PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Taking a Fresh Look at Education

Framing Professional Learning in Education through Self-Study

Mary C. Dalmau, Hafdís Guðjónsdóttir and Deborah Tidwell (Eds.)

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Taking a Fresh Look at Education

Professional Learning
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Rationale:
This series purposely sets out to illustrate a range of approaches to Professional Learning and to highlight the importance of teachers and teacher educators taking the lead in reframing and responding to their practice, not just to illuminate the field but to foster genuine educational change.

Audience:
The series will be of interest to teachers, teacher educators and others in fields of professional practice as the context and practice of the pedagogue is the prime focus of such work. Professional Learning is closely aligned to much of the ideas associated with reflective practice, action research, practitioner inquiry and teacher as researcher.

Taking a Fresh Look at Education

Framing Professional Learning in Education through Self-Study

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This book is dedicated to the life and work of Mary C. Dalmau (12 August 1940–12 October 2016). She leaves a legacy of her caring and thoughtful approach to teaching, research in teacher education, self-study of teacher education practice, and advocacy for equity and access for all learners. She will be deeply missed.

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FOREWORD

This book does exactly what the title suggests; it takes a fresh look at education, and it could well be argued, that there is no better way of doing it than through the professional learning of teachers and teacher educators. As the upcoming pages clearly illustrate, taking a fresh look at education really is possible when the learning of the main players in the enterprise are involved.

The authors of this book have documented how they have learnt about teaching and learning by approaching their own pedagogical development through the use of self-study. In so doing, they illustrate not only how that has made a difference to their work but also to those for whom they are responsible (their students).

Importantly, the book brings together a group of authors who have sought to better understand, and develop, the relationship between teaching and learning, theory and practice. In many ways, they have come to work in ways that resonate with that which Dalmau and Gudjónsdóttir (2002) described as professional working theory (PWT). PWT is a dynamic process in which practice, theory and ethics interact to shed new light on understandings of teaching and learning.

It is worth pausing for a moment to reflect on PWT and its development as a consequence of self-study. Dalmau, a member of the self-study community from inception, was working with colleagues and teachers (Gudjónsdóttir amongst others at the time) in an effort to enhance their understanding of theory and practice through involvement in professional learning. Not surprisingly, considering Dalmau's serious focus on inclusion, her concern to enhance professional learning in ways that moved beyond practice to embrace the bigger picture of social justice in education, had a major and long lasting impact on those with whom she worked.

As a highly valued and committed member of the self-study community, it is a pleasure to see how those scholarly roots have helped to support the growth in learning and action of others involved in self-study – as documented in this book but also more widely through the self-study community as a whole.

Self-study, as is overwhelmingly obvious in the chapters in this book, is all about seeking evidence from which learning about how to better align teaching and learning intents might be realized. Whitehead (1993) described that intent through the notion of the Living Contradiction, and as these chapters continually make clear, seeking to address that is central to seeing education with new eyes.

Taking a fresh look at education means questioning one's taken-for-granted assumptions (Brookfield, 1995), and that demands a commitment to work from the personal in order to inform the educational community more generally. Hence seeking to develop a responsive approach to learning about pedagogy demands more of a teacher or teacher educator, than accepting the status quo and remaining comfortable with practices that go unquestioned. Challenging one's own assumptions

and practices is what is expected through self-study, but it is sharing the resultant learnings that matters for influencing the work of others.

It is almost inevitable then, that with an approach to learning from practice embedded in self-study, and a keen desire to be more informed about, and responsive to, the education of oneself and others, that inclusion and social justice would come to the fore. In so doing, the authors have illustrated how their desire to take a fresh look at education has shaped their professional learning through self-study. However, that alone is not enough. The aim of the book is to create an invitation for others to access these authors' learnings, to encourage readers to take a fresh look at their own practices and search for ways of better aligning their teaching actions with their learning intents.

As the book makes clear, learning through self-study is important in the two big worlds of education – schooling and teacher education – as each are important to the development of the other in the process of long term educational development and change.

The editors of this book have brought together a strong group of authors to push the boundaries of educational practice. They have illustrated how through the evidence inherent in their self-studies they have developed more informed approaches to their work. It is wonderful to see the influence of PWT implicitly and explicitly shaping these works and as always, very good to see Dalmau's unerring contribution to education through her scholarship in both worlds.

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1. THE EVOLUTION OF FRAMING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Taking a Fresh Look at Education: Framing Professional Learning in Education through Self-Study is a book that has been in the making for several years. The chapters in this book reflect the work that has grown out of the scholarship of self-study of teacher education practice. This type of inquiry focuses upon teaching practice in an effort to better inform and improve practice (Loughran, Hamilton, LaBoskey, & Russell, 2004). For over a decade, in addition to the international handbook there have been a wide selection of books published on self-study of practice addressing such areas as methodology (for example, Samaras & Freese, 2006; Tidwell, Heston, & Fitzgerald, 2009), research about teacher education (for example, Berry, 2008; Loughran & Russell, 2002; Schulte & Walker-Gibbs, 2015), issues of diversity and social justice (for example, Kitchen, Tidwell, & Fitzgerald, 2016; Kroll, 2012; Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2015; Taylor & Coia, 2014), specific teacher education content areas (for example, Buck & Akerson, 2016; Bullock & Russell, 2012; Crowe, 2010; Ovens & Fletcher, 2014), specific modes of instruction (for example, Garbett & Ovens, 2017), as well as foundations and rationales for self-study (for example, Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009).

Taking a Fresh Look at Education brings to the literature a unique focus addressing the work of Mary Dalmau, teacher educator and self-study researcher who spent her career addressing the complexity of teaching about teaching. Though Mary was loath to be discussed as the focal point of this publication, we (Hafdís and Deb) as the co-editors with Mary have realized the impact her work has had on improving teacher understanding of practice, purpose, and context and wish to spotlight her professional contribution which has led to the publication of this book. Mary began her career as a classroom teacher in Australia, which evolved into leadership roles in schools (as deputy principal and principal), and in the larger community as acting regional director for the Community Services Victoria Western Metropolitan regional Office and in the Education Department as the Project Director of an Inclusive Schooling – Integration program. Mary's first significant research into teacher thinking and knowing was in her dissertation work (Dalmau, 2002) completed at the University of Oregon, in Educational Leadership and Special Education. It was during her doctoral work that Mary became interested in the self-study of practice in teaching and in teacher education. When she returned to her home in Australia

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after completing her doctoral studies, Mary's work in teacher education at Victoria University in Melbourne focused on inclusive education and teacher knowledge and theory development. During her tenure at Victoria University, Mary continued her self-study research as a teacher educator, and became internationally recognized as a scholar of teacher education with more than 30 papers and articles in peer-refereed journals and book chapters. Over the years, her work addressing the needs of diverse student populations spanned teacher preparation and graduate studies for pre-service and in-service teachers in grades preschool through high school. As a teacher-scholar, she was thoughtful and caring about how her students learned. She believed in the power of modeling how to teach through her own instruction, imbuing her students with a true sense of engagement and scholarly pursuit. "What does practice inquiry look like in practice" was the driving query behind Mary's scholarship and teaching, where she merged theory with practice. Her interest in teacher knowledge and understanding, coupled with her desire for equitable practice for all learners, informed the development of the Professional Working Theory protocol. This book is a reflection of Mary's work in teacher knowledge and theory development, her focus on inclusion and diversity, and her outreach and impact on other educators and scholars. It is through our experiences with Mary and her work that we bring together the chapters in this book. Our ultimate goal is to speak to the passion of Mary's scholarship – creating that space in academia to thoughtfully examine the equity, practice and meaning within the instructional environment which, in turn, informs and improves our understanding of teaching and learning.

Chapter 2, *Generating Responsive Pedagogy in Inclusive Practice*, by Mary Dalmau and Hafdís Guðjónsdóttir, provides a context for the book's focus on framing professional learning in education through self-study research. The authors begin by suggesting that one of the major challenges for teachers in modern times is the continuous search for pedagogy and approaches to meet the diverse abilities in inclusive schools. Ideas of inclusion assume that every student has an equal or equitable access to education. Inclusion has been defined in various ways through the years and the definition is constantly developing. It has moved from the view where inclusion emphasizes the participation and education of disabled students and special needs students in mainstream or general education to the definition of inclusion that focuses on diversity and how schools respond to and value the diversity found in students groups and the school community as they create schools for all.

Their self-study of practice suggests that the attainment of inclusive community responsive pedagogies—in schools and in teacher education programs—is situated in the public/personal dialectic between the transformation of individual values, world views, ethics and practice, and the sociocultural and structural factors that mediate equity, access, and opportunity in educational systems. They argue that, if as educators we wish to take a critical and transformative stance in our research and teaching, we must challenge our own and our students' construction of the world as adequately described by *western* paradigms and hegemony, and recognize that class, gender, sexuality and ethnicity are critical sites for questioning access to social justice and sustainability.

Following Mary's and Hafdís' chapter are two chapters that provide additional insights into issues of social justice and teacher education. In Chapter 3, *Teaching for Social Justice in a New Ed.D. Program: A Collaborative Self-Study to Address, "Who Can Do This Work?"* Barbara Henderson and Helen Hyun describe their collaborative self-study that documents the change process within Barbara's personal and professional demeanor as they worked together for a second year in an intensive, social-justice oriented Ed.D. (doctorate in education) program. This self-study of their teaching practice focused on a single cohort of 16 doctoral students. Data were collected over one semester and focused on a Mixed Methods Analysis class taught by Barbara. Data included Helen's interview with Barbara, formal student reflections on the course written three-quarters of the way through the semester, a review of course materials, outcomes from final student papers, and final course evaluations. This chapter extends upon their first year findings and documents the effective practices and pedagogy advanced within their social justice oriented program. These positive outcomes notwithstanding, the chapter also explores changes in Barbara's identity and experiences with the doctoral cohort as she attempted to include more equity-based readings and discussions in her methods course. As a critical colleague and a person of Color, Helen discusses how events leading up to and including a highly charged final class discussion about race and racism could be viewed through the lens of Critical Race Theory.

Chapter 4, *Unity without Assimilation: Collaborative Self-Study Between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Lecturers* by Claire Kelly, highlights a collaborative self-study between three colleagues working with pre-service teachers (PSTs) in Victoria, Australia, exploring the question "How can teacher educators support pre-service teachers to include Indigenous themes in their curriculum planning?" Claire discusses how this collaboration emphasizes the effectiveness of working together and with the PSTs to reject the colonial discourse whereby Indigenous knowledge and experience is seen as peripheral in schools and universities. The PSTs were surveyed to capture evidence of what was happening in schools and to provide data for discussion in seminars. The chapter describes how the PSTs were supported to develop critical perspectives and appropriate resources for the inclusion of Indigenous themes in school curricula, particularly through the implementation of the Civics and Citizenship domain in Victorian primary and secondary schools. In describing the context for helping students develop critical perspectives, Claire describes how the PSTs had little exposure to Indigenous perspectives in their own schooling or in their school placements. Additionally, most University lecturers had little engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. Claire provides insights into how she and her colleagues listened and responded to PSTs' questions about the reproduction and recreation of colonial perspectives, and how they continued to build knowledge of resources and, most importantly, understanding that Indigenous epistemologies and experiences must be recognized as co-existent with non-Indigenous epistemologies and experiences in order to become reconciliatory learners and teachers.

The next section of the book moves the focus to collaboration and active scholarship in teacher education. In Chapter 5, *The Fire of Transformation: Enacting the Active Scholarship of Teacher Education*, Hafdís Guðjónsdóttir and Mary C. Dalmau report on their work of inquiry based developments in teacher education. One of the most challenging issues they faced as they became teacher educators was the search for pedagogy in teacher education especially to draw out teachers' theoretical backgrounds from their daily experiences, and introduce them to the skills and resources that can enable them to critically reflect on their practice together. Hafdís and Mary based their shared learning on inquiry into lives and experiences of teacher-learners, respect for the unique knowledge and skills of each participant, and collaborative construction of new conceptual understandings. They argue that authentic and purposeful practice for teachers begins with serious and authentic questions about student learning. Hafdís and Mary describe the development of Active Group Practice, that is, the skillful engagement of a diverse group of educators in collaborative action to implement or improve educational programs through a reflective, problem-solving approach to praxis inquiry. They highlight the following issues in grouping as well as efforts toward collaboration that are commonly found in education: Groups are often based on homogeneity, difference is viewed as a problem rather than a resource, or difference is contrived and imposed by authority within a context of hierarchical power and role relationships rather than responsive to questions arising within authentic practice. Learning about collaboration is reduced to the acquisition of interpersonal and communication skills, and even when teachers find reflective group practice in university or professional development situations valuable, they rarely transfer these practices into their busy working lives.

The two chapters that follow continue the discussion of collaboration and inquiry-based development in teacher education. In Chapter 6, *The Collaborative Process in Educators' Self-Study of Practice*, Deborah Tidwell and Amy Staples examine the relationship of collaboration with educators involved in self-study of practice within school systems. Collaboration is examined within a professional development program addressing comprehensive literacy instruction, highlighting the work of 12 educators engaged in the self-study of their literacy practice working with students identified as having significant developmental disabilities. These educators included speech language pathologists, general education teachers, and special education teachers. The nature of collaboration as a manifestation of self-study research is explored within the context of professional development designed to improve understanding of practice in the field. The impact of these self-studies could be seen across the many ways in which the educators were able to make sense of their improvement on practice. By grounding their self-study focus in specific context-based inquiry, they were able to recognize subtle yet important steps toward instructional change. These small steps over time culminated into an improved knowledge of practice that informed their instructional actions. This was particularly evident in the evolution of self-study research questions over time which reflected a greater knowledge of practice and change within practice. As instruction improved

in one area, it appeared to foster a deeper awareness of practice overall, a greater understanding of literacy as a social justice issue for their students, and a more complex understanding of how their practice influenced learning.

In Chapter 7, *Reconceptualizing Their Teaching Over Time: Goals and Pedagogies of Mid- and Later-Career Literacy/English Teacher Educators*, Clare Kosnik, Pooja Dharamshi, and Lydia Menna continue the discussion of inquiry based development in teacher education as they discuss the results of their study of mid-career and late-career literacy and English teacher educators. Their study involved 28 literacy/English teacher educators in four countries: Canada, the U.S., UK, and Australia. The goal of the study was to examine their backgrounds, pedagogies, research activities, identity, and turning points in their lives. This chapter focuses on the 21 mid- and later-career teacher educators who are part of the sample (have over 5 years experience in higher education). Using NVivo for data analysis, the authors present both qualitative and quantitative findings, examining the goals for courses and for pedagogies. Inquiring how their beliefs and practices have changed, Clare, Pooja and Lydia discovered that many of the teacher educators' beliefs remained constant over time, they developed a repertoire of teaching strategies, for many the topics from their doctoral research were still the focus of their research, and they tended to be confident in their ability, reporting the use of many processes for gauging student learning. The authors also discuss how the current political context is exerting pressure on these more experienced teacher educators and leading many to rethink their role in teacher education.

The final three chapters of the book focus on the development and implementation of the Professional Working Theory (PWT), a process where practice, theory, and ethics are brought to the fore in the examination of teacher beliefs and understandings. In Chapter 8, *From the Beginning to the Future: Professional Working Theory Emerging,* Mary Dalmau and Hafdís Guðjónsdóttir focus on their development of a process that facilitates the articulation and discussion of professional working theory with teachers—a process based on the dynamic interaction across *practice* (what teachers do), *theory* (how they understand what they do), and *ethics* (why they do what they do). They describe how they present PWT as a way for teachers and student teachers to uncover their practice, theories, and ethics. Three levels of reflective questions are employed to encourage the inclusion of perspectives from outside the classroom. For each component, three additional levels of reflective questions are provided to cover close/local, medium/distance, and broad/societal. They conclude the chapter with an outline of the expanded discourse on teacher professionalism initiated by teachers as they discuss their PWT. Mary and Hafdis describe and critically reflect on the self-study through which they developed this approach to PWT. They raise questions about the nature and purpose(s) of self-study, the interplay in self-study across the exploration of individual professional identity, the systematic exploration and recreation of practice, and the creation of new knowledge. They discuss how they extended the PWT instrument to systematically explore socio-cultural and historical influences on the practice of teaching. Their work with PWT has shown them that time is an important factor—short terms and

one-off sessions of professional development do not allow time to build that strong conceptual knowledge and understanding. They conclude their chapter arguing the need for time to engage in skillful practice that will enable people to feel confident in their ability to transfer their learning and experience into new environments.

Chapter 9, *Developing Teachers' Professional Identities: Weaving the Tapestry of Professional Working Theory* by Svanborg R. Jónsdóttir and Karen Rut Gísladóttir, brings to life the use of the PWT in teacher education coursework. Svanborg and Karen argue that a strong professional identity is an important resource and guide for the teacher or administrator in a demanding job. In this chapter, they describe their work with student teachers and experienced educators in a master's course in the School of Education at the University of Iceland. This is a self-study research of three teacher educators collaborating on teaching and developing the course *Teaching a Diverse Group of Students* (TDGS). In this course, working on the students' PWT is a core assignment permeating the entire course, using Dalmau and Guðjónsdóttir's (2002) PWT Instrument (PWTI) for guidance and support. Data consist of Svanborg's and Karen's journals, discussions and meeting transcripts, as well as students' data from online discussions, TOCs (tickets out of class) and their assignments in different forms—graphic, 3-dimensional, and written. Their findings show that even though their students struggled with uncovering their PWT, most students found the PWT process empowering and felt that the process had given them an important tool to realize and develop their professional identity to start their work as new teachers or to continue their work as experienced educators.

In the final chapter, *Weaving Together Theory, Practice and Ethics: UAE and USA Graduate Students Craft Their "Living Theories" Using the Professional Working Theory,* Patience Sowa and Cynthia Schmidt explore their process of and reflections on developing PWTs with their graduate students from the United States and the United Arab Emirates. Their self-study addresses an earlier call by Dalmau and Guðjónsdóttir (2002) to include the experiences of teachers into the educational discourse. Patience and Cynthia cite Whitehead (1993) as a critical influence on their research where he emphasizes the importance of explaining one's educational influences in learning as teacher educators, in the learning of one's students, and in the learning of the socio-cultural formations in which one lives and works. Consequently, their self-study research was driven by the following two questions:

1. What did we learn from our students' descriptions and reflections of their PWTs?
2. What did we learn from our experiences to help us improve our practice as teacher educators?

Using self-study and narrative methods as a framework, Patience and Cynthia describe together and separately their experiences developing the PWT with their graduate students in literacy education in the U.S.A and special needs education in the U.A.E., providing a rich description of what they and their graduate students learned from these experiences.

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2. GENERATING RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY IN INCLUSIVE PRACICE

The two of us met when we were doctoral students at the University of Oregon in 1996. We came from different parts of the world, Mary from Australia and Hafdís from Iceland but we felt we had more in common than what separated us. We both had a long experience in education, Mary in special education and leadership, Hafdís in general and special education mostly as a classroom teacher in first to seventh grade. Our passion was in education, especially learning and teaching, and education for all students. We got the opportunity to teach together a graduate course on inclusive practices, and we have continued our collaboration through the years. Sometimes teaching together, other times planning and reflecting. Research has been a part of our collaboration for almost two decades. Inclusive education was our passion and pedagogy for inclusion was important, and we soon began to search for it, to develop it along with our student teachers and teachers. This chapter will focus on this development.

One of the main challenges for teachers in contemporary times is the constant search for pedagogy and approaches to meet the diversity in inclusive schools. Inclusion has been based fundamentally in the philosophies of social justice, democracy, human rights and full participation of all (Ainscow & Kaplan, 2005; Florian, 2008; Guðjónsdóttir & Karlsdóttir, 2009; Jónsson, 2011). Early discussions of the ideology emerged in the 1970s to express equity and justice initiatives related to gender, class, and ethnicity. Activists concerned with disability rights began to use the term "inclusion" in the 1980s (Dalmau, 2002), and within educational systems, medical and remedial models of specialist education for *special* populations became identified with the term inclusion in late 1980s (Guðjónsdóttir, 2000).

Inclusion has been defined in various ways through the years and the definition is constantly developing. One definition is that it represents the participation and education of disabled and special needs students in mainstream or general education (Department of Education & Science, 2007; Rogers, 1993; Salend, 2010). This view focuses on special needs as the criterion for inclusion, meaning that it is a part of special needs education. For others it has moved from the view where inclusion emphasizes the participation and education of disabled and special needs students in mainstream or general education to the definition of inclusion that focuses on diversity and how schools respond to and value the diversity found in students groups and the school community as they create school for all. As such, the ideas of

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inclusion assume that every student has equal or equitable access to education and that schools organize the learning environment to accommodate everyone. Believing that when diversity becomes a natural characteristic of the school community it mirrors the wider community (Lumby & Coleman, 2007).

Inclusive education needs to be incorporated as a goal and strategy in reform and should be seen to be everybody's business in the school (Slee, 2011). To us, inclusion is an on-going process, a never-ending quest, aiming for increased participation in education for everyone involved. Facing the challenges of inclusion, school systems, administrators and teachers need to consider how they can respond and find ways to educate all their students, work against discrimination in ways that lead to an inclusive, just society where everyone is a valid participant (Booth, 2010; Slee, 2011; UNESCO, 1994, 2001). Inclusive processes focus on increasing participation in education for everyone involved, to work against inequality, and to increase people's sense of belonging in school and society (Booth, 2010). To meet these commitments it is important to look for, develop and create inclusive pedagogy.

Pedagogy is shaped by the act of teaching and the ideas, values and beliefs informing, sustaining and justifying that act (Alexander, 2013), together with the interactions between teachers and students, and between the learning environment and learning tasks (Murphy, 2008). The term pedagogy explains the disparate and complex issues of the teaching profession. Three consistent uses of the term pedagogy can be found in the literature: (a) to include teaching methods, instructional programs and curricula; (b) as a comprehensive term for education in poststructuralist thought; and (c) to address moral education and discourse about teaching and learning (Bruner, 1996; Freire, 2005; Van Manen, 1991, 1999).

The basic principle in the inclusive pedagogy approach is based on rejecting ability labeling as a deterministic notion of fixed ability that has historically reinforced the structure of education (Florian & Spratt, 2013). Thus, inclusive pedagogy is particularly aimed at questioning practices that represent provision for most with additional or different experiences for some. The very act of focusing on differences increases the isolation and marginalization of children and adds to the social construction of disability (Grenier, 2010). For the development of inclusive pedagogy three fundamental pedagogical principles are important. The first principle states the teacher is responsible for and committed to the education of *all* the students in the classroom. The second principle addresses co-agency, where the students are seen as active agents in their own learning. The teacher creates learning spaces for the students, but students are responsible for their own learning with support from the teacher. The third principle focuses on the learning environment, and the necessary materials or activities for learning to occur. The school should avoid that the focus is on what is wrong with the student, the needs to be fixed or the disability (Hart, Drummond, & McIntyre, 2007). Instead the focus should be on the strength, abilities and the interest each student brings to the classroom.

In this chapter we will share the knowledge we have gained from working with teachers and student teachers on inclusive student-centered learning communities

that are based on appreciation of diversity and openness to the world. We will explain responsive practice and inclusive pedagogy and how through the years we have developed these terms along with student teachers and experienced teachers.

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Through our years of collaboration we have grounded our work in the methodology of self-study of teacher education practices. To us self-study is about changing our practice, but at the same time transferring our selves as professionals. It is in the hands of each individual to change herself, but it is also important that her progress, development and learning can be transferred or at least introduced to others. We emphasize that professionals think of the relationship between themselves and the broader context, the school and the society, and how to transfer the change in practice to the broader society by trying to understand the change globally and then to introduce the learning and understanding to other professionals.

Inclusion is one of our passions that brought us together. From our first year of collaboration, we have collected data on inclusive practices in the United States, Iceland, and Australia. Our intention was, in collaboration with students and teachers, to create and develop a pedagogy for inclusive school practice. Collaborative self-study formed the basis of the research methodology for three reasons: (1) self-study enabled us to draw on the relationship between teaching about teaching and learning about teaching through developing, planning and teaching our courses on inclusion (Berry & Loughran, 2002; Dalmau, 2002); (2) the inquiry was a natural consequence of our long-term collaboration in teacher education, educational research and professional development (Gudjónsdóttir & Dalmau, 2002; Guilfoyle, Placier, Hamilton, & Pinnegar, 2000), and, (3) key elements of self-study (shared critical reflection on our practice and continuous action for change) formed the basis of the study and the action as we developed and implemented responsive pedagogy (Conle, Louden, & Midlon, 1998; LaBoskey, Kubler, & Garcia, 1998; Lomax, Evans, & Parker, 1998).

Educational inquiry and interpretation do not exist in a vacuum. At all stages of our inquiry, we focused on the *lived lives* of teachers and student teachers in the larger discourse into educational change and improvement (Van Manen, 1990). We have gathered data from multiple resources and over the extended time period that our collaboration has covered. The data originates from workshops and courses we have taught on inclusive practices in USA, Latvia, Iceland and Australia to student teachers and experienced teachers. We have logged our experience, and recorded our intense discussions and reflections. Data were also collected through interviews with classroom teachers and by observing their classrooms. In addition, we have kept a research journal through these years and documented our critical reflections and dialogue.

Throughout our studies lasting for almost two decades, collaborative critical analysis and interpretation have gone hand-in-hand with data collection and theoretical

research. Guided by Wolcott's (1994) idea on organizing the transformation of the data through description, analysis and interpretation, we have collected and written descriptive notes on our experience. The analyzing step and openness to our findings was important to our purpose of the study as it was to create a pedagogy for inclusive practices along with teachers and student teachers. Through this process, we were able to create and develop a model of responsive professional practice. The model has been developed through the years and the discussion situates our interpretation of the data in the context of the current discourse and provides recommendations for future action. In the findings we share our insights on inclusive practices and discuss the following three areas: (a) foundations of teaching practice that include all students, (b) critical challenges for schools and teachers, and differentiating teaching and learning, and (c) professional discourse, knowledge creation and implications for educational communities, professional teacher education, and educational research.

RESPONSIVE PRACTICE AS INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGY

In this section of the chapter, we focus on our learning from the data we have collected through the years, and share our insights and understanding for creating a responsive practice and how to prepare teachers for inclusive practices. Our study suggests that the attainment of inclusive community responsive pedagogies—in schools and in teacher education programs—is situated in the public/personal dialectic between the transformation of individual values, world views, ethics and practice, and the sociocultural and structural factors that mediate equity, access, and opportunity in educational systems. A critical element of our practice through the years was providing the opportunity for student teachers and teachers to engage in reflection and inquiry of learning/teaching, inclusion and the sociocultural context of education. We supported student teachers and teachers to write cases related to the inclusion or exclusion of students. They then used the Praxis Inquiry Protocol (PI) to frame a reflective and action-oriented commentary (Guðjónsdóttir et al., 2007; Kruger, 2006). They took their cases and went through the four steps of the PI Protocol and described, questioned, explained, theorized, and proposed changes to their practice. New understandings of the impact of inclusion/exclusion on learning emerged and these affected our search and development of responsive pedagogy in inclusive practice.

Foundations of Teaching Practice in Classrooms for All Students

Teachers' foundation for inclusive practices builds on the knowledge of children's development and pedagogy. Critical elements in creating learning for all students are teachers' openness to diversity and their responsiveness as professionals. To create a curricula for a whole group of learners that is responsive to each student calls for a recognition that individual differences in children can contribute to the richness of the learning environment. Ethical and moral commitment to the value and abilities

of each student matters when the goal is to build pedagogy appropriate for diverse groups of students.

The analysis of our data illustrate that responsiveness, coupled with pedagogical skills, enabled the teachers to use student differences, contextual issues, cultural and community events, subject matter, and problems and challenges as opportunities for teaching and learning. Explaining her thoughts behind her teaching, one teacher commented: *I consider each individual. I know the curriculum and the theory, but my teaching is child driven. I try to know my students and plan from there; I also try to use opportunities that the children originate* (Teacher Interview, April 1999). Through the years we have learned from teachers and student teachers that if they are to become responsive professional teachers it is essential that they are prepared to understand and use responsive pedagogical approaches for the education of all and that they become articulate contributors to professional discourse, research and knowledge creation. Many of the teachers in our studies have identified a lack of pedagogical preparation as a major obstacle in their efforts to create curricula that include all students in their classrooms. They have managed to create a climate of learning for all their students, but are often unsure of their decisions. Sometimes they are critical of the lack of focus by professional educators and administrators on pedagogical responses to individual difference. One teacher stated: *The education I received in the program (Special Education Program) was more theoretical than practical, it was formative, but I could relate it to my experience as I used the PI protocol and, through that, make it productive for my practice* (Teacher Interview, May 2008).

Another pedagogy-related issue identified by the teachers is the conflict they experience between the generalist education and the special education pedagogical approaches. The teachers identified differences in ethics, developmental understanding, and approaches to curricula development. One teacher explained: *My believe is that it is not sensible to track students by their abilities or disabilities, and transfer them to special schools and classes* (Teacher Interview, October 2004). For schools and classrooms to be open to the inclusion of all students, this dilemma must be faced, and shared approaches to teaching and learning developed. A pedagogy that forms the basis for teaching diverse groups of students must include more than a skill in using prescribed instructional practices. It has to integrate a professional knowledge base about teaching, learning, and child development, and involve an ethical and social commitment to children. From our data we have developed a definition of the pedagogical qualities of the responsive professional teacher:

> Responsive pedagogues are teachers who (a) understand child development and individual difference and are committed to the education of all students, and (b) have a knowledge base that enables them to differentiate between students as they develop curriculum for all students.

Responsive teachers go beyond acknowledging and respecting differences as they create the curricula. They focus on the children and the resources they bring into the

classroom (ability, attitude, background, experience, interest, knowledge, and skills), and respond to individual differences as they develop a learning environment and create learning spaces that support all students to expand their learning. Responsive teachers are skilled in creating a curriculum of learning activities and environments in which all students have the opportunity to succeed.

Children enter schools with a variety of skills, knowledge and experiences. They naturally develop at different rates and in different ways. Our findings have affected our perspective of the emphases in teacher education. Teacher preparation must include a comprehensive grounding in major theoretical perspectives on child development and their practical applications, and an understanding of the social and moral issues inherent in individual differences, as well as the opportunity to build a strong professional commitment to the education of all children.

Critical Challenges and Differentiating Teaching and Learning

Teachers need a comprehensive grounding in pedagogy that enables them to (a) base their teaching on detailed knowledge of each student, (b) construct learning activities that are both challenging and enjoyable, (c) differentiate between students within integrated curricula and programs, (d) use the physical and social environment to support learning, (e) support students to develop a growing sense of responsibility for their learning, and, (f) work in partnership with students to monitor and modify teaching, learning, and assessment. The student teachers and the teachers we have worked with emphasized specific areas of teaching, learning, and professionalism as they worked on their PI protocol. The areas we have identified which teachers find important are the following: activity- based learning, differentiated curriculum, classroom climate, professional collegiality, and collaborating with families.

Activity-based learning. Students achieve most when they are actively engaged in the learning experience. Active learning includes reflecting on the experiences, and using authentic opportunities for problem-solving, decision-making, analyzing, evaluating, and acting. Responsive pedagogues understand and use rich learning opportunities and hands-on activities that are based on students' experiences and interests, and that encourage them to be active, inquiring and reflective learners.

> *I collect worthless things at home and bring them to school for students to use. My students are very interested in different board games, and one day they began to create their own. In doing so, they needed to use different knowledge and skills*. (Teacher Interview, April 1999)

We have learned from teachers that it is important to develop problem-solving strategies in the context of *real* problems and to build these strategies on students' interests. One example came from a teacher telling us about her students going to the beach to construct islands shaped according to the concepts they were learning. Another teacher example was on a reading project where the students were problem

solving for elves that live in their neighborhood (in Iceland). Many teachers create learning opportunities where they integrated different subjects.

Differentiating the curriculum. It helps to build a differentiated curricula on approaches in which subjects are integrated and the emphasis is on both the content and the process. By setting a clear purpose, personalizing the learning experiences according to each student, and using multiple teaching strategies it is more likely that learning becomes meaningful for each student.

> *The goal for each student was to compose a story, write the texts on the computer as well as make the illustrations. They also made the paper for the cover of the book, which they bounded, and at the completion of the project, they read their story to the class*. (Class Observation, September 2004)

By using varied teaching and assessment strategies that take into account all students' unique abilities, characteristics, pace and styles of learning, students get the chance to learn accordingly. The teachers were responsive as they balanced the strategies according to the whole class, small groups, and individual learners:

> *I divided the learning into core work that all students must do. I then organize the curriculum into work alternatives and play alternatives, where students themselves plan their activities. I make sure the students have many varieties to choose from.* (Teacher Interview, May 2008)

Assessment that is ongoing, related to teaching and learning, and structured by teachers, students, and peers can help teachers build on student resources and respond to their learning and progress. This requires that authentic and holistic methods of assessment be developed. Authentic assessment focuses on contextualized tasks that are worthwhile, significant, and meaningful. The planning is backward. That is, the teacher, often in collaboration with their students, begins by deciding what the students will perform to demonstrate their mastery and how to evaluate the performance. Then a curriculum is developed that enables the student to perform the task well. Holistic assessment focuses on assessing the whole work activities rather than specific elements. These assessment approaches build on real and challenging activities where students have the opportunity to use their knowledge, understanding and skills, as well as their imagination and intuition.

Classroom climate. The classroom is the potent cultural and contextual milieu of learning and collaboration. A necessary element of learning and teaching is the quality of the learning partnerships between students and teachers. As teachers and students learn together, they are able to take risks, explore new frontiers, and relate new knowledge to classroom practice. Cooperation and cohesion in the classroom are critical to students' success. The teachers emphasized that they and the students need time to develop the trust, cohesion and mutual respect that are essential for effective learning. However, cohesiveness cannot be based on student similarities

or length of relationships alone. It must rather be grounded in respect for others and their unique and different characteristics, experiences, knowledge and gifts.

> *You have to constantly balance your teaching, asking yourself if all students have appropriate work and are socially included. Sometimes the whole class works together, other times they work individually or they collaborate. My students help each other very much; they work in pairs, which they enjoy. Together they work on their workbooks; they write stories and make questions*. (Teacher Interview, May 2008)

The teachers gave examples of how they created learning space for open discussion about values, attitudes, and behavior that challenged their students to (a) look at issues from different points of view, (b) understand their peers, (c) value individual differences, and, (d) be critical of ideas rather than people. A fourth grade teacher used a teddy bear called Julius to talk about matters such as friendship, loyalty, consideration, and differences. The children in her class loved Julius and through him they could discuss serious and challenging topics that otherwise would be difficult to put on the agenda.

Professional collegiality. Teaching strategies arise not only from teachers' education and experience, but also from cultures of teaching, beliefs, values and community expectation. More subtle influences include the habits and expectations that emerge and become institutionalized in the educational community in response to demands and pressures placed on teachers over the years. We have learned that teachers find it more successful to plan relevant and interesting learning for students in collaboration with other educators and professionals. Then the teachers can learn from each other as they share and evaluate their professional knowledge and experience. One of the teachers wrote:

> *...collegiality in the form of teachers collaborating with other teachers, professionals, and paraprofessionals is a very important factor at my school. Respect for all persons is crucial, as they all bring experience, knowledge, and opinions that are worth consideration. It is very important that teachers collaborate in their teaching and I wish that one day I can team-teach with a colleague*. (Teacher Journal, February 2005)

For effective collaboration, the teachers reported that it was important to base the collaboration on expectations that each member contributes unique knowledge and skills and share information, responsibility, and action. The teachers that were satisfied with the collaboration at their schools all reported that it is important that their work environments support collegial collaboration but at the same time that it is not forced upon them.

Family connections. Parents have the primary responsibility for bringing up their children, ensuring that they attend school and are open to the education offered by

the school. The context in which children learn includes the influence of their family as well as of school. It is therefore essential that teachers understand the importance of including families in their children's learning and become skilled at developing opportunities for parents to share information, discuss aspects of teaching and learning, and express their views.

> *I interview children and their families about children's abilities and interest. I then use the information from the families as I create the class curriculum and create learning activities based on children's interest.* (Teacher Interview, May 2008)

Parents are important allies of teachers in curriculum development as they know their children and can contribute useful information about their interests, approaches to learning, and educational needs.

Professional Discourse and Knowledge Creation

If classrooms are to include and be responsive to all students, the opportunity must be made for teachers to create and share knowledge and contribute to the discourse of education. Many of the teachers we have worked with have provided rich information about their practice, roles, professional knowledge, and ethics that form the basis of their work. They have been able to analyze and extend their understanding through the Professional Working Theory (PWT) and the PI protocol and reflect on complex relationships between practice, theory, ethics, and socio-cultural influences. However, often they focus primarily on describing what they do in their classrooms, and the dialogue elicited pre-formed judgments about problems. They often use phrases such as, *the responsibilities teachers have are too great, the demand on teachers is enormous,* or *there is not enough time or conditions to do what needs to be done.* Thus, it is important to create conditions that enable teachers to recognize omissions in their data, clarify their perceptions, and organize their analysis. The teachers can share and review information and frame their collaborative inquiry and professional development by interviewing each other, analyze the data together and visit each other practices.

Implications for the Educational Community

In this section, we focus on how educational actions we have learned from our student teachers and teachers with whom we have worked can support responsive teacher professionalism. Teachers alone are not responsible for their professional roles. The professionalism of teachers must be recognized and encouraged by school systems, teacher educators, and the broader community. Active and supportive school communities are important factors in establishing inclusive school environments. An individual teacher can develop pedagogical and curricula approaches that support the inclusion of all students in his or her own classroom, but they cannot be held

responsible for the creation of the whole inclusive school environment. As a result of this longitudinal research, we have identified four areas of action that school communities could take: establish a supportive climate, support collegiality, open space for dialogue, and encourage for critical reflections.

Establish a climate that supports learning and innovation. Schools can create a climate of creativity, trust and tolerance that enables teachers to continually question their actions, and evaluate and renew their practice. The schools that established supportive and active communities of learning, practice that encouraged individual and shared experimentation, and regarded mistakes as opportunities to learn, were more successful in establishing inclusive practices. In that kind of an environment teachers' knowledge base and confidence increased and strengthened.

Support collegiality and collaboration. It is important for the teachers to have established time to work together, and to build a collaborative community of professionals committed to improving practice. For cooperation to be meaningful it needs to be built on openness to diversity and the active and positive use of each individual's unique knowledge, understanding, and skills. Again and again we heard from teachers that collaboration must have a purpose and the purpose must extend beyond establishing a congenial method for the implementation of administrative decisions. To establish and maintain the collaboration it was important to the teachers who controlled it, who was involved, and what the purposes were. Teachers reported that collaboration does not work well if it is only based on consultation with experts, and within existing hierarchical and political status differences.

Open the space for continuing dialogue. To explore different perspectives, gain access to creative ideas, and solve complex problems, teachers need opportunities to engage in ongoing conversations about teaching and learning with other teachers. These dialogues can support a continuing evaluation and improvement of practices if is built on (a) value for diversity and creativity, (b) elucidation of teachers' tacit knowledge, and, (c) the analysis of data from their experience, rather than personal judgments about issues. By including other members of the school community, these kinds of conversations can be extended.

Encourage critical reflection and evaluation. In fast-paced and constantly changing societies, it is important to not only be innovative, but also to question new ideas and not accept or implement them before careful reflection and evaluation. Here the PI protocol once again was useful. The teachers found it important to have space (framework, structure, leadership, time, and conditions) to work with their colleagues on educational issues. Each teacher's development is unique and is affected by his or her experience, insight, ability, and motivation. We learned that often the teachers did not know what they know because of a lack of opportunities to reflect on their practice, learning and educational theories. However, processes,

such as the PI protocol, and the PWT, which support systematic and critical analysis of practice, helped student teachers and teachers to frame their reflections on their practices in systematic ways, and to analyze it in relation to theory and experience, which helped them to then take action.

CONCLUSION

For almost two decades we have been looking for, creating and developing inclusive pedagogy. This is a never-ending story. The number of schools and classrooms that are inclusive of all learners will not increase if the educational discourse continues to be based on the special education model with its focus on categorization of students, identification of their limitations, and generation of individual programs and social interaction, or on effective teaching strategies directed towards increasing the academic skills for students in a few school subjects. In the beginning of our collaborative research we realized that the understanding of the term diversity must be expanded beyond disability or ethnic difference to focus on the value of differences in gender, socio-economic status, cultural group, abilities, learning styles and interests. The development of inclusive education needs to be supported by (a) an ethical and moral understanding of diversity and discrimination, (b) educational environments that value diversity in the learning community, and (c) responsive professional educators who have the pedagogical abilities to create learning for diverse group of students.

Our study suggests that the attainment of inclusive community responsive pedagogies—in schools and in teacher education programs—is situated in the public/personal dialectic between the transformation of individual values, world views, ethics and practice, and the sociocultural and structural factors that mediate equity, access, and opportunity in educational systems. This is in line with Responsive Classroom (RC) defined by Northeast Foundation for Children [NEFC] as a teaching approach that connects students and the content in meaningful, respectful and effective ways. Responsive practice is grounded in teachers' understanding of each student and emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community (Northeast Foundation for Children, 1997). Reflective teachers perceive themselves as efficacious in the social and organizational domain, they have a positive attitude toward teaching, and are effective in their discipline practice (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane & Hambacher, 2007; Meyjer, 2003; Rimm-Kaufman & Sawyer, 2004).

In addition to the responsive professional practice of teachers, the successful education of all students will require action by all members of the educational community, and systemic, legislative and policy support that values openness, diversity and non-discrimination (Florian & Spratt, 2013; Guðjónsdóttir & Karlsdóttir, 2009). The direction of public education is established in states and countries through the legislative and policy development process. In our two countries, school administrators and educators live within a system wherein legislators write the

educational law and regulations following community consultation. If education is to become inclusive of all students, policies are needed that prohibit discrimination and support participation of all members of the community. In addition, teachers who will be the eventual implementers of educational improvement must be included in the forums in which policy is debated and the directions for innovation established.

