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Learning to Teach, Teaching to Learn:

A Longitudinal Case Study of Becoming a Literacy Teacher

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Learning to Teach, Teaching to Learn:

A Longitudinal Case Study of Becoming a Literacy Teacher

by

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Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

December 2014

Dedication

For CB, whose unwavering support gave me the confidence to see this dissertation through to completion and whose assiduous efforts to bring about better schools for all kids continue to inspire me daily. And for Mom, who knew I could do this long before I ever did.

Acknowledgements

The journey I went on both professionally and personally to complete this dissertation has been facilitated by many people. It is my hope that it serves as a reflection of the voices and perspectives of the many teachers, students, family, and friends who have so graciously shared their wisdom with me over the last thirty-seven years.

From Jim Hoffman, my mentor and co-chair, I learned how to be a better teacher. Your knowledge and passion for preparing teachers is unmatched, and I recognize how lucky I am to have had the opportunity to watch your life's work unfold every day. From Beth Maloch, my co-chair, I learned how to be a better researcher. Your feedback, scholarship, and organizational habits have greatly influenced my own methodological approach to studying teachers. Thanks also go to the additional members of my amazing committee: Jo Worthy, Melissa Wetzel, and Julian Vasquez Heilig. Jo, your supportive and caring demeanor was a tremendous source of encouragement throughout the entire process. Melissa, your dedication to social justice inspires me to always keep seeking access and equality for all. And Julian, your constant drive to examine the policies that govern our schooling system gives me confidence that there will be positive change for our nation's public schools.

Thank you to my incredible family: to my dad, who worked so hard his entire life to provide the best education for me and my siblings; to my mom, whose intellectual curiosity lives on inside me; to my loyal and loving siblings (Hugh, Molly,

Learning to Teach, Teaching to Learn:

A Longitudinal Case Study of Becoming a Literacy Teacher

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2014

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This longitudinal case study followed a beginning teacher from the first semester of her teacher education program into her fifth year of teaching. Using situated learning theory, this dissertation reports the influences on her journey in becoming a literacy teacher before, during, and after her teacher education program. Data sources included interviews, classroom observations, and documents that were collected over six and a half years and across multiple contexts (e.g., tutoring, student teaching, community-based learning, coursework, two elementary schools). Using constant comparative (Glaser & Strauss, 2009) and longitudinal coding methods (Saldaña, 2009), the analysis suggests that the participant developed the following understandings over time and across contexts: she intends to be a lifelong learner; she values and validates students' interests, histories, and contributions;

she is committed to teaching for social justice; and she believes a safe, trusting, and flexible community is essential to learning.

Findings indicated that her ability to enact these understandings in practice, even in difficult school contexts, was made possible by her reflective stance and her commitment to surrounding herself with communities of like-minded people to support her in similar ways as had been the case in her teacher education program. The results of this study provide evidence that over time the understandings developed in a teacher education program have the potential to fully emerge in practice inside teachers' classrooms. This study has implications for how we prepare teachers, how teacher education programs can continue to support their graduates, the types of school communities that seem to support beginning teachers, and how policy makers might direct future funding towards responsible teacher education.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Statement of the Problem

Teacher learning and how we prepare teachers in the United States have a long history, dating back to 1839, shortly after the first normal school was opened in an effort to develop systematic preparation for teachers (Labaree, 2008). In recent years, it has been a central focus of educational researchers and a target of policymakers. The reason is clear: Teachers and how they learn to teach matter. A growing body of research reveals the importance of literacy teacher education (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; Kennedy, 1999; Risko, Roller, Cumins, Bean, & Collins, 2008) and teacher education programs more broadly (Cochran-Smith, Feiman-Nemser, McIntyre, & Demers, 2008; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001; Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). We have learned that the quality of those programs, and of the students who enroll in them, matter in terms of teacher and pupil outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 2000a; Darling-Hammond & Young, 2002; Hoffman et al., 2005; National Reading Panel, 2000; Pearson, 2001; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997).

In a time when our student population is becoming more diverse and with an increasing demographic divide (Banks et al., 2005; Sleeter, 2008), we have also learned that what teachers know and what they do are "more important influences on student achievement than family characteristics and ethnicity" (Kaplan & Owings, 2003, p. 688). With the improvement of school achievement a dominant public concern, the preparation of teachers is seen as a direct link to that outcome. As a result, teacher education programs face increasing pressures to provide

evidence that legitimizes their process for preparing teachers.   The concern is that

in response to increasing attention to improving student performance through

teacher education accountability measures, we have created narrow policies and

reform movements that could potentially reduce our understanding of teacher

learning and how we prepare teachers.

Reform initiatives calling for increased evidence of teacher preparation

effectiveness are not new. They date back 30 years to the process-product era when

research was focused on correlations between teacher behaviors and student

achievement (Brophy & Good, 1986). However, current trends indicate a

fundamental shift in educational policies from program inputs to outcomes evidence

(Cochran-Smith, 2006, 2008). These moves from internal to external measures of

accountability can be attributed to multiple sources: federal initiatives, state

policies, national organizations, and public perceptions. In 2001, the No Child Left

Behind Act (NCLB) increased attention on the subject-matter preparation of

teachers. These policies led states to reexamine certification and licensure

requirements and accountability measures, resulting in, among many other things,

alternative routes to preparation. Guiding the policy was an interest in improving

student achievement through meeting the goal of having a "highly qualified" teacher

in every classroom. While there is little debate about the importance of "highly

qualified" teachers, there is less agreement on how to define "highly qualified" and

how best to prepare teachers to fit that definition.