Ongoing policy changes often serve as a source of frustration for teachers. They have less authority than external educational experts to implement or teach new or modified curricula as mandated by the local, state, or federal authorities. Alternatively, it is frustrating to be faced with new laws and regulations that do not have financial backing. Instead of neglecting educational law or the national curriculum, or allowing it to have a negative influence on their practice, teachers should be given the opportunity to be more involved in the process as educational professionals. They need to use politics for positive purposes for educating children. All educators should have a voice in law-making and national curriculum-writing so that their opinion is heard. Educators and community members must work together to ensure that law and regulations will address the needs of all children. Teachers need the opportunity to evaluate new policies and political views for their pedagogical acceptability. They must take a stand, comment on, and support political views in which they believe.

Successful innovation in education is related to the capacity of educators and systems, as well as the commitment of organizations to the long-term planning and implementation that will allow innovation to take root and grow (Fullan, 1999; Hargreaves, 1994). It is critical that municipalities invest in the capacity of teachers. Teachers constantly learn in their work. They learn from many groups of people inside and outside the school, from colleagues, students, and parents. But,

> Just as we have concluded that students have to construct their own meaning for learning to occur, people in all local situations must also construct their own change meaning—knowledge is about beliefs, meaning and action which is why it must be developed not borrowed. (Fullan, 1999, pp. 67–68)

It is important that teachers participate in long-term planning for the creation of school development and school change. If we as educators wish to take a critical and transformative stance in our research and teaching, we must challenge our own and our students' construction of the world as adequately described by western paradigms and hegemony, and recognize that class, gender, sexuality and ethnicity are critical sites for questioning access to social justice and sustainability (Booth, 2010; Slee, 2011).

This inquiry brought us to this understanding, that to create inclusive practice teachers not only need to be open to diversity, they must have the pedagogical knowledge on which to base their responsiveness to the variety of situations they face in their daily work. By exploring the pathways the teachers journeyed to become responsive professional educators, we have recognized and clarified the actions that need to be taken to expand inclusive practice to more classrooms and schools. We

have also identified critical areas for reflection, dialogue and action by teachers, active school communities and teacher educators.

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3. TEACHING FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN A NEW ED.D. PROGRAM

A Collaborative Self-Study to Address, "Who Can Do This Work?"

This collaborative self-study documents the change process within the first author's personal and professional demeanor as the co-authors worked together for a second year in an intensive, social-justice oriented Ed.D. program. This self-study of our teaching practice focused on a single cohort of 16 doctoral students. Data were collected over one semester and focused on a Mixed Methods Analysis class taught by the first author. Data included an interview of the first author by the second, formal student reflections on the course written three-quarters of the way through the semester, a review of course materials, outcomes from final student papers, and final course evaluations. The paper extends upon our first year findings and documents the effective practices and pedagogy advanced by the first author. These positive outcomes notwithstanding, the paper also explores changes in the first author's identity and experiences with the doctoral cohort as she attempted to include more equity-based readings and discussions in her methods course. As a critical colleague and a person of Color, the second author discusses how events leading up to and including a highly charged final class discussion about race and racism could be viewed through the lens of Critical Race Theory.

INTRODUCTION

The doctorate in educational leadership is designed to prepare people as leaders. It is, therefore, a practical degree, and as such, intensive Ed.D. programs for working professionals are not uncommon. A recent example is a set of intensive Ed.D.s offered as stand alone doctorates by the California State University (CSU) system beginning in 2007. This policy marked a notable change in California State Universities, which are predominantly masters' granting institutions. Given a perceived crisis in high-level school leadership at P-12 schools and in the community colleges, the state legislature was willing to grant this exception and support these new doctoral programs for working professionals at the CSUs.

Programs for working professionals also serve a more diverse group of students than full-time Ph.D. programs, as students remain fully employed while earning the degree. Further, the tuition structure of the California State University system

M. C. Dalmau et al. (Eds.), Taking a Fresh Look at Education, 23–39.

makes the cost of the degree approachable for middle-income professionals. However, intensive practitioner doctorates face a raft of challenges that include competing demands on students' time, student retention, and efficacy in providing an education that meets statewide goals for sweeping and effective school reform. The professional doctorate also faces critique as a type of training that must develop a vision and identity or risk chasing the shadow of the research doctorate, resulting in ill-prepared school leaders (Levine, 2005; Shulman et al., 2006).

The doctorate at San Francisco State University is an intensive three-year educational leadership doctorates for working professionals. Specifically, our program is focused around equity and social justice. This study addresses how challenges arose within our program around workload, pedagogy, and methodological skill building, all against this backdrop of an equity-focused experience. This chapter uses identity as a lens to understand these issues, a stance that is heightened by our application of a self-study methodology.

This self-study seeks to understand how Barbara Henderson changed her teaching and developed her identity in her second year teaching in this doctoral leadership program. It focuses on our work with the second cohort admitted to our program, and so represents struggles faced at the start of our institution's Ed.D. program. The purpose of the chapter is to understand developments in the program and in ourselves as doctoral faculty. We decided to focus only on data from the course taught by Barbara Henderson. Helen Hyun acted as critical colleague to Barbara, but we did not compare student experience or our pedagogy across the different classes we taught that semester. The paper looks back from a perspective of several years, as we both continue to teach and advise in the doctoral program, and at the time of this writing, are both working with students admitted as the cohort (2014 admissions). The value of looking back is to understand both disruptive and transformative aspects of the experience of teaching in a new doctoral program, even for experienced faculty members.

Our goal, then, was to examine Barbara's pedagogy in a course she was teaching for the second time, and to see how our personal and professional biographies – Barbara's in particular because of the study focus – contributed to our collaboration and to the evolution of our teaching practices. We also examined the development of Barbara's teaching for evidence that these practices had an impact on students in their grasp of Mixed Methods as a research approach, and as these students designed and undertook research studies that addressed equity in the schools.

In many ways, Barbara's experience models best practices in doctoral teaching. As evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive feedback from her students about their learning experiences in the Qualitative Methods course she taught the cohort the prior spring, and Mixed Methods research course taught in fall, this study seeks to document the nature and qualities of effective pedagogy in an accelerated, professional doctoral program. Yet despite the tremendous rapport, respect, and trust Barbara established with her students, an unexpected event occurred at the end of the semester that took both authors by surprise. The incident involved a highly emotional

and negatively charged discussion on race that began online during the final two weeks of the semester, and then concluded in the final minutes of Barbara's last class – a discussion that was also observed by Helen. We use this *critical incident* as a basis for furthering our understanding of how our biographies as instructors affects the teaching and learning process, and how Barbara's identity as a White woman informed classroom discussions and dynamics about race and equity during the semester.

The emotional and conflict-filled conversation that some of the students participated in during the final class brought to bear questions about the complex and fragile nature of facilitating authentic discussions of race and racism in graduate classrooms. Furthermore, the program's focus on equity for training educational leaders and our University's status as a minority-serving, teaching-intensive institution committed to social justice were also brought into relief. As part of our analysis process, we attempt to make meaning of this critical incident and address some of the larger questions tied to pedagogy and curriculum.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Practitioner doctorates in educational leadership have similarities to teacher education, particularly when the program is focused on facilitating school reform for greater equity, as is this program. Similarities arise because reform-oriented leaders must know how to teach educators to work in different ways with their students and the institution. This study is significant because there is a lack of self-studies on teaching practices in Ed.D. programs. Within the limited research on doctoral programs that include the term self-study, nearly all are actually studies of the institution, not individuals (e.g., Gerstl-Pepin, Killeen, & Hasazi, 2006).

The theoretical approach for this paper was informed mostly by Critical Race Theory (Delgado Bernal, 2002; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995), as we sought to understand how Barbara's identity as a White woman and the students' range of identities with primary focus on race and ethnicity played out in the classroom to deepen class discussions and sharpen our focus on equity across readings and student research. Critical Race Theory (CRT) asserts the importance of race in all aspects of society. It also looks at how property rights for material goods and conceptual spaces (such as standard curricula) play out along racial lines and affect people's access to goods, knowledge, and skills. Another key aspect of CRT is recognizing the value of articulating and sharing life stories or *counter-stories* of people of Color through the act of telling or naming one's own reality. These narratives serve to amplify the voices of struggle and resistance in racist institutions and demonstrate the collective nature of the struggle by providing authentic illustrations of how people of Color cope and succeed.

The depth of feeling that people of all backgrounds often bring to these discussions highlights the second major theoretical thread of this study, that is, the emotional labor of teaching and learning (Bellas, 1999; Hochschild, 1979). In

programs focused on equity and justice, students must also be prepared to undertake the emotional labor of learning.

On the broadest level, this study is written as a self-study of our development as teacher educators (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 2000; Loughran & Northfield, 1998; Zeichner, 1999). We examined the continued evolution of our teaching, focusing, in particular, on Barbara's teaching through an in-depth interview conducted by Helen. Barbara also referred to notes from planning, observations, and reflections throughout the semester. Data from students included reflections on the course and some attention to outcome measures based on their final projects. As a self-study, we have initiated the work ourselves, have collected systematic data within our professional practice, and have as a primary goal the improvement of our practice (LaBoskey, 2004). This inquiry is seen as valid because, although it focuses on self, our goal is to share relevant practices with other instructors teaching in higher education (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001), and provide evidence for our claims in ways that are ethically and politically in tune with our values about the purpose of education (LaBoskey, 2004).

METHODS

The study is framed as a self-study, and therefore, we have collected data to publicly illuminate our reflective process (Loughran & Northfield, 1998). The project looked at our work with a cohort of 16 doctoral students in a program in educational leadership that was, at the time of this data collection, entering its third year. The co-authors taught two distinct classes that each met eight times in an intensive weekend schedule. This study uses only Barbara's course and builds upon our examination of what has been changing in our teaching and our identities as doctoral faculty members. Barbara's doctoral students during the inquiry were in their fourth semester of a nine-semester program and all of them worked (most full time) in educational leadership.

Data were collected over one semester and included two main sources and five supplemental ones. As a self-study, we inevitably included additional data drawn from a prior self-study we had done on our work in this doctorate (Henderson & Hyun, 2009) and on our broader professional and personal histories (Berry, 2007). The primary data source was our collaborative reflection based on an interview of Barbara by Helen that took place at the semester's close. The full interview was taped and then transcribed word for word by Helen, and submitted to Barbara for member checking. We used this interview as a key piece of data because it created a chronology of the semester based on Barbara's study of the syllabus, lecture notes, and reflections, which came to exist as a coherent narrative only through the interview.

The dialogic nature of the interview, coupled with our experience in helping to develop the program over the interceding year created our relationship as critical colleagues (Shuck & Russell, 2005). The narrative of Barbara's experience teaching the course would not have emerged from the other materials without Helen's

engagement as an expert interviewer and as colleagues within the program. The interview process helped Barbara drill down into experiences to distill and expand upon teaching activities, intentions, and goals within the semester.

Our relationship as critical colleagues provided a safe and highly professional space that allowed Barbara to uncover a range of motives and insights within her teaching. In fact, our current roles in developing new aspects of the doctoral program emerged through our two self-studies, as we came to know and respect one another as teaching colleagues, and as the program leadership came to see our work together as valuable to the evolving pedagogy of the program. The final way that exploring the course through this interview with Helen was through the contrast of our own racial identities. Helen is Korean-American, the daughter of Korean immigrants, while Barbara is White and the great-granddaughter of immigrants from regions in Northern and Southern Europe. With Helen's input, Barbara was better able to see how Whiteness impacted her rapport and teaching, especially around issues of equity as it intersected with identity.

The other key data source was a set of formal student reflections on the course written three-quarters of the way through the semester in late November. These anonymously submitted reflections on the course were in written in response to two questions:

1. What do you think of the Mixed Methods course (e.g., in terms of fit to the doctoral program, scope, assignments, materials, level of discussion, level of preparation).
2. What has your experience with the course been this semester?

Barbara chose this set of student reflections as data over the final university-distributed course evaluations because they were gathered as an intentional and self-initiated part of our self-study. Further, Barbara framed this evaluation as part of sharing her in-progress self-study with her students and inviting them to be participants. Because this reflection was not part of the formal university course evaluation process, Barbara asked students to focus on the course instead of on her teaching as their central focus. Additionally, this evaluation took place prior to our final difficult discussion on race and identity that unfolded over the last two weeks online and most intensely in the final class period. The students' in-class reflection, then, served as a better measure of how salient the students found Barbara's focus on equity and social justice throughout the semester.

Other data included course lecture and planning notes. As the study is primarily about the developing identity and pedagogy of the authors, student outcome measures were used primarily as background information. These included performance on key assignments, final grades, and the official university teaching effectiveness evaluation. Because of small sample size, the quantitative data from course grades and the university teaching evaluation provided some triangulation rather than a way to test for validity. As this was an exploratory study – intended to open up the features of a phenomenon – these performance and course evaluation measures did not pose methodological problems.

We used an interpretive approach for data analysis, particularly grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and coding of themes to discover emergent categories (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2013). Barbara extensively coded then indexed the data, with a focus on the interview transcript and a compilation of the students' reflections on the course collected in November, as described above. Barbara initially came up with a list of 35 themes, which were then grouped into 11 broader themes. These were then reduced to the following three themes: (a) Student workload within the course: Rigor vs. relevance; (b) Integration of the course into a three-year doctorate; and (c) Teaching for social justice: Who can do this work?

FINDINGS

The findings of this study suggest the course workload impacted Barbara's ability to effectively address questions of race and social justice that the students had hoped to continue from the previous spring semester course on qualitative methods, which they had also taken with Barbara. Second, findings demonstrate ways that this course content was integrated into the goals and overall philosophy of this three-year doctorate, although Barbara was still working to make the course focus better on social justice content in readings and discussion. Third, it is clear that the racial identity of the professor can play a role in how conversations around race unfold, although we also provide evidence that other factors play a role.

Student Workload within the Course: Rigor vs. Relevance

Workload issues within the Mixed Methods course had been a major concern of students in the previous first year cohort. This course had been the very first that Barbara had taught in the doctoral program. In designing and teaching a Qualitative Methods course (which was the second course Barbara taught within the doctoral program), she had gained further experience about what made sense for doctoral students within a practitioner-focused program in terms of assignments and readings. A repeated issue arising across our data for this self study was our (Helen's and Barbara's) concerns as faculty that this three-year doctorate be a rigorous program. Rigor at the doctoral level suggests high expectations for reading, writing, and analysis, and ample experience in conducting research prior to the dissertation.

For Barbara, rigor in the Mixed Methods class meant assigning a selection of current empirical research and methodological papers from the field of Mixed Methods, in addition to a textbook, and keeping the students accountable to these readings, as demonstrated through online and in-class discussion as well as correct use of the materials as citations in written materials. The major course assignment was also rigorous. Students were to complete a small scale Mixed Methods study within the semester. This assignment matched the qualitative study students had completed in Barbara's spring course, although the task was made more complex by the mixed design.

Thus, the design of her Mixed Methods class with this second cohort of students had been influenced by her experiences from the first cohort. Simplifying workload and making the assignments more flexible were the driving force behind how Barbara considered modifying her pedagogy. She began the interview with these thoughts:

> *In thinking about the class, I wanted to be aware of the quantity of work I [had] assigned last [year]; I did cut back on that. I also wanted to build in flexibility into the schedule – what was due when – because that had come up the previous year depending on where people were collecting their data or how. They may have the QUAL part due first or the QUAN part due first, and so I wanted to allow people to turn in different parts at different times.*
>
> *As we got up to the end of October, I started making options about what was due. Similar to last year I still had things due each week, so that each session they came in they were bringing a text to be shared, but there was never a time when they were bringing in two different texts. Even though I [had been] thinking of short papers to the groups as helpful, and [only] drafts… it didn't help people [in] last year's cohort. So I never had two things due in any week. That was clearly on my mind.*

For students, heavy workload was still an issue, and many commented on this challenge in the reflection; however, in contrast to the first year of the study, students reported most of their challenges as coming from beyond the course. These excerpts are drawn from four different students to illustrate how students' time is impacted in an intensive doctorate for working professionals:

- *I changed jobs. That made accomplishing tasks much more difficult than I expected.*
- *I am so worried about getting through my classes right now that I am getting a little bitter about the time and energy that I am constantly asked to expend to help the program.*
- *This semester has been really tough all around. I think pretty much every time I sit down to do school work I think about whether or not I should stay in this program. It's very defeating.*
- *This was absolutely hands down the hardest semester so far. Not sure why, maybe burnout [….] But it definitely limited the attention and enthusiasm I had for the course.*

Students felt additional stress from their jobs, from ways they were asked to help build this new doctorate, and from the impact of the intensive program on their lives. At the same time, the Mixed Methods course itself was clearly taxing. One student said bluntly,

> *Mixed Methods has been one of the most challenging courses I have ever taken. I never dreamed the project would be so difficult to get my head around and harder still to accomplish.*

On the other hand, several other students described the challenging workload in positive terms:

> *I really appreciate the hard work to get us to make connections to the literature and to bring us around to see how our own experiences at our institutions fit into the big picture.*

Perhaps not surprisingly, the most common criticism with respect to the class was keeping up with data collection. One student wrote about "having access to some quantitative data but not in a form where it is appropriate to run statistical tests." While another wrote,

> *I didn't do well collecting QUAL data for the class. I got very little. Actually, I could imagine that if I had all year…. Or maybe just a few more months… I might have done very well collecting the data.*

Perhaps this focus on data collection was an artifact of the timing of the reflection, which came prior to the end of the semester, and so prior to students struggling to meet deadlines to finish data analysis and write up the reports. When we actually got to the end of the semester and Barbara saw that some people were overwhelmed, she made further modifications to drop one of the assignments, and more significantly, allowed students to choose either to write up the full mixed methods research paper as described in the syllabus, or a proposal for a mixed methods paper. The proposal requirements still called for them to report some initial data as well as lay out the full design demonstrating how the qualitative and quantitative data would be mixed, but did not require all aspects of a study.

Although Barbara felt the proposal option helped some students get through the course, she was not happy with this compromise, as she thought it did a less rigorous job of preparing students to conduct all phases of research. Writing a proposal does not require data collection, organization, analysis, or write up of the evidence. Yet Barbara asked herself in the interview, "How do you demand a study from people in a one semester class? How do you use … assignments to build a [real] mixed methods study?" She went on to say,

> *Somehow the class needs to be more structured and less overwhelming for people. I think laying out the proposal option at the beginning of the semester may have helped them, but I was really pushing them to do a study.*

What surfaced most strongly in this part of the findings related to Barbara's conception of what made for a rigorous doctoral class: expectations for engagement in course assignments, and the associated research methods (which did not turn out to be relevant to all members of the cohort). Further, the course timing at the start of the second year of a three-year program played into the struggle students experienced. Barbara was committed to introducing them to a new method of designing and conducting research; the students were trying to finalize their committees and begin their dissertation proposals. They were also experiencing

stress and burnout from being at the start of a second full year of coursework with essentially no breaks, because students in our program must enroll in an intensive summer term, as well as fall and spring semesters. At the same time, students were maintaining a full time work schedule and struggling along with their family and social connections.

Students had developed good rapport with Barbara when they took the qualitative methods course with her the prior spring, and so they trusted her teaching approach and tried hard to engage in the Mixed Method course. They wanted to do well and they were willing to entertain the idea of conducting a Mixed Methods study, but course and program workload were still a challenge.

Integration of the Course into the Three-Year Doctorate

Since the first year study, Barbara had gained much better grasp of the program as a whole, which helped her see leadership, equity, and research skills as key programmatic goals, which thus had direct effect upon how she taught. She sought to evaluate her teaching with respect to how well she supported students to clarify their research interests and solidify their research skills in preparation for their dissertations. Finally, Barbara considered how her identity as a member of the doctoral faculty had developed in the intervening year-and-a-half since the start of the first study. Part of this examination of identity intersected with examination of her identity as a White woman.

The methodology class that is the focus of this study was entitled, *Mixed Methods Analysis of Instruction and Learning*. The "Instruction and Learning" portion of the title deserves some comment. When this doctoral program was designed, areas of focus within educational leadership, such as policy, budgeting, equity, and pedagogy were distributed across the coursework. This parceling of pedagogical content into this methods class was part of the larger program design, meant to provide students with structured opportunities to address each of the key subject areas. As it had turned out, "race, class, and gender" were the descriptors connected to the qualitative methods class that Barbara had taught in the spring. Since equity and social justice are the overarching themes of the program, these descriptors helped Barbara to deepen the course focus on equity through readings, discussions, and course projects throughout the semester of the qualitative class.

In contrast, the Mixed Methods course required focus on learning and instruction, a topic that made an excellent fit with Barbara's background in teacher preparation, but that had posed problems for the first cohort during the year prior to this study. The challenge for students was that Barbara required that students focus on pedagogy for the course research papers, and this pulled many students away from their intended dissertation topics. In an intensive doctorate, students often try to make all of their major projects build to their dissertation work, and so Barbara's requirement that they look at pedagogical issues rankled those looking at, for example, administrative or financial topics.

During the year of this study, Barbara worked with the second cohort to make sure that all students conducted mixed methods studies that contributed directly to their dissertation work, whether or not a focus on learning and instruction was key to the students' inquiry. Thus Barbara lessened the focus on the official course goals to increase the relevance of students' mixed methods study. This shift to emphasize preparing for the dissertation through their mixed method studies and working actively towards social justice through using a transformational study design made class work highly relevant to the students, even if Mixed Methods turned out not to be the approach they applied within their dissertation work.

Overall, findings from the first two themes have shown that Barbara's pedagogy had addressed many concerns raised by the year one study. The class still needed fine-tuning in terms of the selected readings, workload, and how explicitly she taught some aspects of course content, yet success was evident in the tenor of the mid-semester reflections and her strong scores on the university administered end of semester teaching evaluations. The quality of student papers also demonstrated success, as did the fact that students ended the semester feeling positive about mixed methods as a research paradigm.

The next section turns another corner to examine identity and its impact on pedagogy, a way of looking at the course that applies Critical Race Theory to Barbara's pedagogy, to the course, and to the doctoral program. Our ability to conceptually foreground this perspective arose from a critical incident around a discussion of race and equity and in asking questions about the role of the students, the professor, and the nature of emotional labor for faculty in doctoral programs.

Teaching for Social Justice: Who Can Do This Work?

As a person of Color and a critical colleague, Helen brings her own set of assumptions about race and racism to examining Barbara's experience teaching the Mixed Methods course and the critical incident that occurred at the end of the semester. To provide some context, our first year study (Henderson & Hyun, 2009) followed our shifting pedagogical practices and beliefs, and documented our identity formation as new doctoral faculty. As Goodson and Cole (1994) asserted, the process of self-study can contribute to identity formation for new teachers. This was certainly the case for Helen as someone new to the field and practice of self-study. As a result of our collaborative inquiry and systematic reflection, Helen experienced a shift in her professional identity from outsider to insider, and a greater interest in developing a more integrated, authentic self as a professor.

In addition, one of Helen's immediate goals was to gain a deeper understanding of critical theories, in general, and Critical Race Theory (CRT) in particular. As a theoretical and analytic framework, CRT had been received by many of the doctoral students with messianic excitement, though some remained uncertain and skeptical about its promise. So when she was presented with the opportunity to immerse herself in CRT, Helen jumped at the chance. In July 2009, Helen was selected as a

fellow to attend an intensive institute sponsored by the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) on critical policy perspectives in education and ways to integrate Critical Race Theory in scholarship.

Since the institute workshop, Helen has shared some key CRT readings with colleagues and students in the program, and began to incorporate its central tenets in her teaching and writing. While Helen would like to profess herself an expert in CRT, in reality she considers herself a student trying to make sense of this rapidly expanding field in education. Similarly, Barbara feels she has a great deal still to learn about CRT and related fields, and further, is conscious of her status as a White person, which has privileged her experience in our racist society.

An emergent field within CRT called Critical Race Methodology (CRM) is particularly relevant to this discussion. According to Solórzano and Yosso (2002), "…social scientists tell stories under the guise of 'objective' research, [yet] these stories actually uphold deficit, racialized notions about people of color" (p. 23). They continue to state that "this deficit-informed research…silences and distorts epistemologies of people of color" (p. 23).

While Barbara took great care to include alternative, non-deficit, equity-based readings in her Mixed Methods course, as she stated in her interview she felt dissatisfied on the whole with the readings. She said,

> *I'm still not as happy with the readings for this course overall as I am with the readings for the qualitative course because the field is newer, and there is a tendency in the field to be more middle-of-the-road. A more distant researcher perspective comes out of the papers. If this course were to be taught again, conversations about what the readings should be and how to shape them among faculty who know the field more would be helpful….*

Barbara also explained her process for critiquing the positivistic aspects of some of the required readings:

> *So last year, we read an article by Donna Mertens and it was from one of the classic Mixed Methods books, but it's the only article that takes an explicitly transformational approach to research. ... Within Mertens, there's talk about difference in a way that is consciously not just as a disaggregated category, and not with a deficit lens…. So I was trying to get students to… [be] more conscious of what Mixed Methods [in terms of its] tendencies ... to be relatively more conservative as an approach. And I wanted to make it more real to the students by helping them see how it's an approach… [that] doesn't need to be conservative. It's how you use it. It can be as equally radical as any qualitative [research] paper. Not that qualitative studies are [necessarily] radical, but it helped them to see that the methods themselves don't dictate an approach politically.*

Barbara's struggle to locate suitable readings for the Mixed Methods class was not due to a lack of trying on her part. Most mainstream researchers disagree with the

fundamental tenets of CRM, particularly the idea that research can and should be a form of activism. The explicit foregrounding of race and racism in both question and methodology may be too radical for post-positivists and critical realists to accept as legitimate inquiry.

Social constructionist approaches like CRM are viewed with intense skepticism from mainstream social scientists. Most critics argue that by conflating storytelling with evidence, CRM researchers privilege personal narrative over *objective* data yielding findings that are anecdotal, at best, and capricious at worst. As a CRT practitioner, Helen would be remiss not to interrogate Barbara and herself about their foundational approaches to teaching research methods (Barbara having co-authored a book on teacher research, and Helen, a co-author of an introductory research methods textbook). What implicit biases do we have about alternative epistemologies? How do these biases shape our curriculum and affect the ways that equity-minded students perceive our choices as well as our omissions?

Barbara believed she had chosen a curriculum for the Mixed Methods course that sufficiently supported the cohort to address issues of structural racism. That effort was coupled with the trust and rapport she had built from teaching this cohort over two semesters. She was, therefore, surprised that a highly charged and emotionally negative discussion about race and racism occurred. The event took place at the very end of Barbara's final class of the semester, just as the class was wrapping up. One student interrupted Barbara's concluding thoughts and asked if the class could please take up some issues that had arisen online, because she felt they had not come to a satisfactory conclusion. That online conversation had ranged over a number of topics, although some of the most recent postings had been about racial identity and connections with likelihood of suicide.

Two students had engaged most strongly in this part of the online discussion: a White man in his fifties and an Asian woman in her twenties, each with personal examples from close family and friends, and each claiming statistical trends that demonstrated suicide was most likely among members of their own racial and gendered group. As the students took up the conversation in class, it was immediately obvious the deep pain each of these students felt, and embers lit across the class. The White man pushed back hard. At one point he said, "Yeah, there's racism, but life is hard. We all go through tragedy." Reaction from the other students, particularly among other women of Color, was quick and students raised a number of examples from throughout their lives where they had experienced racial or gendered oppression.

Blindsided, Barbara did her best to facilitate the conversation. After forty-five minutes, the conversation was still going strong and had swept over the intended break between her class and Helen's class, which was scheduled next. In fact, Helen and her co-instructor had already arrived and they waited near the front of the room as the conversation raged on. Barbara finally decided to end the discussion as best she could, thanking all the students for their passion and willingness to be vulnerable. One woman, tears standing in her eyes, leapt up and ran to the women's restroom,

another woman close behind to provide a shoulder to cry upon. Stunned, Barbara slowly gathered her materials and left the classroom.

Arguably, there were many factors that contributed to this critical incident unfolding at the end of the semester. Paramount among them were timing (the end of the semester being very stressful), the presence of outsiders (Helen and her co-instructor), and the presence of two students with diametrically opposite worldviews acting as *provocateurs.*

Barbara reflected on the critical incident in the interview describing it in this way,

> *We set up a discussion forum on iLearn [online course management system] within the last session when there were no readings when the papers were due – the last two weeks of the term. And, it happened, in my casualness with the group, I forgot to set up a group and so [one student] took it on. [...] And I think it was the same student who thought we should talk about equity that last class, and... [the others who were discussion leaders the final week] thought it was a great idea*.
>
> *[…] They asked, "Let's define equity" or some open question like that. The discussion got off to a slow start because everyone is [busy] writing their papers.*

Barbara described how as the week went on, several students took an increasingly larger role in the online discussion, and it became quite heated. She said of one student, "She went far with it. She really pushed it. Emotionally, she was really out on a limb." Barbara then explained another complication,

> *A lot of the discussion happened in the last 36 hours when I was preparing for the end of the semester. What I was doing, I wasn't monitoring my iLearn. And there had been long postings with these... that I wasn't even aware of and we just went into the last class, and some of the students were thinking that we had to talk about the iLearn conversation. And so essentially what happened was after all the class presentations, and then in the last 45 minutes of the class, with you and your co-instructor standing there…*

Barbara continued to talk about the difficulty of that highly charged discussion, emphasizing her role and the nature of discussion that students thought the class should engage in.

> *It was a hard thing because I was there... I was running the class, it was my class… I don't know if it was safe or not for people. Clearly, it was not. It was also this feeling of – and it went both ways—that for some people in the class we had not addressed the issues of identity and race as deeply as they wanted to or needed to. I thought we were continuing… I was thinking perhaps naïvely – or maybe correctly I'm not sure – that you can talk about these issues without it always being cathartic. There are ways to uncover that stuff and have someone be a spokesperson […] that could've said there's still racism and it still hurts me on a daily basis when I walk down the street.*

Barbara thought that the class discussions throughout the semester in the Mixed Methods class had been building on the work the class had done in the Qualitative class, although taking a more logical and objective approach. Yet she also wondered if the students, or at least some of them needed a more therapeutic and emotionally grounded conversation, as this final conversation had provided. Despite how difficult it felt in the moment to manage students' raw emotions, that hard conversation wouldn't have taken place had Barbara not created an environment that supported it.

Together, as critical colleagues, Helen and Barbara wondered about the nature and occurrence of such discussions. How crucial are these emotional conversations about race, as well as other markers of identity, to enacting educational reform? Can a group of doctoral students use a primarily cognitive orientation to understand the negotiation of identity and still make progress with pragmatic reforms that truly address equity and access in the schools? Or is it necessary for professors to undertake emotional labor (Bellas, 1999; Hochschild, 1979) to support students' learning, and similarly for the students to accept the emotional exertion this kind of transformational learning requires? To return to the title of this paper, who can do this work? Do White professors have limited credibility and empathy when it comes to authentic discussions of race and racism? As Barbara said in her interview,

> *I do want to know more about it. I do feel limited. I don't know how to be deeper with my own understanding of race and other kinds of difference and the way they impact teaching and learning. In looking at my own work, I wonder how much things that I've said (maybe 10 years ago) were read as my own racism as opposed to my attempts to address racism. I hope I've gotten better at it. But I still think talking to students about my limitations is part of it.*

In the end, powerful moments of transformation along with the limitations of personal experience arise during cathartic discussions of race and identity. Not every student can or will engage, or engage at the same level of intensity in these highly charged discussions. Further, the experience will be perceived differently by each of the students. A doctoral program focused on social justice for educational leaders needs to have some provocative, deeply personal, and highly charged moments, but we do not believe facilitating such discussions should be the sole responsibility of faculty of Color, nor should such experiences comprise the primary tenor of the program. Since our focus was on our practice and ourselves, we do not make any claims about our students' perspectives on whether White faculty have limited credibility in these important discussions. Clearly, race still matters, but to limit these discussions based on immutable characteristics is unreasonable, particularly given the majority White professoriate. And even in the best of situations, when a White professor has co-created along with her students a safe place to have these difficult discussion, how best to facilitate them remains elusive. We find then that our real question then is not who, but *how*?

As a follow up to this question, Helen interviewed one of the student provocateurs involved in the critical incident and asked what Barbara, as their instructor, could have done differently to prevent the blow up. The student was quick to respond that Barbara could not have done anything to obviate the confrontation online nor assuage their anger in the moment. The student felt the showdown was inevitable and the result of multiple programmatic stressors and festering mistrust from other underdeveloped classroom discussions about equity. According to the student, discussions among diverse parties about race and racism are always limited by the participants' physical characteristics and perceived experiential understanding of oppression. Using an example from the cohort, the student referred to a woman of Color who worked with children in extremely impoverished schools. The student regarded her as someone who had high "street credibility" among the cohort because of her lived experience with poverty and oppression. As the student commented "She had standing in our cohort because she seemed to possess authentic markers [of oppression]."

In contrast, most White students in the cohort were perceived as sympathetic, though not fully empathetic to the injustices and indignities suffered by Black and Brown people. The student felt that many "presumptions" were made about the White students in the cohort that were unfair and often false. White students who were down with the party line were embraced, but those who held conflicting views were made to feel small and alone. As the student recalled back to this classroom conflagration, a female student of Color shot back at a White, male student that a jocular comment he made about President Obama's Muslim-sounding name "being a problem" was out of line. She prefaced her statement by saying "I think I speak for all my brothers and sisters when I say that your comment was offensive!"

In what ways do immutable characteristics tied to power and oppression influence the credibility of the speaker when discussing race and racism? From Barbara's perspective as a privileged, heterosexual White woman, there is acknowledgement yet resistance to the idea that difficult discussions of race and racism can only be facilitated by non-White instructors. Given the mostly White professoriate, as she points out, it would be unfeasible unless the University hired outside consultants (of Color) to facilitate these discussions for White faculty. Moreover, in an intensive program such as ours – aimed at training education leaders for social justice – are there safe places to have honest, credible, transformative discussions about race and racism? Barbara felt she had co-created such a space with her students in the Qualitative Analysis course that continued into the Mixed Methods class, yet the content goals of the latter class, in particular, precluded her from locating adequate readings that conveyed both substance and critique of dominant ideologies. Further, the pacing of the assignments that she included so that the course was appropriately rigorous for doctoral level students limited the time the group had to go in depth with discussions that may otherwise have arisen regarding the material.

IMPLICATIONS

This paper confirmed and extended findings from our self-study in the program's first year with a pioneering cohort (Henderson & Hyun, 2009). Students in that first year of the program had met with exceptional stressors and faced newness and uncertainty at every turn. It was necessary to continue the study in this second year to demonstrate how the program and the students were evolving as we have grown to a self-sustaining size and gained experience teaching intensive classes within a three-year doctorate.

This research is significant as a self-study of teacher and leadership education practices because it demonstrates how shared introspection provides a valuable way to explore a new phenomenon and provide explanation for change and resistance in novel situations. It pushes the boundaries of self-study literature in teacher education because it focuses on teaching in a practitioners' doctoral program, yet honors the same sets of questions about teaching, learning, and becoming. As critical colleagues in this collaborative study, we used self-study tools to engage in an authentic process of inquiry to improve our practice and our program.

We discovered that our identity – related to race, class, and gender – mattered although we disagreed about the degree to which it affects candid classroom discussions about race and racism. We both agree that online discussions about equity must be monitored carefully, but that the ideal setting is face-to-face and must be facilitated with clearly stated ground rules and prompts. It should be the responsibility of our program administrators to provide a primer for first year students about the rules of engagement and to provide faculty with professional training and consultants, as necessary, to facilitate these difficult, yet necessary discussions. By doing so, perhaps faculty and students could be better prepared for future difficult conversations, which we argue must take place and cannot be easy, given the structural racism and sexism that continue to impact our daily experiences. While we still struggle with the "how?" question, through this collaborative inquiry we learned that the conditions, setting, and trust must be in place before any real progress can be made.

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CLAIRE KELLY

4. UNITY WITHOUT ASSIMILATION

Collaborative Self-Study between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Lecturers

> Reconciliation is an idea that's still coming to be; and it touches on questions the pre-service teachers have about all of us – the connections between wanting to know what has happened and is happening; and the common elements we have as people living together wanting to be socially just and to be activist, to be really good teachers. It's connected to Freire's ideas (Freire, 1972) on starting with experience, dialogue and learning together.
>
> (Davina Woods, personal communication, August 21, 2009)

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the rich context and interconnected events and processes within a self-study conducted between one Indigenous and two non-Indigenous colleagues working together in 2009 at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia, with pre-service teachers (PSTs) in two Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) fourth-year Units, *Curriculum and Innovation* and *Change and Social Justice*. Our collaboration highlighted the effectiveness of working together and with the PSTs to reject the colonial discourse whereby Indigenous knowledge and experience is seen as peripheral to our understanding of the purpose of education and to ourselves as educators and as twenty-first century citizens. It was in the dialogue, in the discourse, in the collaborative learning between the three of us and with the PSTs, that we were able to articulate our insights and build our understandings throughout the year we worked and reflected together. We found the use of dialogue to be the basis for "making meaning, establishing the validity of ideas, and promoting action" (Placier, Pinnegar, Hamilton, & Guilfoyle, 2005, p. 54).

In the *Curriculum and Innovation* unit, we focused on the Indigenous themes of Democracy, Identity, Equity and Justice, Rights and Responsibilities, and the role of the media (Woods, Kelly, & Eckersley, 2009). For the purposes of this chapter, I focus on the content and engagement from our work with PSTs in the *Curriculum and Innovation* unit and the related self-study data regarding our teaching. This self-study of practice and the examination of the context and processes involved in working with PSTS during the 2009 academic year continues to influnce my

M. C. Dalmau et al. (Eds.), Taking a Fresh Look at Education, 41–71.

understanding of the power of addressing social justice issues in curriculum and teaching.

The question that guided our self-study – How can teacher educators support pre-service teachers to include Indigenous themes in their curriculum planning? – came from my experience in settings including Pre-school, Primary, Secondary, Technical and Further Education, the Melbourne Museum, and, in particular, in my work with PSTs and colleagues at Victoria University (VU). My experience accords with what Indigenous colleague Davina Woods says above, that most teachers *are* concerned about being really good teachers, about being *socially just* teachers, and about learning together. This is the philosophical basis of the VU School of Education with "social justice as the ethical reference point" and a commitment to support the work of teachers "in schools characterized by socio-economic disadvantage and cultural diversity" (Kruger & Cherednichenko 2006, p. 321).

I had the personal and professional good fortune to meet Mary Clare Dalmau when I began teaching in the VU School of Education in 2005. We found ourselves in an exciting and challenging environment of pedagogical and content reform. The Praxis Inquiry (PI) Protocol (Guðjónsdóttir et al., 2007) was being defined and put into practice. The inclusion of Indigenous perspectives was being consciously supported and the idea that as educators *we should start with students' questions* was our pedagogical commitment. Hafdis Guðjónsdóttir had worked and studied with Mary Dalmau in Oregon, USA, in the 1990s. Hafdis spent a semester at VU on sabbatical from Iceland working with Mary in the year prior to my employment. The principles and practices of collaborative self-study, as Mary, Hafdis and colleagues understood them, were particularly complementary to the developing PI Protocol whereby we listen to each other's experiences, questions, and analysis, and thereby develop our understanding and commitment to constructive action.

> Self-study research is situated within the discourses of the social construction of knowledge, reflective practice and action for social change. The strong presence of collaboration in the practice of self-study of teacher education is a natural response to this ethical and theoretical location. (Bodone, Guðjónsdóttir & Dalmau, 2004, p. 743)

This conceptualization of self-study as collaboration and a commitment to social justice and action to improve learning and teaching was an influential element of the insights Mary brought to the work we did together in helping to implement the PI Protocol in the School of Education at VU. Mary, Hafdis, and I, together with colleagues, wrote a description and analysis of our work, published in a special issue of the *Journal of Research on Technology in Education* (Guðjónsdóttir et al., 2007).

The connections between the dimensions of the PI Protocol (as reflected in Figure 1) and an awareness of technical, epistemological, and ontological factors provide a rich opportunity for PSTs to recognize and evaluate complex interactions across the learning and life outcomes of students, educational policies, socio-political and cultural factors, ethical considerations, and the ongoing discourse of education.

PRACTICE DESCRIBED PSTs describe practice (cases, artefacts, anecdotes) and identify questions (e.g., what do I wonder about when I think about this event/artefact?)	**PRACTICE EXPLAINED** PSTs seek to discover professional explanations for their practice (literature, research, mentors & colleagues, teacher education): How can I understand this practice?
PRACTICE THEORIZED PSTs consider the overriding question: Who am I becoming as an educator as I integrate these understandings and beliefs into my practice? Who am I becoming as a teacher?	**PRACTICE CHANGED** PSTs plan action: How can I act to improve learning for students and improve my capacity as an educator? And, of course, What are my new questions?

Figure 1. The four dimensions of the Praxis Inquiry Protocol in the P-12 Bachelor of Education at Victoria University (Guðjónsdóttir et al., 2007, p. 168)

PSTs are able to develop research opportunities for their own students which are connected to big questions, and thus develop an appreciation of epistemological perspectives. They begin to "reframe and reconstruct their world-views and deepen their commitment to collaborative and transformative action" (Dalmau, 2002, p. 66).

BACKGROUND

The inclusion of Indigenous themes in Australian school curricula has been expected by educational policies at the Federal level for more than two decades (Commonwealth of Australia, 1989; Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 1999, 2008). State and Territory education systems, responsible for the development of curriculum and assessment in their own jurisdictions, subsequently also committed to the inclusion of Indigenous themes. In Victoria from 1995–2005, when the PSTs with whom we worked in 2009 were students themselves, the Curriculum Standards Framework (CSF) was guiding school curricula. In 2006 the Victorian Government Education Department replaced the CSF with the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) as the guide to the curriculum content expected to be taught from Preparatory classes to Year 10. The VELS were in operation during the PSTs' school placements. The fourth year PSTs spend each Tuesday in their schools and also complete a two week block in semester one and a six week block in semester two in those schools.