Eight years later, federal initiatives to ensure the preparation of "highly

qualified" teachers intensified when the Obama administration introduced Race to

the Top (RTT), a fund created to reward states for education innovation and reform. A central tenet of RTT has been an increased focus on teacher preparation. It asks states to adopt accountability measures by linking student achievement growth to teachers and the programs that prepare these teachers (http://www.americanprogress.org). In so doing, this federal initiative (like those that came before) has had states scrambling to interpret these accountability and assessment measures (Goertz & Duffy, 2001).

Although not a RTT participant, the state where this study takes place passed legislation in 2009 as SB 174 (now TEC 21.045) requiring that the state develop plans to hold educator preparation programs (EPP) accountable for their graduates. The Project on Educator Effectiveness and Quality has been given the task of developing a comprehensive metric to assess the influence of an EPP's graduates on student achievement during their first three years in the classroom. The metric includes a measure of growth in student performance, as well as observations of teachers in the classroom, and the resulting data will be publicly reported. When these ratings on program effectiveness are disseminated to the public, a likely concern may be that the scores could misidentify the success or failure of a teacher education program and thus lead to undeserved rewards or sanctions. This potentially could further discourage those who want to enter the profession or could influence where teachers choose to teach, perhaps keeping the most "highly qualified" teachers from teaching in low-performing schools (where "highly qualified" teachers are needed most) for fear that the school's test scores would reflect poorly on the program where they were prepared.

Coupled with these federal and state initiatives are national organizations such as the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), which is trying to standardize teacher education across the nation through accreditation processes, and the National Council of Teacher Quality, which is charged with reviewing and ranking the nation's 1,400 higher education teacher preparation programs. What remains unclear is whether these policies and accountability measures will substantially improve the preparation and quality of teachers, since we have come to understand that standards and accountability are necessary but not adequate in themselves to improve or change teaching and learning (Goertz, 2007). The biggest fear is that we "oversimplify or distort complex issues by mandating quantitative requirements . . . which do not correspond to the complexity of the issues involved" (Zeichner, 1999, p. 12). As programs rush to accommodate mandates, seek accreditation and improve their ranking, it is important to remind ourselves what we already know about the process of learning to teach, how to prepare effective teachers, and the areas of research that still need to be addressed.

Rationale for the Study

> Student learning in schools is affected by a number of different but interrelated factors in addition to the general type of preparation for teaching received by their teachers. Among these are the individual attributes brought by prospective teachers to their teacher education programs; the specific features of these programs and their components and the institution in which they are situated; the nature of instruction in teacher education programs, what prospective teachers learn in these programs; the schools in which teachers teach before, during, and after they complete their preparation; school district policies and practices; and state and federal policies. (Zeichner, 2005, p. 743)

We know that learning to teach is complex and that it is a lifelong process. Zeichner's quote illustrates this by acknowledging the link between student learning and the multiple influences on the process of learning to teach. Research on learning to teach typically describes this process as ongoing throughout the professional life of a teacher (Feiman-Nemser, 1983, 2001, 2008). This teacher-learning continuum includes research and theoretical work on teachers' beliefs and experiences before entering a teacher education program, how teachers are prepared during their programs, their work in the early years, and the ongoing professional development of teachers throughout their career (Darling-Hammond, 1996).

First, we have evidence that initial beliefs of entering preservice teachers (PSTs) affect what they learn from their preservice programs (Conklin, 2012; Hollingsworth, 1989; Lortie, 1975; Richardson, 1996; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998) and that those beliefs are difficult to change (Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). Second, in recent years, there has been an increasing amount of research on literacy teacher education, and we have learned more about the qualities of successful programs that prepare literacy teachers (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; International Reading Association, 2007; Risko, Roller, Cumins, Bean, & Collins, 2008). Research has also demonstrated that there is an established link between the quality of teacher preparation for literacy instruction and teaching practices during the first few years of teaching (Harmon et al., 2001; Hoffman et al., 2005; Maloch et al., 2003). And finally, as literacy teachers begin their careers and transition from preservice to in-service, research tells us that the schools in which they teach and where they are located significantly influence their

actions (Deal & White, 2005, 2006; Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999; Smagorinsky, Gibson, Bickmore, Moore, & Cook, 2004).