Twice each year in 2008 and 2009 I surveyed fourth year PSTs about their comments and questions regarding the inclusion of Indigenous themes in their own schooling and in their school placements. In 2009 I began working with two

colleagues, Davina Woods and Bill Eckersley, in lectures and seminars with PSTs who took part in the 2009 surveys. I had worked with Bill in the fourth-year B.Ed. Units for the three previous years. Davina, an experienced Indigenous educator and curriculum developer, had recently been appointed to the VU School of Education. We found ourselves forming the 2009 teaching team for the fourth-year B.Ed. program at the Footscray Park campus.

The self-study among Davina, Bill and myself was recorded in my notes of regular *Curriculum and Innovation* planning meetings, including reflections on lectures and seminars with PSTs, reflections on the survey data and from two tape-recorded and transcribed discussions between us, edited sections of which appear in this Chapter, preceded by our initials.

When the PSTs with whom we were working in 2009 were school students themselves, the CSF contained reference to the inclusion of Indigenous themes, although those references were limited in their secondary schooling to the History strand of SOSE (Studies of Society and Environment – which also included Geography and Economics). The CSF also included an across-the-curriculum domain of Civics and Citizenship which was meant to be incorporated into all the other domains where appropriate. When other domains contained material that was deemed to be connected to Civics and Citizenship themes, an icon was placed next to the particular Year level Outcomes and Indicators for that domain to indicate a link to:

> help[ing] students to become active and informed citizens.... to develop understanding about key elements of Australia's legal, economic and political systems..... the history of the country .... the values that the community shares and an awareness of the rights and responsibilities of citizens. (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2002a)

Figure 2 reports two of the five groups of CSF Learning Outcomes and Indicators for Level 6 (Year 10) History, including that students 'evaluate the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' and that they 'outline the different ways in which the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities campaigned for civil and political rights' (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2002b). The inclusion of two out of five groups of Learning Outcomes and Indicators which contained specific reference to the inclusion of Indigenous themes left open the opportunity for teachers to work with what they were most comfortable with and to leave the inclusion of Indigenous themes in the too hard basket of *the crowded curriculum*.

Civics and Citizenship was supposed to support "an understanding of the history of the country and its people" (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2002a). But the icon meant to alert teachers to connections between the domain of Civics and Citizenship and other subject domains, was absent from the Indigenous History Outcomes and Indicators in Figure 2. On the other hand in Level 5 (Years 8–9) the SOSE History Strand was entirely devoted to the study of "ancient and medieval

Two of the Five CSF Year 10 History Outcomes and Indicators

6.1 Describe the reasons for the colonisation of Australia.

This is evident when the student is able to:

- examine the factors involved in the British colonisation of Australia
- evaluate the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- analyse any one particular social or political change in a colony and its impact on people
- describe the motives, values and events behind the move from a number of colonies to one nation.

6.3 Analyse the movement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for civil and political rights.

This is evident when the student is able to:

- identify which civil and political rights were denied the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- analyse the reasons why civil and political rights were denied to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- outline the different ways in which the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities campaigned for civil and political rights
- evaluate the degree to which the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have been successful in their campaigns.

Figure 2. Two of the thirteen groups of the Curriculum Standards Framework SOSE (History, Geography and Economics) Learning Outcomes and Indicators for Year 10. (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2002c)

societies." By contrast with the Indigenous themes in Year 10, which did not attract the icon denoting a connection to Civics and Citizenship, the study of ancient and medieval societies in Level 5 (Years 8–9) did include the icon (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2002b).

The lithograph in Figure 3 (Broad, 1886) always engenders strong opportunities for PSTs' discussions of colonisation. It is significant not only for the insight it presents of the double jeopardy being meted out to Indigenous landowners whose country and food sources had been stolen, but also because it was created by a non-Indigenous observer. This thread, of awareness, criticism and in some cases action against the effects of colonization on Indigenous peoples from among sections of the non-Indigenous population, is an important element for opening spaces for understanding and reconstructing the Australian story. It provides that space to respond to PSTs questions as to whether there was any resistance from the non-

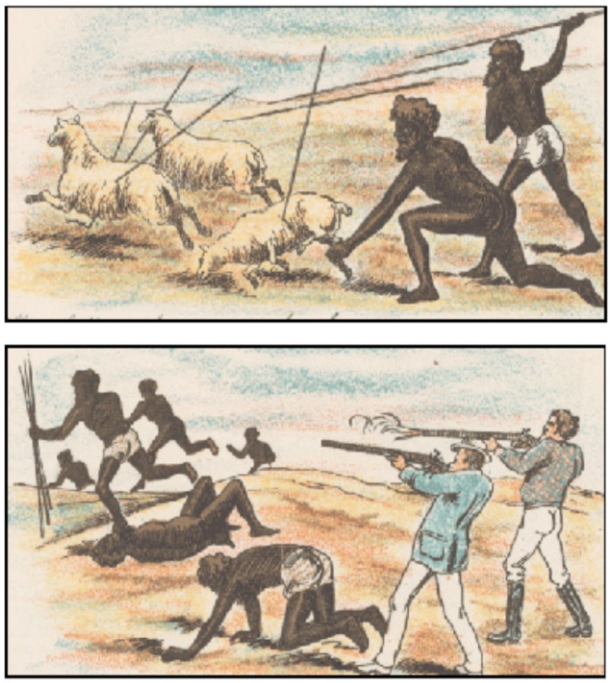

Figure 3. Lithograph as prompt for PST discussion of colonization

Indigenous population to the effects of colonization on the Indigenous inhabitants of the 270 countries now known as Australia (Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 1995). But such resources and the epistemological understandings that can follow from a consideration of such resources are not yet commonly available to teachers and students. It was from the PSTs' and lecturers' questions and the research that followed that we were inspired to think about ways to approach such big questions.

The apparent inclusion of Indigenous themes in the Year 10 History domain (when the PSTs were high school students) can, in fact, be understood as exclusion (Au & Apple, 2009), as part of the paradigm of viewing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as *the other*, as not connected to the Australian story (Phillips, 2005; Phillips & Whatman, 2007). Indigenous struggles for civil and political rights are in effect located outside not inside "key elements of Australia's legal, economic and political systems," to be observed as a footnote to the "attitudes and values associated with developing active citizenship" (Victorian Curriculum and

Assessment Authority, 2002a). This was the educational context from which the PSTs with whom we were working had come from in their own schooling. So it was challenging to all of us, lecturers and PSTs, to investigate the complexities of the colonial discourse.

The introduction of the VELS (2006–2012) saw Indigenous themes more conspicuously woven through the Arts as well as the Humanities, and particularly in the revised and expanded cross-curricula Civics and Citizenship domain.

> Indigenous perspectives are an integral part of the VELS. The study of Indigenous perspectives is essential for developing student understanding of Australian history, culture and identity as well as providing understanding of contemporary society. (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2009)

However, whilst the VELS made stronger connections than the CSF between Indigenous experiences and the Australian story, it also promoted opportunities for exclusion in the same way as the CSF. Although the expectations expressed in the policy above appear inclusive, the curriculum is still crowded with expectations of what teachers will cover in their classes. Yates describes the expectations placed on teachers since the 1980s onwards as 'an unmanageable array of different kinds of agendas about knowledge, change and the purposes of schools without providing a new way of conceptualising either pedagogy or curriculum and what teachers or schools might do in practice' (Yates, 2009, pp. 25–26). This was the situation for the school placement teachers and for the PSTs they mentored. The results of the PST surveys, where they reported little or no inclusion of Indigenous themes in their schooling or school placements, can be understood in this context of the exclusion of Indigenous experience from the Australian story, which encourages teachers to continue to repeat what they find comfortable teaching, particularly without appropriate pre-service and in-service professional development. The teachers who were working with the PSTs when they were students and the mentors in their school placements had little experience with Indigenous perspectives.

Also between 1996 and 2007 the conservative Liberal/National coalition government held power and promulgated a notion that some school curricula were actually promoting a "black armband" view of Australian history, teaching students that they had "a racist and bigoted past" rather than "a very generous and benign one" (McKenna, 1997, pp. 9–10; Howard, 1997). This public political debate emboldened some to attack the level of funding for Aboriginal Australians (Hanson, 1996). This was the context in which we were working in Curriculum and Innovation to support the inclusion of Indigenous themes in the PSTs' curriculum planning.

OPENING SPACES

In 2006 when the VELS replaced the CSF, the VU fourth-year B.Ed. Unit *Curriculum and Innovation* was seen to be the most appropriate place to include more extensive support for PSTs regarding the inclusion of Indigenous themes in

school curricula. At this time there were no Indigenous lecturers working in the School of Education. So as non-Indigenous lecturers we were faced with a huge task. Could we open spaces for discussion and research with PSTs who, like teachers in schools, were being asked to take on responsibility for curriculum of which they had no experience, either as students themselves or in their school placements? The anecdotal evidence from both PSTs who were positive towards this new curriculum, and from those who were antagonistic, was that schools were not putting the policy into practice. The surveys of PSTs were intended to capture the evidence of what was happening in schools and to provide the PSTs' own data for discussion with them in *Curriculum and Innovation*. We were supporting PSTs to develop *a personal commitment to, and understanding of, innovation in education* (Victoria University, 2009), including developing critical perspectives and appropriate resources for the inclusion of Indigenous themes in school curricula, particularly through the implementation of the Civics and Citizenship domain of the VELS. Of course it was not only the PSTs who had little experience regarding the inclusion of Indigenous themes in their teaching. Most University lecturers have had little engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. In those first years of *Curriculum and Innovation* we continued to build our knowledge of resources and we listened and responded to PSTs' questions about why we were focussing on Indigenous themes. Then, the employment of Indigenous lecturers opened spaces for us to learn together about key ideas for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and to reflect on our own and the PSTs' learning and teaching.

The issue of 'special treatment' remained contentious for some PSTs. One discussion stands out in my notes. In my seminar group we were discussing the definition of Aboriginality in Australia (Forrest, 1998). PSTs were considering the special conditions for Indigenous Australians. A small number of PSTs voiced the opinion that 'those people get free money' when they themselves 'get nothing'; and 'you see the new African immigrants with wallets stuffed with money' (my seminar group, March 2009). The discussion had been moved seamlessly from so-called 'Indigenous freeloading' to include all 'others' as unfairly taking from 'real Australians', when we had actually been exploring the reasons why official health and education forms often ask if a person is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. The explanation that statistics are collected to judge Indigenous access to health and education programs was considered thoughtfully by some PSTs and perhaps less so by others.

One event that positively affected attitudes amongst PSTs and the general population about what has happened in our own history was the newly elected Labor Prime Minister's *Apology to the Stolen Generations* (Rudd, 2008; Spillane & Gregg, 2008). In the previous ten years under a conservative government, the charge of 'political correctness' had been levelled at those who spoke in favour of looking at the hidden histories of Australia. They were castigated for promoting a 'black armband' view of history (Jones, Reynolds, & Windschuttle, 2001; Windschuttle, 2002, 2008a), a term supposedly first brought into public use by the historian

G. Blainey (1993). In fact, the first three uses of the black armband image in the context of Australian history had been undertaken by Aboriginal Australians: at the 1938 Day of Mourning (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 2008), at the 1970 centenary of Captain Cook's landing and at the re-enactment of the 1988 bicentenary of the British claim to sovereignty over the eastern Australia (McKenna, 1997). After *The Apology* it was more difficult to maintain a 'white blindfold' position in regard to the Australian story, although some conservative commentators continued to do so (Windschuttle, 2008a, 2008b). Below Bill Eckersley reports one of the many examples of schools stopping to listen to telecast of *The Apology.*

> BE: *It (The Apology) was on the radio all day. I heard an interview on the ABC (Australian Broadcasting Corporation). A teacher from a Geelong primary school said they'd taken their children to the school hall and shown them the speech from Parliament. The teacher said 'one of my children came up to me afterwards and said "what country did that happen to those people? And when I said "that's Australia", the child burst into tears'. .... It was a powerful moment. It doesn't change the world but it's still really powerful.*

Nonetheless the development and implementation stages of the new Australian Curriculum produced further protestations of 'political correctness' from conservative commentators and politicians (Hudson & Larkin, 2010; Harrison, 02.03.10). Windshuttle criticized the study in schools of the film *Rabbit Proof Fence* (Pilkington Garimara, 2002; Noyce, 2009) – an influential eye-opener according to the student survey data – arguing that it was "grossly inaccurate" and should be withdrawn (Vasek & Perpitch, 2009).

WORKING TOGETHER

The collaborative self-study between Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators working with the PSTs with their own data from the surveys was articulated in lectures and seminars. Our aim was to support reconciliation and social justice, empowerment, professionalism, creativity and moral purpose. The PSTs were listening, talking, questioning and coming to appreciate 'the common elements we have as people living together wanting to be socially just and to be activist'. They and we were 'starting with experience, dialogue and learning together'. Although I had worked with Indigenous educators over the previous two decades, this was the first time I had worked in a team-teaching situation in the same lecture theatre with an Indigenous lecturer and the combined seminar groups. In lectures, one of the three of us would take the lead in presenting Course material and the other two of us would contribute ideas and questions.

> DW: *The three of us had to utilise our best inter-personal and intra-personal skills in developing the team and as a part of that we've come to respect our*

> *differences and see the things that we're slightly different on as supports, as strengthening what we do with the students, because it gives them a broader perspective of the issues that we're discussing with them.*

The one hour spent together in the lectures was a time when we asked questions of the PSTs, rather than just telling them 'the facts' (Marlowe & Page, 2005). We often developed those questions further in planning meetings where we reflected on the issues that had arisen the previous week in the two fourth-year Units, so that we could discuss those ideas again at the next lecture. We encouraged the PSTs to ask their own questions and tried to ensure that they were all engaged in the dialogue. We consciously shared with the PSTs our own developing understandings of working together to put policies for the inclusion of Indigenous themes in school curricula into practice. "Self-study research introduces the personal action and identity of individual teacher educators into the public discourse" (Bodone, Guðjónsdóttir, & Dalmau, 2004, p. 773).

This commitment to listening to PSTs and working with their questions is consistent with the VU Praxis Inquiry Protocol, based on the understanding that policy alone, essentially a technical tool, is not sufficient to support critical action. Cherednichenko and Kruger (2006) pose critical questions regarding the efficacy of teacher education.

> How can a university construct teacher education which student teachers, teachers and teacher educators experience as authentic practice?
>
> How can a university teacher education program initiate critical inquiry into essentially technical educational policy and practice and at the same time sustain authentic and critically theorised action by student teachers, teachers and teacher educators? (p. 4)

The lectures and seminars were often challenging for the PSTs and for us as lecturers. As noted previously the expectations in the CSF (1995–2005), the VELS (2006–2012) and the new Australian Curriculum, that school curricula include investigation of Indigenous involvement in the social political and economic events of Australian history, were not being implemented when these PSTs were students and were not being implemented in their school placements. The climate of reaction and negativity cultivated by conservative political, academic and media commentators during the primary and secondary school lives of these PSTs also undermined the expectations of Indigenous educators and State and Commonwealth policy makers that the Australian story should include people, events and ideas which resisted colonisation. It was in this climate that the Course Aims of *Curriculum and Innovation* included the following three key components:

- Generating a professional development strategy oriented to ongoing curriculum improvement and innovation.

- Undertaking a negotiated and socially committed curriculum innovation which integrates Civics and Citizenship Education with an inquiry into an issue related to Indigenous Australian studies.
- Using the *Praxis Inquiry Protocol* to encourage pre-service teachers to relate their developing curriculum knowledge to specific practical challenges in teaching in their Project Partnerships.

These aims generated ongoing discussion in lectures and seminars about what some PSTs saw as the privileging of Indigenous themes. There was an undercurrent of antagonism which occasionally surfaced which was expressed by PSTs as a belief that *all cultural differences should be investigated, so why were we concentrating on Indigenous issues?* and *why are we being made to feel guilty?* Nonetheless, such sentiments were not widely expressed and were often responded to by other PSTs as well as by the lecturers.

As lecturers we saw the power of working together, as Indigenous and non-Indigenous colleagues, as a contribution to the struggle to challenge the hegemony of the dominant discourse that *White is right*. Our aims were to support PSTs to recognize the co-existence of Indigenous and non-Indigenous histories, contemporary experience, ways of knowing and ways of being which include aspirations for the future. In the quotes below we reflect on issues such the amount of time needed to be spent by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators to put in place the consultation between Indigenous community representatives and teachers if schools are to connect with local people and knowledge. The question of the role of non-Indigenous educators is also explored, touching on issues of trust, responsibility, knowledge and personal stories.

> DW: *I see the Indigenous Australian population, you know we're just under 3% of the total Australian population. That's a small percentage of people to be talking about Indigenous history and current issues. ...if we don't want to be always burdening the Elders and the leaders within the community then we've got to get to a stage where we can trust non-Indigenous people to do this work and the way to feel trust is to work with you to give you the knowledge and understandings that we've already developed through our life experiences....I don't know whether you two want to add anything to this.*
>
> CK: *I was involved in a conversation around this the other day. I asked another Indigenous educator about the PSTs 'do you think that these young teachers can engage with their students on Indigenous history and contemporary themes?' And the answer was 'definitely'. So here they are, the young teachers who are going into schools. If they don't engage with the polices and opportunities for reconciliatory eduction, then that's a waste of opportunity for discussion and knowledge and thinking, and the steps being taken forward .... I come at it from the point of view, and this is why I'm doing my research, that I'm a teacher educator. I am a passionate person interested in history and culture*

and contemporary issues and you know, if I don't engage with the PSTs in my classes in thinking about it then it's a lack, it's a gap. So I figure as a teacher educator it's my responsibility to work with these young teachers to find out what their questions are to see if they can start thinking about including and responding, acknowledging the owners of the land, you know the cultures that we live with, that we get so much benefit from but we also ignore at the same time. I mean that's the world we live in so unless that's part of our thinking in schools and in society then what are we doing?

BE: *Well I think if pre-service teachers can learn more about Indigenous history you know, that's great. If they didn't have this Unit they'd walk out of their Degrees a bit like I walked out 30 years ago having a bare bones knowledge, understanding and appreciation. You can hear them, after having spent this time with us, being able to articulate a view or a position about Indigenous history and the contemporary issues that are related, to themselves, to their peers and hopefully they will be confident to educate their future students. If we feel that we've supported them in that, in a relatively short period of time, then we've done a good thing. Because your question goes back to who should be teaching this stuff? So here we've got the three of us, lecturers with varying degrees of expertise, knowledge, and understanding in this area. So who should or can or could teach in this area?....does it mean therefore that you (Davina) should do it all? Maybe not, but certainly take the lead, help us to create the modules and the conversations. How* ***do*** *you share that? That's another interesting part of this experience we're having together... It seems to me that the way you share it is often through story-telling, personal experience, little chronological history lessons you know, and critical incidents in the history of Australia and key people whose names they sometimes were, but often were not, familiar with.*

PRAXIS INQUIRY (THE PI PROTOCOL)

Earlier I outlined the methodological importance of the VU School of Education Praxis Inquiry I Protocol in our work with the PSTs. In fourth-year the PSTs spend one full day per week for the whole school year in their placement schools, as well as a two week block in Semester One and a six week block in Semester Two, working with a mentor teacher in a particular primary school year level or in a secondary school subject area. These placements are explicitly understood by the schools, the PSTs and the VU School of Education to be partnerships. PSTs also participate in an Applied Curriculum Project (ACP) working with their schools to develop, implement, document and review a project which supports the school's curriculum.

Teaching practice at VU is not enacted as 'the practicum,' with individual blocks of time in different schools. PSTs work in teams or, following Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2003), 'communities of inquiry' on teaching and learning

> questions of value to the school, which are directly related to student learning. (Cherednichenko & Kruger, 2006, p. 9)

These projects were another element which stimulated the PSTs' understanding of opportunities for and limitations on innovation in schools. In practice most ACPs tend to be practical support for the partnership school, particularly in literacy and numeracy or lunchtime activities for students. The inclusion of Indigenous themes was generally outside the experience and perspectives of the teachers and schools in which the PSTs worked.

Two simultaneous expectations were being placed on teachers and schools. In 2008, the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) commenced in Australian schools. Every year, all students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are assessed on the same days using national tests in Reading, Writing, Language Conventions (Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation) and Numeracy (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2011). Standardized testing beginning in early primary school became the mode of accountability to judge the effectiveness of school curricula at the same time as teachers were being expected to develop curricula which responds to Indigenous knowledge and experience. This tendency towards homogenization at the same time as devolving responsibilities to schools is not new (Brennan & Noffke, 2000). But the need to develop appropriate curricula, in areas where PSTs and teachers feel ill-prepared, without appropriate pre-service and in-service professional development, in many cases causes stress, resentment and resistance.

According to the *Curriculum and Innovation* Unit Outline, PSTs work together and with their university lecturers and school-based mentors on

- an inquiry into Indigenous Australia with Civics and Citizenship Education integrating Indigenous Australian culture and history into the school curriculum
- setting up the classroom for authentic inquiry-based learning (e.g., student groupings; individual/group/whole class activities); negotiating the curriculum
- formative and summative assessment strategies, anecdotal observations and authentic assessment approaches such as student learning portfolios and student self-assessment

For both PSTs and the schools in which they worked, the last two of the aims above were successful and well-explored. However the first two aims were more difficult to implement. The reality facing PSTs was that schools were not implementing the VELS expectations regarding the inclusion of Indigenous themes. They actually had little opportunity to 'integrate Indigenous Australian history and culture into the school curriculum'. This highlighted even more strongly the space created and the opportunities able to be explored by our conscious commitment to collaborative self-study with the PSTs in lectures and seminars.

The VU PI Protocol provides a framework to explore the opportunities for becoming a *teacher for social justice.* In *Curriculum and Innovation* we investigated

- Ontological questions – Experience, Understanding and Commitment: What do we believe in, what are our ethics?
- Epistemological questions – Knowledge and its Application: How do we understand the world? How do children learn best?
- Technical questions – Effective Strategy and Technique: What pedagogies and practices engage children in thoughtful active learning? (Kruger 2006, p. 2).

In our work together we explicitly rejected any model that situated Indigenous knowledge and experience as part of a deficit theory or practice of learning. We encouraged PSTs to reject the colonial discourse whereby Indigenous knowledge and experience is seen as peripheral, rather than critical, and to acknowledge each other as Australians sharing the land on which we live and learn (Dodson, 2009).

> DW: *Our work has been about developing with our pre-service teachers the meta-cognitive competencies necessary for them to be teachers who acknowledge diversity and teachers who are social constructivists who promote unity without assimilation*.

The following section outlines our work with two of the *Curriculum and Innovation* Readings that particularly supported exploration of Australian colonization and Indigenous knowledge and experience.

COLONIAL DISCOURSE

One of the important Readings discussed with PSTs in *Curriculum and Innovation* was Clare Bradford's chapter *Colonial Discourse and its Fictions* (Bradford, 2001, pp. 14–47) which begins with an exposure of the paradigm of 'white is right' through an analysis of *The Australia Book* (Pownall & Senior, 1952, 2008). In our planning meeting Davina and Bill asked me to propose questions for use in the seminar groups. These are the questions I developed:

- What do you think Bradford is asking us to think about in presenting her analysis?
- What are the two strands of discourse that Bradford analyses as the ways that Indigenous peoples are presented in Australian children's literature? What examples have you experienced as a student, teacher or parent, that might demonstrate these strands in Australian curriculum/units of work/children's books/cultural events or institutions?
- What do you think Bradford means by 'socially sanctioned ways of understanding their world'(p. 20)?
- What is Bradford's critique of John Marsden's *Tomorrow, When the War Began* (Marsden, 1993)? What is your response to this critique?
- Bradford proposes that 'One of the rules of colonial discourse is that Indigenous people are never truly heroes' (p. 26). Find and explain two examples of resistance to colonial occupation of Indigenous lands, including at least one from what is now Victoria (Claire Kelly, March 2009).

When I presented these questions to Davina and Bill, the final question above was the subject of some discussion between the three of us. Would the PSTs be able to find appropriate resources to do this research? We made sure that we placed links on the University's online learning system whereby PSTs could access library resources and links to websites such as the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (2011), *The Koori history website* (Foley, 1998–2014) the Australian Broadcasting Corporation *Indigenous Language Map* (Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2009), *The Gunditjmara land justice story* (Weir, 2009), *Indigenous Australian voices* (Sabbioni, 1998) and *Convincing ground: Learning to fall in love with your country* (Pascoe, 2007).

> BE: *Yes, the Bradford Reading was pretty powerful and it resonated with the PSTs as young teachers. It was important for contextualising the broader issues of inclusion in school curricula. Which I thought was positive, for both lecturers and students. Because they did engage with it, there were some good discussions in the tutes (tutorials) as a result of that.*

The second Reading that was particularly appreciated by the PSTs was Larissa Behrendt's *The 1967 referendum 40 years on* (Behrendt, 2007). Behrendt analyses the work of Aboriginal activists such as William Cooper and Fred Maynard who led the campaign to change the Australian Constitution to recognize Indigenous people, who prior to 1967 were not counted in the Census, were subject to the laws of individual States and were denied access to industrial and welfare reforms such as equal pay with non-Indigenous workers or the old-age pension or other social benefits.

PSTs were shocked to realize how little they knew about the lack of basic rights for Aboriginal Australians and the political struggle undertaken by activists like Fred Maynard (Maynard, 2007) and William Cooper who believed that if Aboriginal people were given the same opportunities as other Australians and could make the key decisions about their communities, their families and their lives, they would be able to find their own solutions to their problems" (Behrendt, 2007, p. 25). The Referendum Reading also provided an effective introduction to other curriculum materials available for use in school classrooms, for example the VELS Unit on *The 1967 Referendum* (Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2007), Reconciliation Australia's *Resources for the 1967 Referendum* (Reconciliation Australia, 2007a), in particular *Women of the Referendum* (Reconciliation Australia, 2007b) and the National Museum of Australia's *Collaborating for Indigenous Rights* (National Museum of Australia, 2007). This was important because the PSTs were not used to thinking about such events as central elements of the Australian story.

Figure 4 below shows significant dates relating to Indigenous peoples' right to vote in Australia. The PSTs were not familiar with the idea put forward by Australian football icon Ron Barassi (Nicholson, 2009), that Australia Day should be moved to May 27, the date of the 1967 Referendum, to commemorate the day when ninety

1770	Captain Cook claimed the eastern half of the Australian continent for Great Britain.
1788	Colonisation began. When colonising Australia, the British Government used the term *Terra Nullius* (meaning land of no-one) to justify the dispossession of Indigenous people. Traditional Aboriginal systems of tribal land ownership were neither recognized nor acknowledged. Colonial and later national development was based exclusively on the English legal system
1829	British sovereignty extended to cover the whole of Australia – everyone born in Australia, including Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, became a British subject by birth
1843	First parliamentary elections in Australia (for New South Wales Legislative Council) were held. The right to vote was limited to men with a freehold valued at £200 or a householder paying rent of £20 per year
1850+	The Australian colonies become self governing – all adult (21 years) male British subjects were entitled to vote in South Australia from 1856, in Victoria from 1857, New South Wales from 1858, and Tasmania from 1896. This included Indigenous people but they were not encouraged to enrol. Queensland gained self -government in 1859 and Western Australia in 1890, but these colonies denied Indigenous people the vote
1885	Queensland Elections Act excluded all Indigenous people from voting
1895	Western Australian law denied the vote to Indigenous people
1901	Commonwealth Constitution became operative – Section 41 was interpreted to deny the vote to all Indigenous people, except those on state rolls
1902	The first Commonwealth Parliament passed the Commonwealth Franchise Act of 1902, which was progressive for its time in granting the vote to both men and women. It did however; specifically exclude 'any aboriginal native of Australia, Asia, Africa or the Islands of the Pacific, except New Zealand' from Commonwealth franchise unless already enrolled in a state.
1949	The right to vote in federal elections was extended to Indigenous people who had served in the armed forces, or were enrolled to vote in state elections. Indigenous people in Queensland, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory still could not vote in their own state/territory elections
1962	Commonwealth Electoral Act provided that Indigenous people should have the right to enrol and vote at federal elections, including Northern Territory elections, but enrolment was not compulsory. Despite this amendment, it was illegal under Commonwealth legislation to encourage Indigenous people to enrol to vote. Western Australia extended the State vote to Aboriginal people. Voter education for Aborigines began in the Northern Territory.
1965	Queensland allowed Aborigines to vote in State elections. Queensland was the last State to grant this right
1967	A Referendum approved Commonwealth Constitutional change. Section 127 of the Constitution was struck out in its entirety. This amendment allowed Indigenous people to be counted in the Commonwealth Census. Section 51 of the Constitution was amended to allow the Commonwealth to make special laws for Indigenous people. Both Houses of the Parliament passed the proposed Act unanimously; consequently a 'No' case was not submitted. More than 90% of Australians registered a YES vote with all six States voting in favour

Figure 4. Significant dates in Australian electoral history. Adapted from (Australian Electoral Commission, 2011).

per cent of the Australian population voted 'Yes' to change the Constitution to allow Aboriginal people to be counted in the Census.

In late 2010, Davina Woods was asked to present a paper at the Popular Education Network of Australia conference on the new second year B.Ed. Unit she was coordinating, *Re-Thinking Australian Studies,* to be implemented in 2011. Davina

had asked me to work with her on the development of the Unit. Due to circumstances I ended up presenting the paper. In Davina's words:

> Culture is not a static entity. It is a phenomenon of everyday living and social interaction. Not all but many of the Indigenous peoples of Australia's many countries have survived. They have survived through adaptation not assimilation and it is these adaptations that our students need to investigate and understand
>
> It is only through truly understanding the adaptations that the First Peoples of Australia have made post-invasion, to maintain their identity, their connection to their community and country and the political fights that they have instigated to win their human rights, citizenship rights and Indigenous rights, that our students will ever be able to contribute to reconciliation. (Woods & Kelly, 2010)

The new Unit would be part of the second year B.Ed. program and thus introduce PSTs to technical content and epistemological ways of knowing early in their four-year Degrees rather than in their final year. Being able to appreciate the different perspectives, the co-existing epistemologies that are part of peoples' cultures and life circumstances, is critical for PSTs if they are to be able to respectfully and appropriately include Indigenous themes in their curriculum planning. Below I reflect on the influence on my own understanding of listening to stories from Indigenous colleagues and students about their experiences and perspectives.

> CK: *For me a really important thing that happened was in the 1980s when I worked in the Aboriginal Services Unit at the Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE. The students were all Indigenous and from all over Australia, returning to study. They ranged in age from 18 to 60 and had so many stories to tell it just blew my mind really. It was very, very powerful.... listening to people's stories.....What I learnt was to listen and to understand how little I knew. They were the things I learnt. And I was already in my thirties and I was a history and politics teacher; but you know, it was such a strong influence on me.*

BIG QUESTIONS

Our work in *Curriculum and Innovation* raised a number of recurring questions from the PSTs. Two most dominant questions addressing the emphasis on Indigenous issues and the broader representation of other diverse groups are highlighted below with the discussions and responses that ensued.

Why Are We Putting So Much Emphasis on Indigenous Issues?

This query was raised within my class and the following journal entry provides my reflection on this incident and a context for understanding the value of this question in working with PSTs.

> CK: *Last week someone in my group questioned why are we doing all this. Unless we've got Indigenous children in our room is it really relevant? That question keeps recurring. I think the fact that they find it possible to ask that question is good and sometimes I feel they're being provocative, you know they want to talk it over because they have heard this in their placement schools and they want to feel confident in answering it.*
>
> *So your presentation today was great Davina. When we came back to our seminar room they said "that was fantastic, that really answered a whole lot of questions that have come from what we've been thinking about". The same PSTs who were saying, repeating, "why are we doing it," were really touched by your presentation.*

Davina had presented a lecture/discussion responding to the following assessment task, which was the second of two alternatives for Assessment Task 2 in *Curriculum and Innovation* (see Figure 5). In particular, Davina was responding to the difficulties the PSTs were having in understanding the concept of the Dreaming – a world-view as complex as any comparable epistemological system. PSTs are challenged by the proposition that just as we wouldn't ask school students to draw a picture for the Koran or to write a new Gospel we also should not pretend that students will be able to understand Aboriginal culture by doing a dot painting or writing a Dreaming story (Keeler, Couzens, & Koorie Heritage Trust, 2010).

The PSTs did detailed work on this task and reported back enthusiastically to their colleagues from the groups they formed to complete it. The use of multi-media materials is always engaging for PSTs and for their students. In 2008, one of the PST groups found and presented the song clip *I still call Oz home* (The Last Kinection, 2007) from an Indigenous Newcastle hip hop group, which we subsequently made use of in future *Curriculum and Innovation* and *Re-thinking Australian Studies* classes. In our planning discussion after the presentations of this assessment task we decided that it would be appropriate and important for Davina to respond in the next lecture to important elements raised in some of the presentations. The section of Davina's lecture which "touched the PSTs' hearts and minds" (CK notes, 05/22/2009) was her explanation of The Dreaming.

The question raised for discussion with the PSTs in the lecture was, What do you understand by the term The Dreaming? PSTs were asked to consider this in small groups, then to share their thoughts with the whole seminar. They talked of stories of the past, of how the world began and of how people should behave. After that discussion, Davina introduced the PSTs to the following five concepts, one at a time: Philosophy, Connection, Interdependence, Responsibility, and Reciprocity. The idea that Indigenous Australian peoples' ways of knowing are epistemological and ontological and that their status is comparable with other such knowledge systems challenges the assumption that Indigenous peoples' cultural, scientific, and spiritual knowledge are myths believed by primitive people. The issue of whether writing your own Dreamtime story or doing an Aboriginal Painting (a dot painting)

Assessment 2: Engagement, Innovation and Understanding

For this task you will work in groups of four to analyse the presentation of an Indigenous person, or an aspect of Indigenous culture as it is presented in a commercial film, television programme or YouTube video.

Following the showing of your piece of film, you will provide a succinct analysis of the degree to which stereotypes are used or avoided in this snippet, and the way in which this influences us as viewers. You will then lead a discussion about the presentation of Indigenous characters and/or issues in the film media.

A succinct and independent written report of the task, with literature references, will be provided by each pre-service teacher.

To successfully complete either of these tasks pre-service teachers must:

- Work effectively in a professional learning team
- Plan and implement self-directed learning
- Employ analytical skills
- Employ the Praxis Inquiry protocol of Describe, Explain, Theorize and Change
- Effectively lead a discussion
- Must refer to specific Reading around "Colonial discourse"
- Demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge of innovation in teaching and learning; OR demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge of the application of stereotypes in society in general and film media in particular
- Convey a rich understanding of innovation in education OR convey a rich understanding of the ways in which stereotypes inform and influence social perception
- Demonstrate the ability to make connections across issues in this Unit, and across different subject areas in your B.Ed.

Figure 5. VU B.Ed. 4th year curriculum and innovation 2009 assessment task 2

were appropriate activities (which had earlier provoked a strong reaction from some PSTs) were seen in the context and the seriousness of the concepts Davina presented.

Aren't There So Many Different Cultural Diversities in Australia That We Should Be Looking At?

As lecturers, through our year-long collaboration, we came to understand that using Australian Indigenous perspectives within the humanities enables students to develop

deep and nuanced intellectual positions and to critically and analytically engage with historical and contemporary issues in Australian society. Australian Indigenous Studies has an evolving disciplinary identity that incorporates and acknowledges diverse cultural frameworks, allowing students to consider issues from complex and multifaceted perspectives (Kelly & Woods, 2011). This was the response we articulated to the PSTs.

> DW: *To me when I talk about Indigenous Australian education I'm talking about the education of our own people and when I'm talking about Indigenous Australian studies I'm talking about our shared histories. In that conversation that we had in that B.Ed. review the other day it clicked in my head about when the Reconciliation Council did the 8 booklets that were on 8 key topics (Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1995) and one of them was the 'Shared histories'. And I thought ok, we've talked about the shared histories, now let's dialogue and action together. That's what's so positive with our work this year. We have been moving from history to what we as educators (lecturers, PSTs and teachers) can actually do in schools.*
>
> *As I said in the lecture, "Australia is the only place where we can learn from the oldest surviving living cultures in the world."*

The PSTs we worked with in *Curriculum and Innovation* were studying in P-12 Bachelor of Education Degrees. Their professional focus ranged from becoming general classroom teachers in Primary settings through becoming subject specialists in Secondary schools. Some will be Physical Education (P.E.) teachers. These were often our most challenging students. The attitude was sometimes expressed of *what has this got to do with us?* We would point to the first sporting team to represent Australia overseas (Australian Aboriginal cricket team in England, 1868), to Peter Norman, Williamstown High school teacher, who proudly supported his fellow medal winners Tommy Smith and John Carlos, in their Black Power salute at the 1968 Mexico Olympics by wearing an Olympic Project for Human Rights badge with them on the dais. We suggested that a rained-out double period of P.E. would be a great time to play the film about that event, *Salute* (Norman & Redman, 2008), reinforcing the idea that such content is not just represented in humanities classrooms.

We looked at photographs from the Australian War Memorial of some of the thousands of Indigenous Australians who fought in all the wars in which Australia has been involved, even though they did not get the vote or equal pay or soldier settlement land when they returned. We explored historical events such as the 1938 Cummeragunga Walk-off, the 1938 Day of Mourning, the Freedom Ride, the 1967 Referendum, the Gurindji Walk-off from Wave Hill Station, and the Aboriginal Tent Embassy.

> CK: *I think the work we did with the PSTs on events like the Freedom Ride was important. Understanding the role of leaders like Charles Perkins challenges*

> *the image of 'primitive people' who 'just let things happen to them' to quote some PSTs. And the role of the non-Indigenous students who went on the bus with Perkins also gives the PSTs pause to think about being willing to stand up and be counted.*

In another Assessment Task, PSTs were asked to visit an educational organization in the community which promoted awareness and appreciation of Indigenous knowledge and experience. The question of *whiteness* was the most difficult of the understandings we tried to explore with the PSTs, through considering their own self-awareness of the privileges that accrue to members of the dominant culture (Malin & Ngarritjan-Kessaris, 1999, Moreton-Robinson, A. 2004). The hidden curriculum and the conveying of the values of the dominant culture by teachers is seductive and pervasive, even when all the PSTs may not be White themselves but aspire to be teachers, conveyers of that culture.

WHAT WORKS

The title for this penultimate section comes from the *What Works* Program (McRae et al., 2002, 2005; Price & Hughes, 2009; Parkin, 2010; Australian Curriculum Studies Association, 2012) which Davina had worked on as a consultant in one of her employment positions prior to joining VU. *What Works* focuses on initiating changes in teaching practices at the school level and on accelerating the achievement of educational equality for Indigenous students, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The Program also examines whole school policies and practices to promote success for Indigenous students and families. *What Works* is the opposite of a deficit model of learning and teaching. The strategies it proposes are

> …a very important tool for social inclusion, for developing relationships between teachers and students, and for assisting students in seeing themselves as able to operate in the wider world. Some trips to places familiar to students provide the opportunity for students to take on the role of teacher, sharing their own knowledge with others, and thus strengthening their sense of identity. (Parkin & The What Works Advisory Group, 2010, p. 6)

PSTs can see in the *What Works* program and in the *8 Ways* program later developed in Western New South Wales (Western New South Wales Regional Aboriginal Education Team, James Cook University School of Indigenous Studies, & NSW Department of Education and Training, 2009), activities which can benefit all students arising from pedagogies originally developed to meet the particular needs of Indigenous students. Having Indigenous students sharing their particular knowledge (where appropriate and negotiated with such students – and/or community members if there are no Indigenous students in a particular class) is another example of Indigenous experience and epistemologies surrounding and including non-Indigenous ways of knowing, which I have argued elsewhere as a

radical possibility for developing reconciliatory education. Figure 6 outlines the elements that *What Works* proposes are important elements of a good educational program.

Similarly, the *Dare to Lead* program (Principals Australia Institute, 2003–2009), supports schools "to become more effective in achieving improved outcomes for their Indigenous students, and in understanding and supporting the wider goals of reconciliation and cultural understandings for all of their students" (quoted from website which is no longer active). In both these programs the principles developed by Indigenous educators to work effectively with Indigenous students and families are inclusive principles that can be used for all students. The programs demonstrate universal principles and practices for good education, for the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and experience for all students, as opposed to the 'look at the victims and

Good Education
➢ Assumes all learners can and will succeed ➢ Makes its demands clearly known ➢ Includes explanations of the purpose and value of what is being learnt and efforts to ensure that they have meaning for the student ➢ Provides a series of well-structured steps relevant to the competence and background knowledge of students ➢ Searches for strategies to which students will respond ➢ Provides a maximum of explicit guidance and modelling ➢ Provides opportunities for practice, and consistent useful feedback ➢ Accommodates variations in pace, and pays special attention to the needs of students who don't get it first time, and includes a level of intensity and manageable challenge ➢ Makes regular use of the life experiences and knowledge of students to make connections with other curricular content – Have you reviewed what you are doing and using now and explored alternatives to improve the relevance of curricular to students' lives, interests, context and culture? ➢ Uses teaching materials that deal with Indigenous cultures in an accurate and relevant way as a conventional part of the content of the curriculum ➢ Provides opportunities for cultural reference and expression ➢ Provides consistent opportunities available for students to work cooperatively

Figure 6. What works principles of good education (McRae et al., 2005)

Indigenous knowledge as deficit/loss' (Phillips, 2011) model of Indigenous studies and Indigenous education.