What we know less about is the long-term impact of literacy teacher education and its overall influence on career development (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Clift & Brady, 2005). There is considerable agreement in the field that the study of teacher learning and teacher education would benefit from more longitudinal studies (Clift, 2008; Clift & Brady, 2005; Conklin, 2012; Feiman-Nemser, 2008; Wilson, Floden, & Mundy, 2001). In the long history of literacy teacher education, only in the past decade have literacy researchers begun to increase their focus on longitudinal studies examining the transition of teachers across the learning continuum (e.g., Grisham, 2000). Specifically, we need to do a better job at looking, over time, at the settings and contexts in which learning occurs (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Grossman et al., 2000; Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999; Grossman & Thompson, 2004). "Both the components of teacher education programs and programs themselves need to be described and studied in a way that acknowledges their complexity and their ties to the settings in which they are located and the people who inhabit them" (Zeichner & Conklin, 2005, p. 699). By focusing on the continuum of teacher learning and the settings in which teachers learn, researchers could contribute to the understanding of the influences on teachers' development over time and what that might reveal about how teachers transition from teacher education programs into using high-quality teaching practices as beginning teachers. As Clift (2008) reminds us, "there is little data to provide links between an individual's knowledge, their learning within a teacher

education program, their actual teaching in schools, and their students' learning" (p. 828). Research that considers the interaction of person, program, and school setting could add to the much-needed information on the link between teacher learning and student learning.

In light of these gaps in the research it seems important to explore the process of learning to teach by investigating the complexity and interconnectedness of how the multiple learning communities before, during, and after teacher education influence teacher learning.   At a time when policies are limiting our understanding of learning to teach to a single test score used to measure teacher education outcomes, it seems vital that we engage in research that gives a more comprehensive view of what candidates learn over time and what role a teacher education program plays in that learning. Thus, this dissertation study offers an opportunity to answer the calls for longitudinal research that trace teacher learning across the multiple settings where teachers learn to teach (Feiman-Nemser, 2008).

This study looks to teacher education settings to learn about the preparation of a literacy teacher and to beginning teacher settings to gain a better understanding of the demands placed upon a literacy teacher in her first classrooms. Ultimately, I will look across these two settings with the intent of clarifying the messy transition from one to the other that historically has plagued the teaching profession (Cuban, 1993). In so doing, I aim to increase the conversation across these two contexts to assist teachers in producing student outcomes that will satisfy policymakers without sacrificing what research suggests about how to prepare effective teachers. Through a longitudinal case study, I hope to make a contribution to research by

investigating how a fourth-grade teacher has negotiated the transition of learning to teach across multiple contexts. This study is guided by the following question: How did a teacher's participation across multiple contexts over time influence her journey in becoming a literacy teacher?

Purpose and Design of the Study

As a former fourth-grade teacher, and now a teacher educator, I have become increasingly interested in deepening my understanding of the most effective ways of preparing and supporting teachers as they learn to teach. During my first years as a graduate student, I was fortunate to work with Dr. Houston and Dr. Williams (pseudonyms) on a longitudinal self-study of our university-based teacher education program. The purpose of this research was to better understand how the features of our program helped to support our preservice teachers during and after their program. Engaging in a three-year study of a cohort of teachers with whom we were working and from whom we were learning revealed many things about the nature of teaching and learning. First, we learned about the influences that tutoring had on their learning to teach. Second, we learned about the successes and challenges our teachers faced in their first year of teaching. And finally, we learned about how their visions for teaching were constructed and reconstructed in moments of dissonance. The findings from the study (Hoffman & Mosley, 2010; Hoffman, Mosley, Horan, Russell, Warren, & Roach, 2009; Mosley, Hoffman, Roach, & Russell, 2010) gave us insights about how to strengthen our program, and that led me to become interested in looking at the influences of our program on teacher learning beyond the first two years of teaching. In addition, I was eager to follow

one particular participant, Colleen (pseudonym), who had emerged from this study as a teacher with a student-centered, inquiry-based vision for teaching literacy that seemed to be sustained in a school where there was an emphasis on the use of structured programs.

Drawing upon and extending the data from this larger study, this dissertation study is intended to broaden my understanding of learning to teach and how we prepare teachers. Specifically, this study sought to uncover the influences and factors associated with learning to teach literacy by looking up close and in depth at Colleen's journey before, during, and after her teacher education program. The goal was to bring new insight to discussions about the complexity of learning to teach and the role that various contexts play in that process. I designed this qualitative study to build on what we discovered in the larger study about learning to teach literacy while also heeding the calls of other researchers about the methods in which researchers go about studying teacher education. Coupled with the need for more longitudinal research (Clift, 2008; Clift & Brady, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 2008; Wilson, Floden, & Mundy, 2001), there is also a call for more in-depth case studies of teacher education programs and their components (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2008; Zeichner, 2005). Concurrently, I am mindful of the requests for fuller descriptions of data collection and analysis methods within these case studies, including the contexts in which research is conducted (Borko, Whitcomb, & Byrnes, 2008; Grossman & McDonald, 2008; Zeichner, 2009).

Therefore, guided by my research question and consistent with case study research, I collected data over six and a half years through sources that included

interviews, observations, and documents (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009). Data analysis

was ongoing throughout the study, with two phases of formal analysis that drew on

both constant comparative (Glaser & Strauss, 2009) and longitudinal (Hatch, 2002;

Saldaña, 2009) methods of analysis. I addressed trustworthiness criteria (Lincoln &

Guba, 1985) inside my research design, as well as attending to the specific features

of ensuring quality as part of a case study guided by social learning theories (i.e.,

sociocultural theory and situated learning).

Significance of the Study

The findings from this investigation will add to existing bodies of research in

two ways. First, they fill a void in the research on learning to teach and literacy

teacher education by examining the impact of particular settings on learning to

teach (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2008; Grossman & Thompson, 2004; Grossman et al.,

2000; Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). While many studies on learning to teach literacy

have examined the influences of either prior beliefs/experiences, teacher education,

and/or school communities, only a few (e.g., Deal & White, 2005, 2006; Freedman &

Appleman, 2009) have looked across all of these to make sense of a teacher's

journey from before, during, and after a teacher education program. In addition,

while research has shown that teacher education matters for student achievement

(Darling-Hammond, 2000a; Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Hoffman et al.,

2005; National Reading Panel, 2000; Write, Horn, & Sanders, 1997), we still seek to

learn more about other outcome measures for teacher education program

effectiveness. Through the consideration of Colleen's experiences, I hope to

illuminate issues of teacher learning that might help teacher educators who aim to

provide evidence beyond a single test score to legitimize the impact of teacher education on teacher and student learning.

Second, this study has the potential to contribute to the methodological gaps in the study of teacher learning and teacher education. Clift (2008) believes that "there are few methods texts to guide us in this work, which means that the field of research on teacher learning must be as attentive to careful documentation and critique of methods as it is to asking the right questions" (p. 829). With my research questions and theoretical frameworks guiding all aspects of my research design, my goal for this study is that it might serve as a model in longitudinal case study methods offering an explicit chain of reasoning through thick descriptions of contexts and a thorough documentation of my data collection and data analysis techniques (Floden, 2008). Other researchers might be interested in replicating the design to contribute additional case reports that side by side might help us begin building cases of what excellence in learning to teach might look like across programs, institutions, and pathways in teacher preparation (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Zeichner, 2010).

This study has the potential to contribute to empirical research that focuses on the complexity of learning to teach literacy (Florio-Ruane, 2002). By looking across the continuum and examining what learning to teach means across contexts, this study could have implications for whom we recruit to the profession of teaching, how we prepare teachers once they enter the system, and what kind of support we need to offer beginning teachers to keep them in classrooms. A mix of politics, public opinion, and empirical evidence will always influence decisions

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about teacher education and teacher learning (Wiseman, 2012). I hope that this research will be an important contribution to the evidence showing the complexity involved in learning to teach and the role that teacher education plays in the lives of teachers and students.

Overview of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into six chapters: introduction to the study, review of literature, methodology, Colleen's evolving understanding of self and students, Colleen's evolving understanding of teaching and learning, and discussion. The first chapter identifies the research problem, the rationale for the study, and the purpose, design, and significance of the study. Chapter 2 situates the study amid earlier research with a review of the literature on learning to teach. In this section, I review the theoretical frameworks for the study and the conceptual literature on learning to teach, offering a framework through which to view the data collection and analysis of this study.   Next, I review the empirical literature on the role that prior beliefs/experiences, teacher education, and the transition into school contexts play in learning to teach literacy. In Chapter 3, I describe the methodology of this study.   It includes a detailed explanation of the research design, philosophical assumptions that I bring to this work, the settings in which the study takes place, a rich description of the data collection and data analysis procedures, and a discussion of the trustworthiness criteria that I employed throughout the study.   Chapters 4 and 5 reveal the four themes that emerged from the data as salient to Colleen's journey in becoming a literacy teacher. Within each theme, I describe the contextual influences on her learning to teach literacy before, during, and after her teacher

education program. Finally, Chapter 6 provides a discussion of the findings and the

implications of those findings for practice, policy, and research.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Review of Literature

Investigating the process of learning to teach requires attention to several related areas of literature. As a result, this review is organized into three major components. First, I discuss the theories that ground my study. I explore the ways in which a theoretical framework informed by sociocultural views, specifically situated learning, can provide deeper insights into the process of learning to teach. Second, I review relevant conceptual literature on learning to teach that demonstrates the ways scholars have theorized teacher learning. Finally, I offer a review of the empirical literature on learning to teach literacy. The review of the empirical literature is organized to emphasize the notion that learning to teach happens over a lifetime and not solely in a teacher education program (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). I start by looking at the ways in which researchers have made sense of the influence of the prior beliefs/experiences teachers have before they enter a teacher education program. Then, I discuss the literature on literacy teacher education and the program experiences that contribute to the development of an effective teacher. Finally, I look to studies that focus on the transition of beginning literacy teachers from teacher education to new school contexts, examining methodological choices and the influences of those settings on a teacher's learning.

Taken together, these three bodies of literature help to reveal the complexity of learning to teach over time and across multiple contexts. Drawing on all of these areas of research helps to contextualize my study and directly affects the choices I have made in my study's design. Thus, I look across this literature to demonstrate how a longitudinal case study is one viable way to build upon what research says

affects teacher learning and to contribute to the conversation about the influences on learning to teach. Taking into account the multiple bodies of scholarship that inform this study, Figure 1 provides a visual overview for the structure of this review.