We encouraged PSTs to see the co-existence and potential harmony of Indigenous and non-Indigenous pedagogies. PSTs were already familiar with Howard Gardner's (1999) *Multiple Intelligences* and the ways in which teachers can value and promote multi-literacies. We invited them to also consider Gardner's commitment to the ethics of learning and teaching:

> I want my children to understand the world, but not just because the world is fascinating and the human mind is curious.
>
> I want them to understand it so that they will be positioned to make it a better place. Knowledge is not the same as morality, but we need to understand if we are to avoid past mistakes and move in productive directions.
>
> An important part of that understanding is knowing who we are and what we can do. (pp. 180–181)

THE THEMES WHICH EMERGE FROM THIS SELF-STUDY

The themes which emerge from this collaborative self-study between Indigenous and non-Indigenous lecturers developed through our work in 2009 with PSTs. The analysis of our teaching grew out of our discussions that framed and reframed our understanding of the issues and dynamics that emerged from our engagement with students, our discusions post teaching, and our continued discussion of our documented data from my notes. The themes provide further evidence for answering the research question, How can teacher educators support PSTs to include Indigenous themes in their curriculum planning?

- Non-Indigenous teacher educators need to listen to and learn with Indigenous educators:

  DW: *Certainly as Indigenous educators we have been trying to say for years, that if you are going to teach Aboriginal Studies or going to integrate it across the curriculum then please have members of our community involved and that's part of the reason why we've got the state and the local Aboriginal educational consultative groups* (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2013).

- Teacher educators need to continuously educate ourselves:

  BE: *For me and for many of the PSTs, just attending this Unit doesn't mean you automatically develop a high level of knowledge of these issues. But if we can encourage them, and us, to keep thinking ... you know, having an appreciation and an empathy about the history of this country… what is the history and what it means to us now.... then we have achieved something*

worthwhile. So yeah, I think we can because we're not teaching them to be experts but to be able to question and think .... you know: 'Is this is a good question?' 'What are we doing?' 'What is our ultimate goal?' Is it about developing an appreciation of what has happened, why it's happened, how it happened, when it happened?

- Teacher educators need to confront the colonial assumptions in teacher education curricula and in schools which lead towards seeing Indigenous peoples as the exotic other and/or victims or as invisible:

  DW: *When we came down to Melbourne from Queensland my daughter started at Northern (alias) Primary School.... they had a sister school in the country and they were getting all excited about their sister school coming down to visit them. The teacher said 'there are some Aboriginal children there and won't that be wonderful'. My daughter came home and said 'I'm sitting there thinking, but I'm Aboriginal'. Hopefully now teachers can understand that Aboriginal children live everywhere, not just in rural or remote areas.*

- Teacher educators need to encourage PSTs to see themselves as on a life-long journey in learning about Indigenous Australia:

  DW: *I think it goes back to meta-cognition. We're using Civics and Citizenship to try and develop within PSTs a thinking which is more inclusive and which is very reflective ....and also to develop within them the ability to think a little more confidently. To feel they know enough to feel confident that they can go and speak to an Indigenous person. And to be able to pick up the right sort of book and read it or even the wrong sort of book and read it and think critically about it, much better than our generation was taught to think about the issues.*

  BE: *Yes I think that summarizes it in a nutshell. To be able to see examples of behaviour or literature or in the media and to be able to work with their own students to say 'look you can understand why these uninformed opinions are being put, why people are thinking that way or are talking that way or describing it that way.... so being able to be critical and being able to be reflective of what they see and hear you know, those are probably some of the fundamental things we were aiming for in Civics and Citizenship. I'm glad we're taping this....*

- Teacher educators need to listen to PSTs' questions:

  CK: *I think the way we conducted the lectures and seminars, encouraging the PSTs to ask questions, and them seeing us doing that between ourselves as well, opened spaces for honesty and deep thinking. So the questions the PSTs asked could move from ones at the beginning of the semester about why they*

should have to study 'Aborigines' when there were so many other ethnic groups in Australia to later on wanting to know why the term 'invasion' wasn't used to describe what happened in 1788. The process of the PSTs seeing Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators learning and teaching together encouraged them to take risks themselves with the questions they wanted to ask and the research they were prepared to undertake.

Loughran (1997, 2006) emphasizes the importance of teachers 'modelling the message' of their teaching and that the relationship between theory and practice should be apparent within the teaching and learning. In 2009, we witnessed the powerful possibilities for reconciliatory education from learning together and with the PSTs, in dialogue, in making meaning, in establishing the validity of ideas, and for promoting action. Our collaborative self-study was discussed with the PSTs, who saw Indigenous and non-Indigenous lecturers working and learning together and with them on the inclusion of Indigenous themes in school curricula. They saw that it was possible to choose to be teachers for social justice.

EPILOGUE

In 2010 the VU Education Head of School asked Davina Woods to establish a new compulsory curriculum Unit for the second year of the B.Ed. which would be wholly focused on the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in school curricula and would come at an earlier and therefore more appropriate time in the Degree. If PSTs were to have time to think and reflect and plan for the inclusion of Indigenous Australian themes then it was important for that to be addressed throughout their Degrees, not just in their final year. Davina later invited me to join her in developing and teaching this new Unit, *Re-Thinking Australian Studies,* which incorporated many of the learnings from our work together in *Curriculum and Innovation*.

In 2010 the poster (seen in Figure 7) won the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week poster competition, responding to the 2010 themes of leadership and unsung heroes. NAIDOC celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee, 2012). The poster complements primary school student Chloe Miller's painting for the Queensland schools NAIDOC competition, seen in Figure 8 below. Both posters respond to themes of leadership and unsung heroes by highlighting the importance of the role of education. Chloe's painting interprets the *Closing the Gap* slogan from the continuing Commonwealth government Intervention into Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory. The Intervention proposes that the huge gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous access to services and achievement indicators in health and education will be overcome by stricter bureaucratic administration of welfare support. Chloe, from Oakey State School in Queensland, has confronted the

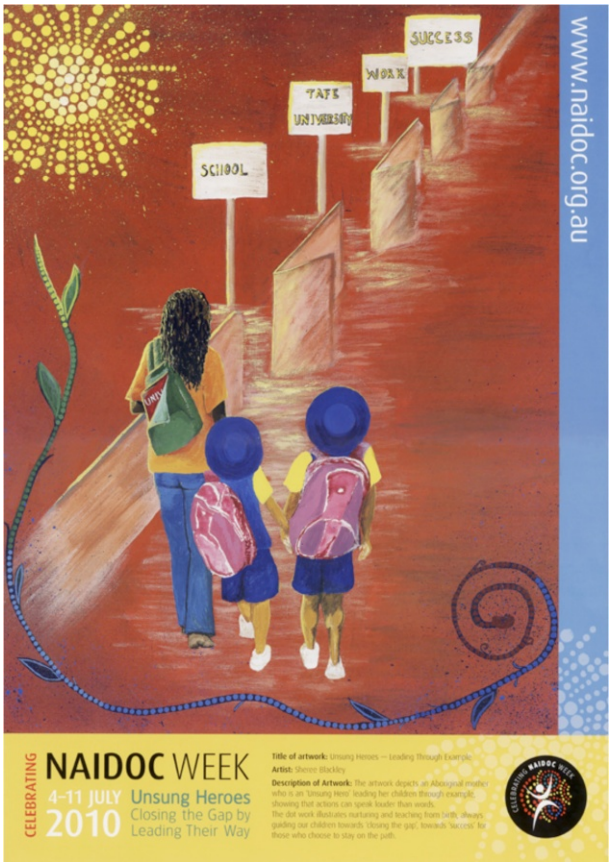

Figure 7. National NAIDOC poster 2010. Unsung heroes: Closing the gap by leading their way (Blackley, 2010)

epistemology of the dominant paradigm, which underpins the continuing control of Indigenous decision-making, by celebrating 'unsung heroes who close the gap by leading *their way'*, thus closing this Chapter with a lesson in listening to Elders and learning together.

So thank you Mary Clare Dalmau for the learning journey we went on together in implementing the Praxis Inquiry pedagogies and for your encouragement for me to begin and complete my own PhD in an area of educational concern that I have been passionate about for many decades. But without Mary's initial support and certainly in our discussions along the way I may not have had the resilience to continue and I would not have learned as much about the effectiveness of collaborative self-study for learning and teaching for social justice.

Figure 8. 2010 Queensland NAIDOC poster. Unsung Heroes: Closing the gap by leading ***their way****. (Miller, 2010)*

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5. THE FIRE OF TRANSFORMATION

Enacting the Active Scholarship of Teacher Education

This chapter reports on our work of inquiry based developments in teacher education. One of the most challenging issues we faced as we became teacher educators was the search for pedagogy in teacher education. We wondered how we could support student teachers and teachers to draw out their theoretical backgrounds from their daily experiences, and how to introduce them to the skills and resources that can enable them to critically reflect on their practice together and become empowered teachers. We believed it was critical that such professional dialogue permeates all aspects of initial and continuing teacher education, and that the facilitation of this dialogue was an essential aspect of reflective practice and the professional capacitation of teachers.

As we continued to study our practice we realized that we had to turn our teaching around, and instead of beginning with our presentation on a specific topic we decided to begin with the resources our student teachers and teachers brought with them, their thinking and their questions and look for authentic experiences that have the capacity to provide rich learning opportunities. Rather than remaining dependent on lecturers as purveyors of information, student teachers join with lecturers in the related discourses of learning/teaching, inclusion and the socio-cultural context of education.

CONTEXT

The metaphor of Icelandic fire emerging from the deepest 'aeons' of the earth inspired our understanding of how we drew on self-study as a transformative strength throughout our lived teaching and learning. We came to understand that even well-constructed methods and findings are not enough. Without a burning commitment to personal, professional and collegial transformation we are limited in the enactment of active scholarship and our contribution to the re-creation of teacher education. This study thus reports almost twenty years of professional practice, active scholarship and the continuous agency of educators. Significant challenges were the search for pedagogy in both teacher education and self-study, and the critical process of becoming teacher educators of the future.

In response to our search, we began the development of a scaffold—Professional Working Theory (PWT)—that was designed to support teachers and teacher

M. C. Dalmau et al. (Eds.), Taking a Fresh Look at Education, 73–87.

educators to engage in this journey (e.g., Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2000, 2002a, 2002b; Guðjónsdóttir, 2005; Guðjónsdóttir et al., 2007). We created the Active Group Practice (AGP), a praxis-inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning through collaborative work with teachers (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2012). In addition we participated in the creation, implementation and development of the Praxis Inquiry Protocol (PI) that has the potential to support student teachers and teachers to extend their ways of thinking and action (Guðjónsdóttir et al., 2007; Kruger & Cherednichenko, 2005/2006). Throughout this period, we maintained two concurrent self-studies: (a) a collaborative self-study that enabled us to continuously critique and develop our own practice, theory, and ethics; and (b) shared self-studies as we incorporated the different protocols into local, international, and collaborative teaching, supervision, and professional development. As we worked with teachers in Iceland, Latvia, Australia, and North America, these ongoing self-studies led to new understandings, and new questions, about the scholarship of teachers. Our study uses both Retrospective Self-Study and Critical Self-Study methodologies to investigate our past, current, and emerging scholarship. The study analyzes and interprets our experience with Active Group Practice. The methodology included collegial self-study, supported by local research projects within learning communities, and macro analysis.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

> Enacting a pedagogy of teacher education requires much more than simply delivering whatever it might be that is variously described as the curriculum of teacher education. Doing teaching with students of teaching requires deep and well conceptualized understandings of pedagogy that are developed, articulated, critiqued and refined in the crucible of practice itself. (Loughran, 2007, p. 14)

Loughran's articulation of the enactment of powerful pedagogies in teacher education reiterates the passionate commitment with which we began to work together in 1996. From the beginning we understood that our goal was not simply to identify and transmit appropriate skills to teachers, but rather to create an environment and discourse through which teachers and teacher educators could become activist scholars.

Enacting active scholarship is a process of inquiry and development that, in Freire's (1993) words, challenges us to avoid becoming "prisoner[s] of a circle of certainty within which reality is also imprisoned" (p. 21). From this stance we are able to strive for the courage and wisdom to more fully enter "into reality so that, knowing it better, [we] can better transform it" (Freire, 1993, p. 21) — in this case, retracing twenty years of international self-study of teacher learning and practice, our professional learning with teachers, our shared development, and a growing awareness of collegial agency have taught us that the significant change,

envisaged above, will emerge through creative and meticulous work over time. Three intertwined factors emerged over time in this study, the search for pedagogy in teacher education, becoming teacher educators of the future and collaboration. Together they raised questions about our passion for teacher education, our partnership with teachers in life-changing learning, and a deep understanding of active scholarship. These, often tacit understandings merge in our combination of practice, theory, and ethics (Carspecken, 1996).

One of the less positive myths and legends about teachers is that they are *practitioners* who are interested only in hearing about practical ideas and who resist theoretical analysis (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Guðjónsdóttir, 2005). Our challenge has been to find ways of opening a professional dialogue with teachers that recognizes, analyses, and deepens our shared understanding of the meaning of the living theory (Whitehead, 1989) implicit in their practice and includes courageous questioning of evolving professional roles and identities (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005). We therefore prepared for this chapter by articulating the questions, principles, and methodologies that have guided our work.

Questions

These questions have emerged in the preliminary data and become significant throughout the journey:

1. Persistent learning over time: What is different when we pursue knowledge over years—how do teacher learners join the community of discovery and become leaders in an emerging world?
2. Critical pedagogy of self-study: How do significant questions and self-study methodologies and methods form a process of learning and becoming through authentic questions, rigorous inquiry, situated interpretation, and lifelong learning? How is such learning created, shared, enacted, and sustained?
3. Becoming a scholar: Scholarship described as the body of principles and practices used by scholars to make their claims about the world as valid and trustworthy as possible, and to make them known to the scholarly public ("Scholarly method," n.d.). As we prepared for this chapter we also recognized with joy the expanding scholarship of teachers as well as our own. What does becoming a scholar mean? What is the scholarship of teachers?

Principles

As we planned the study for this chapter we identified values or principles that are critical to the integrity and justice of our commitment to all learners. These include

1. Becoming a teacher: Placing more focus on who we are becoming, rather than simply measuring what we can do.

2. Interest in teacher education: Driven by a passion for teacher education, inspired by democratic and reform agenda, a strong commitment in all self-study.
3. Desire for all students: Inclusive education as the overall reform agenda for education and seen as everybody's business in school (Slee, 2011). It is an on-going process, aiming for increased participation for everyone.
4. Pedagogy: That envisions and creates teacher education that helps teachers to understand deeply the development of learning, social and cultural contexts, and teaching and how to enact these understandings in complex classrooms of diverse students (Darling-Hammond, 2010).
5. Collaboration and collegiality: Working relationships between teachers that are purposeful, voluntary, development-oriented, and pervasive across time and space.

Active Professionalism of Teachers

As we struggled with data that showed little evidence that teachers were incorporating what we were teaching about collaborative practice into their busy working lives, a critical event occurred that we have reported in another forum:

> One day some of the teacher learners said to us, "It's no use talking to us about group practice and collaboration… we know it doesn't work… teachers are too busy… you can get things done quicker on your own… besides, it's just something we have to do to please the administrators." (Notes from class, spring 1996)

It felt like our enthusiasm and energy were colliding with a thick wall of indifference. After much anguish and soul searching, we realized we were just another pair of enthusiasts in a long line of people telling teachers that we knew the answer, that we were the ones who could tell them what to do (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2002a). This moment of truth set us on a new journey that allowed us, the teachers and the student teachers with who we worked to identify problems and issues in existing approaches and to reconstruct our shared learning and action. At the heart of the teachers' resistance was their perception that group (as opposed to individual) practices were being imposed on them in schools and universities in order to achieve a plethora of externally driven tasks. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) critiqued such technical conceptualizations of teachers as "consumers and receivers of curriculum and teaching materials grounded in university-based research," and "skilled transmitters of information developed by others" (p. 16). We were acquainted with that perspective and did not want to be identified with that conceptualization, and decided to focus on *learning all over again*. Through self-study we built critical reflection, data collection and analysis into our work interpreting our data as we began our journey into collaboration within teacher education.

Collaborative cultures at schools build on working relationships between teachers that are often spontaneous, voluntary, development-oriented, pervasive across time

and space, and unpredictable (Datnow, 2011). This we had experienced at different practices. In contrast, contrived collegiality is collaboration that is administratively regulated and imposed by authority within a context of hierarchical power, role relationships, and the accomplishment of predetermined and externally driven tasks (Hargreaves, 1992). Contrived collegiality among teachers does not generally lead to meaningful or sustainable change and we had also experienced that at some of our workplaces. The difficulties we faced in teaching collaboration to student teachers and teachers stemmed from three factors: (a) their experience of collaboration as an imposed tool for the implementation of administratively driven tasks, (b) the discrepancy between expected forms of collaboration and their real work with students, and, (c) a culture of individualism that associated professional collaboration with personal characteristics, compatibility, and empathetic relationships.

The student teachers and the teachers' reported that their experience of collaboration in schools and university classes was sometimes negative — the assertion that *collaboration doesn't work* (student's assignment, 1996) usually led to a discussion of the nature of the tasks around which collaboration was mandated. Teachers and student teachers told us: *Collaboration around centrally driven school priorities diverts teachers from their real work with students* (students' evaluation, 1996), and, *In universities collaborative assessment tasks waste time and potentially diminish the quality of (and grade for) submitted work* (students' evaluation, 1996). Teachers often based their idea of collaboration on similarity and consensus using a metaphor of friendship, rather than shared purpose and improved outcomes for students. *Our group worked well because we all get on so well together* (students' evaluation, 1996) was a constant refrain in program evaluations. Thus framed, differences of role (special vs. general educator, administrator vs. classroom teacher), culture, race, gender, or ability were seen as barriers to be overcome, and difference was viewed as a problem rather than a resource (Lambert, Collay, Dietz, Kent, & Richert, 1996; Rendón & Hope, 1996; Richert, 1997). Teaching and learning collaborative practice were often primarily focused on the acquisition of discrete interpersonal communication or organizational skills, with the assumption that these skills were equal to effective group practice. Overemphasis on this aspect of group practice often diverted teacher groups from the task at hand.

This displacement of goals and strategies is one more example of the lack of understanding of active contribution of teacher professionalism. Guðjónsdóttir (2000) used the term, responsive professionalism, to describe the professional practice of teachers who work collaboratively with all members of the school community — students, colleagues, administrators, parents, and community members — to articulate and create effective and innovative educational programs that lead to positive learning and life outcomes for students (Loughran, Hamilton, LaBoskey, & Russell, 2004).

Technocratic and authoritarian approaches do not always recognize or elicit the active professionalism of teachers. However, collaboration and social learning processes within schools can affect people's actions and thinking and provide

opportunities to influence beliefs of students' abilities to learn for flexible teaching (Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2004; Guðjónsdóttir, 2000; MacMillan, 2010; Ryan, 2006). Communities of practice or professional learning communities are facilitated where teachers and other professionals within and outside the school learn from each other and improve their practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

In the later years collaboration and teamwork (team teaching) has become more and more important. With diverse groups of students that need different ways of learning, multiform tasks, and support, it can be a challenge for one teacher to respond to all those differences (Meijer, 2003). One answer to this diversity can be team teaching and teamwork that can be found in different forms. Team teaching can be defined as two or more teachers teaching the same group of students, planning and implementing the teaching tasks together (O'Gorman & Drudy, 2010). Teachers might also plan together and make decisions collaboratively, but separate the teaching. Sometimes regular classroom teachers and a special educator teach together, or a social pedagogy or teaching assistant works in the classroom alongside the teacher. In inclusive schools, teachers might have to work in collaboration with paraprofessionals and build up a team that works together around one student (Skrtic, 2005). Collaboration between classroom teachers and support services can even be considered to be a crucial foundation for enhancing inclusive practices where professionals learn from each other (Ainscow & Miles, 2008).

At the same time we recognize that collaboration can improve practice, collaboration should not be seen as a magic solution that solves all problems; sometimes groups or teams do not function as they are intended. There are challenges to consider. Classroom and subject teachers have a long history of individual autonomy and independence and are not always ready to give that up (Vangrieken, Dochy, Raes, & Kyndt, 2015). It is often a challenge for people with different skills and expertise to collaborate or problem solve as they respond effectively to student needs or structure their learning plan (Meijer, 2003). There can also be issues of differences in teaching style and personal dispositions or professional stance, and working closely with others can be intense and demands mutual trust and respect. We also have to consider that there are different types of collaboration, which can be performed differently for different reasons, and towards different goals. Collaboration is a joint interaction in a group around activities needed to accomplish a shared task. Collaboration as a concept can be seen as an umbrella term, being part of different types of collaborative performance and team work (Vangrieken, Dochy, Raes, Kyndt, 2015).

Critical collaborative theory builds on interpersonal, interactive and critical reflections in and on practice. The collaboration between critical friends is provocative, and gives a new lens, findings and perspective, but is not judgmental or evaluative (Samaras, 2010). Knowledge communities are defined and strengthened as much by dilemmas as by their agreements. Understanding the resilient and strong forms of collaborative conservation that preserves in the face of complex, conflictual viewpoints and harsh realities is important to self-study researchers who wish to

take a critical and transformative stance in their research (Bodone, Guðjónsdóttir, & Dalmau, 2004). In a climate where teachers are expected to be competent and professional educators who will seek out answers to these questions of collaboration and team work, it is the teachers themselves who will seek out the opportunity for collaboration as they deal with complex problems. There is no need to make it contrived collegiality; however, creating a space in time for collaboration is important.

METHODS

This is a self-study of our collaborative practice over the years. We have worked together on the AGP with student teachers and teachers in four different countries, USA, Latvia, Australia and Iceland. Sometimes we have been in the same place and other times at a distance collaborating through the Internet. We base our shared learning on inquiry into lives and experiences of teacher-learners (teachers who are studying, either to become teachers or for lifelong learning), respect for the unique knowledge and skills of each participant, and collaborative construction of new conceptual understandings. Authentic and purposeful practice for teachers begins with serious and authentic questions about student learning.

We collected our data by logging our practice, our discussions and shared dialogue about our work. Together, we collected data from our students about the activities we have created in our teaching with student teachers and teacher learners. The documentation of the data began in 1996 and lasted until 2014. This inquiry became a part of our collaborative research portfolio that we have kept for almost twenty years. We described, analyzed and interpreted our data (Wolcott, 2005) and through that work we come to our conclusion and further questions. Do to our intention of the data collection, the analytical process was ongoing. Along with our teaching, we discussed and unfolded our experience, and related it to our reading of theories and broader research findings. This iterative and analytical process was often messy as we stepped back, critically reflected on our experience, peeled the layers and responded to our findings by changing or developing our practice. As in our teaching we continued to practice collaboration and collegiality. Critical collaborative inquiry requires that personal insights are documented, shared, and critiqued (Loughran & Northfield, 1998), and that the critical and collegial partnership assist researchers to question power, social justice, and discrimination.

Active Group Practice

> Teacher push back the desk and come outside!
> I'll race you to the swings!
> Don't be afraid teacher.
> Just grab my hand and follow me.
> You can learn all over again!
> (Cullum, 1971/1999)

As we began our journey into teacher education, becoming teacher educators, one of our challenges was the search for pedagogy in teacher education. Through our reflections and self-study we realized that we had to learn all over again and turn our teaching around, which we began with student teachers and teachers resources and their authentic experiences. This led us to begin with student teachers' questions about their school-based experiences. This was challenging for us and Hafdís likened her experience to throwing away a life ring.

> When in Australia I travelled to the Great Barrier Reef on a snorkeling expedition. I was faced with the choice to hold onto the life ring near the boat or swim out to the reef with younger and fitter people. Finally I found the courage to leave the life ring and explore an exhilarating new world. That's what PI (Praxis Inquiry) learning and teaching feels like to me—I have had to leave the security of accumulated lesson plans and Power Points and share my knowledge and learn with students in flexible and responsive ways … After I shared this story in class one of my student teachers wrote to me to say that his experience of inquiry led learning and teaching was similar… (E-mail communication, 10–11–2005)

Our self-study has demonstrated that it is difficult for teacher educators to go beyond didactic teacher focused approaches, and to make the change to learner-centered PI based learning and teaching. The student teachers, and even the two of us, felt more secure when we presented our Power Points and answered students' questions, rather than supporting them to describe, explain, theorize, and act upon their experience. The dilemma we faced was not simply related to our teaching techniques. We also needed to go beyond cultural assumptions that knowledge is there in the university to be transmitted and that effective learners reproduce that information.

To respond to this development, we focused on Active Group Practice and a protocol we created to assist our students in their collaboration. We will present the development of the Active Group Practice protocol and process, and the actions we took as we began to use it in our teaching, as well as what we have learned from these actions. Through the investigation of our teaching and our collaborative critical reflections, we managed to capture how we created the active group practice and what we found to be critical for the group practice to become active and efficient. We emphasized working something out if we hit a challenge, talking about it, asking questions from a different stance, and finding ways to problematize together. The process we call Active Group Practice (AGP) typically includes five dimensions enriched by a number of guiding principles that inform the journey.

Dimension 1. AGP incorporates strong questions, authentic tasks and diverse colleagues. Effective teaching and learning of collaboration is more likely to occur when integrated with an authentic and purposeful challenge – for example, the

opportunity to make a difference in teaching and learning for a group of school students. When working with preservice or experienced teachers, we ensure that they have genuine opportunities to respond to important questions, often the ones they bring. We also typically ensure that these learners are randomly selected into diverse inquiry teams that will work together over time. In school situations, teachers often work in year level or discipline planning groups as decided by the group – it can be a good idea to also mix these groups to get various perspectives.

Dimension 2 – Authentic collaboration — real people engaged in real life. Figure 1 (see below) is an example of a simple profile that has proved effective in supporting educators to situate their collaboration in authentic tasks. Individuals are asked to respond to these simple questions, and write them down. Often they keep the individual profile for themselves, although they later compile the information into a group profile. As the group profile is created and the discoveries become apparent in the conversation, we noticed many "aha" reactions. One group found that they had one member who was *extremely organized and confessed to feeling extremely nervous if group projects were not organized early* (Notes from class, 1997); another member admitted that *she only felt her adrenaline running as the deadline loomed* (Notes from class, 1997). A second group discovered that they *had a student from overseas who felt in need of support with his English*, and *a verbal and apparently extremely confident student who asked for support in listening to others* (Notes from class, 1997). The examples abounded. The important data for us was the recognition that people with very different abilities and working styles were working together to support and enrich the group, rather than acting out their conflicts.

Dimension 3 – Holistic iterative review of project and collaboration: Recording action—recording learning. As the real work of the team progressed, the integrated

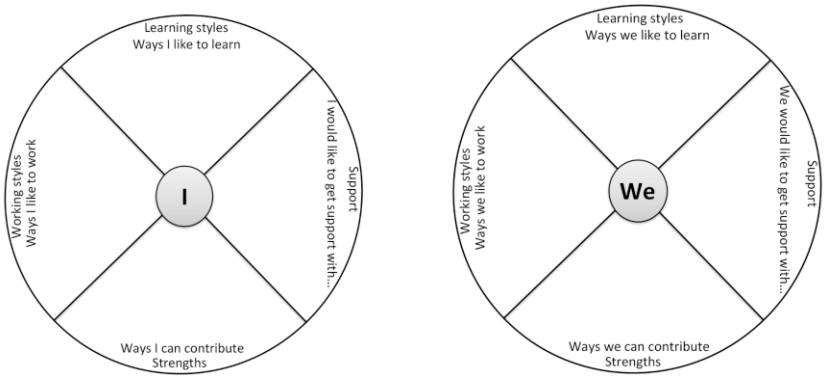

Figure 1. Individual and group profiles

and opportunistic education in collaborative learning also continued. In 2004, when Hafdís was on her sabbatical leave in Australia, we took some further steps in developing the AGP. Guided by the principles of AGP (see below) and issues raised by students, we integrated reflection and teaching into the ongoing activities of the group. As we progressed in our teaching, we encouraged participants to keep a Praxis Inquiry Log where they record questions, research, and learning, thus reinforcing sustained habits of reflective practice. They often brought their challenges to the group and the team problem solved together.

Dimension 4 – Meta-reflection. Mindful of the importance of learners recognizing and taking responsibility for their own learning, we made space for times of meta-reflection about collegial collaboration. We asked groups to identify knowledge, understandings, and skills they saw themselves using and about which they wished to learn more. Examples of their responses included: knowledge [What does a balanced classroom (between teacher led and student led) look like? How does AGP relate to school-wide change?]; understanding (How do you change the dynamics of a group when one person dominates and does not represent the group? How do you approach a supervisor about a problem you are having with him/her in a professional way?); and skills (How do you 'free' response and 'bind' response?). By recording their queries, the learning participants have a collection of ideas or reflections on different matters they can always look up.

Dimension 5: Integrating praxis inquiry. We added the praxis inquiry protocol as the basis of our learning and teaching and to extend student teachers ways of thinking and action. It was developed at Victoria University and consists of a semi-structured questioning framework that assists pre-service teachers and teachers to learn about teaching from the standpoint of their own practice (Kruger, 2006). We took this step as Hafdís was in Australia and from then both of us continued developing the protocol and especially how it was used. In the protocol, the student teachers write cases from their teaching. As they describe, question, explain, theorize, and propose changes to their practice, new understandings emerge and become part of individual, team and class discussions and action. For many, these were their first self-conscious expressions of practice-theory writing, which in turn opened other avenues (e.g., responsive professional development, increased awareness of the constraints and opportunities imposed by systemic factors, and more comprehensive pedagogical awareness). Being in practice is no guarantee that a practitioner has a well-founded and convincing understanding of practice. The protocol does not in itself show a pre-service teacher or a teacher how to teach. Its strength is likely to be found in its demand that pre-service teachers present evidence for assertions about good ways to teach from their own practice, justified by analysis of that practice and by support from the research and policy literature. In addition it is a frame for collaborative critical reflection in and on one's practice.

Active Group Practice in Action

Through analyzing the data and bringing together the main characters of the Active Group Practice we can see that our focus has been on the following principles:

Seek out and welcome diversity. Active Group Practice occurs when groups seek and use each individual's unique knowledge, understanding, and skills in order for the group to create new understanding and new action. Differences between people are highlighted more than similarities. Openness to diversity makes available to groups the opportunity to think and act in more complex and creative ways because of the multiple perspectives, resources and talent that can be found in heterogeneously composed group of people.

Develop tasks that are purposeful and action-oriented. Authentic action that makes a difference in student/teachers lives is the best protection from the gradual displacement of group goals with individualistic objectives of friendship and personal support. The teachers establish the tasks and purposes, they use discretionary judgment for selectivity of choices made, and initiate the change as much as they react to it.

Collaborate based on the principle of multiplication. Working in groups is not necessarily a positive or productive experience. Our goal is to provide groups with an understanding of the creative potential of active groups through the presentation of three descriptors: *subtraction* (when group work undermines goals because of factors such as unresolved conflict, goal displacement, contrived purpose); *addition* (when the action of a group equals the sum of the individual actions of the members); and *multiplication* (when the action of the group creates something new; i.e., it exceeds the sum of the individual contributions).

Use Data to Open Doors

Pre-service teachers and teacher learners bring to professional development about group practice many years of learning and experience in group work. This very experience may lead to judgmental statements about working together that can undermine AGP. The use of a meaning statement, 'Data opens doors—Judgments closes doors', helps educators to become aware of (and move away from) judgment statements (e.g., *I know the best way to facilitate groups*, or *Group work wastes time*, or *Our group would work OK if xxx would leave*.) to the data statements (e.g., *When we share tasks we can make more complete products*, or *I like to work to deadline*, or *I like to organize well in advance*.).

We have endeavored to internalize these guiding principles of teaching and learning AGP into our thinking and work. We articulate the principles with students as the opportunity arises and try to relate them to reality. These are some of the skills

we have focused on through the years, and some of them we have practiced or asked the students to be aware of as they collaborate and work on their tasks:

- Action: To listen, talk, speak out, take turns, lead, follow, praise, thank, ask, rephrase, cooperate, model, implement …
- Motivate: Achieve more, build democracy, save time, share resources, do good, get things done, listen to Vygotsky, Freire, Schmuck …
- Enquire: What is happening for you? What is happening for students? What do you need to learn? Reflecting on what is happening and how we can respond to it.
- Respect: There are all kinds of diversity in one group and we must recognize that and respect everyone as they are and look at it as a resource that opens doors for new opportunities.

We have found these skills important, but we do not begin with them or introduce without a context, we interweave them into the course and the content as we see or feel the topic arise.

Loughran (1997) expressed strongly the absolute necessity that teachers model the message of their teaching and that the relationship between theory and practice should be apparent within the teaching and learning. Mindful of this message, we integrate into each session practical examples of collaboration, inquiry into the lives and experiences of the participants, respect for the unique knowledge and skills of each participant in the class, and the collaborative building of new conceptual understandings.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT AGP – DISCUSSIONS

"Professional teacher learning occurs through investigation of the social practices of learning and teaching, most often situated in classrooms and schools" (Kruger & Cherednichenko, 2005/2006, p. 1). When teachers are expected to be competent and professional educators who seek out answers to their questions, they also seek out opportunities for collaboration as they deal with complex problems. The steady progress towards recreating truly collaborative practice made by a number of Icelandic and Australian schools when they were able to identify and work with issues of student learning and school improvement led us to believe that it was critical to pay attention to inherent issues of authenticity, purpose, power, and control when teaching and learning through group practice (Baird & Northfield, 1993; Petschack et al., 1993).

Students (student teachers and experienced teachers) quickly began to use the idea of building AGP through the diverse abilities of heterogeneously constructed groups and to use that information to plan and work together more effectively in the university classroom. One reason for this change was our deeper understanding and fluency with the material we were introducing and the tasks on which we were suggesting the students would work. As we reflected together on our data at the end of the first year, we identified a number of issues for further work and began

to respond to them. This affected the years to come. It was something that began as we team taught during our stay in the USA as doctoral students but multiplied when we became teacher educators supporting student teachers and teachers becoming reflective practitioners that built their practice on data and theory.

We have introduced AGP to many groups of teacher/learners. We learned (not surprisingly) that time is an important factor—short terms and one-off sessions of professional development do not allow time to build that strong conceptual knowledge and understanding, and the skillful practice that will enable people to feel confident in their ability to transfer their learning and experience into new environments. Praxis inquiry is extending our understanding of different possibilities.

The adding of the PI Protocol promoted continual reflection on teaching through systematic inquiry and documented student teachers' and teachers' practice as they asked the questions that they found personally and professionally important (Kruger, 2006). We have learned that teachers need supportive cultures in which to collaborate, but also enough autonomy to be able to make decisions and take action on the basis of their analyses of information about student learning.

Freire (cited in Gadotti, 1996) used the term, ingenious dialogue, to describe dialogue that remains pleasant and warm by not acknowledging the serious and divisive issues that face partners in the dialogue. It is our belief that teaching and learning AGP without seriously working with teacher learners to situate their practice in these important contexts could be considered a disingenuous group practice.

We also found that our international collaborative self-study was not only a method by which we improved our teaching, but rather, intrinsic to teaching and learning. Our parallel engagement in self-study and the teacher-learners' active inquiry into improved learning and life outcomes for students, enabled us to face their dilemmas with them and model a strong collaborative commitment to embracing international and intercultural perspectives and action. We *can* learn all over again!

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DEBORAH TIDWELL AND AMY STAPLES

6. THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS IN EDUCATORS' SELF-STUDY OF PRACTICE

In this chapter, collaboration highlighting the work of 12 educators engaged in the self-study of their literacy practice working with students identified as having significant developmental disabilities is examined. These educators included speech-language pathologists, general education teachers, and special education teachers. The nature of collaboration as a manifestation of self-study research is explored within the context of professional development designed to improve understanding of practice in the field.

INTRODUCTION

Our intention of connecting professional development with self-study of practice reflects the idea that educators benefit from various forms of knowledge, including formal and practical, which relate to the what and how of teaching (LaBoskey, 2004). Since self-study of practice is intended to improve upon one's immediate practice (LaBoskey) and to align theory to practice (Loughran, 2007), the use of self-study seemed like an effective way to connect the educators' professional development work with their change in practice. Schuck and Russell (2005) have found that the act of engaging in self-study will challenge an educator's previously held assumptions. By participating in experiences within a particular context, self-study can both enlighten understanding of practice while at the same time provoke conversation about practice. In the context of teaching children who have been identified with significant developmental disabilities, the act of self-study of one's teaching practices can unpack professional and personal histories and can help the educator understand the notion of privileges that influence teaching (Kuby, 2013). What makes self-study of practice so useful to practicing educators is its focus on the current issues of education (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001). For our participants, their current issues within their work in the project reflected their thinking and understandings around implementation of comprehensive literacy instruction for children with significant developmental disabilities.

Schuck and Russell (2005) highlight one of the concerns with self-study: "the difficulty of assessing one's own practice and reframing it" (p. 108). To counter this concern, the use of a critical friendship can be employed to assist in providing support and constructive criticism (Schuck & Russell). This focus on support and

M. C. Dalmau et al. (Eds.), Taking a Fresh Look at Education, 89–111.

encouragement became a mainstay of the process for examining practice in our self-study work with our participants; it was our goal to create a safe environment for our participants to take risks in examining practice in areas in which they felt less confident. As Schuck and Russell (2005) admit, self-study of one's own practice can be challenging and "risky" (p. 120), but it ultimately provides room for growth and a shift in teaching to better impact student learning. What aids in making this growth through self-study of practice possible is the collaboration that occurs among colleagues.

Collaboration can be seen as a relationship across individuals for a specific goal or outcome (Amabile et al., 2001; Jassawalla & Sashittal, 1998; Melin & Persson, 1996; Sonnenwald, 2007). Amabile (2001) defines collaboration as a relationship where individuals who may maintain unique and differing understandings or ways of knowing work together for a shared purpose. However, this focus on difference is less apparent in Jassawalla and Sashittal's (1998) description of collaboration as individuals with diverse interests who come together to "achieve a common purpose" (p. 239) through interacting together, sharing ideas and knowledge, and coordinating their efforts toward that common purpose. Melin and Persson (1996,) further refine the definition by including the idea that the engagement in collaboration works best when the competence of individuals is brought to the fore and resources are made known. The social context of collaboration is a critical aspect of Sonnenwald's (2007) understanding, where she defines collaboration as the coming together of individuals to address both a larger group goal as well as individual goals. Self-study of practice as a collaborative effort can be seen across these ways of thinking about collaboration. Within self-study, critical friends work together in sharing information, understandings, competencies, and resources, engaging in interactions, and working toward a common goal of understanding practice as well as individual goals addressing specific aspects of practice.

CONTEXT FOR EXAMINING PRACTICE

Providing opportunities for our participants to engage in the self-study of their own practice began as part of a state-wide professional development project in Iowa designed to prepare educators to become leaders/models of effective literacy instruction. The Iowa Literacy Project, funded by the Iowa Department of Education, involved university faculty in Special Education, Communication Sciences and Disorders, and Literacy Education in a five-year endeavor to improve/inform literacy instruction for educators in the field, including special education and general education teachers, speech-language pathologists, reading teachers, administrators, and support personnel such as classroom aides. For many of these educators, this was the first time in their professional careers that they were asked to address literacy instruction in a comprehensive way. Teacher education in special education programs for children with significant developmental disabilities has traditionally focused on the development of life skills over academic instruction. The emphasis on creating and sustaining meaningful access to the general education curriculum

for students with significant developmental disabilities has increased over the last decade (Browder, Wakeman, Flowers, Rickelman. Pugalee, & Karvonen, 2007). This change is due in large part to US legislation, such as the 1997 and 2004 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. While families and advocates have lobbied for the inclusion of children with disabilities in general education settings and instruction, it was federal legislation that mandated change in a more systematic manner.

Special Education teachers interested in changing their instructional focus to support their students in comprehensive literacy need additional professional development to be able to successfully implement literacy-based instruction that will be meaningful and effective for their students. The first three years of the project focused on providing educators interested in changing their practice with professional development on comprehensive literacy instruction. Years 4 and 5 of the project included three overarching goals: to create online comprehensive literacy modules, to provide professional development to the participating educators, and to conduct self-study research on educators' own professional practices. The focus of this chapter is on the self-study and professional development that occurred with a subset of educators during the final two years of the project.

The introduction of self-study work into the project came about from the collaborative efforts of Deb and Amy. Our collaboration began during the second year of the five-year project when Amy invited Deb to participate in the project as a literacy consultant. At the University of Northern Iowa, where we both work, Amy is affiliated with the Special Education Department, and Deb is affiliated with the Literacy Education program within the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

Part of Deb's work at the university in Literacy Education included assessment, literacy theories and practice, and literacy instruction for English language learners. Part of Amy's work at the university in Special Education included assessment, literacy instruction, and instruction for students with disabilities, including those who have been identified as having significant developmental disabilities. We brought to our collaboration a mutual interest (and experience) in literacy, with each of us providing unique areas of expertise that the other did not share. The barriers to collaboration that typically occur across disciplines were less discernable for us because of our mutual interest in literacy, as well as the structural support provided through the funded project. A shared interest in the social justice aspect of making literacy accessible to all learners also supported our collaborative efforts.

Deb also brought to the collaboration her work in self-study research, and proposed that teachers have the opportunity to examine their changing practice through self-study of practice. Prior to these final two years of the project, participants in the project had been engaged in professional development aimed at improving their understanding of literacy instruction through a comprehensive literacy model that included word work (graphemes, phonemes, phonics, morphemes, decoding, word recognition, spelling patterns, and vocabulary development), comprehension, writing, and self-selected reading. For many of the participants, this comprehensive

approach to literacy was unparalleled to any preparation or practice from their previous professional experiences.