Theoretical Framework

Sociocultural Learning Theory
Situated Learning Theory

Conceptual Literature: Learning to Teach

Historical Views on Learning to Teach
Contemporary Theories on Learning to Teach

Empirical Literature: Learning to Teach Literacy

Role of Prior Knowledge and Beliefs
Role of Teacher Education
Transition from TE to School Contexts
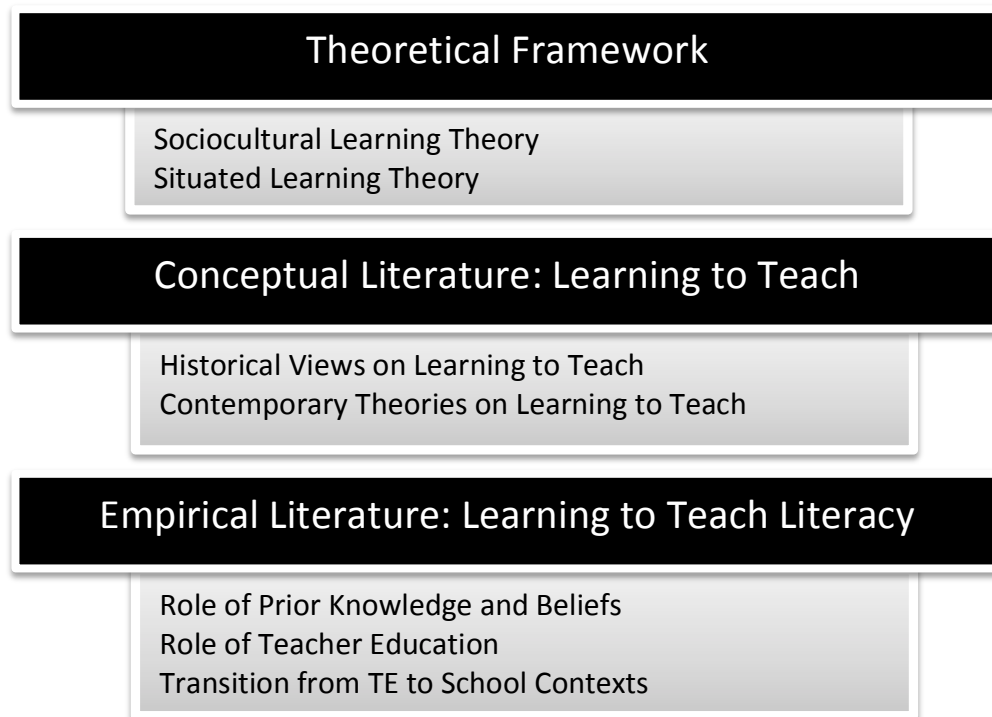
Figure 1. Organization for Review of Literature

Theoretical Framework

In order to investigate the process of learning to teach, this study is grounded in two complementary social learning theories: sociocultural theory and situated learning. Sociocultural theory, more broadly, and situated learning, more specifically, offer compelling frameworks for the study of teacher learning and teacher preparation. Sociocultural learning theory views learning as a collaborative process constructed by social interaction, through the use of tools, and within

various sociocultural settings (Vygotsky, 1978). In particular, sociocultural

approaches "focus on the interdependence of the social and individual processes in

the co-construction of knowledge" (Palincsar, 1998, p. 345). From this perspective,

learning to teach is not viewed as the transmission of a body of knowledge or a set

of skills from an expert (teacher educator) to a novice (preservice teacher); rather,

learning and meaning-making are actively built upon as a result of individuals

interacting with the world and through culturally constructed activities (Bruner,

1990; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). By choosing to view this study from a

sociocultural perspective, I hope to gain insight into the "contexts for learning to

practice and the social forces affecting practice" (Clift & Brady, 2005, p. 330). This

perspective allows me to move away from focusing solely on the cognitive aspects of

my participant's learning to teach literacy to exploring the impact of social practice

on her learning (Wertsch, 1991).

Situated Learning Theory

Situated learning theory draws on a sociocultural framework and has

particular relevance to this study (Greeno, 2003; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Putnam &

Borko, 2000). Examining what it means to know and learn through a situated

perspective, which has engaged scholars for a long time, refers to a set of theoretical

perspectives and areas of research with roots in various disciplines, among them

anthropology, sociology, and psychology. Situated learning theory posits that

learning is a process that takes place in the act of participating (Lave & Wenger,

1991; Wenger, 1998). Unlike behaviorist theories, which view learning as taking

place solely in the mind of an individual, situated learning theory conceptualizes

learning as a social practice. Much of the research in the field of education on the

nature of knowledge, thinking, and learning as constructed in social interaction has

been focused primarily on PK-12 students; less attention has been paid to teachers

and how they learn to teach (Putnam & Borko, 2000). I believe that this perspective

offered a powerful lens for the investigation of individual teachers as they

participated in learning communities and in real-life situations. In this particular

study, framing teacher learning as a situated practice enabled me to examine my

participant across time and within multiple sociocultural contexts, focusing on the

interdependent relationship between the participant and the context. Doing so

helped me see the strengths and limitations of particular practices and settings for

teacher learning.