The project team (Amy, Deb, and two colleagues from Communication Sciences and Disorders) discussed the use of self-study in conjunction with continued professional development, and saw the value of self-study as a way to provide the participants with a venue for connecting their evolving knowledge about literacy to areas they wished to better understand. The flexibility of both focus and purpose within self-study was seen as a way to facilitate the participants' varied levels of experience, practice, and needs. Part of the challenge of self-study for the participating educators was that they were located in four different regions in the state, complicating the collaboration of their study of practice. To facilitate working with the different disciplines represented across the participants, we encouraged them to pair up with a colleague who shared mutual interests. What follows is the chronicle of the process used in creating and facilitating the collaboration of our participants in their self-studies of practice. The information shared in this chapter was originally reported in an unpublished document (Staples, Tidwell, Edmister, & Garrett, 2014) summarizing the self-study process and professional development experiences of the participants in years 4 and 5 of the Iowa Literacy Project. (Note: The contents of this chapter do not necessarily represent the policy of the Iowa Department of Education and endorsement by them should not be assumed.)

SELF-STUDY METHODOLOGY

Self-study has been conceptualized by LaBoskey (2004) as a methodology that "is improvement-aimed;…is interactive;…includes multiple, mainly qualitative, methods" (p. 817) which delineates validity as a process based in the notion of trustworthiness (Mishler, 1990). We saw self-study as a way for educators engaged in ongoing professional development to examine the implications from that experience, to have a way to think about their practice, to discuss their practice with others, and to share their thinking about the changes occurring in their practice.

Interweaving of Self-Study with Coaching and Practical Argument

Through self-study, our participants were encouraged to examine their own practice as they developed and implemented literacy instruction for their students with significant developmental disabilities. By working closely with colleagues to share and discuss their practice, we anticipated that their engagement in self-study would represent a form of peer coaching (Gallbraith & Anstrom, 1995; Showers & Bruce, 1996; Thorn, McLeod, & Goldsmith, 2007), which might affect three key areas of their professional work: (1) their engagement with students and/or other educational professionals, (2) professional relationships across colleagues, and (3) their involvement in a professional community that encouraged deeper understanding of their practice, and ultimately impacted their view of the students they served

as individuals actively engaging in literacy and learning (Abrams, 2009; Zwart, Wubbels, Bergen, & Bolhuis, 2007).

We viewed the use of informed others in their discussion and examination of their practice as embedding practical argument (Fenstermacher, 1994) within their self-study work (LaBoskey, 2004; Tidwell & Heston, 1998). Practical argument has been used with educators as a framework to help them think about and examine their own practice (Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991). In this approach, the educator examines her own practice with the support of an informed other (one who has expertise and knowledge that will support and guide the individual). The educator is provided with prompts and queries to challenge her thinking about her practice and to help her make the connections between beliefs and actions, and between research and practice. Educators were seen as being in the role of informed others because of their participation in professional development in comprehensive literacy and their shared experiences working with students with significant developmental disabilities. The use of an informed other in the role of a critical friend has the potential to create the type of thoughtful and rigorous discussion about practice that leads to a better understanding of the impact of practice on learning (Hamilton, Richardson, Lloyd, Tidwell, Fenstermacher, & Anders, 1991; Tidwell & Heston, 1998). Examining practice in such a way can provide a richer context to explore the efficacy and ethics of practice in relation to key issues (Darling-Hammond, 2003). This interweaving of peer coaching with a practical argument frame embedded within a self-study approach to examining practice can provide us with a conceptual framework for thinking through how we might engage educators in a thoughtful and critical approach to their own professional development.

Participants

Before they began their self-study of practice, 18 classroom teachers and speech-language pathologists from four districts across the state were learning about comprehensive literacy as participants in a two-year PD program. From this experience the 18 educators were then invited to participate in continued PD that included self-study of their own practice. At the end of the first semester of their work in this self-study professional development program, one educator had moved, with 17 educators continuing their self-study of practice. Of those 17 educators, 12 agreed to be part of our focused research on their self-study of practice, with 11 pursuing their own self-study and a twelfth participant serving in the role of a critical friend to a colleague's self-study research.

Data and Analysis

Data in these 11 self-studies consisted of the transcriptions of meetings with university faculty regarding self-study of practice, as well as teacher data that included reflective journals, video recordings of practice or of self-debriefing on

practice, notes from meetings with critical friends, and their classroom notes taken during instructional practice.

Data sources. Data in these 11 self-studies consisted of the transcriptions of meetings with university faculty regarding self-study of practice, as well as teacher data that included reflective journals, video recordings of practice or of self-debriefing on practice, notes from meetings with critical friends, and their classroom notes taken during instructional practice.

Data analysis. Data were analyzed using a constant comparative method deemed by Glaser and Strauss (1999) as a "general method of comparative analysis" which enables the researcher to provide "relevant predictions, explanations, interpretations, and applications" (p. 1). Themes were developed within and across the self-studies using the different data sources, driven by the question, *How does self-study impact the understanding of practice?* Results from the analysis of the self-study data are organized in three major areas: the self-study process, the impact of self-study on educator practice, and the impact of self-study on learning.

DESCRIBING THEIR SELF-STUDY PROCESSES

Analysis of the data revealed a complexity within self-study that reflects the process by which collaboration through self-study influences the thinking and understanding of practice. To best represent this process, the self-study data are discussed through the timeline of self-study meetings, the choice of data sources for documenting self-study of practice, the choice of critical friends, and the development of the self-study question driving examination of practice.

Timeline of Self-Study Meetings

To begin the process of developing individual self-studies of practice, all the educators involved in the professional development program were brought together on campus on August 27, 2012, for a full-day workshop that included both ongoing professional development in comprehensive literacy and an introduction to self-study presented in three segments. The first segment provided an overview of the purpose of self-study and an introduction to self-study design. The second segment focused on selecting a critical friend using a selection process termed *research speed dating,* where all 18 educators were given the opportunity to engage in 3-minute chats with as many potential critical friends as they would like across a 45 minute time frame, with the intent of finding colleagues with similar interests for self-study work. The third segment introduced the idea of situated inquiry driven by one's own question(s) and situated in one's particular context.

The educators were asked to work with a set of prompts to help think about their practice.

When you think about your involvement with comprehensive literacy and communication, what have you done in your teaching that you believe has informed/improved your practice?

What do you see as your greatest strength in addressing comprehensive literacy and communication in your classroom?

What aspects of comprehensive literacy and/or communication would you like to explore more fully?

When you think of your own teaching and areas you would like to explore more fully, what specific area(s) seems most important/critical in improving your practice?

Each educator developed an initial research question that would drive her self-study work. To begin thinking about answering their questions, educators were given specific suggestions for data gathering, which included note taking and journaling about their practice and video recording their practice over time. Examples of video clippings with suggestions for video analysis were provided, along with examples for developing a journal on their practice. At the close of the workshop day, each educator submitted the name of the chosen critical friend. While some educators chose colleagues within their same building, most participants chose critical friends from members of the group outside their district.

Across the first year, monthly electronic meetings were organized for all the participants using Adobe Connect™. During these meetings the intent was to spend part of the time discussing their self-study research and the remainder of the time on specific aspects of comprehensive literacy. What we discovered was that self-study often took over the meetings, intruding on comprehensive literacy PD. Discussions from one site, while interesting, would require the others to listen in and, basically, wait their turn. Since the intent of the self-study discussions was to provide opportunities to talk about self-study data gathering, electronic meetings were changed to separate PD meetings, with self-study as individual electronic meetings on ZOOM™. See Table 1 for an overview of the first year meetings.

Despite efforts to keep self-study discussion separate from the professional development meetings for Comprehensive Literacy learning, participants continued to bring up their self-study work at large group meetings, often as a result of partners wishing to share an understanding or clarify an approach. This led to a change by the end of the first year in how self-study meetings were conducted, holding separate and specific self-study electronic meetings with each pair of critical partners (see Table 2 for an overview of partner meetings held during year two).

Year two for self-study of practice saw two critical changes that influenced the organization of self-study work. First, the critical friend partnerships evolved over time and several partnerships changed by the end of the first year (see critical friend choice for more information on this dynamic). Second, the meeting times for self-study discussion were changed to best address the needs of the participants, holding

Table 1. Self-study meetings – Year One

	Adobe	*Zoom*	*Onsite*	*On campus*
08/27/2012				Group*
09/25/2012	Group*		Individual	
09/27/2012			Individual	
10/09/2012	Group*		Individual	
10/30/2012	Group*			
11/29/2012	Group*			
12/11/2012	Group*			
01/15/2013	Group*			
02/25/2013		Individual		
2/26/2013		Individual Group*		
2/28/2013		Individual		
04/02/2013		Group*		
04/14–15/2013			Individual	
05/14/2013		Group*		

**Group represents either small group or large group meetings.*
(Staples, Tidwell, Edmister, & Garrett, 2014)

a total of 35 meetings across the semester for the different critical friend pairs. Table 2 shows the organization of meetings for year two, including the use of a coding system to represent the participants involved in the meetings. Meetings were scheduled when the educators were available and able to meet for a 20–30 minute period of time.

As with the organization of meetings with year one, year two began with a day-long workshop that incorporated 3 hours of self-study work in the morning. This included providing participants with a series of prompts to help them discuss their self-study work and to update their self-study focus. Discussing and reporting self-study work completed involved providing participants with specific prompts intended to capture their self-study efforts throughout year one. These prompts asked each educator to provide the following information:

- *Research question*
- *Kinds of information gathered to help answer your question*
- *Information about your practice*
- *What you want to explore*

Table 2. Self-study meetings – Year Two

*Participants**	*Zoom™ Meetings Fall 2013*			*Zoom™ Meetings Spring 2014*			
	October	*November*	*December*	*February*	*March*	*April*	*May*
CF01-01	10/29 10/30	11/21	12/18	2/13	3/6	4/10	
CF01-02	10/29 10/30	11/21	12/18	2/13	3/6	4/10	
CF02-01		11/22	12/13	2/13	3/6	4/10	5/1
CF02-02		11/22	12/13	2/13	3/6	4/10	5/1
CF03-0		11/21	12/17		3/6	4/15	
CF03-02		11/21	12/17		3/6	4/15	
CF04-01		11/22			3/13	4/24	
CF05-01		11/21	12/03	2/26		4/23	
CF07-01		11/19	12/3	2/24			5/6
CF08-01			12/16			4/17	
CF09-01	10/30	11/14	12/5	2/19		4/16	

**Participants in this table represent the 11 educators who agreed to participate in research on their self-study of practice. Coding for each participant represents the self-study partnership team of critical friends working together (CF#) followed by the partner number (01 or 02). Not all participants were able to attend all meetings. (Staples, Tidwell, Edmister, & Garrett, 2014)*

For discussion of their continued plans for their second year of self-study, participants were provided prompts that included confirming their current critical partner, the self-study question driving their examination of practice, and the type of evidence they planned to use (continue to use) to determine change in practice. In addition, participants were asked to provide a timeline for their self-study work. These prompts included:

- *Collegial critical partner*
- *Current question*
- *What change do you hope to accomplish?*
- *What evidence will you use to determine if you have made a change and how will you collect that evidence?*
- *Timeline for your self-study (including months September through April)*

Along with the scheduled meeting with university faculty regarding self-study, each educator pair also met on their own time to discuss their self-study practice.

Reported critical friend meetings ranged from one meeting per week to one meeting per month to discuss practice.

Choice of Data Sources

In developing their data sources, participants were encouraged to use journaling (written or recorded) and video recording of their practice in the field. During the first year of self-study, teachers were also engaged in professional development readings through the project, and with the development of modules by providing feedback to project directors and by being involved in video recording of their teaching practice within their school sites. The complexity of the demands on their professional time impacted their ability to focus on self-study consistently throughout the year. By the second semester of the first year, of the 12 participants in the project, ten provided written and/or recorded journals supporting their work on their self-study research. All 12 participants provided feedback on their self-study progress across the small group meetings and large group meetings where self-study was addressed (see Table 1 for self-study meetings). Two participants began to video record their practice for analysis; yet, the use of video recording of their practice was seen as less manageable within the demands of their daily practice. Consistently, participants engaged in observation of their own practice while teaching or through the use of another to provide feedback, note taking during and post implementation of specific strategies or approaches addressing their focus area, observation of their own work with children and colleagues, and discussion with colleagues and their critical friends regarding their self-study efforts.

Over time, the preponderance of data choice were in notes taken during practice, notes taken during meetings with their critical partners, and reflection upon discussion with partners and colleagues regarding their practice. As teachers discussed their data and their use of that data, the efficacy of data sources revealed the importance of time allocation for using data, collaboration with critical friends and other colleagues to make sense of data, finding meaning in the specific sources of data that were collected, and choosing specific modes of data for accessibility and user-friendly approaches. The most common form of data were the discussions held with critical friends and colleagues with whom they worked.

Choice of Critical Friends

At the first workshop on self-study in year one, participants engaged in a process for determining who might be a good candidate for the role of critical friend. Participants met in pairs to discuss their areas of interest for self-study. After three minutes of discussion, pairs rearranged to begin a new discussion with another possible critical friend candidate. Over a period of 45 minutes each participant had the opportunity to meet with the other participants one at a time to discuss their interests. By the

end of this first self-study session, participants had chosen their partners who would become their critical friend during the self-study process.

Initially, these choices for partners/critical friends were driven by mutual interests, particularly in specific areas of comprehensive literacy. Choosing critical friends based on similar interests for self-study meant that many participants had partners located in a different school district across the state. Over time, this distance between partners impacted their ability to engage as critical friends on a consistent basis. Issues centered around the complexity of organizing schedules, the technical problems that arose when trying to set up electronic meetings, and the difficulty in accessing someone in a timely way. Several of the participants began to engage with other participants located in their same building or district. They found that working as a critical friend in a shared environment provided them with similar insights and understandings of the students and the school culture. During this first year of self-study research, most of the participants changed their critical friend to someone within their own building. A driving force for this change came from the immediacy of feedback they received from colleagues who were just down the hall from their own working space. The participants found it more of a natural process, meeting up at the end of the school day to talk about their own practice and the progress of their students. As they debriefed about their day, they found their discussions would shift to their self-studies of practice. Several participants shared that this closer proximity to a critical friend and the immediacy of feedback helped to foster their documentation of practice in field notes and in data collection.

Self-Study Question Development

Throughout the self-study work in the first year, participants were encouraged to examine their original focus area they developed at the beginning of the school year in the fall and determine if it was still a good fit for their self-study of practice. To do so, they began gathering data about what they were learning about their own practice. Beginning in January, the participants reflected upon the efficacy of their initial self-study questions developed in the fall. Throughout the spring semester they took notes about their practice, discussed their practice with their partners, and met in small group meetings to update the progress of their self-studies. The information they gleaned from these interactions helped them to determine the efficacy of their original self-study questions, and a majority of the participants then revised their specific focus questions to best reflect their self-study intent. This process they experienced reflects a phenomenon about self-study, where the question often evolves as data from practice informs that practice (Tidwell, Heston, & Fitzgerald, 2009).

The information learned about practice during the first year of self-study better informed the participants on the specific area or issue they would like to address in improving their practice. This changed their thinking about their practice and, in several instances, changed the focus for their self-study. Table 3 provides

Table 3. Examining the efficacy of self-study research questions over time – Year One

Speech-Language Pathology Example:		
Original Question	Data Sources	Findings from Data
What different roles do I play as an SLP in a Level II classroom?	Google doc journal Conversations with critical friend Conversations from teachers	I do have multiple roles as an SLP: • Behavior management • Materials provider • Collaborator • Idea creator
Focus Change: What are my roles outside the Level II classroom – involving parents, medical SLP, colleagues?		
Teaching Comprehension Example:		
Original Question	Data Sources	Findings from Data
Am I making comprehension meaningful for my students?	Modules Professional reading Collaboration with UNI & support from my team [lesson feedback, notes]	My students began to use the "language" • author's purpose • character analysis • story maps • think alouds
Focus Change: Branch out from comprehension to my practice of teaching writing – making writing meaningful and fun for my students		
Communication Example:		
Original Question	Data Sources	Findings from Data
How can I make sure that what I'm doing is improving the child's communication in the classroom?	Collaboration/brainstorming through emails with teachers Increased time in general education & special education & decreased 1:1 pull out Feedback from teachers	Communication demands in the classroom Observing students led to adjustments in my practice with those targeted children
Focus Change: How can I maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of my time in the classroom through collaboration?		

(Adapted from Staples, Tidwell, Edmister, & Garrett, 2014)

three examples from the first year that highlight the insights gleaned from self-study data which informed the participants about the efficacy of their research areas (and their self-study question). The three examples are from a speech-language pathologist examining her role in the classroom, a special education teacher examining the

impact of her comprehension instruction, and a special education teacher examining her effectiveness at supporting the communication of a child in the classroom.

This evolving nature of the research question that drove each of their self-studies reflects the impact of thoughtful reflection on practice. In the teaching comprehension example in Table 3, the evolving self-study question shows a change in the special education teacher's instructional focus from comprehension to writing. Through her self-study of her own teaching practice, she documented her efforts in choosing appropriate texts for her students, in using think alouds to encourage students to express their understanding of the author's message as well as their own confusions and queries, and in analyzing characters and character development within a story. She also documented her students' use of think alouds during reading that reflected their understandings and their confusions, and their use of questioning and predicting regarding possible story development. Her successful efforts to carefully choose appropriate text complexity for her students was reflected in her students' use of the author's language in their own discussions. Data (in the form of notes) taken during her instruction in analyzing characters in stories showed that her students were able to use character analysis to discuss similarities and differences in characters within a story and across different stories. This success in reading comprehension, coupled with her understanding of the impact of reading on writing and writing on reading, led her to revise her year two self-study focus to writing instruction. "I want to branch out from comprehension to extend it to my practice of teaching writing. I want to work on my personal study of making writing meaningful and fun for students" (Year Two Self-Study Update form).

Conversely, an initial self-study question may reflect a focus on practice that is sustainable and meaningful over time. Some initial self-study questions remained the same but the depth in which the educator examined the query increased. For example, one participant, a special education teacher, maintained her initial question across both years of her self-study. She wanted to know how she could make communication more effective and enriched in her classroom. Her students required the support of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices to convey their thoughts. The initial focus for this teacher's question was on increasing her own patience and wait time when communicating with her students since it takes considerable time to compose a message lengthier than one or two words. In addition, she brought in a consultant to help her with device selection, customization, and use. In year two, she maintained the same focus but her depth was greater; she examined how each child could have an individualized communication system, and she researched the efficacy of each system by gathering video data of each child's communication use. Ultimately, the development of the research focus through a self-study question provides an insight into how these educators engaged in context specific examination of practice (see Table 4 for documentation of question change over time across the 11 self-studies of practice). The ongoing development of their self-study questions reflects their thinking about practice, and relates directly to their

decisions about what they do in the classroom, how they engage with students, and how they create a culture of learning.

Table 4. Self-study question development over time

Participant	*Initial Self-Study Question*	*Final Self-Study Question*
CF01-01	*What am I doing in writing?*	*How am I reciprocating communication to promote positive behavior?*
CF01-02	*How can I provide more communication opportunities for my students during reading and writing activities?*	*Am I making literacy meaningful to all students?*
CF02-01	*Am I making comprehension meaningful for my students?*	*Am I making writing meaningful and fun for my students?*
CF02-02	*How can I make communication more effective and enriched in my classroom?*	*How can I make communication more effective and enriched in my classroom?*
CF03-01	*How can I make sure that what I'm doing is improving the child's communication in the classroom?*	*How can I maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of my time in the classroom?*
CF03-02	*How do I improve my delivery of systematic word instruction?*	*How can I better utilize technology to help a student with intense communication and sensory needs?*
CF04-01	*How do I collaborate with someone that doesn't agree with me?*	*How do I effectively collaborate/get to know professionally someone with whom I've never worked before?*
CF05-01	*How can I improve comprehension through weekly contact with parents?*	*How do I make decisions about what to use and what to eliminate in the new reading program?*
CF07-01	*What are the different roles I can possibly play in the Level II classroom?*	*What are the different roles I can possibly play with teachers, parents and colleagues?*
CF08-01	*What am I doing for children who don't see self as readers?*	*How can I help children choose to read as a center activity?*
CF09-01	*How do I know my communication is effective?*	*How effective am I in communicating needs for students with communication systems and providing support over time in implementation of those systems?*

(Staples, Tidwell, Edmister, & Garrett, 2014)

IMPACT OF COLLABORATION AND SELF-STUDY ON EDUCATORS' PRACTICE

Results from the two years of self-study of practice suggest that self-study (when combined with professional development focused on improving instruction) is useful in helping teachers think about teaching and learning, and in fostering a proactive stance toward their professional practice. An analysis of the data from meetings and of data provided by the participants resulted in five specific themes related to educator practice: power of collaboration, awareness of practice, efficacy, onus of practice, and a shift toward students.

Power of Collaboration

As discussed in *choice of critical friend* in the section above on *process of self-study*, the collaboration with a colleague who shares the same situated context for practice is powerful. The selection of a critical friend who was accessible and familiar with the learning environment (school and children) helped drive the success of the self-study process. During the discussions each month about their self-study research, the impact on practice of the role of the critical friend as the informed other revealed the importance of the other voice in shaping understanding of self-study methods and data. In concert with the critical friend was the collaboration with a university faculty member who served as facilitator and as an additional informed other, often speaking to the efficacy of practice.

The informed other often was seen as recognizing *small steps* toward change and improvement of practice that was not previously recognized by the educator conducting the self-study research. During discussion, the critical friend as the informed other was seen as *reiterating context to inform practice*, meaning that the other voice in the process of discussion helped to bring the context forward in helping shape the meaning of the practice being discussed. Through this process of discussion, the idea of *stepping back to look forward* occurred when the critical friend or the facilitator guided the discussion back to earlier events or data to clarify practice. Across all discussion, the informed other played a key role in *altering perceptions* about practice, especially regarding the educator's view of students, of efficacy of practice, and of the role of teacher and learner.

Awareness of Practice

Across the comments from journals, from group meetings, and from partner Zoom™ meetings, participants stated that engagement in self-study made them more aware of their practice, specifically in the area being addressed by their research question, but also in other areas of their practice. Their comments focused on how the process of self-study of their own practice affected their awareness overall of their actions and interactions across their practice. As one special education teacher

stated, "the very act of engaging in self-study changes how one thinks about one's practice" (CF01-02, 2-13-14). This notion that the focus on practice through self-study influenced how they thought about their practice was reiterated by 81% of the participants. In essence, the intentional planning to examine practice through the lens of a particular area of literacy (focusing upon a question about their practice that related to literacy instruction/literacy learning) created a persistent query about practice that they could not (or would not) ignore. As one educator (CF05-01) suggested, once she started thinking about why she was doing what she was doing, she could not stop asking herself *why*? This ongoing query about practice seems to focus educators' attention on their actions, reactions, and interactions within practice across the instructional setting.

Efficacy

Though not all self-study questions addressed issues of efficacy, many of the participants in their discussions and journals raised concerns about the efficacy of their own practice with students, the efficacy of a current protocol of the institution, or the efficacy of their engagement with adults (both colleagues and parents). Across these concerns of efficacy was an undercurrent of doubt about their own practice. This doubt can be seen as a by-product of self-study in that closer examination of practice coupled with thoughtful discussion of meaning within practice imbues a culture of inquiry that raises questions and encourages a level of discourse that can inform and change understanding about practice (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009).

This sense of doubt can also create cognitive dissonance (about practice) that Whitehead (1989) refers to as a living contradiction. In their discussion of practice, several participants raised concerns that reflected a living contradiction, as they discussed trying to implement a practice they believed was important for their students, only to realize that their actual practice did not match the ideal. This living contradiction can be seen as a positive aspect of self-study as it provides an awareness of practice that is important in moving toward change. Wood (2010) suggests that a living contradiction arises as we "transform ourselves by living out our values in our everyday interaction" (p. 109). In essence, as these educators intentionally change their practice, they are living out their professional lives reflecting those practices they value as important and which they hope will positively impact the learning of their students.

A major area of discussion across educators in terms of efficacy of practice was the issue of time. Time became a deciding factor in determining the efficacy of practice in terms of managing an instructional lesson that enabled students to participate. While most educators would identify time as a barrier to instructional change, for these educators, the complex needs of their students with disabilities amplified this barrier. Children with complex and multiple disabilities often require ongoing individualized physical, communicative, and cognitive support. Making any changes in instruction for these students can be arduous due to the need to create or modify

materials and/or arrange for additional appropriate personnel to ensure students have meaningful opportunities to engage actively in a lesson. Making a change in book selection might require reprogramming a communication device, modifying a book so a student could turn its pages or see it, or asking a speech-language pathologist to adjust her schedule to provide a student with communication support. As a result, educators had to ask themselves whether there was time available to make the instructional changes that made sense to them. Would there be enough time to provide enough support to make the practice viable? Would there be enough time to prepare for the activity? Time was also discussed as an important variable within instruction that needs to be provided to students in order for them to be successful. The conflict many educators discussed regarding their use of time in their practice was in letting go of the control of time in order to allow students to have that time to respond and engage effectively in instructional activities. Some students might need more than a minute to respond to a question, for example. Teachers struggled with how to give students the time they needed without disrupting the flow of the lesson.

Onus of Practice

The focus on responsibility and obligation within practice, categorized as onus of practice, was reflected both in the discussions by participants of efficacy and in the development of self-study questions. On issues of efficacy, participants discussed responsibility in making practice meaningful to students, and in designing or crafting lessons for content, for meaning, or for efficiency. Onus of practice also reflected how participants developed their initial self-study question about their practice (which in some cases involved participants deflecting from their own actions in terms of data and focusing on the actions of others, such as students, colleagues, or parents). This notion of onus deflected to others changed over time, as questions evolved and as understanding of self-study shifted from looking at others to examining the actions of self to better understand the intent of individual practice.

During the second year of self-study, the discussion on onus of practice centered on responsibility, suggesting that effective educators are those that provide authentic learning for students with significant disabilities. The idea of authentic was grounded in discussions of access to literacy: connecting learning to students' lives, providing tangible experiences to make learning come alive (manipulatives, real writing experiences with student-created text, physical access to books), and creating a classroom environment where learning is possible and where learning is expected.

Shift Toward Students

Another common theme in the discussion of the impact of self-study on practice was the shift educators saw in their focus toward their students in ways that improved their literacy instruction. All 11 educators related their self-study work in some way toward addressing students' needs. Over the two years of self-study meetings, and

in particular during the second year where partners met as a pair with a faculty facilitator to discuss their practice, discussions about instruction and student engagement showed a clear shift toward students. This shift was most noticeable in discussions of an increase in instruction involving student choice, paying attention to wait time for student responses, changing teacher talk with students, providing more opportunities for students to attempt tasks (previously completed by the teacher), and including student voice in decision making.

Early in her self-study work, one special education teacher (CF01-02) during the Fall 2012 combined PD and self-study group meeting, shared the process she used to get at how she was addressing communication. She "stepped back and considered how to include communications more" [October 22, 2012 meeting notes, p. 1]. She began by first examining what she had for communication support and how she was using it. To help her think about communication within the context of literacy, she reviewed the comprehensive literacy text from PD and looked at what she was currently doing. As she watched herself in her teaching she became aware that she did not wait long enough for a response. When children used communication devices they often had a delay to think about their answer and then to construct the message using their device before they could respond. Further, she noticed she was more interested in getting responses than in the content of the response. She was stunned (living contradiction) to see herself focusing mostly on participation and product. She saw this awareness shifting her focus from being at a more surface level of watching for a response action from a student to a focus on the student's meaning making within that response.

Some discussion of this shift toward students involved educators making a shift in how they realized their own role in the learning environment. These discussions involved efforts to intentionally examine current practice to better understand what needed to be changed. The shift toward the students grew out of a better understanding of how literacy works (support from PD sessions) and a desire to change practice to improve students' literacy experiences. For example, CF02-01, a general education teacher, discussed how she began her self-study focusing on her writing instruction. In reviewing her previous annual plans for writing, she noticed that every year she changed what she did for writing, but was never satisfied. She thought looking more closely at what she did would help give her insights. Over the first five months of her self-study, she was able to see what she was doing with writing, which she found was mostly teacher-provided writing prompts and assignments. What surprised her was how often she cancelled writing due to a conflict with specials (art, physical education, music) or with other school activities. She discussed how she thought about implementing change by using resources (websites, texts) to help her think about and develop her writing program.

Through her journal entries about her practice, she saw that her teacher-led approach to writing needed to be changed; from her readings she realized the need for a shift in her role, stating that her students needed to lead her where to go (shifting from a teacher-directed approach to a more student-centered approach).

One incident recorded in her notes about her classroom practice was pivotal in helping her think about change. A student had made a request about writing, but she kept putting him off. When she finally did give him what he wanted to develop his writing piece, his writing was far more complex and sophisticated than she had seen in previous writing samples. The faculty facilitator for the PD meeting, upon hearing her discussion of her insights, had suggested she take a look at the work of Donald Graves and Lucy Calkins. During the months following that meeting discussion, she used the suggested resources to help her shift her practice toward her students, using her students to help direct her teaching. This example is one of several across the self-studies in which the combination of effective PD support and self-study work enabled the educator to look more deeply at practice and effective change in practice in order to improve literacy instruction.

IMPACT OF COLLABORATION AND SELF-STUDY ON LEARNING

The impact of the self-study of practice on students' learning was reported by the participants through their observations of students' responses to their practice as it related to their self-study work. Three main areas of learning discussed across educators included meaning making as a function of student literacy responses, student engagement, and student persistence with tasks.

Meaning Making as a Function of Student Literacy Response

The impact of a comprehensive literacy PD program was evident in the educators' discussion of student response to instruction as a meaning making event. All 11 educators discussed the importance of providing instruction that was meaningful to students and that enabled students to "make meaning" (CF02-02, 04-10-2014) as the reason for literacy instruction. Making meaning was discussed within student response to different levels of text structure, within student actions related to engagement of tasks, within student response to story (whether in reading or writing), and within student-generated actions related to tasks.

Reference was made to different levels of text response as meaning-based responses to instruction. At the smallest level of text, some educators provided examples of student identification of letter sounds within words as more than a skill-related task but rather a meaning-based response to a recognized word within an understood story. In this context, students were able to identify letter sounds and letter combinations because of the meaningful connections they were making to a known story or sentence structure that contained a recognized word. In other words, the educator was approaching the skill aspect of the lesson through a whole to part approach that provided a meaningful context for the skill within a story using known vocabulary. Educators provided examples of application of the targeted skill to new words, building from a base of known to new. Examples of meaning-based response to larger levels of text were provided that included making meaning using

sentence structure (both in reading and writing), understanding meaning through the examination of story structure (including the use of think alouds, story grammar, and prediction, confirmation of predictions, and integration of confirmed content into the understanding of the story).

Student actions related to engagement of task focused on how students provided evidence that they were making meaning in their effort to engage in an instructional activity. Educators reported student communication device use to express meaning in response to educator prompts, student use of eye contact to express understanding (such as the intent of a lesson or the focus on content being addressed), use of eye movement to respond meaningfully to question prompts (indicating understand of context, task, or content), student use of switches to express choice, opinion, or answers to teacher prompts, and student efforts to provide oral or written responses to teacher prompts.

Student response to story related to meaning making exhibited by students in response to instruction using larger amounts of text (such as poetry, paragraphs, book chapters, and short stories). Examples provided included student use of visuals to recall/retell story, student use of teacher prompts to show evidence of story knowledge, and student creation of story from teacher prompts, story frames, or story structure borrowed from texts read in class.

Student-generated actions related to tasks refer to the examples provided by educators where students were proactive in their engagement with tasks that reflected their understanding of meaning. In these contexts, educators cited examples where students took the initiative without teacher prompts to respond to both reading and writing activities. Such initiative included evidence of interest through student generated actions [such as reaching for text, asking for book, eye contact, physical response (sitting up or leaning forward), oral response], student engagement in word recognition, student self-initiated response to story, and student-generated independent writing.

Student engagement. Educators provided multiple examples of connecting their self-study work directly to increased student engagement in the classroom. These examples included the meaning-based examples provided above as well as examples of student actions showing engagement not necessarily indicating an understanding or connection to meaning making. Such student responses were in relation to teacher-provided support using techniques or technology, such as communication devices, access tools, and physical response (e.g., eye gaze, gesture, facial expression) to teacher prompts and guidance.

Student persistence to tasks. Educators provided multiple examples of their students showing persistence on tasks within a lesson and over time across multiple lessons. This idea of persistence as related to their self-study of practice was documented in observations of student focus, documentation of time on task, and the concept of student stamina. Student focus was reflected in the manner in which educators described students maintaining concentration on a task. Some educators

also provided tangible time on task evidence, documenting seconds and minutes in which students were able to maintain engagement with a particular task. Student stamina was described by educators as a phenomena of persistence combining both focus and extended time on task that was not interrupted or affected by other variables (such as student interruption, announcement interruption, teacher focus on other students).

SUMMARY OF COLLABORATION THROUGH SELF-STUDY OF PRACTICE

A summary of the impact of self-study on our participants' practice suggests that providing educators with a rich professional development context for examining their own practice will support the development of an awareness of practice that encourages collegial engagement and critical thinking on teaching and learning. Collaboration in this context represented the bringing together of individuals with different experiences and different interests harboring a shared goal of improving the understanding and implementation of practice. Across the data (and subsequent themes that emerged from data analysis) was an overarching value of presumption of competence (Jorgensen, McSheehan, & Sonnenmeier, 2007). This notion of presumed competence, strongly supported within the professional development sessions, was evident in the manner in which teachers discussed their own practice and in their discussion and expectations of their students, assuming that all students are capable of learning and that literacy instruction and change in practice would positively impact all students understanding of how literacy works. What emerged from these self-studies of practice were educators imbued with altered thinking about practice related to time allocation, the value of collaboration, and the understanding that situated inquiry driven by one's own questions about practice provides a powerful approach for improving practice, both for educators and for the students affected by their practice.

The impact of these self-studies could be seen across the many ways in which the educators were able to make sense of their improvement on practice. By grounding their self-study focus in specific context-based inquiry, participants were able to recognize subtle yet important steps toward instructional change. These small steps over time culminated into an improved knowledge of practice that informed their instructional actions. This was particularly evident in the evolution of self-study research questions over time which reflected a greater knowledge of practice and change within practice. As instruction improved in one area, it appeared to foster a deeper awareness of practice overall and a more complex understanding of how their practice influenced learning.

Self-study of practice within the context of implementing instructional change focused the educators' attention on understanding practice. This understanding helped to inform instructional decision-making. More specifically, the combination of informed decision making through professional development focused on

comprehensive literacy coupled with self-study of practice that encouraged collegial engagement provided an effective context for improving practice. This improved practice was realized in educators' increased understanding of effective literacy instruction, and through their problem solving to change and improve practice.

Self-study in tandem with ongoing PD seemed to allow the participants to get more out of the PD. The use of the critical friend and ongoing self-study meetings provided that support to discuss and think about practice. From the response of the participants it was clear that they actually enjoyed the opportunity to examine their practice and to have the support and time to do so. The self-study process provided them with a structure to examine their practice with regularity and with a sounding board (both from the critical friend and the research support) that enabled ongoing thoughtful discussion of practice.

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CLARE KOSNIK, POOJA DHARAMSHI AND LYDYA MENNA

7. RECONCEPTUALIZING THEIR TEACHING OVER TIME

Goals and Pedagogies of Mid- and Later-Career Literacy/English Teacher Educators

> In most countries … there is not yet a shared understanding about the roles, competences or qualification requirements of teacher educators … there is still relatively little awareness about teacher educators' key roles in improving educational attainment, or the competences they need to fulfill their roles effectively …
>
> (European Commission 2013, p. 11)

INTRODUCTION

Teacher educators are often considered as a homogeneous group but given their varied backgrounds, interests, and strengths they are in fact quite heterogeneous. A number of variables come into play: educational background (e.g. highest degree a PhD or Master); years experience as a classroom teacher (e.g., few years versus being a master teacher); status in the university (contract versus tenured); years of experience in higher education (novice versus later-career); involvement in administration; and level of research activity. This brief list reveals the variability of those referred to as teacher educators. This heterogeneity is one of the reasons why, as the European Commission (2013) notes above, there is not a shared understanding of teacher educators collectively or individually.

Our large-scale research project, *Literacy Teacher Educators: Their Goals, Visions, and Practices*, examined 28 literacy/English teacher educators (LTEs) from Canada, the United States (US), the United Kingdom (UK), and Australia. This project was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The overall goal was to study in depth a group of literacy/English teacher educators, (LTEs) with special attention to their backgrounds, knowledge, research activities, identity, view of current government initiatives, pedagogy, and course goals.

This chapter focused on the pedagogy of mid- and later-career LTEs because their views and issues are significantly different from novice LTEs. Narrowing specifically on literacy teacher educators was particularly important because the landscape of literacy is changing as an array of communication channels (e.g., text

M. C. Dalmau et al. (Eds.), Taking a Fresh Look at Education, 113–127.

messaging) has extended the boundaries of communication and forms of knowledge construction (Kress, 2010). In this chapter we addressed the question, How do LTE's pedagogies and goals for their courses change over time?

The intent of this paper was not to compare new LTEs with mid- and later-career LTEs. Rather, we looked specifically at the pedagogies of mid- and later-career LTEs and documented their self-reports on how and why they changed. This research provides insight into teacher educators beyond their initial transition from classroom teacher; mid- and later- career teacher educators are rarely considered (Kosnik et al., 2014). This research begins to provide what the European Education Commission (2013) calls for a "shared understanding about the roles, competences or qualification requirements of teacher educators" (p. 11).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Teacher education is truly a complex enterprise. Williamson (2013) identified a central paradox of teacher education:

> …we must prepare teachers for the schools we have while at the same time we must prepare them for the schools we want. Though we must help our students become teachers who can understand the complexities of schools- who can enact the required curricula and meet professional standards- we also want them to see themselves as change agents who can make a difference in how school happens. This means that our courses must invite students to take stock of how their literacy instruction provides kids with access to learning opportunities- to understand the resources and the practices that are available- and then to envision how these can be adapted and enhanced to achieve the rich, rigorous literacy goals that we set for our youth. (p. 2)

Reconciling this paradox of conflicting goals for teacher education is not easy especially in these highly politicized times. The role of the teacher educator presents yet another paradox. Loughran (2006) argues that "the teacher educator may be viewed as simply being a teacher teaching in teacher preparation" however they must have "an expertise in teaching and learning about teaching" (p. 13). In his ground-breaking text, *Developing a Pedagogy of Teacher Education: Understanding Teaching and Learning about Teaching*, Loughran notes that one cannot simply replicate one's practices as a classroom teacher in the university setting; there is no direct application of the skills used for teaching children to teaching adults. Loughran (2006) provides a set of six principles for his pedagogy of teacher education: need for sensitivity, building trust, being honest, valuing independence, reflection, and risk-taking. He sees these principles "as the essence of teaching about teaching… principles are the foundation for reflection on practice and a catalyst for researching teaching through self-study" (p. 98). Not to be used as a checklist, he suggests that teacher educators should cloak these principles in content for their context while using them to think about teaching about teaching.

Novice teacher educators find that their knowledge is insufficient because it needs to be *repackaged* and broadened (Murray & Male, 2005). Mid- and later-career teacher educators are faced with a number of different challenges with respect to pedagogy: solving the problem of not having *recent* experience as a classroom teacher, integrating digital technology into their courses, and often balancing administrative duties with their teaching and research (Kosnik et al., 2014).

Kosnik, Rowsell, and Simon (2013) built on Loughran's work by focusing specifically on literacy teacher educators because, as Boyd and Harris (2010) argue, each content area in which teacher educators work must be considered because each discipline carries different demands (p. 9). Kosnik et al. (2013) identified a number of characteristics of exemplary LTEs: rethinking literacy in a digital age; being thoughtful and having integrity about teaching and research; developing a rich pedagogy; drawing on one's own teaching and research experience; adopting an inquiry stance; and making links between practice teaching and the academic program.

The work of LTEs is complex because they "must bridge theory and practice; attend to the requirements of a number of external bodies (e.g., college of teachers; government departments); be cognizant of new school district/government initiatives; connect academic courses to practice teaching (over which they often have little control); develop a coherent course for student teachers who come to the program with markedly different prior experiences; and model effective teaching" (Kosnik et al., 2015 p. 52). In order to meet this extensive requirements Kosnik et al. (2014) identified four spheres of knowledge required for LTEs. LTEs must be familiar with government initiatives in order to address them with student teachers. Their knowledge of literacy theory and literacy teaching will guide their pedagogy. Conducting research will deepen their knowledge and enhance their identity as

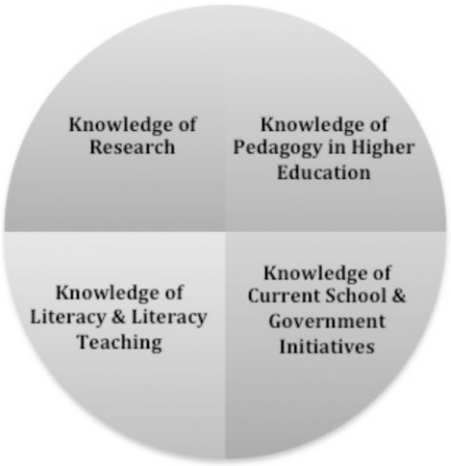

Figure 1. Spheres of knowledge

researchers. Their knowledge of pedagogy of higher education must be extensive because they design opportunities for learning, select appropriate readings, set useful assignments, and create a supportive environment.

Their knowledge cannot remain static or be seen to be complete because after coming to terms with the often traumatic transition from classroom teacher to academic (Murray & Male, 2005; Williams et al., 2012) there must be continuing growth. How do teacher educators' practices develop? To what extent do mid- and later-career teacher educators re-conceptualize their work over time? By understanding their trajectory and examining how they change over time we gain essential insights into teacher educator development. This information can provide institutions with information on how they can best support teacher educators and provide novice teacher educators with some sense of future development.