One key tenet of situated learning, and the social nature of learning to teach,

is legitimate peripheral participation (LPP). LPP is a process of learning by which

people move from a position of limited understanding and participation to

increasing levels of understanding, participation, and responsibility (Lave &

Wenger, 1991). In essence, Lave & Wenger (1991) define it as a "process by which

newcomers become part of a community of practice" (p. 29). This concept,

developed to characterize learning, was an attempt to broaden the notion of

apprenticeship from fixed divisions between expert and novice to a more

interpersonal system of interaction between both experts and novices (Rogoff,

1995; Wenger, 1998). In relation to this study, LPP would suggest that as teachers

learn to talk and act like teachers, their capacity to participate shifts from a limited

role to a more central role. It is through this participation that one becomes

acculturated into the practices of the community (in both teacher education programs and first years of teaching) and, as a result, develops new knowledge of teaching (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Developmental research in the past has often examined either the individual or the context, but the LPP perspective allows one to examine the codependent nature of an individual and his/her sociocultural environment (Rogoff, 1995). Thus, utilizing LPP as a lens to view learning allowed me to focus my study on "how various settings for a teacher's learning give rise to different kinds of knowing" (Putnam & Borko, 2000, p.6). In turn, this focus allowed me to examine, simultaneously, my participant and the settings in which she developed as a teacher. Learning to teach, then, is always situated in a social context and is social in nature (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Ovens & Tinning, 2009; Putnam & Borko, 2000).

Communities of Practice. Social contexts have been conceptualized in various ways across research--e.g., affinity groups (Gee, 2005), activity systems (Engeström, 1999), and communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). I have chosen to draw on communities of practice as a way to conceptualize the learning-to-teach journey. Although earlier efforts to understand learning within communities of practice were not focused on school cultures, recent studies have begun to investigate learning to teach in school contexts and teacher education programs (e.g., Au, 2002; Cobb, McClain, Lamberg, & Dean, 2003). The primary focus of communities of practice is that learning happens during the process of social participation (Wenger, 1998). This construct, developed by Lave and Wenger (1991) and later elaborated on in Wenger's (1998) work, suggests that a community

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of practice is defined by three essential qualities: a joint enterprise, mutual relationships, and a shared repertoire. In sum, the community of practice model is a theoretical framework for thinking about the learning that occurs within specific contexts and among participants engaged in mutual goals. To understand teacher learning, then, the community of practice model takes into account both the individual and the physical and social systems in which that individual participates (Putnam & Borko, 2000).

The notion of communities of practice offered this study a lens through which to view the process of learning to teach as participation in socially organized activities, thereby having an effect on an individual's construction of knowledge (Greeno, 2003). We all belong to communities of practice (often many), and these communities evolve and shift during our lifetime. These multiple communities of practice "shape not only what we do but also who we are and how we interpret what we do" (Wenger, 1998, p. 4). As it relates to teacher learning, this framework is useful in understanding the influences that various communities of practice have on a teacher's learning and how he/she develops within these contexts over time. Research that more closely examines the influences of these communities of practice, as elements of my study hope to demonstrate, makes it possible to contribute new understandings about the complex nature of learning to teach.

Conceptual Framework on Learning to Teach

Many scholars have theorized about the ways in which teacher learning is enacted (e.g., Borko & Putnam, 1996; Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Shulman & Shulman, 2004). In this proposal, I

use the phrases "learning to teach" and "teacher learning" interchangeably and define them as the research on how people learn to develop their teaching practice over time and across settings (Feiman-Nemser, 2008). This review of the conceptual framework on teacher learning proceeds chronologically, beginning with a brief history of how research on learning to teach has been conceptualized, then moving to a discussion of five contemporary theories.   Since this study is grounded in situated theories of learning, I chose to focus on frameworks that view learning to teach as a lifetime journey and that emphasize settings/communities/contexts as essential to that process.

Historical Views on Learning to Teach

Learning to teach as a conceptual and empirical topic emerged with greater attention during the mid-20th century. This is not to discount the research and discourse about teacher learning that occurred before the 1950s, but it offers a nice starting point, since research during this time began to expand in both scope and quantity (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005). During the late 1950s through the 1980s, learning to teach was often referred to as "teacher training," and methods were delivered through transmission by expert others (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005). Although not the same, teacher education research often reflected the broader teaching research at the time. The process-product paradigm that dominated this period emphasized teaching and learning as a causal relationship, linking classroom processes (teaching) to products (student achievement) (Brophy & Good, 1986; Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Gage & Needels, 1989). This led to the use of prescriptions (i.e., a set of criteria or teacher characteristics) to inform the work of teacher

preparation. Critics at the time were concerned that this conception disregarded

the classroom context (e.g., time of day, the subject matter, the student population)

(Gage & Needels, 1989; Shulman, 1986).

Starting in the 1980s and moving into the 1990s, the conception of teacher

learning shifted away from the notion of teacher training to the concept of teacher

learning. Feiman-Nemser's (1983) seminal work put greater emphasis on

characterizing learning to teach as a process that happens over time and begins long

before a teacher enters a formal program. By examining learning to teach on a

continuum, Feinman-Nemser's approach allowed scholars to consider both informal

and formal influences on learning to teach, demonstrating that teacher learning

does not simply occur in strictly linear fashion. Feiman-Nemser (1983) also brought

to light the importance of teachers' sharing their experiences and the need for

scholars to "pay close attention to the content and context of those experiences" (p.

167). During this decade we began to see a shift from knowledge constructed

through transmission to knowledge generated by the teacher through experience

and reflection on that experience. Scholars began to conceptualize what that

knowledge was and the sources and experiences that contributed to its construction

during the process of learning to teach (Shulman, 1987).

Building on Feiman-Nemser's (1983) conceptual framework of learning to

teach, the mid-1990s ushered in an emphasis on the role of practice on the learning-

to-teach continuum (Ball & Cohen, 1999). These scholars sought a model of teacher

learning that was grounded in the practice of teaching, recognizing that learning

about a method is not the same thing as learning to *do* the method (Grossman &

McDonald, 2008; Lampert, 2005). "In this view, practice incorporates both the technical and the intellectual, and is enacted not by single individuals but as members of a broader community of practice" (Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009, p. 275). Current scholars are continuing to conceptualize teacher learning by viewing practice enacted within a community as a central element, one that is of great importance when learning to teach (e.g., Ball & Foranzi, 2009; Grossman, 2011; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; Hoffman & Mosley, 2010; Zeichner, 2012).

Although I framed the conceptual research from a chronological perspective, it is important to note that it did not follow a linear progression, nor did any new theory signal the disappearance of another (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005). However, looking across these time periods does allow us to see the evolution of teacher learning from a focus on teacher characteristics and teacher behaviors, to cognitive views of teachers as decision makers and reflective practitioners, to a focus on teachers' practice and the contexts in which that practice is situated (Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009). As such, learning-to-teach theories have shifted from the acquisition of skills and knowledge, to knowledge and reflection, and finally to how knowledge, skill, and dispositions are developed in the process of learning in practice (Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; Grossman & McDonald, 2008; Hoffman & Mosley, 2010). The following contemporary frameworks take into account the ways in which these decades of thinking about teaching and learning have influenced the field of teacher education and the process of learning to teach.

Contemporary Views on Learning to Teach

There are five contemporary frameworks for learning to teach that have informed my thinking and the design of this study, as they all have in common the social nature of learning. I begin with the most recent framework developed by Hoffman and Mosley (2010). I selected this framework because it was conceptualized during the larger study from which this study was created. Also, it focuses specifically on learning to teach literacy. Second, I draw on Shulman and Shulman's (2004) framework, as it is the only one I found that explicitly situates learning to teach in multiple contexts: individual, community, and policy. Third, I explore Feinman-Nemser's (2001) framework, since her original work (1983) was so influential in the movement to shift teacher learning from training to learning to teach. Eighteen years later, she conceptualized teacher learning as an array of central tasks that shift across a continuum. Fourth, I draw on Cochran-Smith and Lytle's (1999) work as it informs my thinking about the notion of inquiry as stance and how that is situated in the relationship between knowledge and practice. Fifth, I examine Hammerness and her colleagues' (2005) framework prioritizing the role that community has in learning to teach.

Table 1 describes each model, illustrates the explicit components, shows how they overlap, and states what makes each framework unique. Worth noting is that if a box is not checked, it does not mean the author chose not to talk about this concept. Instead, it indicates that the framework did not make that particular topic an explicit component of the model.

Table 1

Overview of Conceptual Models of Learning to Teach

	Hoffman & Mosley (2010)	Shulman & Shulman (2004)	Feiman-Nemser (2001)	Cochran-Smith & Lytle (1999)	Hammerness et al. (2005)
Description of model	Learning to teach through practice	An accomplished teacher is…	Central tasks of learning to teach	Knowledge-practice relationship	Learning to teach in community
Components					
Vision	✔	✔	✔		✔
Reflection	✔	✔			
Community	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Tools			✔		✔
Practice	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Action	✔		✔		
Motivation		✔			
Subject matter Knowledge (Understanding)	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Knowledge of learners/learning (Understanding)	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Beliefs			✔		
Experience	✔				
Dispositions			✔		✔
Scaffolding	✔		✔		
Identity			✔		
Synthesis	✔				
Unique feature	Specifically for teaching reading	Individual, community, & policy models	Model looks different across the continuum	Inquiry of stance	Vision at center of framework