METHODOLOGY

This study involved interviewing 28 literacy/English teacher educators. To put together the sample of 28 literacy/English teacher educators we compiled lists from a balance of Tier 1 (research-intensive) and Tier 2 (teaching-focused) institutions and systematically worked through them. Some teacher educators were invited because we knew they taught literacy methods courses, others because they had published research in literacy. To make the sample consistent we invited only those who had a doctorate. We tried to ensure there were a range of experience (e.g., elementary/primary and secondary teaching), and a gender representation comparable to that in the profession as a whole. Six declined our invitation to participate for a variety of reasons (e.g., assuming a new administrative position and therefore not teaching literacy methods courses). To our knowledge none declined because of a lack of interest.

In regards to the literacy/English teacher educators' relative experience, we understood the terms novice, mid-career, and later-career in the following way:

- **novice**: 0–4 years experience
- **mid-career**: 5–10 years experience
- **later-career**: 10 + years experience

For the purposes of this report we only included LTEs with five years or more experience, therefore we limited our sample from the original 28 to 21 participants within the mid-career or later-career categories.

All participants were interviewed three times over the period of April 2012 to August, February, 2015. Each semi-structured interview was approximately 60–90 minutes in length. The first interview addressed background experiences (e.g., education) and research activities. The second interview considered pedagogy (e.g., goals for courses, teaching strategies). The third interview focused on use of digital technology and future plans. Interviews were done either face to face or via Skype and were audio-recorded and transcribed.

Much of the methodology was qualitative as defined by Merriam (2009) and Punch (2014). Qualitative inquiry is justified as it provides depth of understanding and enables exploration of questions that do not on the whole lend themselves to quantitative inquiry (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Guzzetti, Anders, & Neuman, 1999; Merriam, 2009). Such methodology opens the way to gaining entirely unexpected ideas and information from participants in addition to exploring their opinions on simple pre-set matters. A modified grounded theory approach was used, not beginning with a fixed theory but generating theory inductively from the data using a set of techniques and procedures for collection and analysis (Punch, 2014). As the analysis progressed, key themes were identified and refined – adding some and deleting or merging others – through constant comparison of the interview transcripts.

For data analysis we used NVivo9, going through a number of steps:

1. Our initial coding of the transcripts was fairly broad, leading to 100+nodes/themes. Some arose straightforwardly as answers to our interview questions (e.g., background experience as a classroom teacher) while others emerged unexpectedly (e.g., fell into doing a PhD).
2. After two rounds of coding we collapsed our analysis into 50+ nodes/themes; however, within them there were sub-nodes (e.g., gaps in knowledge had sub-nodes of knowledge of research, knowledge of schools).
3. As we analyzed the quotes, annotations, and memos we developed summary findings for three areas in particular: goals, teaching style, and political context.

FINDINGS

As Figure 2 shows, our sample of mid- and later-career teacher educators included LTEs with range of experience both as classroom teachers and as university faculty. Although our participants worked in both research-intensive and teaching-focused universities, teaching well was very important to all.

Developing Goals for Their Courses

Given that our sample of 21 LTEs had substantial experience in teacher education, they have had time to develop the goals for their courses. They were very specific in their aims and easily provided examples of ways they realized these goals.

Remaining current. As Williamson (2013) noted earlier, part of teacher educators' work is preparing student teachers for the schools we have now. However, for mid- and later-career teacher educators their experience as classroom teachers occurred many years ago and schooling has changed (e.g., use of digital technology). To determine how our LTEs handled this situation we asked, "To what extent do you draw on your experiences as a classroom teacher?" Interestingly, 17 said a great deal while 4 replied not at all. For those who drew on their personal experiences

Experience as a classroom teacher	*0 years = 1* *1-5 years = 1* *6-10 years = 9* *11-20 years= 6* *21+ years = 4*
Years at the university	*6 -10 years = 10* *11-15 years = 2* *16 -20 years= 5* *21+ years = 4*
Country	*Canada = 7* *US = 5* *Australia = 5* *England = 4*

Figure 2. Background experiences (as of 2013)

as classroom teachers they did so to help student teachers understand the reality of teaching. For example, Caterina knew that "there is never enough time as a teacher" so she tried "to help her student teachers be realistic." Having been a classroom teacher gave them some credibility but it was met with a mixed reaction. Justin reported:

> *On a good day … one has some credibility with ones students precisely because one can talk from first hand experience. At the same time, on a bad day, I'm aware that students think that this must have happened in some era where dinosaurs roamed the earth or something and its really not relevant to current reality. On a good day, it doesn't feel like that at all.*

Rather than despair about their lack of recent classroom teaching experience many were pragmatic. Bob felt that over time (and with a great deal of work) he had developed the "capacity to understand the world from the student teacher's perspective because it is different from when I was a teacher." In order to secure recent examples of teaching practice some LTEs got materials of children's work from teachers they observed when doing practice teaching supervision; some "borrowed" their children and grandchildren's work; while others accessed resources from teacher participants involved in their formal research.

Developing specific and expansive goals. Through their teaching and research our participants developed a clear set of goals for their student teachers and themselves

(which they were constantly revising). By mid- and later-career, the LTEs had moved beyond addressing a series of disconnected topics which often characterizes the work of new teacher educators (Fletcher, 2012). Emma felt her course construction had improved because she had "an overall design for her course making it more coherent." Many noted it had taken many years to develop a course where goals and activities matched; topics built sequentially; and, readings and assignments supported goals. Some recalled that as beginning LTEs they had drawn heavily on their classroom teaching experience while others offered courses that were too theoretical, believing that was what new teachers needed. Sharon noted, "too heavy an emphasis on the practical is as inappropriate as too much theory." By doing research, attending conferences, working with colleagues, and reflecting on practice they learned how to better balance theory and practice.

The goals for their courses were both expansive and specific. We identified three main sets of goal: firstly, and not surprisingly, was helping student teachers gain knowledge of literacy theory and acquire teaching skills. Emma explained she wants her student teachers to "understand current curriculum … develop skills to plan and assess … I want student teachers to be independent thinkers who are not just teaching for the schools we have … they must know both theory and practice." Secondly was the goal of developing an identity as a professional. It is not sufficient to have what many referred to as a "bag of tricks." Caterina wanted her "students to see themselves as professionals not college students." In order to help student teachers develop as professionals, Stella felt she could not be the sage on the stage. "I've never been a teacher who wants to give people answers. And I know sometimes people find that infuriating because what I want to do is encourage them to think and to experiment and to take risks." Thirdly was helping student teachers position education in the larger political/social context. It was important for student teachers to understand literacy in the broader context of education (and society). Justin's expansive goals were: "prepare student teachers for a lifetime of teaching … prepare them to be public intellectuals … personalize English teaching … see schools as an emancipatory space." These three broad goals were not addressed sequentially; rather, the LTEs aimed to have them work in a dialogic fashion.

The LTEs identified particular teaching strategies, some quite ingenuous, to meet their goals. See Figure 3.

The LTEs recounted that as beginning teacher educators they had had a limited number of strategies for teaching in higher education; over time through trial and error and working with colleagues their repertoire increased. In addition to their pedagogy evolving, their attitudes towards student teachers became more realistic. Carolina said she no longer expects student teachers to want to know everything. She has "mellowed" has become "not as intense' and is "more realistic what she can accomplish." Many recognized that student teachers had many demands on them outside of school (e.g., part-time jobs) so they adjusted course expectations (e.g., reduced number of readings).

Goal	*Teaching Strategy*
Knowledge/Skills Development	• *hold book talks* • *student teachers work with children in a tutoring programs* • *analyze videos of classrooms* • *examine photographs of places for literacy;* • *use a range of digital technologies (e.g., Tumble Books, Voice Thread)* • *do a case study of an individual child* • *respond to videos made during practice teaching*
Identity as a Professional	• *invite classroom teachers and/or community leaders as guest speakers* • *form on-line discussion groups* • *assist in organizing in-service sessions for teachers* • *invite student teachers to participate in LTEs' research activities* • *encourage student teachers to participate in world-wide teacher communities (through Twitter and blogs)*
Position education in the larger political/social context.	• *hold debates on "hot" topics (e.g., Why do politicians find the teaching of phonics so appealing?)* • *conduct community walks* • *connect student teachers with community-based groups* • *analyze policy documents*

Figure 3. Goals and teaching strategies

Developing a Teaching Style

Just as the goals for their courses evolved, so had their teaching. When describing their teaching style, participants had a range of responses, but confidence in their ability was common to all. Chester realized that "learning takes time. I've become much more confident and I think that's changed my practice. Not panicking, not

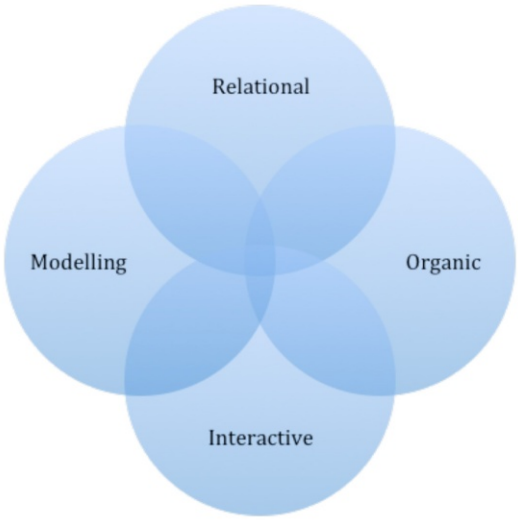

Figure 4. Features of teaching style

rushing, not getting anxious about things." We identified four common features of their teaching styles which were mutually supporting (see Figure 4).

Relational approach. Across the three interviews, one element of the LTEs' teaching philosophy mentioned repeatedly was the importance of knowing their student teachers. All but one participant felt this was key to teaching well. Margie said, "getting to know the students as individuals" helped her develop her courses to more effectively meet their needs. Justin's "valuing what they bring to the course" was the foundation upon which to build his teaching. For example, he encouraged student teachers to draw on their rich funds of knowledge (e.g., home language) in developing their teaching practice. They did not privilege teaching practical strategies or theory (as they had done as beginning teacher educators) because they believed they first needed to know their student teachers as individuals. Over time they realized the value of the affective qualities of being an LTE and were not afraid a caring stance would undermine their authority as professors/lecturers. When asked to define the qualities of an effective LTE, 17 of the 21 included the "softer" qualities of caring and being supportive in addition to subject expertise.

Organic approach. Although they were very thoughtful and deliberate in developing their courses, there was still what Bob described as "openness." In order to meet their student teachers' needs, their courses could not be preset. Seven described their courses as organic, seven as preset, and six as a combination of organic and preset. Justin described his approach as "structured but there is time for discussion and

activity." Beatrice said, "I mix and match different styles. So sometimes I'm quite telling what's what … and other times I attempt to get them to talk. … I often have a clear sense of what I'm going to do." Many of our LTEs adopted an inquiry stance which is consistent with an organic approach. An inquiry stance allowed individual interests to emerge (both the LTEs and the student teachers) and its flexibility allowed them to address issues as they arose (e.g., during practice teaching; new government initiative).

Interactive. Only one of the 21 participants used a heavily lecture-driven approach. For the most part they were not simply lecturing but were setting up a learning environment where student teachers experienced first-hand a number of teaching practices or opportunities for learning. Caterina described her style as "very interactive" and "wants student teachers moving around" not simply "being passive recipients" of her knowledge. Giovanni said his course "is interactive … and supportive. It's inquiry-based." It was noted by many that they did not use activities simply as a form of "edutainment" (e.g., using a digital technology program that was fun and engaging); rather, the activities were carefully designed to support learning (e.g., learn the difference between orally reading a children's book with watching a video of the book) and for student teachers to experience these pedagogies firsthand.

Modelling. Repeatedly, participants stated they must model a range of effective teaching practices and the dispositions of a thoughtful, caring teacher. They believed student teachers needed to be immersed in quality teaching and then unpack/analyze it. A further benefit of modeling was it gave their courses authenticity. As Carolina states, "we try to model effective teaching, what we consider effective teaching strategies in our own teaching." Christine describes the format of her class as:

> Generally, for sessions I have a welcome board so when the students come into the classroom, there is actually a get-go task so they can get going straight away … we also have what we call a study circle … after they do their welcome board, they go into their study circles and we try to use the reciprocal teaching strategy … we might model other strategies so they get to put a few things in their teaching tool kit, like maybe the expert jigsaw … we use some of those reading comprehension strategies that we would use in classrooms with kids.

The LTE's confidence they were effective teacher educators was apparent. Beatrice said her student teachers were "universally happy" making comments such as, "I used some of the strategies we learned in class during practice teaching." "I am learning a lot in this course." Both formal and informal feedback processes solidified their identity as able instructors in higher education.

In summary, by having clear goals for their courses, knowing their student teachers, and having an organic teaching style which was rich and varied, they were able to meet the needs of their student teachers. As their confidence increased, they

continued to refine their teaching. They did not despair when something went amiss because they could be flexible and had the confidence to modify their courses.

Being in a Constant State of Revision

As we learned about their pedagogical practices, it was clear our participants spent countless hours developing their courses. One of the challenges identified by all was insufficient time. While all spoke passionately about their teaching, many anguished about the number of hours they spent preparing their classes. For example, Sara recalled that it "took six months to prepare the [new] unit guide so that when we started it was in the best position." It seemed that most were in a constant state of revision. Further, mid- and later-career LTEs often had administrative duties (e.g., Chair of their department) that were very time consuming.

When asked about the impetus for change in their practice, many described that as beginning teacher educators they poured over their course evaluations in an effort to understand and improve their teaching. They often anguished at comments made by the student teachers. Many years later, they could vividly recall specific criticisms leveled at them. However, most of the LTEs noted they received high course evaluations with a number having been nominated for teaching awards. By mid- and later-career the LTEs expanded beyond relying solely on course evaluations. They used multiple forms of "data" which were consistent with Schon's (1984) forms of reflection.

Reflecting on and assessing their teaching occurred in a variety of ways: they thought about their work (reflection-on-action), they observed how student teachers participated in class discussions (reflection-in-action), they noted the gaps in student teachers' knowledge in their written assignments, and they listened to the questions student teachers raised. For Jane, one of the ways she gauged the "success" of her teaching was when the student teachers "make connections with reality." Bob spent a significant amount of time debriefing with his student teachers after practice teaching. He developed a form of "rounds" where student teachers talked about their experiences. "That was a highlight for them … you could see how affirming that was for them, being able to discuss their professional practice in that [professional] way. And it was a highlight for me because I found those conversations very rewarding and I was learning from them as much as they were." He closely monitored these rounds to "assess" the student teachers' learning, which in turn influenced how he proceeded in the course.

Many of the LTEs recalled their early years in teacher education as stressful and trying. One participant admitted: "I am embarrassed when I think about my practice when I was a new lecturer." Our participants concurred that as beginning teacher educators they were surprised at the amount of time it took to prepare their lessons and the need to go beyond what they had done as classroom teachers. They had to develop a new skill set and expand their knowledge base. Stella's advice to a new LTE was "do not underestimate how hard it is to be an LTE."

Working in a Politicized Context

Although the LTEs in this study worked very hard at improving their teaching, there were forces beyond their control which were (negatively) impacting on their work. Most were very cognizant they were working in very politicized contexts where education was being "controlled" by and from various bodies (Furlong, 2013; Whitty, 2014). In all four countries they felt pressured to adhere to the different government mandates (e.g., in England they were required to teach student teachers how to teach synthetic phonics). By contrast, the newer LTEs in our study did not talk to the same extent about the political context. Perhaps, because newer LTEs have had recent experience with the current national initiatives they were more knowledgeable about and comfortable with them. Or they may not realize that over their entire career they will see a number of education initiatives come and go. Justin said, "I have lived through 4 or 5 national curricula." Possibly they may not realize how politicized higher education has become.

Many of our LTEs felt the political pressure was impacting them in a number of ways. With curricula (both for schools and for teacher education programs) being imposed by the government, they often felt they could not develop their courses in line with what they knew student teachers needed. Since they have spent years developing their courses and conducting research on various aspects of education they had a keen understanding of the skills, knowledge, and dispositions required of new teachers. Bob was perplexed by "the steady erosion of quality curriculum and pedagogy through standards-based reforms at the university level, that is, required forms of accountability that have led to a dumbing down of the curriculum." Rachel felt "the frustration with the politicization of the profession and the ever-increasing demands on us. And in lots of ways I think the government is working against us." Carolina from Australia felt pressure from all government levels: "We now have exit testing for our pre-service teachers so we are going to have to be jumping through those hoops."

Since 20 of the 21 were actively conducting research in schools, they were aware of the changing school curricula and the externally imposed methods to ensure teacher compliance. Hailey, who teaches in New York state, struggled with her commitment to a child-focused approach which she believed was essential to effective teaching. Her stance strongly contrasts with the phonics-driven and generic-skills Common Core standards imposed on schools. She acknowledged that "the political structure is really a major deal. I'm not always sure what I'm teaching my students is the right thing since it's going to be putting them at a disadvantage." She felt they may not be able to readily teach some of what is advocated in the Common Core standards.

Many had had a negative experience with external credentialing bodies (e.g., OFSTED in England). Since many were in administrative roles (or were senior members of their department) they were heavily involved with these inspections that Justin described as "just looking to tick boxes." Stella, who was the Director of her teacher education program, described just how high stakes the reviews are:

> I've become more aware of pressures on me to make sure that what I do is compliant or not found wanting of any of kind of OFSTED regulation. Because I am very clear that if they came in …they could say our course didn't fit the bill and that would be curtains [for the program]. And that's terrifying.

When asked about future plans, seven said they intend to retire in large part because of the political climate.

DISCUSSION

The 21 LTEs in this study were very hard working and committed individuals who have grown over time in confidence, skill, and knowledge. Much of their development came about because of their own efforts: reflecting on practice, collaborating with colleagues, conducting research, and listening to their student teachers. Certainly, new teacher educators have much to offer; however, experienced LTEs have a depth of knowledge in many areas, an extensive repertoire of teaching strategies, and confidence which allows them to adjust their course to respond to their student teachers.

The notion of a pedagogy of teacher education (Loughran, 2006) has been slowly emerging. Although this concept is still in its infancy, our 21 LTEs understood there were specific skills required for teaching about teaching: bridging theory and practice, designing appropriate learning opportunities for adults, preparing useful assignments, carefully selecting readings, deciding on appropriate formats for class (e.g. lecture, workshop, small-group, and individual), and creating community. The logical next step is to focus on each discipline that is a pedagogy of *literacy* teacher education. Given that each discipline has unique content, pedagogies, history, philosophy, and research base, a generic pedagogy of teacher education will only advance the field so far.

The LTEs' goals and teaching style were expansive. They fluidly moved from modeling to direct instruction to engaging in rich discussions, which is not easy to do. In order to work at this highly sophisticated level, moving between theory and practice and having a multifaceted teaching style requires more than a commitment to their students. The four spheres of knowledge (Kosnik et al., 2015) noted earlier (research, pedagogy, teaching, initiatives) capture the breadth of knowledge and skills required by LTEs. Each sphere addresses an aspect of practice and together they conceptualize the vast knowledge needed. New LTEs would benefit from being introduced to these spheres which could guide some of their own learning and professional development and help them understand the complexity of their role.

Beyond the technical aspects of course design and delivery, our LTEs recognized less tangible aspects of teaching: building a strong relationship with their student teachers. Because of their increased confidence, they could blur the boundaries between professor and student without losing credibility. They recognized they did not have to know "everything" on literacy education hence they could draw

on student teachers' knowledge. They recognized that personal connections with student teachers strengthen learning.

Becoming a "good" LTE takes time. The 21 LTEs' on-going efforts to improve their practice were admirable but the time devoted to their teaching cannot be underestimated or dismissed. Having highly interactive classes required a great deal of preparation. The demands on their time were exacerbated for those involved in administration. Their workload is truly crushing. Is this a sustainable model? To alleviate the heavy workload, LTEs need to work together by sharing course outlines and teaching strategies, and be a community where they can discuss challenges and successes. The findings from this study would be useful for new LTEs because they provide direction on how to shape and organize teaching in higher education. They could benefit from observing their more experienced colleagues; conversely, veteran LTEs could learn much from their new colleagues who have recent teaching experience. In order to further develop a pedagogy of literacy teacher education will require the concerted and combined efforts of many.

Although the findings from this study are heartening, the political context is impacting on the work of LTEs. The negative consequences for individual teacher educators and the profession as a whole are discouraging. This creates yet another paradox: the wisdom and expertise of experienced and knowledgeable LTEs are being dismissed by governments. How can literacy teacher education improve without the input of mid- and later-career LTEs?

The opening quote from the European commission (2013) queried about "the roles, competences or qualification requirements of teacher educators." Their role needs to include teaching, research, service, being available to their student teachers, and participating in communities of literacy teacher educators. Competencies as a teacher educator must include knowledge of teaching, pedagogy, research and current initiatives, and the ability to develop coherent courses. In addition, qualifications as a teacher educator include experience as a teacher, an advanced degree of education, and experience as a researcher. All of which takes time!

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MARY C. DALMAU† AND HAFDÍS GUÐJÓNSDÓTTIR

8. FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE FUTURE

Professional Working Theory Emerging

The cautious guest
Who comes to the table
Speaks sparingly.
Listens with ears
Learns with eyes.
Such is the seeker of knowledge.

(Hávamál: The Sayings of the Vikings)

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we continue the story of our shared work with teachers around professional working theory and reflect on the issues we faced as we developed it and continued the self-study in different professional and personal circumstances. The chapter has a dual focus. First we discuss the development of the process that facilitates the articulation and discussion of the professional working theory with teachers—a process based on the dynamic interaction between "practice" (what teachers do), "theory" (how they understand what they do), and "ethics" (why they do what they do). Secondly we describe and critically reflect on the self-study through which we developed the Professional Working Theory Instrument (PWTI).

We have spent almost twenty years with teachers and student teachers in Iceland and other European countries, Australia, and the United States in a variety of teacher education, school development, and research contexts.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND BACKGROUND

In our 2000 Castle Conference paper (the biennial international conference on self-study of teacher education practices), we discussed facilitating and framing professional dialogue with teachers through consideration of their professional working theory (PWT) based on the dynamic interaction between practice (what teachers do), theory (how they understand what they do), and ethics (why they do what they do) (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2000a). We also introduced the *PWT Instrument* we created to support this process with teachers (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2000b). In our 2002 Castle conference paper, we shared the story of our work together with

M. C. Dalmau et al. (Eds.), Taking a Fresh Look at Education, 129–148.

the PWT (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2002a). In the following years we shared our experience and learning at different conferences both nationally and internationally and through publications.

We initially worked on the PWT during our stay together in Oregon (1996–2000) as students in a doctoral program in education. In fall 2000, our situation changed as Hafdís returned to Iceland to a new position of Assistant Professor, while Mary continued her study and work in Oregon until she moved back to Australia in 2002 after graduating from her doctoral program. In a new situation, Hafdís extended her use of the PWT, with a much larger and more diverse group of students than initially addressed (pre-service and professional development in Iceland and Latvia). At this time, two engagements led us into meta-reflection on the nature and processes of self-study; we wrote about self-study together, re-developing our Castle 2000 paper into a book chapter, and Mary began a new role as the Program Chair for the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) Special Interest Group (SIG) of the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

In our novel situation, as teacher educators in Iceland and Australia, we wished to build new ways of working together internationally as we supported one another in our new professional roles. Our collaborative self-study continued and developed despite the fact that many miles separated us, living in two different countries and managing two languages. In 2004 and again in 2008, Hafdís had the opportunity to spend her sabbatical leave in Australia teaching and researching with Mary. In between, we met at conferences and in Iceland, as well as using the internet to communicate on our collaborative work. We used (and reframed) our self-study to continually question and support our processes examining our practices.

Professional Working Theory

As we first stated in our chapter on the fire of transformation, one of the less positive myths and legends about teachers is that they are practitioners who are mainly interested in hearing about practical ideas for their teaching and that they ignore theoretical analysis. While not subscribing to this point of view, we have none-the-less been challenged in our own practice to find ways of creating a professional dialogue with teachers [i.e., one that recognizes, analyzes and deepens our mutual understanding of the living theory implicit in the teaching practice (Whitehead, 1993)]. The teaching profession calls for teachers to be much more than "recipients [and implementers] of knowledge generated by professional researchers' and presented by teacher educators" (Cochran- Smith & Lytle, 1993, p.1). It calls for professionals with theoretical, pedagogical and critical abilities to influence teaching and learning and the regeneration of schools. We believe it is critical that such professional dialogue permeates all aspects of initial and continuing teacher education, and that the facilitation of this dialogue is an essential aspect of reflective practice and the professional capacitation of teachers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle,

2009; Day, Calderhead, & Denicolo, 1993; Freire, 1998; Fullan, 1999; Grimmett & Dockendorf, 1999; hooks, 1994; Slee, Weiner, & Tomlinson, 1998).

The changes in society and teachers' work raise questions concerning the professional roles and identity of teachers. Exploring the literature, we found the following characterizations of the teaching profession:

- Practical Professionalism: the personal practical knowledge teachers receive, learn about, use, and develop through their experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996).
- Reflective Professionalism: thoughtful and informed professional reflection as the basis of improved professional practice, judgment and decision-making (Beck & Kosnik, 2000; Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996; Loughran & Northfield, 1998; Schön, 1983).
- Responsive Professionalism: incorporating practical and reflective professionalism with the added dimensionalities of mediation of theory, practice, and ethics, incorporation of holistic perspectives, awareness of broader sociocultural contexts, and contribution to educational inquiry and knowledge creation (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2002b; Guðjónsdóttir, 2000; Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996).
- Shared Professionalism: developing and contributing to pedagogy in partnership with teacher educators where the complex nature of teaching and learning are continually being developed, refined and articulated within the profession (Guðjónsdóttir, 2005; Loughran & Russell, 1997). This calls for new forms of relationship with colleagues, students, and parents (Giddens, 1994). Judyth Sachs (2000) has called this activist teacher professionalism pointing out that it provides opportunities for teacher educators and school-based colleagues to engage in public critical debates about the nature of practice.

Teachers' rejection of theoretical explanations may be an indication of their concern about the abstraction of theory (in teacher education and pedagogy) from the issues they face in their experience of education. Or such rejection could be related to the responsibilities faced by teachers, causing them to feel insecure or destitute regarding all the requirements they experience, leading them to call for regulations and standard curriculum that they can follow. The challenge, then, in teacher education is to draw out teachers' theoretical backgrounds from their daily experiences, to introduce them to the skills and resources that will enable them to critically reflect on their practice together, and to analyze and recognize their personal and professional resources. We believe it is critical that such professional dialogue permeates all aspects of initial and continuing teacher education, and that the facilitation of this dialogue is an essential aspect of reflective practice and the professional capacitation of teachers. Circumstances that are related to situations in the life of each individual, especially events that are related to personal or professional challenges, affect teachers' commitment and their abilities to be resilient. It is crucial for teachers to see the relationship between what they do and why, to see the theory

behind their practice. It can make them a stronger professional and can enable them to judge alternatives, and to revise or to reject mandates affecting their practice (Dorovolomo, 2004).

Practical theory was defined by Handal and Lauvås (1987) as "a person's private, integrated but ever-changing system of knowledge, experience and values which is relevant to practice at any particular time" (p. 9). They argue that implicit or "practical theory" is behind everything teachers do or wish to do in their teaching. They use the model of a pyramid as a metaphor to describe a personal theory built on theory-based, practice-based and ethics-based arguments (Handal & Lauvås, 1982). Practical theories are personal and individualistic because each teacher develops and adheres to his or her own practical theory from his or her experience and knowledge. They are also contextual, since teachers work in a context rather than in isolation, therefore the environment affects teachers' practical theory (Connelly, Clandinin, & He, 1997; Sanders & McCutcheon, 1986). Another explanation is that "practical theories of teaching are the conceptual structures and visions that provide teachers with reasons for acting as they do, and for choosing the teaching activities and curriculum materials they do in order to be effective" (Sanders & McCutcheon, 1986, pp. 54–55). Moreover, practical theories of teaching occur in the terrain of lived experiences. Whitehead (1993) used the term living theory to describe the way teachers build knowledge and theoretical understandings based on their perceptions, descriptions, and interpretations of their own educational practice.

From these ideas we began our development of the PWT, a process that offers teachers (and academics) opportunities to frame their reflection on the living theories implicit in their practice. PWTs are based on reflection in and on practice, indicating that they originate from, and develop through experiences in teaching and work. The PWTs of teaching are the conceptual structures and visions that provide teachers with reasons for acting the way they do in order to be effective. They are propositions that undergird and guide teachers' appreciation, decisions and actions. Such theories are crucial to the success of teaching because educational problems are essentially practical problems (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2000a, 2002a, 2002b; Sowa & Schmidt, 2008).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

The nature of the life-changing experiences reported throughout the years of the project led us to base our methodologies on a stance that (a) recognizes and values the life experience, discourse, and professional contribution of both teachers and teacher educators; (b) adopts an organizing system based on the fundamentals of collaboration, critical self-study, and the capacity to bring together retrospective data and continuous learning and authentic change; and, (c) systematically investigates the theory. We have, therefore, adopted for research of our work both Retrospective Self Study and Critical Collaborative Self-Study (Bodone, Guðjónsdóttir, & Dalmau, 2004; Guðjónsdóttir et al., 2007; Rios, Montecinos, & van Olphen, 2007).

A retrospective study makes use of historical information, reviews and uses existing data on events that have already occurred. Retrospective data can provide a window to the long time processes that characterize the transformation of education, and can clarify the changes and the renewal. It can also help us to set our goals or purpose for further studies and to focus on the big questions. Retrospective data analysis can provide insights into trends, behaviors, or events that have already occurred. Searching educational research, we can see that retrospective studies are conducted when researchers are examining such issues as long time changes in educational policies, effective education, and development of higher education (Ahouanmènou-Agueh, 2002; Glewwe, Kremer, Moulin, & Zitzewitz, 2004; McMillan Culp, Honey, & Mandinach, 2005). The need for retrospective studies is there when considering developments or changes that have occurred over time. In retrospective study, a search is made for a relationship between one (usually current) phenomenon or condition and another that occurred in the past. An identification, assembly and analysis of relevant existing data are important to achieve an understanding of the interrelationship of long-term change.

In a critical collaborative self-study, the researchers focus both on the critical and the collaborative (Bodone et al., 2004). To become critical the focus can not only be on describing or understanding the practice, but to be able to uncover the aspects of the dominant practice the participants must become conscious of both the transformation that takes place and the process that leads to that transformation (Kincheloe, 2003). Through the conscious participation and the voices of all participants, in relation to practice, the participants "have the opportunity to free themselves from myths and prejudices that organize their resistance to change, and reorganize their self-images as historical subjects" (Pilmenta, 2007, p. 93).

Our data collection included the study of the development and usage of the PWT over nineteen years (Retrospective Self Study), general study of our engagement and change by ourselves and the teachers and student teachers with whom we worked (Critical Collaborative Self-Study), and the analysis and interpretation of the findings. These stages were not linear but rather interwoven as new understandings began to emerge.

Research Methods

We are reporting on a study that has been going on for almost twenty years, relying on retrospective data and recalling information or data from the past about our teaching, interaction with students, and our collaboration. To make sense of our practice, the transformation and the emerging scholarship, we go back and forth between past and present. By doing so, we have the advantage to study the change we have gone through, understand our transformation over time, and identify causal factors. Describing and explaining our practice, reconstructing the past from the vantage points of the present, allows us to introduce and explain our transformative practice. Thus, our retrospective self-study enables us to address new information,

Table 1. Data sources from research portfolio and students

Research portfolio	*Data from students*
Data collection from classroom practice: • notes on class activities • questions from students • reflection thoughts	Interviews with teacher learners using the PWTI as a framework for a dialogue. Recordings and transcribes of interviews.
Notes from our collaboration: • class observation • Skype meetings • other meetings and events	Portfolios from students as they used the PWTI as a guide.
Examples of • course material • students' tasks	Students' statements of who they want to become as teachers.
Recordings from • meetings • classrooms	Reflections from students' related to large questions voluntarily shared with us by request

knowledge and understanding with support from our personal archives of professional journals, notes from collaborative reflections, publications, course materials and students' tasks. We also used these archives to provoke our memories of "moments in time that mattered in our work" (Tidwell & Manke, 2010, p. 138) or to recognize certain turning points, which affected our understanding (Bullock & Ritter, 2011).

General Sources and Data Collection

During these years, our collaboration through critical reflections and through deep questioning, analyzing and relating to the broader context of teacher education, has led us to transform our practice (Berry & Crowe, 2010). We have kept a research portfolio that has become our retrospective data as we reflect on the development of the PWT instrument, document the turning points, and discuss our struggle to get our students (student teachers and teacher learners) to deepen their thinking or relate practice and theory or to understand what it means to become a teacher. Additionally, we have collected data with our students from four sources (see Table 1).

MAKING SENSE OF THE DATA

The trustworthiness of this research comes from ontology as well as from epistemology. The substance of the research findings is empirical and can be found in our experience, dialogue and critical reflections but also in the bridge between our

students and us. We focus on our professional work, which includes both our own practice and our work with other educators and their practice.

The analytical process was ongoing, as we discussed and unfolded our experiences at certain turning points, at times encountering a problem or a gratifying surprise. This iterative and analytical process was often messy as we stepped back, critically reflected on our experience, peeled the layers and responded to our findings by changing our practice. However, by going back and forth with data collection and analyzing, going from present to past to present, we created a dialogue and a practice that was both critical and analytical. The data analysis was inductive as we identified conceptual categories, constantly comparing and looking for common patterns, themes and turning points (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In addition, we used the PWTI as an analytical tool, examining the interaction between practice, theory and ethics in relation to close/local, medium/distance, and broad/societal influences. Reflecting on these data sources through the lens of critical self-study methodology allowed us to see the transformation from different stances.

Creating and Developing the PWT

In this chapter we focus on the process involved in developing the professional working theory (PWT) and explain the professional working theory instrument (PWTI), including the design of the instrument and how it has been used. We use the term PWT to symbolize the professional identity that evolves through the constant interplay of professional knowledge, practices and beliefs. Teacher professional identity represents how teachers define themselves both to themselves and others. Professional identity is multifaceted, brought together through a multi-dimensional, multi-layered, and dynamic process. It is formed through lived experiences and its development is shaped by historical, sociological, psychological, and cultural influences. Reflecting on practical experience, educational theories or knowledge, and ethical or moral principles can help teachers identify their professional identity. Explicit PWT is developed through systematic and comprehensive critical reflection and collegial dialogue, and also contributes to the construction of professional identity, the creation of professional knowledge, and the development of collegial approaches to practice. Secondly we describe and critically reflect on the self-study through which we developed the Professional Working Theory Instrument (PWTI).

In the Beginning, Creating the PWT

In our first year of collaborative teaching to a group of pre-service and practicing teachers on collegial collaboration, school improvement and teacher research, we introduced a framework which assisted teachers to describe their practice to one another through the development of individual and group profiles (see chapter 5). In the second year, with a new group of students we continued to use the profile

Figure 1. The Professional Working Theory (PWT)

framework and incorporated the use of dialogue around practice (what I do), ethics (why I do), and theory (how I understand). Through iterative reflection on outcomes (in our preparation sessions, with class participants, and with our collaborative review group) we extended this initial activity to the creation and use of the Professional Working Theory (PWT). We created a graphic illustration of the concept using three interlocking gears to represent the interrelatedness of the three components (practice, theory, and ethics) and the idea of constant movement (see Figure 1).

The PWT process outlined below offers students, teachers and academics an opportunity to frame their reflection on the living theories implicit in their practice.

Practice: This gear represents teachers' practice. It provides a space for teachers to explore their experience of their professional work and roles, including teaching, assessment, evaluation, collaboration with colleagues, and relationships with students and parents.

Theory. This gear represents the knowledge and the way teachers understand and relate practice to theory. It reflects teachers' theoretical frameworks and their explanations for what happens in the classroom. It represents their method of relating self-understanding and reflective practice to theory.

Ethics. This gear represents how teachers explain the reasons behind their practice. It relates to their beliefs and values about the world. It reflects what they are becoming, and what they want to be as teachers.

The PWT proved to be a way for teachers and student teachers to uncover their practice, theories and ethics. To further support them in so doing, in the year 1999, we designed the Professional Working Theory Instrument (PWTI) which is an instrument with questions intended to encourage people to critically reflect on their practice and the interplay of theory, ethics and practice.

Going beyond the classroom. During our years of collaboration we have tried to meet at different places for our work together. Conferences have been great forums for our meetings; we met in Montreal in 1999 at AERA, and we always think of this time as one of the turning points. One day we went to Quebec, and as we drove we had a rich discussion of analysis of data and all the stories from the teachers with whom we had been working. On our way back to the conference, as we drove along the river from Quebec to Montreal, we began discussing how the river with its channel boundaries shaped how and where the water would flow. We saw this as a metaphor for our own flow of language and discussion as we worked with teachers. When we saw all the river water getting bigger and wider and opening up, connecting to the towns and horizon as it flowed, we saw the impact of water coming from other places building to a broader and wider perspective. Through this discussion we saw this river metaphor connecting to our work with teachers. We understood that when channels are opened we could see beyond the classrooms. This metaphor helped us see our personal/professional lives in a new light, where, like the river, a broader body of knowledge comes together as different channels of theory and practice merge with discussions of ethics to create this growing understanding of practice. This metaphor revelation helped us to create new opportunities for scholarship. Reflecting on our data, analyzing the situation we realized that the discourse with teachers was still bounded by the classroom.

The outcome of this experience in the car as we drove was the expansion of the PWT. We began to create the PWTI to systematically explore socio-cultural and historical influences on the practice of teaching by creating three levels of reflective questions which would encourage the inclusion of perspectives from outside the classroom. For each component, three additional levels of reflective questions were provided to cover close/local, medium/distance, and broad/societal. From this the PWTI includes extended scaffolds at three levels (see Figure 2). For example the *Practice* element of the PWT now includes reflective questions related to

- Close/local: What educators see in their daily work.
- Medium distance: Factors that directly affect the working environment.
- Broad/societal: Societal/global connections that affect practice.

Figure 2 provides specific question sets for each of the three areas of Dimensions of Inquiry: Close/Local, Medium Distance, and Broad/Societal. These questions are introduced to prompt the critical reflections in the dialogue; they are not intended to be answered in a liner mode.

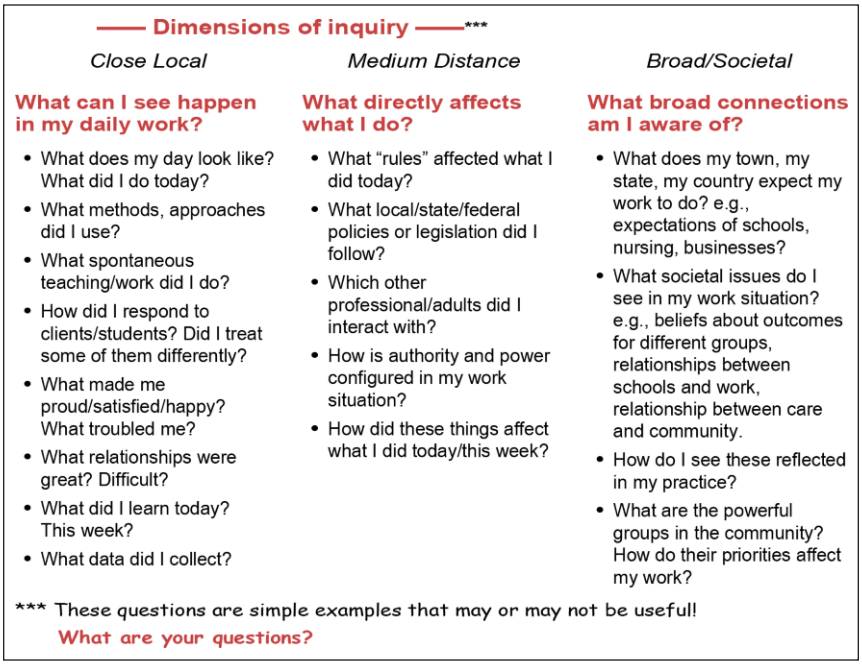

Figure 2. Dimensions of inquiry on practice taken from the PWT Instrument (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2008)

- What can I see happening in my daily work?
  - E.g., What does my day look like? What did I teach? What methods/ approaches did I use? What spontaneous teaching did I do? How did I respond to students? Did I treat some students differently? What made me proud/satisfied/happy? What troubled me? What relationships were great? Difficult? What did I learn today/this week? What data did I collect?
- What directly affects what I do?
  - E.g., What "rules" affected what I did today? What local/state/federal policies or legislation did I follow? Which other professionals/adults did I interact with? How is authority and power configured in my work situation? How did these things affect what I did today/this week?
- What broad connections am I aware of?
  - E.g., What does my town, my state, my country expect schools to do? What societal issues do I see in my school (e.g., beliefs about outcomes for different groups; relationships between school and work, school and taxes)… and how do I see these reflected in my practice (e.g., priorities, curriculum, assessment)? What are the powerful groups in the community? How do their priorities affect schooling?What can I see happening in my daily work?

  - E.g., What does my day look like? What did I teach? What methods/ approaches did I use? What spontaneous teaching did I do? How did I respond to students? Did I treat some students differently? What made me proud/satisfied/happy? What troubled me? What relationships were great? Difficult? What did I learn today/this week? What data did I collect?
- What directly affects what I do?
  - E.g., What "rules" affected what I did today? What local/state/federal policies or legislation did I follow? Which other professionals/adults did I interact with? How is authority and power configured in my work situation? How did these things affect what I did today/this week?
- What broad connections am I aware of?
  - E.g., What does my town, my state, my country expect schools to do? What societal issues do I see in my school (e.g., beliefs about outcomes for different groups; relationships between school and work, school and taxes)… and how do I see these reflected in my practice (e.g., priorities, curriculum, assessment)? What are the powerful groups in the community? How do their priorities affect schooling?

The *Ethics* and *Theory* sections are also followed by three dimensions of reflective questions. In the beginning we used the PWTI as we discussed with our student teachers one at a time. They reported that using these questions as a scaffold helped them reflect on their work, to analyze, situate in theories and realize their stand.

Developing the Use of the PWTI

We continued our collaboration and using the PWT in our teaching, Hafdís' words summed up her experience with the PWT in the first years (1996–2000):

> In the beginning as we developed the PWT I worked closely with few teachers at time, I was the interviewer, I was able to create an atmosphere where teachers were relaxed and excited about telling me about their practice…and, I had chosen experienced and open practitioners to work with. (Reflection in a meeting, April, 2001)

In the period of 2000–2002, Hafdís' first years as a teacher educator in Iceland, she struggled. Her student teachers and teachers she was working with were not used to looking at their work in a critical way nor reflecting on their teaching with others:

> *As I continued to work on professional development with teachers continuing their learning and development, I found using the PWTI much more difficult. The aim these teachers where working at was to do better in their classroom and the teachers complained that they did not find the PWT practical because I was not telling them how to teach… they felt that they did not really know why they were doing what they were doing. However, some teachers said as*

> *they reported their PWT that it was helpful for their practice to realize their theories and ethics and their professional working theory.* (Reflection in a meeting, April, 2001)

To give a picture of the development of the PWTI and how we used it in our teaching we have organized the next section around three challenges we faced and their turning points: using the PWT with a larger group, using PWT approaches in our own teaching, and situating ethics within teacher practice.

EXTENDING THE USE OF PWT TO A LARGER GROUP

Hafdís worked with different groups on the professional working theory using the PWT instrument and began experiencing some challenges. Since she could not interview them all herself as she did in the beginning stage, she divided them into groups after having introduced the PWTI to the whole group and asked them to discuss the practice-focused questions on the PWTI.

> *I walked between the groups trying to grasp what was going on. I noticed there was a dialogue going, but not very systematic though and I became unsure if they were all getting something out of this or if the activity in itself supported the stronger persons and the others became more quiet and agreeing to what the others were saying. I questioned if they were really working on their own PWT or just trying to relate their experience to what the talker was saying. Some had both much to say and a strong opinion, when others were quiet.* (Notes, class activity, 2002)

This experience was troubling. Hafdís began a period of intense questioning both in Iceland and in her communications with Mary. She wrote:

> *The next task was to go through all the assignments from about 40 teachers working on their professional development, analyze them and try to understand what was going on, what was hard to do…what was troubling them, …what had been positive. They reported that the opportunity to talk about their work with their colleagues was great. They liked to relate theory and practice, but complained how hard it was—it was a new experience for them. They found writing about their ethics, their beliefs, and their opinion a difficult task, and reported that they knew it was there but didn't know how to talk or write about it.* (Notes on class activities and reflection thoughts, 2002)

The data were helpful. It enabled us to go beyond being troubled by negative feedback, and enlist teachers in the task of understanding what was going on. Our discussions at this time were based on Hafdís' reflections shared at first by e-mails and then on Skype. As we struggled with these issues, life moved on and Hafdís began preparing to teach more graduate and undergraduate classes, as well as teacher workshops.

USING PWT APPROACHES IN OUR TEACHING

From former experience we knew that the quality of the discourse did not reside in the PWT instrument itself, but in how and why it was used. However, at this stage, Hafdís felt less able to influence this process. She was communicating with large student groups, and was neither able to select participating educators nor directly facilitate the dialogue. Teachers and student teachers were now in charge of the PWT process, and some groups found the PWTI difficult to use, other groups were not skilled in participatory dialogue. We found that often people asked closed questions (requiring a minimal response) and did not follow up the answers with additional discussion. We also noticed that particular individuals took control of the conversation, leaving others less opportunity to participate. The first rounds were over, and as we reflected together we found a new question: How can we encourage people to participate in an equal dialogue where they question their practice and deepen their thoughts, if we are not facilitating the discussion? At this stage, we had a long Skype conversation, which seemed to be significant. We talked about hearing student voices and inviting them to share the responsibility for relating their learning to their practice in schools. We discussed a participatory interview approach (Bodone et al., 1997).

Participatory interview approach. The participatory interview approach was first developed by the International Women's Group, Eugene, Oregon (Bodone, 1997). It was designed to support participative, equitable and reflective approaches to life history research interviews in small groups of 3–5 participants. The participants have three rotating roles (interviewer, interview, reflective note-taker) where all participants take a turn in each role. (If there are more than three people in the group, the group asks two people to share the note taker or facilitator roles. It is imperative that each group member is responsible for a role.) The following describes each role.

1. Interviewer: facilitates the discussion, and asks the questions.
2. Interviewee: shares her practice and experience with the group.
3. Reflective Note-taker: takes notes and at the end of the session gives brief feedback on the process of the interview and what impressed her in the discussion.

This participatory process has developed over the years due to technology, whereby now most participants record the interview using their phones and then they have the opportunity to listen to themselves again and again, which helps in thinking about their practice and writing their PWT.

In the new semester, Hafdís divided students (graduate) into groups, gave an overview of the Participatory Interview Approach, and prepared the group to facilitate the dialogue. Over time, as group members took (and rotated) the roles of interviewee, interviewer, and note taker, the dialogue became more balanced and more focused. During the first meeting, students discussed the practice section of the PWT, and then continued to work on their individual PWT guide at home. At

the second meeting, they rotated roles and went through the second step, discussing how different theories influence their work, and in the final meeting they talked about ethics. Hafdís continually integrated her teaching with the teachers' reflections on their experience and the role of the PWT in assisting them to make sense of that experience. These groups became a strong element in the students' learning—students moved beyond the simple description of their experiences to engage with the theoretical and pedagogical perspectives introduced in the class. Discussions on the internet, in class presentations and in final papers gave students the opportunity to make connections between their experience, educational theory, and broader socio-cultural issues facing schools.

TALKING THROUGH THE GEARS AND FINDING A METAPHOR: EMBEDDING ETHICS WITHIN PRACTICE

Going beyond the classroom was initially countercultural to teachers' experience or expectations. This was the most difficult step, and the students and we needed support to gradually begin to work together and to grapple with these new understandings. The stories of practice, of their teaching and their students' learning became richer and new questions began to emerge. However, focusing on theories or ethics was more challenging.

Early on an interesting opportunity occurred as Hafdís was invited to make a presentation about teacher ethics to a group of students in their second year. This opportunity also became a dilemma because Hafdís realized that she was being asked to isolate ethics from practice, and tell these young teachers what their ethics should be as teachers. What about our belief that ethics, practice and theory are closely integrated in the professional understanding and work of teachers? After some discussion we devised a plan that would engage the large audience and situate ethics in participants' practice. We decided to use a think-pair-share strategy with this large group of students (approximately 100), where the audience would think about a topic, pair with others to discuss their ideas, then share out to the group what had been discussed. The question we gave the students was: How do you see ethics in your work? After taking a few minutes to think for themselves and write down brief reflections, students were asked to form groups of three to five and discuss what they had written down and come to an agreement on a report to the large group. This activity became powerful. As students reported back to the whole group, responses were written down and provided to the audience members after the session as they worked on the next task in the PWT on teacher ethics. Students found this resource extremely helpful in developing their PWTs. We have continued to use the same question and strategy with other students as they work on their PWT.

Another challenge was getting students and teachers to focus on theories, explore them or to relate theory with practice. Students and teachers were able to focus on their practice, but theories seemed distant to them and not the first thing that came to

mind as they discussed their work or responded to the different situations that came up in their teaching. Once again, this was an opportunity to reflect, to problem solve and to learn, and in the end a new turning point was shaped as we created an activity to help them address theory.

> *We asked students to work individually and brainstorm all the theories they could think off or have affected their job. This was not easy, and Hafdís said: "I am very often asked what do you mean by theory? Can you give us an example?" Usually after some discussions students settle down and begin their brainstorming. The next step is to work in pairs were each and everyone introduces their list, discuss what is behind the words, and get new ideas. The third step is individual and the task is to choose two words from the list and then write down a description of the word or the theory and how and why it has effected their practice. The fourth step is to work again in pairs and introduce the writing, receive and give feedback. The final step is to write a description of at least one theory. Each task takes from three to ten minutes depending how complicated they are. The questions they ask as they critically reflect on each other work could be: Why do you relate this to your work? How can this appear in your practice? Why do you choose this? How does in help you understand or explain your work?...* (Notes on class activities, 2009)

The aim of this activity was to explore together the theories that students build on in their work in a systematic way and see how they relate them to their practice.

Aspects of Self-Study

For almost 20 years we have based our work together on shared professional goals, shared work, and our commitment to self-study as a process of transforming our practice. This experience of working together over a long period of time and creating the PWT and the instrument has led us to question the nature and purpose of self-study. What is the interplay in self-study between the exploration of our professional identity (psychological or therapeutic focus), the systematic understanding and re-creation of our practice (practice research focus), and the creation of new knowledge and contributions to educational discourse (conceptual and dialogic focus)? While each aspect is important, the *self* in the title may tip the balance in favor of personal exploration and a quest for self-understanding. During this collaborative study, our efforts to frame the discourse for teachers led to two outcomes that are relevant to this discussion:

1. The framed and situated dialogue led the teachers to a rich analysis of their professional identity, which was articulated in terms of their practice.
2. The systematic framing of the dialogue quickly led us beyond the improvement of our teaching, to questions about the nature of the processes we were using with teachers.

The questions of knowledge creation and the extension of the discourse beyond the local, are important for self-study and teacher researchers. We have incorporated the questions that emerged in each study of the creation and development of the PWT and the dialogic approaches into new research projects at the same time as we continued the self-study. These following questions emerged:

1. How is teacher practice informed by theory and ethics?
2. How does reflective practice lead teachers to new knowledge and theoretical understanding?
3. How can teachers' voices be strengthened and teachers empowered?
4. Where does such discourse fit into the multi-tasked professional lives of teachers?

Discussions

Through these years working together and through our self-study research we learned that the PWT approaches extended the theoretical dialogue with our students, and that, though it was difficult to move beyond the parameters of the classroom, framing the discussion (PWT instrument), and supporting the dialogue (process) effectively extended the scope of our discussion. The quality of the discourse did not reside in the PWT instrument itself, but in how and why it was used. What was most exciting through these years was that the process enabled the students and ourselves to participate in situated theoretical dialogue in ways that we had not hitherto experienced. The ensuing discussions began a shared process of knowledge generation related to identification of critical elements in the dialogic process and understanding the professionalism of teachers.

We have introduced PWT to many groups of student teachers and teachers. After the first stage of the study we extended the PWT instrument to systematically explore socio-cultural and historical influences on the practice of teaching. We have learned that time is an important factor—short terms and one-off sessions of professional development do not allow time to build that strong conceptual knowledge and understanding and the skillful practice that will enable people to feel confident in their ability to transfer their learning and experience into new environments (Connelly, Clandinin, & He, 1997; Sanders & McCutcheon, 1986).

By analyzing our data we learned how our student teachers and the teachers or participants used the PWT instrument. During the dialogue, the participants were asked to express their opinions about their professional practice in a manner that could be easily understood. The PWT instrument helped them organize their thinking and understand more deeply their actions and rationale. The teachers were innovative and expanded the vision of how the PWT process could be useful to them. The following are some examples of how they used the PWT to support their understanding or evaluation of their practice:

- *Describing and analyzing their approach to teaching by responding to questions such as:* What should I emphasize in my teaching this year? What is the overall

approach to Math in the curriculum – in my teaching practice? …Special Education? …Inclusive practice?

- *Reviewing a particular aspect of their work by questioning particular elements,* such as: How is the alternative approach working with diverse group of students? Does the 'reading bingo' involve the different groups of students in the class? How do rewards effect ethics and beliefs? How does my teaching relate to the national curriculum?
- *Framing participatory research by planning systematic projects,* such as: Expanding and systematically inquiring into inclusive practice in partnership with the special educator. Informing other teachers about teaching methods my colleagues have developed and used in their classroom.
- *Communicating with others and supporting collegial dialogue* and collaboration by using the PWT instrument to frame the discussions as they reflected, rationalized, made decisions, and created ideas about their teaching methods, planned collaboration with others, and reviewed their status in the professional world and the community.
- *Reflecting on professional growth and planning for professional development* by reviewing how and why they typically used theories and methods, and identifying issues, areas they would they like to explore further, with their colleagues, and opportunities for professional learning. Using PWTI to explore how they developed as teachers or what they want to become as teachers.
- *Developing a personal statement* by synthesizing the information they collected through the PWTI.

The PWT formed an important framework for our dialogue with our participants. It helped us extend the discourse from the discussion of implicit practical theory to the systematic generation of professional knowledge (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2000a).

Our work with the PWT Instrument over the years has helped hone the content and format used with our students and teachers. The current version of the PWT Instrument (see Appendix) contains three sections: (a) an introductory overview, (b) a page for mapping their thoughts, (c) double pages for entries related to "Practice," "Theory" and "Ethics" with reflective questions that are designed to encourage users to explore each of the three areas represented by the gears, and (c) space to develop a personal statement (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2008). There are also some open spaces that can be used for writing, drawing and/or concept mapping.

This chapter represents our attempt through almost 20 years of collaborative self-study to explore the creation of meaning and the extension of the dialogue within the self-study framework. In the *Saying of the Vikings* (cite) we are reminded of the activities of learning, that we need to use all our senses to learn, but at the same time we need to recognize that practitioners hold great knowledge of their practice. Often teachers' voices are marginalized in knowledge creation discourse within the context of their work. Yet when teachers are provided the opportunity to explore their practice and present their findings their voices are heard and their knowledge

emerges to inform and to enhance teaching and learning. Self-study can provide an important opportunity for university and teacher researchers to do their separate work together and frame a shared discourse. The seriousness with which we value the unique knowledge and experience that teachers bring to educational discourse, must be reflected in the seriousness of our endeavors to include them.

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9. DEVELOPING TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES

Weaving the Tapestry of Professional Working Theory

A strong professional identity is an important resource and guide for the teacher or administrator in a demanding job. In this chapter we describe our work with student teachers and experienced educators in a master's course in the School of Education at the University of Iceland. This is a self-study research of three teacher educators collaborating on teaching and developing the course *Teaching a Diverse Group of Students* (TDGS). In this course, working on the students' Professional Working Theory (PWT) is a core assignment permeating the entire course using Dalmau and Guðjónsdóttir's (2002) PWT Instrument (PWTI) for guidance and support. Data consist of our journals, discussions and meeting transcripts, as well as students' data from online discussions, TOCs (tickets out of class) and their assignments in different forms—graphic, 3-dimensional, and written. Our findings show that students struggled with uncovering their PWT, but most of them found the process empowering and felt that the process had given them an important tool to realize and develop their professional identity to start their work as new teachers or to continue their work as experienced educators.

INTRODUCTION

Salka (pseudo names have been used for all students quoted in this chapter) wrote the following words in a personal narrative composed as part of her PWT assignment in the TDGS course.

> *In this course I have better realized what inclusive education is all about. I do not need to wait for it to arrive. It is already here and the success of its implementations depends on teachers' attitudes and approaches towards it.* (Salka, PWT, 2015)

Teaching in inclusive schools today is a demanding job and a strong professional identity is an important resource and guide for teachers to respond constructively to different challenges. Teacher education plays a vital role in helping students discover and develop their professional working theories.

M. C. Dalmau et al. (Eds.), Taking a Fresh Look at Education, 149–168.

We are three teacher educators who have been teaching and developing a graduate course on teaching in inclusive schools from 2012–2015. Two of the three teacher educators are authors of this chapter, and have worked in collaboration with the third teacher educator. We do not focus solely on the importance of student teachers and in-service teachers developing their PWT but also on the importance of self-study of our own work through reflecting on our teaching and making clear who we are as teachers. We believe we can make our teaching more influential if we find out how students experience our teaching, and in this case, we look at how we supported students to uncover and develop their PWT within the context of a graduate course addressing effective teaching of diverse students in inclusive education. In this chapter, we describe our self-study research on teaching and developing our practice and seek to answer the question, What are we learning about our teaching through exploring students' PWT assignments?

THEORECTICAL BACKGROUND

Two major factors influencing teachers practice involve the educational values they have adopted and the kinds of experience they have. It is important for teachers to realize which ideologies they build upon in their practice and the influence those ideologies have on how they teach (Engelsen, 1993); in other words, teachers need to realize which theories impact them knowingly or unknowingly. Eisner (2002) claims that teaching is an artistic act, led by educational values, personal needs, and various truths to which teachers ascribe. These emerge as different variations of professional identities and can be seen in different views of teachers and within multiple teaching styles (Bjarnadóttir, 1993). We claim that a strong professional identity is an important resource and guide for teachers in a demanding job. The personal variations of teachers' professional identities have been described as their *practical theory*, (Handal & Lauvås, 1987) that is a personal construct about their practice, continuously developed through a series of diverse events (practice, experience, reading, listening or learning from others' practice). According to Handal and Lauvås, practical theories are private, constantly changing integrated systems of knowledge, informed by experience and values relating to teaching. Practical theories possess three components: (1). "personal experience;" (2). "transmitted/mediated knowledge, experience and structures;" and (3). "values (philosophical, political and ethical)" (p. 10).

Teachers' practical theories are often unarticulated and subconscious. Many scholars emphasize the importance of making teachers conscious of their individual and collective practical theories in order for educational transformation to happen (Aðalbjarnardóttir, 2007; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Day, 2004; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992; Guðjónsson, 2007; Guðjónsdóttir, 2004). In grounding teachers' exploration of their practical theories in the experiences and challenges they confront in practice, they become a source of empowerment and open up processes for individual and institutional change and development to happen. Thus, they

encourage teachers to use their experiences as a focal point to reflect on their views on education and their actions in practice.

Dalmau and Guðjónsdóttir (2002) use the term *Professional Working Theory* (PWT) to symbolize professional understanding that evolves through the constant interplay of professional knowledge, practical experience, reflection, and ethical or moral principles. Explicit PWT is developed through systematic and comprehensive critical reflection and collegial dialogue, and also contributes to the professional identity, the creation of professional knowledge, and the development of collegial approaches to practice. Dalmau and Guðjónsdóttir developed a step-by-step frame to help in-service teachers and student teachers reflect on and uncover their professional working theories. They present and explain the use of the PWTI (the PWT instrument) as a framework in three steps to engage teachers in deep reflection on their profession as a personal construct.

In this study, we explored the emergence of student teachers' and in-service teachers' professional working theories as they took part in our TDGS course about inclusive education. We were interested in knowing how working with the PWTI and other assignments we designed to support their PWT development influenced our TDGS students' awareness of who they are or who they want to become as teachers (Korthagen, 2013). We wanted to gain insight into our students' processes of working on their PWT so that we as teacher educators could learn from their experience to improve our teaching.

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Since 2012, three of us in teacher education in the School of Education at the University of Iceland have been teaching and developing together the TDGS graduate course (Guðjónsdóttir & Jónsdóttir, 2012). A main focus in the course is on inclusive education (IE) and how we can organize schoolwork to meet new challenges in teachers' work.

The course is designed for students to take responsibility for developing their professional identity by identifying and expanding on areas important for their professional growth. We organized the course into five themes: (1) Ideology of inclusive education and innovation education; (2) Inclusive education in the classroom; (3) Individualized education and assessment; (4) Parent-teacher collaboration; and, (5) Leaders in inclusive education. Within each theme, students read and discussed one or two pre-determined readings. Additionally, students were required to choose two to three readings within each theme on a topic of their own interest. Students had to complete three major assignments as well as actively participate throughout the course and complete a self-evaluation of their learning. In developing these assignments, our intention was to create a learning process that would enable them to capture their different experiences, concerns, teaching approaches, and beliefs and values.

Working on the students' PWT is a core assignment permeating the entire course using the PWTI (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2002) for guidance and support. Since 2012, we have realized that working on the PWT is a challenge for students (Guðjónsdóttir & Jónsdóttir, 2012). We have been strengthening the use of the PWTI and supporting assignments and approaches that we find helpful to realize both the requirements of IE and to discover or develop students' PWT. The group in the course is a diverse mix of students who are native to Iceland and students who are immigrants to Iceland with varied nationalities. This group involved student teachers and in-service educators, including administrators, pre-school teachers, compulsory school teachers, physical education teachers and teachers with different specializations. All participants focused their work on issues of teaching and engagement. For the purposes of this chapter, all experienced educators will be referred to as teachers.

METHODOLOGY FOR OUR SELF-STUDY

Through engaging in this self-study of our teaching, we wanted to understand how the overall organization of the course and the assignments put in place for our students allowed their professional identity to emerge through uncovering and developing their PWT as teachers working within IE. Our research was driven by the question, What are we learning about our teaching through exploring students' PWT assignments? We gathered data about this course each spring from 2013 to 2015. In this chapter, we focus mainly on data from spring 2015, although we consult and are informed from older data. One of the changes we made in 2015 was to emphasize more decisively than before the opportunity for students to present their PWT in other forms than as written essays. Data consisted of our journals, discussions and meeting transcripts, as well as students' online discussions, anonymous TOCs (tickets out of class) providing student feedback on class meetings, and their assignments in different forms—graphic, 3-dimensional, and written.

As we read through the data from 2013 and 2014 we realized that although students were challenged by the PWT assignment, it was an important step in taking on the IE ideology in a constructive way. For the analysis of the data from spring 2015, we describe our two methods for addressing the data.

Svanborg's Analysis of Data

I, Svanborg, read the data with the inductive approach of grounded theory, marking and coding items and issues of interest without a specific theory in mind (Creswell, 2003). In the second round, I gathered issues and codes into themes and patterns that started to emerge, and the third time I sorted the themes in relation to our research question (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Karen's Analysis of Data

I, Karen, read and reread the data through the experiences and educational knowledge I had previously gained from working as a teacher researcher. I used this prior knowledge to guide me in identifying life experiences, values and beliefs, and critical incidents from the school site that student teachers declared important to the development of their PWT (Hubbard & Power, 1999). From there I explored patterns and themes, pieces of data, leading to flashes of insights into benefits and challenges students experienced in working with their PWT.

FINDINGS AND EMERGING THEMES

After these first rounds of analysis, we compared our emerging findings and started to write up the themes that emerged from the data we had analyzed, expanding and deepening our themes with direct quotes, as well as examples and stories from the data. Finally, we met and discussed the influences our findings were having on our understanding of the process we wanted students to go through and what implications they might have for our teaching.

A core theme in the findings shows that working on the PWT was a challenging process although most found it gave them strength and power. We describe and analyze the experience of students in two sections: (1) The different wefts [the horizontal threads interlaced through the warp (vertical threads) in a woven fabric]—how the different steps and assignments helped them along the way and how it was a step-by-step process; and, (2) The influence the PWT development had on students—what kind of professional identities appeared in their work. Finally, we conclude our findings by describing and analyzing what we learned as teachers about our teaching and discuss potential implications.

A Challenging and Empowering Process

Our data from 2013 and 2014 indicates that students found the process of working on their PWT to be important, and at the same time difficult. As we discussed students' conflicting experiences, we realized that many of the steps we had implemented in the course were working well. We decided to expand on those, developing additional tasks and experiments, encouraging students' critical engagement with their PWT.

For the purpose of this chapter we used mainly data from 2015, focusing on our collective efforts to develop the course to support students' engagement with and development of their PWT. Looking more closely at the data from students, we could see that using the PWTI and other assignments, tasks, and our approach all helped students to develop their PWT. One of our students in 2015 used the image of a tapestry as a symbol for making her PWT visible. From there she goes on to name the different influences on her PWT.

> *My professional working theory—who I am in my work and what I want to stand for—consists of many influences from different sources. These threads of influence weave together into the tapestry of my professional working theory. Each thread is important but individually fragile. When woven together with the others, each thread is strengthened, can bear more strain, and progresses towards its fullest potential. However, many threads are hidden; meanings I still need to uncover. Some I will never recognize, but I realize nevertheless they have shaped who I am, both in my work and in my private life. Some threads have yet to be wound and dyed, let alone woven into this tapestry; they represent the experience and knowledge I will gain through the rest of my life.* (Hanna, PWT assignment)

We found this metaphor useful in realizing how complex and intricate this important theory (PWT) is in the making and visualizing one's own professional working theory, presenting one's own professional identity.

The Different Wefts: Developing the PWT Step by Step

Throughout the data students identified elements in the course that helped them situate themselves in the reality of IE and thus excavate their PWT. They described what moved, informed and pushed their thinking about IE as it became a part of their PWT. Analyzing data, we recognized that students' experience of learning about and working within the context of IE and on their PWT were tightly intertwined, and that the course design and approach were woven into and around these two. Throughout the data we saw how the IE philosophy was in a way the warp in the tapestry of students' PWT and the different influencing elements make up the weft.

Practicing what we preach. As teachers educators we want to practice what we preach. We agree that learning takes time and that it is important to use various methods and strategies in working with students; we wanted to model for them that what we were telling them was useful. Therefore we made sure we both planned a time for students to discuss the issues being addressed and created tasks for students to experience these firsthand. After each session we asked students to help us name the teaching and learning methods we had used during that day. The list after one of the sessions contained the following methods: Presentations (lectures), discussions, collaboration (team-teaching), walk-and-talk, discourse analysis, group work, student presentations, narratives from teaching, visual presentations (drawings), active listening, looking for needs, analyzing needs, problem solving, and book fair (where students had choice according to interests and specializations) (Brainstorming List from Class, 2015). Students declared that the emphasis and approaches in the course had convinced them that it was important in their own teaching to offer a variety of teaching and learning methods. At the end of the second session a student

wrote, *I have not only read about teaching strategies, but experienced them. I would like more of this* (TOC, February 16th, 2015).

Throughout the course we gave mini-lectures on various topics. Many students mentioned that different lectures had inspired them, such as lectures about IE, literacy, innovation education and about being a leader (PWTs & Self-evaluations, 2015). Líf, a young teacher in a rural town, described her reaction to a lecture about innovation education: *The lecture was an inspiration for me in my working environment and I started to experiment with the ideology of innovation and other ideas that have been presented in this course* (Líf, Self-evaluation, 2015).

In getting students engaged with their readings, we asked them to write an editorial about a topic of their interest within each theme of the course. These editorials were to be posted on the online environment Moodle and discussed online in small groups. Many students described how this work had influenced their thinking about IE. Lísa describes her gain from the course's readings:

> *Many of the topics I have read and written about have directly influenced my job, sometimes to make my co-workers think about how our body language and how we apply our voice can avert children from conflicts towards solutions*. (Lísa, Self-evaluation, 2015)

In the second on-campus session, students asked for an opportunity to meet and continue their online discussions. As we responded to that request they described how this face-to-face interaction with either their peers on similar school levels or in groups with professionals from different levels and different specializations sparked greater discussion once they met online (Notes from Talks, 2015).

Throughout the course we had a strong emphasis on creativity and individual expression. Many students found the openness of some of the tasks to be challenging, especially in the beginning of the course. We strongly encouraged students to use original ways of presenting their PWT for the final form of that assignment.

Personal engagement with PWTI. A major approach in PWTI is to engage students personally and to draw on the life experiences that have influenced who they are as professionals. In the course, we designed different steps that were a part of or intertwined with using the instruments. In the first on-campus session we had students do a triple step interview working in groups of three. The aim of the interview was to get students to think of the practical aspects of their work. We arranged times for the interview and observed students actively doing the interviews on-campus, somewhat hesitant at first but as they continued, becoming more alive, the interviewee talking vigorously and the interviewer nodding and prompting when needed.

After the first on-campus session, students wrote in the TOCs how they had "learnt about what a professional working theory is," how they *needed to be proud of themselves as professional*, and how they realized *the importance of writing about and reflecting on one's work*. One person mentioned how she had never thought of

what kind of teacher she was and now she needed to allow herself to think of and put into words who she is as a teacher. As pleasant as this feedback from students were, we worried that the interview would not work as well for students who had not attended the on-campus session and had to conduct it online. These students were instructed to find a partner online to interview, organize an online meeting (for example, on Skype), and to record the interviews. The results of this type of interview process worked better than we had expected. Auður wrote in her self-evaluation report:

> *Having to find a partner to interview and discuss my PWT helped me develop my theory. Discussing it with another student, who also took this course, like me, mostly online helped me to get better in touch with the course. The points I wrote down during the interview helped me to work on my PWT. It was helpful to be able to listen often to the recording, both to hear my own talk and my partner's.* (Auður, Self-evaluation, 2015)

From there we asked the students to bring an object to on-campus session two that could symbolize who they were or wanted to be as teachers. Salka explained to her group what she had brought:

> *I discussed this with my colleagues in the teachers' room in my school and got them to reflect on their PWT. I suggested bringing a chili pepper. The spice symbolizes my effort in teaching where I am identifying needs – like tasting food – where do I need to do more, how can I spice things to get better results?* (Salka, PWT, 2015)

Another task students engaged with as a part of the PWTI was to complete a written response to the prompt "I remember…" highlighting their experience of being students or teachers. This was a task developed for students to identify moments in their lives or work they related to IE. From there, students were to write out the full account of that moment in order to explore the multiple factors influencing their actions and thoughts at that time. An example of "I remember…" writing is this description from Sif:

> *I remember my first students and the feeling I got when I first met them. I thought to myself after the first day: How on earth am I going to tolerate these other people's kids for a whole winter for many hours each day? Then something happened... I felt this abundant compassion towards them that emerged in that I wanted to do everything I could to ensure that they felt as good as possible.* (Sif, I Remember, 2015)

Other assignments and tasks were similarly designed to get students to develop a PWT that enabled them to both problematize their understanding of IE and identify professional strengths within themselves or their professional community to respond to different situations in their work.

Reflecting on the PWT assignment. The student data repeatedly showed that uncovering or developing their PWT was a process and the scaffolding and ignitions we provided helped them along in that challenging journey. Hanna, a pre-school teacher, reported:

> *Early in the course I bought a journal to write down my thoughts about schooling and education. This has been helpful for me as a professional. I will continue recording my thoughts and ideas. It has been useful to reflect on and develop ideas that come up in the business of the day*. (Hanna, Self-evaluation, 2015)

Þóra, an experienced teacher, admits that in the beginning of the course she did not know what a PWT, action research or reflection on one's own work was about: *I have to admit that I have built my teaching on an invisible PWT. I am realizing that everyone has a PWT, some parts can be hidden but others visible*. (Þóra, PWT, 2015) Throughout her PWT assignment she describes a strong and caring professional using the frames of the PWTI to present the core elements of her work. Auður looks back on her PWT work in the course in this reflection:

> *In the first assignment I was asked to reflect on what kind of teacher I wanted to be. When I look at my answer I see that my ideas have developed and changed in only three months. I have realized that my ideas about what kind of teacher I want to be must be supported by a strong rationale and power, they cannot just be exclamations. I have understood that I must know why I want to be this kind of teacher, what's behind that aspiration.* (Auður, PWT, 2015)

Through students' self-evaluation reports and the PWT assignments, we could see that the work with PWTI and other assignments on-campus and online helped students to get in touch with, uncover, and strengthen their developing PWT. Some students mentioned the PWTI as an influence in this process. Arna, a student teacher, expressed in her self-evaluation report the value of the PWTI for guiding her thinking:

> *I have deeply reflected on my PWT all term and it has been in the back of my mind in everything I have been doing. I have thought about what Hafdis said in her lectures and I have used the guidance and questions in the PWTI that we got in the beginning of the course to help me reflect on these issues. This work has given me a clearer picture of my PWT and how I want to explain what my profession entails.* (Arna, Self-evaluation, 2015)

Drawing together these findings, it is evident that the process of working on the PWT was a continuous journey throughout the course, guided by the PWTI, and addressed across many steps and through different assignments, tasks, and readings. Gradually, the tapestries of their PWTs emerged and were presented in the final version they handed in.

PWT Influence on Students – The Tapestry Appears

Most of the students experienced the PWT assignment as challenging but also found the process useful and empowering. Some students found it to be invigorating and that it strengthened the PWT they already had realized, and through the overall process in the course they were able to develop their PWT further. Others were developing or uncovering their PWT for the first time, throughout the course using the PWTI and other assignments and tasks related to IE to help their PWT to emerge.

Challenging and inspiring assignment. Working on the PWT was difficult for most of our students, especially the ones with little or no experience of teaching. Gustaw, an immigrant to Iceland who focused at the pre-school level, was one of those who found the PWT both challenging and useful:

> *It was a huge challenge to work on my PWT and yet the one I learned the most from. It made me stop and reflect on my situation. It was a very personal assignment, I have never written such a piece and I feel so much lighter after doing this.* (Gustaw, Self-evaluation, 2015)

Another pre-school teacher was bewildered in the beginning, but working on her PWT through the course, she discovered how theoretical knowledge supported her.

> *First I was meant to look at my PWT, but I didn´t understand what was expected of me. I had of course read about theories but they were just kept up "on the shelves" so to speak. But now I see how they support my work*. (Jóhanna, PWT, 2015)

Other students described the PWT assignment as enjoyable and useful. Anna, an inexperienced but motivated student teacher, reflects on her PWT:

> *It is not complicated to write your PWT… It is more demanding to act it out, especially when times are tough. I have still no experience of that. But I want to understand myself and that is not a job for one person, so I have accepted the help of influential others, that is, of academics and theorists.* (Anna, PWT, 2015)

Several students talked about enjoying the PWT assignment and were pleased with being allowed to leave the traditional frame of writing an essay. Ólöf was one of these students. She presented the core of her PWT as a series of drawn pictures depicting her development as a professional (see Figure 1 below):

> *I appreciated working on the PWT assignment. I was surprised how much I enjoyed leaving the academic frame and working it out in a creative visual way. I enjoyed and learned a lot from thinking about my profession in this way*. (Ólöf , PWT, 2015)

Salka, a young teacher in primary school with a little teaching experience, talks about how working on the PWT helped her mapping what she has been learning

Text translated to English:

Upper section:
Build on theory
Research, inquire, build up, engage.
Point out new routes
Opportunities for learning
Work with teachers, administrators, students, officials
School development
Lead people together
Professionalism.

Lower section:
Professional – schoolwork
Teacher – learner – inquirer – administrator – teaching guide.
Learning community
Support
Inclusive education
School development, flexibility, respect, learn from others, collaboration, team teaching, guidance, courses, adjust learning and teaching
The student in the first place
Building up the child

Figure 1. Ólöf's Professional Working Theory in 2015

and how she has matured and developed. Now, she feels more ready than before to develop further (Salka, PWT, 2015).

Looking at the data, we see how students experience being empowered by their participation in the course and have developed stronger professional awareness. This emerged in their PWT as well as in having a direct influence on their working conditions (for those who were practicing teachers). Practicing teachers were able to bring their understandings from their PWT to their teaching and this raised their awareness of how IE is realized in their schools. We recognized the work on the PWT as influential in expanding students´ knowledge, skills, and confidence to work in IE. They gradually realized what was needed for implementing this ideology; and this understanding was depicted in their PWT, reflected as: solid knowledge, positive attitude, collaboration, and creative thinking.

Knowledge and positive attitude. Many students mentioned that they had acquired more knowledge or deeper than they had before about IE. Hjördís reports in her self-evaluation report:

> *My knowledge about IE has increased enormously in the course. I feel ready to ensure that all children in the playschool I work in have the opportunity to enjoy everything it offers and I celebrate the diversity and its potentials and I will focus on every child's strengths.* (Hjördís, Self-evaluation, 2015)

Students' ongoing discussion in relation to their readings and writings helped them develop knowledge of IE. Ólína reports that Moodle discussions were rewarding: *There is a huge amount of experience and knowledge in the group, so many ideas that I have got through the discussions and responses to my writings* (Ólína, Self-evaluation, 2015). Radomila describes the overall influence of the course:

> *The course gave me increased academic knowledge about my profession in IE and an opportunity to discover new ways and approaches to diverse ways of teaching (tangible ways of expression, TOCs, and different forms to deliver assignments*). (Radomila, Self-evalutaion, 2015)

As a part of their PWT, many of the students analyzed what is at the core of IE. Aðalheiður states the foundation of IE lies in the teachers' attitudes and that *everyone can learn, whatever age, sex or race, but it is different between individuals how they learn* (Aðalheiður, Online discussion, 2015). Anna talks in a similar voice: *We are all individuals and we can all learn, all the way to our last breath* (Anna, PWT, 2015).

Collaboration and conversations. One of the realizations students identified as a key to making IE work was collaboration between colleagues, between teachers and students, and between school and parents. In her PWT, Katrín discusses the importance of collaboration and conversations in approaching complications that can be difficult to solve alone. She points out that it is possible with a positive attitude and working with good people to ensure the welfare of students:

> *It is important to work with good colleagues .... It's important to be able to discuss issues with co-workers. When discussions take place often new insights emerge that lead to solving the problem*. (Katrín, PWT, 2015)

Auður argues that for teaching and learning to be successful a collaboration with students, other teachers, principals, and parents is needed. She claims the keys to good collaboration are *positive interactions, respecting others, their ideas and talents, weaknesses and personal properties* (Auður, Online discussion, 2015).

Nína finds it imperative if a school is to work well that colleagues listen to each other and collaborate on meeting challenges and working on tasks. Salka concludes in her PWT assignment that solid collaboration is one of the keys to a successful teaching profession. She points out that collaboration is an important issue in modern society and that it needs to be trained. She also finds this thinking applies

to students' learning: *Students must understand their roles in connection with others and experience teamwork* (Salka, PWT, 2015).

Creative thinking. Developing a working theory is a creative process that reinforces the realization that creative and resourceful thinking is a necessity in the teaching profession. Our emphasis on creative thinking and seeing challenges as opportunities to move teaching and learning further with new or known solutions was often discussed in our preparation and analytical meetings. We wanted this thinking to permeate the whole course and thus we presented innovation education as an approach. The students embraced and expanded on this emphasis in different tasks and used it to develop their PWT.

Some of the students found the freedom for expressing their creativity to be challenging. Katrín declared in her self-evaluation report that the freedom she had in presenting her PWT in a creative way was daunting but at the same time it was the experience from which she learned most.

> *It engaged me to express myself in more ways than with words on paper. In my PWT assignment I became very excited about my idea of sorting out the knitting basket tangle as a symbol for my PWT. The tangled basket represents teaching in a group of different students as a complex and sometimes tangled endeavor.* (Katrín, Self-evaluation, 2015)

Hanna, a pre-school teacher, believes fostering children's creativity is important. She wants them to become resourceful and inventive.

> *Problem solving with children and identifying problems themselves, understanding and solving them is important. It is not just useful for them here and now but also to build a society in collaboration with others, because when we take from them the power and solve everything for them, we remove their initiative and skills to solve problems independently.* (Hanna, Self-evaluation, 2015)

Students repeatedly expressed how they wanted to emphasize problem solving in their teaching and to think about problems as challenges and opportunities. They expressed belief in creative teaching methods and approaches. They stated it would be more constructive to use available materials in a creative way rather than only complain about what is not available (e.g., accepting refugees to Iceland could be seen as an opportunity rather than a problem).

Development of the PWT Throughout the Course

Working through the PWTI and other assignments and tasks in the course supported students to form and make their professional identities visible. Analyzing the data from the beginning of the course to the final assignment and self-evaluation report we saw development and progression of the students' PWT. In the beginning many

of the students expressed doubts about IE. These views were altered according to the PWT assignment and self-evaluation report.

Clarifying the PWT in light of inclusive education.

> *I found everything about this policy that wasn't working and expressed my doubts about it. My feeling was that people were obsessed with practicing it according to one strict model. Fortunately my views gradually changed. ... I now think that each teacher must find his or her own rhythm to work in inclusive education with the students' needs at heart.* (Ingunn, Self-evaluation, 2015)

Þóra, another experienced teacher, talked in her self-evaluation paper how she had not expected much from this course: *I thought this would be yet another sermon about specific theories and teaching methods that would make me feel bad about what I was lacking* (Þóra, Self-evaluation, 2015). In the first intensive on-campus session, she slowly realized this course was different. *It was about looking at ourselves as professionals, our teaching, our attitudes and values. Reflect on why we teach like we do and what we can do to meet the needs of all students* (Þóra, Self-evaluation, 2015).

Most students were more upbeat and more positive towards IE by the end of the course. Prior to the course, Sigríður, a student with a psychology background, knew a lot about the IE policy and ideology but always thought it was complicated and difficult in practice. Looking back she felt she had been stuck in a rut:

> *I was stuck with the cliché that "it is impossible to meet each student's needs because of lack of time and money." After reading all the articles in this course, listening to the lectures and writing down my thoughts in a research journal I have realized that this does not have to be so complicated in practice*. (Sigríður, Self-evaluation, 2015)

These changes in students indicate that students' preconceptions of IE can change and that they may not be as deep-seated as they appeared in the beginning of the course.

Renewal and Empowerment

Students' views on IE either changed or became clearer through their PWT assignments. Some of the in-service teachers found the process and the course to be invigorating, giving them renewed energy and interest in their work. Many discovered their professional confidence and felt increased respect towards their work.

Increased professional awareness with theories and reflection. Working on their PWT and other assignments helped students to realize what kind of professional they

wanted to be or become. Through the process they strengthened their professional image. Hrönn, a pre-school teacher, claims that the course and the work on the PWT helped her to develop her professional identity as a leader in her school: … especially in my department where there are different individuals with different needs (Hrönn, PWT, 2015). Heiðrún, a primary school teacher, explains in her self-evaluation report: I am now more professionally aware and a better teacher than before (Heiðrún, Sef-evaluation, 2015).

Through our own self-study we often discussed that many students have not experienced being empowered by theories, often finding them to be an unsettling obligation in their studies. Therefore we were pleased to see how many students had discovered the power of theories for strengthening their professional image and how they played an important role in their PWT.

Ingunn, an experienced compulsory school teacher, has found connections with theories that she did not expect.

> *I have learned a lot, my vocabulary relating to theories has increased enormously. Today I have words for so many things I did not know there were words for – and certainly not theoretical words.* (Ingunn, Self-evaluation, 2015)

She adds that she leaves this course *thick with theories and armed with many more tools to teach than in the beginning of the year* (Ingunn, Self-evaluation, 2015). Linda, a pre-school teacher, expresses how she found support in the theories she previously had thought had little relevance for the day to day work in pre-school:

> *I have got theories that helped me to think more deeply. They support my rationale and my views and give me professional confidence. The theories have helped me to name the methods I have been using in my work.* (Linda, Self-evaluation, 2015)

Anna claims that she highly doubts that it is possible to write about one's own PWT without connecting to theories and writings of others. Una reflects in her PWT assignment: *I saw that I had been busy in my everyday work and reading again about the ideology behind the theories I found that I was better equipped and stronger in doing my job* (Una, PWT, 2015).

Over and over we saw that the course and the tasks were enabling students to realize how their work was already theorized; by gaining the words they needed to talk about their profession and their actions, they felt empowered. Brynhildur, a pre-school teacher, described her increased lexicon for describing practice:

> *I simply didn't realize that I knew so much and I just lacked the right words to describe. I try to work in the spirit of the multiple intelligences theory – before this course I knew I was doing a good job but I could not put the theories I was working by into words.* (Brynhildur, Self-evaluation, 2015)

A majority of the 2015 group expressed that they experienced the importance of self-reflection through working on their PWT, using the instruments provided in class

to support them. The PWTI led them to reflect and think carefully about the three core elements in their PWT. Several of them dug deeply into their life histories and presented in their assignments deeply touching stories from their background. Linda started her PWT assignment by stating: *In order to describe my professional theory I had to dig deep into my own life's history to scrutinize everything that has influenced me and how I am now* (Linda, PWT, 2015). Hrund, a compulsory school teacher with 10 years of teaching experience, stated she realized the importance of constant reflection. *I need to allow my doubts to be aired and use them to convince myself I am doing the right things. My self-discussions are a part of my PWT. It is ready – but will be constantly scrutinized and reevaluated*. (Hrund, PWT 2015)

Ólína stated that she found the PWT assignment useful *to look inward, reflect and look at yourself as a professional* (Ólína, Self-evaluation, 2015).. Þóra, an experienced compulsory school teacher, said she did not have a clue about her PWT before this course. She discussed how reflecting on her actions helped her realize that she is a different kind of teacher depending on which subject she is teaching. She admitted that she did not do a proper reflection in her job, but throughout the PWT assignment she provided deep reflections on the many issues, facets and duties of her work.

Inspiring and empowering. Hanna, a pre-school teacher, remarked on the PWT work and the course as a whole: I could not have gained more from a course than in this one, it ignited a passion in me that had been diminishing (Hanna, Self-evaluation, 2015). Ingunn described influences in a similar vein:

> *The course and assignments pushed me as a teacher and taught me that I am professional and theoretical in my work. I have learned a lot of practical things that I will use in my work; approaches and ways of working in the intensive sessions were powerful and it was really bad to miss them when I could not attend.* (Ingunn, Self-evaluation, 2015)

Our teacher hearts were joyful when we saw how many of the students found the course and the PWT assignment empowering. Lovísa stated she could now recognize and celebrate her own strengths through working on her PWT: *I have acquired a new outlook on myself as a professional. My self-efficacy and my competence to meet different children's needs has expanded in the course* (Lovísa, PWT, 2015). She describes how the work on the PWT gave her an opportunity to reflect on her ways of working: *It has helped me to know my strengths. Working on the PWT has strengthened my respect for myself as a pre-school teacher*. (Lovísa, PWT, 2015)

Brynhildur spoke to the impact her experiences in the course had on appreciating the professional self: *This course has taught me to value myself more highly, my own resources* (Brynhildur, Self-evaluation, 2015). Heiðrún, a pre-school teacher for eight years, used her reflection in the course and a part of her PWT to identify unknown spaces for learning in her work. She discovered that her favorite time was the time in the dressing room with the children:

> *You have relaxed quality moments with the children, talk to them quietly and talk about different things. You can support their acquisition of knowledge and use opportunities that arise. Instead of telling the child to put on certain mittens, you can ask if they would like to put on the green or the black mittens. Simple things are important.* (Heiðrún, PWT, 2015)

Overall the data from spring 2015 shows that students were influenced by the course as a whole and in particular by working on their PWT. They described how they were empowered by elements of the course that included hard work, self-reflection that required digging deep into their personalities and life experiences, experiences of different assignments, and the teaching and learning methods that are effective for inclusion education. Through these experiences they saw a shift in their professional selves as individuals who not only have increased knowledge about IE, but who also aspired to be the very model of resourceful teachers in inclusive education.

IMPACT ON OUR TEACHING IN A COURSE IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Inspired by Freese's (2006) approach, we reflected on our findings to draw out what is "usable, applicable and informing" in order to tease out what might make a difference in our teaching in teacher education or possibly in teacher education in a larger context. Our research question was: What are we learning about our teaching through exploring students' PWT assignments?

The underlying aim of our course is to increase student teachers', in-service teachers', and administrators' awareness of how their habits of minds (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009) influence the development of their PWT. A key to responding to the social and cultural diversity of students is the ability to explore one's practice from alternative perspectives. Thus, all the tasks developed within the course were meant to increase students' awareness of who they are or who they want to become as teachers (Korthagen, 2013). During the course we used TOCs from the on-campus intensive sessions to adjust our teaching and organization of the course elements to the different needs within the versatile group of student teachers and in-service teachers. For example, after the first sessions we decided in the next intensive sessions to draw out more clearly how physical education teachers and pre-school teachers might use creativity and an innovation education approach in their work. We also responded to students' suggestions of being able to work on campus in the same groups as they were arranged in Moodle discussions, and to work sometimes in groups according to the school level in which they were working as teachers or administrators, or being prepared to work as student teachers.

In our meetings, reading TOCS and discussing the various assignments and tasks in the course, we realized that we experienced a similar engagement as the students in our own PWT. We constantly asked ourselves: Are we enacting our own PWT? Are we practicing what we preach? And does it work? By reflecting regularly on our

data we verified that we were applying versatile teaching methods and adjusting our teaching to students' needs.

By using self-study, we systematically scrutinized our teaching, adjusting it from year to year. It allowed us to look closely at our own ideals, intentions and plans and how we enacted them in practice. We gathered data of different kinds and used students' own descriptions, discussions online and on-campus, and reflective assignments to extract their experience of our teaching and the influence it was having on their professional identities. This was useful for us; it challenged us to respond and develop what we had designed for them and also empowered us to continue doing what worked well. Informed by these data and our regular conversations and reflections, we realized that our students brought different experiences and knowledge into developing their PWT. We needed to respond to them as individuals, paying attention to their different experiences; but we also needed to respond to them as a group and as sub-groups. Although we recognized that the creativity and flexibility of some of the assignments and tasks were difficult for some students and they needed more support to complete them, we saw this focus on creativity and flexibility as important for students' individual and collective development of their PWT (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). Throughout the course we noticed how these students grew in their skills to use creativity as they tried out different forms in representing their PWT. Students who preferred a more structured approach in completing assignments were able to articulate their fears of having weak frames (Bernstein, 2000) as the structure for their creative work.

Our collaboration and continuous conversations have inspired and empowered us to keep developing this course. The self-evaluation reports and PWT assignments of students were an inspiration, providing us insights into how the whole process of students working on their PWTs was both professionally empowering and professionally enabling in preparing them as teachers to work in inclusive education. The following are excerpts from our journals discussing the impact we have seen for our students using PWTs as a venue for professional growth, and the understandings we have gained.

> *Reading two stories of immigrant Icelanders in their PWT assignment gave me an understanding of what kind of background they came from and what kind of lives they might be carving out for themselves in Iceland. I feel honored to be able to contribute to supporting them to become strong, confident professionals in Icelandic schools. I was also moved to tears when I read the life histories of three Icelandic women in the class and how they used destructive experiences to become professionals who displayed the opposite of what they had endured*. (Svanborg, journal, May 2015)

> *In looking back at students' awareness of the role of the PWT in how they view and respond to their working situation as it has emerged within the content of the course, I feel they have grown so much. Through the course I have seen them move <u>from</u> not realizing they have a PWT <u>to</u> naming the different sources*

> *of influences and values in their lives to identifying how this increased sense of professional identity has empowered them to respond to their situation. I have learned so much about the importance of PWT through students' work and I know I will have to continue exploring to support this important work*. (Karen, reflective journal, May 2015)

We have realized which ideologies we build on in our practice by doing self-study on our work. We see our ideologies crystallize within inclusive education and the social justice it represents. We try diligently to implement our ideologies into practice; we want to practice what we preach. Our teaching is in many ways similar to artistic acts, led by the educational values, personal needs, and theories to which we ascribe (Eisner, 2002). Our artistry emerges in the versatile ways we respond to students' needs, we interact constantly with them online and on-campus, and we use different teaching styles and approaches. Teaching in this way is a challenging endeavor, but we realize that our professional identities have strengthened through looking closely at our work with our students. Self-study of our teaching has helped us better understand our students experiences, and through the examination of those experiences has informed our practice as teacher educators.

We have seen, as we have presented above, that working on PWT with the PWTI and other assignments and tasks creates a strong tapestry in students' professional identities. The work turned out to be inspiring and empowering. We acknowledge that it is important and challenging for teachers to become conscious of their professional identities. We have seen through our data that with the help of PWTI and carefully planned activities and approaches it is possible to help students make visible and strengthen their PWT, which in turn provides insights and understandings that inform their professional lives.

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PATIENCE SOWA AND CYNTHIA SCHMIDT

10. WEAVING TOGETHER THEORY, PRACTICE AND ETHICS

UAE and USA Graduate Students Craft Their "Living Theories" Using the Professional Working Theory

The purpose of this chapter is to explore our experiences implementing Dalmau and Guðjónsdóttir's (2002) Professional Working Theory (PWT) with graduate students in the USA and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). We believe that the PWT provides an excellent framework for helping pre-service and inservice teachers consider the ways that educational theories are embedded in their daily instructional practices. Further, we believe that this framework gives teachers a voice in stating their own beliefs (ethics) and creates a sense of personal ownership or identity for their professional lives.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

We draw on the literature of reflective practice, the self-study of teacher education, and narrative inquiry to explore our experiences assisting our graduate students in developing their professional working theories.

Since the early twentieth century, educational researchers and teacher educators have emphasized the necessity of preparing teachers to be effective in classrooms by bridging the gap between the theories they learn and their practice in classrooms (Dewey, 1933; Korthagen & Schon, 1983; Zeichner & Liston, 1996, 2013). These researchers note that reflective practice is vital in helping to bridge this gap, as well as facilitating the ways in which beginning and in-service teachers can continue to grow, develop, and transform their practice as professionals. Various models of reflective practice, such as journaling, debriefing, anecdotes, and action research, have been suggested as a means of scaffolding reflection to improve teaching.

Additionally, researchers pointed to the need for teacher candidates and in-service teachers to work towards creating and developing their own personal and professional knowledge and theories through experience. In this regard, Whitehead (1983) states teachers can improve their practice by creating their own "living educational theories" (p. 2). Whitehead (1989) notes that teacher/researchers should use a cycle in the tradition of action research where they "present their claims to know their own educational development as they investigate how to improve their practice"

M. C. Dalmau et al. (Eds.), Taking a Fresh Look at Education, 169–186.

(p. 2) through posing problems, choosing solutions, evaluating the outcomes of the solution(s), and modifying ideas and actions in light of these evaluations.

Similarly, Korthagen, Loughran and Russell (2006) note the importance of teacher educators perceiving "knowledge as a subject to be created by the learners themselves" (p. 1027). They note the advantage of this approach to knowledge in teacher education is that teachers acquire a different perspective to using theory in teaching. These researchers posit that the theory teachers elicit from their own experience and reflection is "more linked to their own situations and concerns, and thus has much greater emotional significance for them" (p. 1027). Furthermore, facilitating such a process with teacher candidates "provides them with the capacity for ongoing professional growth during their careers as teachers" (p. 1027).

We also draw on the literature of teacher professional identity. Researchers have emphasized the importance of teacher professional identity and its links to the practical professional knowledge of teachers. They note teachers' views of their own professional identities affects how they enact their work and how they are able to cope with educational innovations, changes and reform (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2013; Bullough, 1997; Mockler, 2014). In her studies on teacher professional learning and development, Mockler (2013) notes; "teacher professional learning … is not merely about the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but the formation and mediation of teacher professional identity" (p. 42). She argues that it is important for teachers in their ongoing professional growth to ask themselves "essential identity questions" such as "who am I' (in this context) … and "why am I here'?" (p. 42), to enable them to articulate their professional identities. Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2013) include the question, "What do I want to become?" (p. 213).

In this study we contribute to the research literature on ways of scaffolding reflective practice, improving teacher professionalism, as well as engaging in the self-study of teacher education practices. The self-study of teacher education practices is the rigorous examination of the teaching practices of teachers and teacher educators in order to inform and transform their teaching and children's learning (Loughran, 2002, 2004). The self-study methodology has its roots in Dewey's (1933) notion of reflective practice. However, self-study extends reflective practice through the features of openness, collaboration, and reframing (Barnes, 1998). Openness is achieved through making the privacy of our classroom teaching public and open to critique. Teachers and teacher educators are able to consider different perspectives of their work through collaboration by negotiating and sharing ideas with critical friends (Schuck & Russell, 2005). The process of reframing occurs, through systematic reflection, when teachers and teacher educators "open themselves to new interpretations" (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 1998, p. 2; Schon, 1983), and then "reinterpret and reframe their situation" (Zeichner & Liston, 1996, p. 16) and change their teaching practices or "create different strategies for educating students" (Hamilton & Pinnegar, 1998, p. 2). Clandinin and Connelly (2004) state that "self-studies of teacher knowledge must somehow lie closer to practice, to be studies of practice, studies of what we call personal practical knowledge" (p. 582).

We explore how we used PWT (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2002) to develop and guide our graduate students' reflective practice and to reframe our own practice as teacher educators. Dalmau and Guðjónsdóttir (2002) based this framework on the ideas of Schon (1983) and Whitehead (1989, 1993). The PWT provides a framework for reflecting on three important components of reflective practice: theory, practice and ethics. Practice is defined as "what teachers do, theory as how they understand what they do, and ethics as why they do what they do" (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2002, p. 102). The definitions are intended as a starting point for teachers to reflect upon the educational theories and ethical commitments that are embedded in their daily teaching practices. Loughran (2002) states "the ability to recognize develop, and articulate a knowledge about practice is crucial as … it is a powerful way of informing practice as it makes the tacit explicit, meaningful and useful (p. 38)." The PWT process offers teachers and teacher educators an opportunity to frame their reflection on the living theories implicit in their practice. The PWT process is particularly unique because it adds the element of ethical commitments to teachers' notions of professional practice.

Narrative inquiry weaves our theoretical frame together. Narrative inquiry is "the study of the ways in which humans experience the world …" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). The focus of narrative inquiry in education is teacher knowledge. Clandinin and Connelly (2004) describe teacher knowledge as knowledge that teachers acquire through experience, learning in context, and demonstrating this learning through practice. Through the "construction and reconstruction of the personal and social stories; teachers and learners are storytellers and characters in their own and other's stories" (p. 2). This links Connelly and Clandinin's work to teacher identity as teachers learn about themselves through telling stories about their professional lives and landscapes. In the telling and retelling of stories, narrative inquiry explores teacher knowledge through the three dimensional space of time or temporality, the continuum between the personal and social, as well as place (Clandinin & Huber, 2010; Connelly & Clandinin, 2000). Connelly and Clandinin, emphasize the need for self-studies which use a narrative approach as a method, to move "away from an intensely personal focus" to contributing towards professional knowledge through connecting to "audiences of other researchers, other teacher educators, other teachers and perhaps policy makers" (p. 2).

CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

In this section of the chapter we describe our methodology, which is narrative self-study and our classroom contexts.

Narrative Self-Study

In this study we use narrative self-study and PWT as theoretical frameworks to analyze our data. Narrative self-study is a term for self studies that employs

narrative inquiry to study the relationship between teacher educators and their practice. Kitchen (2009) describes narrative self-study as the "improvement of practice by reflecting on oneself and one's practices as a teacher educator" using narrative inquiry as a method (p. 38). By storying and restorying their experiences through narrative self-study, teacher educators can transform their personal practical knowledge into professional knowledge. We use narrative exemplars to tell and reframe our stories about implementing the PWT. Narrative exemplars are reflective stories of socially and contextually situated human actions (Lyons & LaBoskey, 2000). These exemplars help teachers and teacher educators to "interrogate their teaching practices to construct meaning … through the production of narratives that lead to understanding, changed practices and new hypotheses" (p. 21).

In narrative exemplars, data are used "in exemplary ways to illustrate the thoughts of the narrative writer" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 11). Our narrative exemplars consist of two parts. The first part is a description of our teaching context and practices; the second part is a reflective analysis of these practices accompanied by a reframing of our teaching. We use the analytical tools of the PWT and narrative inquiry (broadening, burrowing, and storying and restorying) to analyze the data. Our field texts consist of field notes, graduate students' artifacts that include the PWT, and reflection papers.

Cynthia's Teacher Education Context

Students were asked to develop their PWT for a graduate course, the Teaching of Reading. The course was taught in a university located in the Midwest portion of the United States (US). Faculty in the Language and Literacy program aim to prepare teachers to meet the needs of diverse learners in urban contexts. While the university is located in a city, graduate students come from different school districts around the metropolitan area: urban, suburban, and rural. As in many countries, US teachers are under considerable pressure to increase students' test scores in reading and writing. School districts mandate curriculum materials and methods that teachers use, but individual teachers maintain a level of autonomy in how they implement instruction in their own classrooms. This literacy course is designed to help teachers develop understandings of underlying principles and foundational theories related to a variety of instructional practices. As graduate students, they are expected to move beyond declarative and procedural knowledge about instructional practices toward understanding principles that underlie effective teaching practices and ways to adjust practice to meet the needs of individual learners.

Fifteen graduate students were enrolled in the semester considered in this analysis. Eleven were teachers pursuing a graduate degree leading to certification as reading specialists; two teachers were in high school English, two were in middle school developmental reading, and seven were in elementary grades one through five. Three graduate students were preparing for initial certification in special education, and worked as teacher aides in special education classrooms. One student

was pursuing a master's degree in literacy without certification. Two teachers were Black, both working in urban schools. Twelve White teachers were working in a variety of school districts: urban, suburban, and one rural.

In this teaching of reading course, we studied the theoretical foundations and the social and political contexts that were associated with changing instructional practices in reading throughout the twentieth century. Each graduate student was assigned to observe literacy instruction and interview a teacher about the literacy practices observed. In small groups, graduate students compared the practices they observed and analyzed the theoretical principles underlying those classroom practices (e.g., traditional basal reading instruction, reading and writing workshop approaches, and computer assisted literacy programs). In their observations and analyses, they considered the literacy environment, such as student interactions, motivations, and engagement in authentic reading and writing tasks associated with different instructional approaches. Each small group of students made a classroom presentation showing visual representations of practices and explaining their interpretations of educational theories embedded in those classroom practices. These presentations were intended to demonstrate the connections between educational theories and current literacy practices.

The PWT paper was a culminating project intended to demonstrate learning throughout the course. Graduate students analyzed *their own* instructional practices in terms of theoretical foundations and principles. In addition, they articulated their personal theories about worthwhile literacy instruction and explained the values and ethics that supported their choices. The purpose for having students develop a culminating PWT paper in their graduate studies was to help them realize "…the professional understanding that evolves through the constant interplay of professional knowledge, practical experience, reflection, and ethical or moral principles." (Dalmau, & Guðjónsdóttir, 2002, p. 102). Figure 1 provides the overview of inquiry prompts used to guide students in the development of their PWT papers.

Initial drafts of the professional working theory paper were completed during class time with small groups of peers working under the supervision of the instructor. Peer discussions were intended to help graduate students clarify and articulate their own personal theories to be developed in their individual papers. The following provides the directions for the assignment.

> *Professional Working Theory*-Write a paper that synthesizes what you have learned this semester about worthwhile instructional practices in a comprehensive literacy program and the educational theories that are related to literacy development and instructional practices. Identify those instructional practices that you consider to be most essential for worthwhile literacy instruction at a particular grade level. Explain the ethics and values that guide your choices about worthwhile literacy practices. Cite the theories and theorists who are most influential in your position about worthwhile literacy development and instructional approaches.

Practice	Theory	Ethics
• What do I do in my daily work of teaching? • What instructional practices are most significant to me in improving literacy instruction? • What type of classroom context is important in order for worthwhile literacy development?	• How do I understand and explain what I do? • Whose ideas have been influential in helping me understand the nature of good literacy instruction?	• Why do I do what I do? What are my personal ethics and values related to literacy? • What are the sources of my values; e.g., societal and cultural influences that impact my values? • How are my values made visible in my work?

Figure 1. Question prompts for practice, theory and ethics

Rubrics associated with this assignment were used by program faculty to assess individual student learning, and to consider program success in developing graduate students' understandings of literacy theories and practices and their commitments to values associated with developing high levels of literacy for *all children* (see Figure 2).

As described in Figure 2, the rubric for scoring the PWT papers includes an evaluation of the components within a PWT (instructional practices, literacy environment, theoretical foundation, ethics, and the rationale for the PWT) as well as the quality of writing by the student. The *target* level of performance involves analysis and synthesis of content, connects theory to practice, with clear descriptions of elements, clear organization and appropriate use of terms. *Acceptable* performance involves the inclusion of key elements that connect theory to practice and provides descriptions but with less attention to analysis and synthesis of content. The *unacceptable* level of performance lacks clarity and organization, may include misconceptions and misunderstandings, and provides weak connections across theory and practice.

Cynthia's Reflective Analysis

In the following section, I describe students' performances on four elements of the rubric: instructional practices, theoretical foundations, ethics, and the rationale.

Instructional practices. All students scored at an acceptable level by clearly describing developmentally appropriate and worthwhile instructional practices for literacy. Many graduate students focused on differentiating instruction to meet the

Components	Target	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Instructional Practices	Analyzes and synthesizes types of instructional practices that are appropriate for a particular instructional approach.	Demonstrates clear understanding of purposes for instructional practices Describes practices that are worthwhile, developmentally appropriate, and contribute to a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction.	Description of instructional practices lacks clarity or does not demonstrate appropriate purposes of instructional approaches.
Literacy Environment	Describes ways to promote social, and intellectual environment for worthwhile literacy learning, and respect for diversity of opinions and backgrounds.	Describes ways to promote social, and intellectual environment for worthwhile literacy learning,	Description of components of literacy environment is not clearly connected to goals of a literate environment for a particular age group.
Theoretical Foundation	Analyzes and synthesizes different strands of cognitive and sociocultural theories related to literacy development and literacy instruction	Demonstrates understanding of cognitive and sociocultural theories related to literacy development and literacy instruction.	Demonstrates some misconceptions about theories and their application to literacy development and instruction.
Ethics	Clearly describes impact of teachers' role in supporting literacy development for children from diverse backgrounds.	Understands significance of teachers' roles in supporting literacy development of **all** children. Communicates the importance of fair-mindedness, empathy and ethical behavior in literacy instruction and literacy environments	Belief statements are not clearly connected to teachers' roles in classroom literacy instruction.
Rationale for PWT	Rationale for instructional practices and ethics are well supported with theories and practical knowledge. Makes strong arguments for positions stated.	Makes clear connections among instructional practices, theories, and ethics related to literacy instruction.	Connections among theory, practices and ethics is somewhat vague
Quality of Writing	Professional quality of writing in terms of clarity of ideas, voice, organization, appropriate use of technical vocabulary, sentence fluency and conventions.	Appropriate quality of writing in terms of ideas, organization, appropriate use of vocabulary terms, sentence fluency and conventions	Errors in writing distract from understanding of the ideas communicated in the paper.

Figure 2. Rubric for scoring PWT papers

needs of specific learners. The special education majors emphasized this, but other practicing teachers did so as well.

Seven students reached a target level by analyzing and synthesizing particular activities showing a consistent approach to literacy instruction. The most successful teachers were able to describe instructional practices in terms of their impact on students' engagement and ownership of literacy. These were qualities we used to describe effective literacy instructional practices (Au, 2011; Fountas & Pinnell, 2006). One student notes, "I often see very reluctant readers embrace a new love for reading because of discussions…during interactive read-aloud." In addition, some teachers focused on the significance of authentic literacy practices, "…creating activities that enable my students to connect to the real world …to make them aware of the world beyond the classroom…is at the heart of effective literacy practice."

Theoretical foundations. All students were able to describe theoretical foundations of literacy instruction; however, only six graduate students reached a target level by demonstrating thoughtful understanding of similarities and differences among cognitive and sociocultural theories. The most successful graduate students acknowledged the interplay among cognitive and sociocultural theories in the instructional approaches they used. For example, one student talked about ways she moved between explicit instruction in phonics and basic comprehension skills for some learners, and more open instructional approaches in reading and writing workshops for more advanced learners. Other teachers acknowledged the significance of reading and writing workshop approaches in allowing them to scaffold individuals who needed specific assistance with cognitive strategies, while also allowing for social interactions in literature discussion groups.

Ethics. All students were able to explain their personal values and ethics related to literacy instruction; seven reached a target level, and eight scored at an acceptable level. All graduate students spoke broadly about the importance of literacy, and their desire to help all children achieve high levels of literacy in their classrooms. For example, one elementary teacher wrote; "When…reluctant readers transfer this love for text to their independent reading lives I feel truly successful as a teacher." One student directly addressed the issue of social class when she explained that she wanted to empower students to move beyond perceived limitations based on her own working class upbringing. She supports her approach with sociocultural theories, demonstrating her integration of theory, practice and ethics.

> *Empowering my students to use literacy to seek the knowledge they are searching for teaches them to take ownership for their own learning. This dynamic between the role of the students and the role of the teacher derives from a very social constructivist approach to teaching and learning.*

Only three of the 15 graduate students directly addressed issues of race and culture affecting the inequities in urban classrooms. One pre-service teacher had taken

previous courses focused on the significance of culturally responsive instruction. She writes:

> *Research has shown the ways in which students of minority and low socio-economic status have been disadvantaged by mainstream education that is made for students of white Anglo-Saxon, middle class backgrounds*.

Two Black teachers with experience in urban schools expressed similar issues. One teacher refers to Au's (1998) framework as a theoretical foundation for her beliefs and instructional approaches.

> *Leading students to listen to and read a variety of books is harmonious with Kathryn Au's teachings on Diverse Constructivism. Students are exposed to a plethora of text. Their readings promote diversity and cultural awareness. Students are introduced to different worldviews, making it easier for them to understand and function in places outside of home and school.*

Rationale. All but one graduate student wrote acceptable rationales demonstrating reasonable connections among instructional practices, theories and ethics. The graduate student who was unsuccessful in this area was not a teacher and was not enrolled in a certification program. She had difficulty meeting requirements for observing and interviewing a practicing teacher. Eight of the 15 graduate students wrote excellent rationales; i.e., they stated strong ethical positions about the types of instructional practices they espoused and they made clear connections about the theoretical foundations embedded in those practices.

Reflection II Reframing My Teaching

Faculty in the Language and Literacy program were concerned graduate students were not developing adequate understandings about theories and principles related to literacy instruction. I redesigned the Teaching of Reading, taken by our students in the first semester of the program, to provide information about foundational theories, and the social and political contexts which influenced the development of different approaches to literacy instruction. US teachers have been under considerable pressure to raise students' test scores in literacy and math, and many school districts have responded by proscribing literacy curricula, using particular materials and instructional methods to be implemented in all classrooms. Teachers are often frustrated by mandated changes and feel they are losing their professional identities. We want our graduate students to understand the underlying principles of instruction that are embedded in different instructional approaches so that they can critically examine the methods and materials that make up their literacy curriculum. The PWT offered a framework to help teachers understand the significance of their personal and professional lives as teachers.

We began the semester by reading about historical changes in theories about literacy development; e.g., behavior, cognitive, and sociocultural theories. We considered how these theories were connected with different instructional practices (e.g., explicit teaching of phonics, controlled vocabulary in early basal readers, authentic children's literature, reading and writing workshop approaches). While this was interesting, many students did not see the relevance to their current situations.

The assignment to observe and analyze literacy instruction with a group of peers provided a critical scaffold toward our final writing of a PWT. The graduate students divided themselves into groups based on current teaching: primary, intermediate, middle and secondary, and special education. Each student observed literacy instruction in a different classroom (twice) and interviewed the teacher about his/her beliefs about important instructional practices. Essentially, these were brief ethnographic experiences; they collected artifacts and prepared an oral report for their groups. The small groups met twice during class time to discuss similarities and differences in the classroom practices they observed and analyzed the theoretical principles that were embedded in particular instructional practices. Each group prepared a classroom presentation (a PowerPoint and some classroom artifacts) addressing two questions:

1. What did we observe as important literacy instructional practices at this grade level?
   a. What was the role of the teacher?
   b. What were roles of students?
2. What theories and principles of literacy instruction are embedded in these practices?

The group presentations were followed by whole class discussions about the value of these instructional practices and their implications for students' personal literacy development. These classroom presentations and discussions brought the theories and principles to life. Graduate students were particularly interested in the impact of different instructional practices on children's experiences of literacy in the classroom.

By considering the implications of educational theories they observed in actual classrooms, my graduate students began to see patterns that helped them understand and develop their own theories about worthwhile instructional practices. The PWT helped some teachers develop a powerful sense of ownership of their professional lives as teachers. As one teacher wrote:

> *When I began teaching I knew that I wanted to make a difference in the lives of children… I didn't give much thought to my classroom practices as that didn't seem to matter as much as the scores and successes my students were achieving. Through this class, I was able to think critically about my classroom practices and* ***identify the why behind the things I do*** *each day*. (Cynthia's bolding)

The PWT framework was my foundation for redesigning this course. I wanted my students to develop their own living theories of literacy instruction – to see that their living theories could be the driving force that influenced literacy learning for their children despite changes in methods and materials mandated by their school districts.

Clearly, some graduate students wrote papers that were stronger than others in different aspects of the PWT, but all reached acceptable levels on the rubrics associated with my PWT assignment. By emphasizing the different elements of PWT, we moved beyond intellectual arguments about different instructional practices or theories. The ethical aspect of the PWT gave teachers an opportunity to voice their personal commitments to the values embedded in different instructional approaches – moving beyond test scores to students' personal development of and engagement with literacy.

While I was pleased with graduate students' performances on the PWT, I was disappointed that graduate students did not write as much as I expected about critical literacy. I included significant readings about critical literacy and a book by Kathryn Au (2011) that proposes a framework differentiating traditional constructivism from a *diverse constructivism.* I believe Au's framework can be significant in developing strong theoretical and practical approaches to literacy, and it is certainly based on clear ethical commitments to diverse children. However, I believe that only some of my students understood Au's framework and could apply it to their personal situations. As I wrote above, one preservice teacher addressed it theoretically, while only two teachers (both Black teachers with experience in urban schools) seemed to adopt this stance in their PWTs. It may be that more emphasis could be placed on understanding Au's framework, but I also think that teachers need experiences to clarify their understandings of the framework. In our Literacy and Language program, there are urban practicum experiences that could support this understanding and a later writing of the PWT would give faculty an opportunity to assess graduate students' growth in articulating personal theories that incorporate broader societal issues into the PWT.

Patience's Teacher Education Context

Student developed their PWT in the Language Development and Communication graduate course I taught in the UAE. The course addressed communication, language development and acquisition and assessment procedures for special needs and inclusive education. Eleven women graduate students who were pursuing a Master's in Education (M.Ed.) in Special Education, took this course which was the seventh of 11 courses in their program of study. The M.Ed. in Special Education was a new program and the participants were in the first cohort of students. The blended course consisted of nine sessions over a period of six weeks. Class meetings were on Fridays and Saturdays. Eight of the students were Emirati, or citizens of the UAE and three

of them were from Jordan. The students were in various stages of their careers in schools, in a center for children with special needs, and in educational organizations. One of the students had been an English teacher and was not working at the time she was taking the course. Two participants worked in schools as coordinators for children with special needs. Two others worked as teachers in schools, and the rest of the participants were all working in various capacities such as lead teacher, therapists and case-workers at a center for the education of children with special needs.

The education of children with special needs is relatively new, but is a top priority in current UAE education reform. The country is working towards creating inclusive classrooms and providing more services for children and adults with disabilities and special needs. In 2006, the government passed the UAE Disability Act "to protect the rights of people with disabilities and special needs" (http://www.uaecd.org/special-education). Accordingly, the Ministry of Education and the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) have been educating teachers and providing needed resources to facilitate the education of children with special needs in public and private schools.

The purpose of having the graduate students complete the PWT was to have them take ownership of their work as teachers by critically reflecting on and gaining a greater understanding of their practice, the theories which inform their practice, and their ethical commitments. This culminating activity, in turn, gave me the opportunity to gain insight into how and what students were learning during the course, and their program in terms of their own professional development and identities. To scaffold the PWT, I explained the assignment and we had whole group discussions about each of the three elements. Graduate students were required to examine each component of the PWT from a close or local perspective, a medium distance perspective, and a broad or societal perspective (Dalmau & Guðjónsdóttir, 2002). The close/local perspective question for practice is, 'What do I see happening in my work daily?' The medium distance perspective asks, 'What directly affects what I do?' The broad societal perspectives asks, 'What broad connections am I aware of?' Figure 3 below illustrates how part of the PWT was scaffolded for the graduate students.

We started the course with exploring theories of language development and acquisition and how these theories might be linked to interventions for children with special needs, specifically in the area of language development. Graduate students used a worksheet to write down the theories they used to inform their practice and to describe what using these theories looked like in the societal context. The same was done with the elements of practice and ethics. We discussed the element of practice after graduate students had completed a case study of the language acquisition, and physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of a child with special needs. Graduate students described the interventions they would use to help in language acquisition as well as the holistic development of the child. As part of this assignment, graduate students were expected to specify theories applicable to the child's development and use these theories to reflect on the child's situation and social and cultural context.

	Close/Local	Medium Distance	Broad/Societal
Practice	What do I see happen in my daily work?	What directly affects what I do?	What broad connections am I aware of?
Theory	How do I explain what I do?	What are the immediate sources of my understanding of what I do?	What theoretical frames of meaning for the basis of my understanding?
Ethics	What are my personal ethics and values? How are they visible in my work?	What are the sources of my ethics and values?	What are the cultural and societal impacts on my ethics and values?

Figure 3. Question prompts addressing close, medium and broad contexts for reflection

Towards the end of the course and before the assignment was due, we then had another whole group discussion about the assignment and the rubric I would use for assessing the assignment. The graduate students were encouraged to draw visuals to help them complete the assignment.

Reflective Analysis

The analysis of the graduate students' PWT demonstrated that they understood the three elements of the theory. The graduate students were quite detailed regarding their everyday work with children, colleagues and families. They wrote about working with children, modifying curriculum, collaborating with families and teachers, creating supportive environments and using assistive technology. "As a special education teacher, my job is to identify my students' needs and be responsible for creating a safe, inspiring, motivating, helpful, and supportive learning environment," one of the graduate students noted. All the students had strong discussions about the broad societal implications of their teaching and support of children with special needs. They wrote about how they worked to change attitudes of teachers, parents and families as well as their communities towards children with special needs. Many of them wrote about their passion for teaching children with special needs.

The center for children with special needs uses Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to educate and socialize the children who attend the center. The goal of the center is to prepare children for inclusion in schools. The graduate students who worked at this center discussed this model and behaviorism as major influences on their practice. The teachers and coordinators stated that constructivism was their major influence, only one of them stated that behaviorism was an influence. All the students stated that more than one theory formed the basis of their practice. Theories

they discussed included Bandura's (1986) social learning theory, Vgyotsky's (1980) zone of proximal development, ecological theories of development (Bronfenbrenner, 2009), and Piaget's theory of cognitive development (Wadsworth, 1996). In writing about ethics, students wrote strong discussions regarding their beliefs and values. Participants discussed fairness, trust, respect, and the importance of their responsibilities to the children, families and community as teachers, case workers or lead therapists. Only one person mentioned the importance of confidentiality. A discussion on confidentiality is crucial in a closely knit Emirati community, where many families know each other, especially if they belong to the same tribe (Crabtree, 2007). Almost all of them wrote that one source of their values was the Quran. They stated that the Quran called upon Muslims to be dedicated to their work: "Allah will be pleased with those who try to do their work in a dedicated way," a student wrote. The Quran also calls upon Muslims to provide "social, psychological, medical and economic" support for children and adults with special needs as well as the less fortunate in society, another student wrote. Many of the students also wrote about their beliefs in helping children succeed, "making a difference in their lives", helping them "connect to the real world," and advocating for children and families. A few of the Emirati students wrote that it was important to help children with special needs to be productive, contributing members of society. Two students wrote that their immediate, extended family and culture were a source of their ethics and had greatly influenced their choice of working with children with special needs. Four of the 11 candidates wrote of their passion for working with children with special needs and the importance of advocating for these children. What needed strengthening in their discussion of ethics was how they make their ethics visible and explicit in their professional practice.

Reflection II – Reframing My Teaching

As mentioned above, the purpose of the professional working theory assignment was to help the graduate students gain more of an understanding of their professional work and what it means to develop their own theories of practice. For four out of the 11 students, the development of a professional working theory seemed to be more of an academic exercise. The essays of these students tended to be discrete or separate discussions on each of the components of the PWT. They described their practice, listed theories and superficially discussed their ethics. The work of students who had strong PWTs reflected their awareness of the integration of the three components. They gave examples of how theories and ethics were reflected in their work with children, families, their colleagues, and the UAE society. Only one student discussed how important and helpful the assignment was in helping her to reflect on her professional growth. She states, "I also believe that it is very useful to reflect about our works [sic] and our practices and ask our self [sic] if we can do better."

The purpose of self-study is to help teacher educators to reframe their practice through asking themselves the question "how can I improve?" Reframing is essential

to self-study. Loughran (2004) points out that in self-study teacher educators are "continually adapting, adjusting, and altering their practice in response to the needs and concerns of their context" (p. 18). Looking back and storying and restorying my experience teaching graduate students to develop their professional working theories has given me occasion to consider the various ways in which I would reframe my teaching.

Unpacking the components. First, I would conduct a more careful and considered unpacking of each of the components of the PWT. This unpacking would be done through discussing each of the components and then looking at them as an integral whole. Instead of a chart which perhaps might have led the graduate students to think of each component as separate, I would use a Venn diagram to illustrate the integration of the three components (See Figure 4).

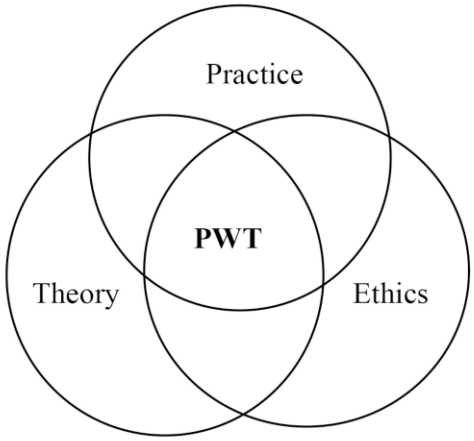
Questioning. I would also add more questions to help elicit deeper and more critical reflection. After a whole group discussion, and in addition to answering questions about the close, medium and broad societal questions for each component, I would put students in pairs or small groups and have them work together to answer questions such as:

1. How are my ethical values and beliefs reflected in my practice?
2. How do the theories I use in my professional work inform my ethics?
3. Which theories inform my professional practice?
4. Why do these theories inform my practice?
5. Which theories do I believe in but find difficult to implement in my professional practice?

Eliciting student experience through their writing or discussing assertions and/or rules and practical principles of professional practice is an effective way of helping educators or teachers to articulate their practice by making the tacit more explicit (Kitchen, 2009; Loughran, 2004).

From our discussions of how we implemented the PWT, I would also, as Cynthia did, add the rationale for writing a PWT as an element. This explicit addition helped her students write about their personal positions regarding PWTs.

Programmatic issues. Time is always important in helping students process information. This course was very intense and a lot of material had to be covered in nine sessions over six weeks. The intensity and fast-paced nature of the course did not lend itself to giving students nor myself the time to reflect more deeply about course content, and themselves as professionals. It is important to note that the graduate students had varying degrees of English language proficiency. Graduate student PWTs might have been stronger if they had more time to process and write their reflections. As a whole, the M.Ed. program itself needed for courses to be seamlessly connected and lengthened to give graduate students opportunities to



- How do theories inform my professional practice?
- Which theories do I believe in but find difficult to implement in my professional practice?
- Why do these theories inform my practice?
- How are ethics reflected in my practice?
- How do my theories inform my practice?

Figure 4. The integration of practice, theory and ethics in a PWT

continually reflect on their practice, the theories which inform their practice and their ethics. The M.Ed program has since been revamped and courses have been lengthened to include ensuring this objective.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of narrative self-study is to give teacher educators the opportunity to improve their practice through the telling and retelling of their stories. Having a critical friend as part of the self-study process is vital and essential (Loughran & Northfield, 1996). Over the past 10 years, the PWT has served as a foundation for our own personal and professional development as critical friends. "A critical friend acts as a sounding board, asks challenging questions, supports reframing of events, and joins in the professional learning experience (Schuck & Russell, 2005, p. 107). The PWT helped us explore our experiences in facilitating student development of professional working theories and uncovered the tensions, challenges and strengths of our teaching.

Mockler (2011a, 2011b, 2013) notes the importance of supporting teachers to develop their professional practice and thereby their professional identities, in relation

to their societal and teaching contexts. We believe the professional working theory provides an excellent contextual framework for developing notions of professional identity. While some students thoroughly understood the idea of developing their professional working theories, others did not. We found that the more experienced practitioners had stronger professional working theories and sense of professional identity. However, we know that we have set all of them on the path toward thinking more about themselves as theorists and professionals. Conducting this narrative self-study led us to deeper understandings of our personal practical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1998); it helped us reframe our practice and give us insights into how we might make this activity more meaningful and transformative for our students.

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