All of the aforementioned frameworks offer contributions to the discussion about how to conceptualize teacher learning and to this study's design. Thus, I have chosen to create a conceptual framework that takes into account the components that all five models have in common: community, understandings, and practices (Figure 2).
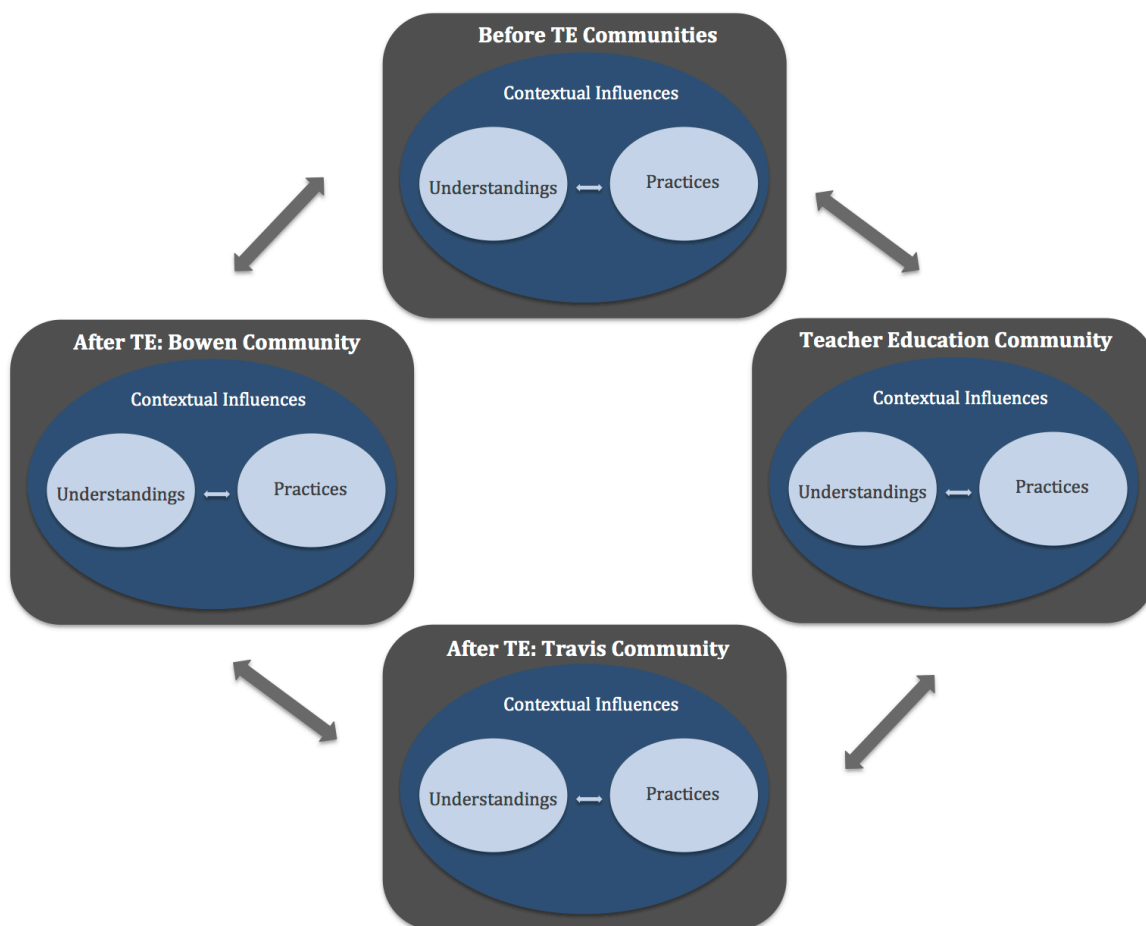
Figure 2. Conceptual Framework for Examining Colleen's Journey in Learning to
      Teach Literacy

Grounded in a situated perspective (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998),

this conceptual framework represents Colleen's journey in becoming a literacy

teacher over time and across contexts. It allowed me to trace the influences on her

understandings of self, students, teaching, and learning and, in turn, her practices in

of various communities before, during, and after teacher education. Below, I

describe how I conceptualized the individual components of this model (community,

understandings, and practices).

Community.   Central to this model is the view that teacher learning occurs within a community and often multiple communities at any given time (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). Using a situated lens enabled me to examine the many contexts where Colleen learned to teach, taking into account both Colleen as an individual learner and the communities of practice in which she was a participant (Putnam & Borko, 2000). By emphasizing community, this framework allows one to explore how teachers' learning might be complemented or contradicted across settings (i.e., school settings vs. university settings). This approach has the potential to help teacher educators identify particular features of certain contexts and experiences that might help support teachers. Recognition of how teacher learning and development are inextricably linked to the contexts of which teachers are a part could reveal the complexity involved in learning to teach.

Understandings.   Decades of research asking, "What should teachers know?" or "What kinds of knowledge are most important?" constitute the vast understanding category. For the purposes of this study, this model values deep knowledge of self, students, teaching, literacy, and learning. This includes everything from the long list of understandings (e.g., pedagogical content knowledge, subject matter knowledge, knowledge of learners) that Shulman (1987) has been developing over the last several decades and is represented in his conceptual model of learning to teach (Shulman & Shulman, 2004). One aspect of the Hammerness and colleagues (2005) model that has not received as much attention in the research is the understanding of how "knowledge is developed and validated within different social contexts" (p. 386). In my opinion, this is a nice

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addition to the ever-growing body of research and national standards that depict

what teachers should know in order to be effective. It takes into account the

dynamic nature of teaching and the direct influence of various settings on that

knowledge base, as different settings value certain kinds of knowledge. In this

study, I hope to attend not simply to what knowledge the participant possesses but

also to how she uses this knowledge in particular contexts, and what she learns

about teaching as a result.

Practices*.* A teacher's evolving understandings lead to a set of practices that

incorporate "a variety of instructional activities to promote student learning"

(Hammerness et al., 2005, p. 387). Some of these practices include facilitating

classroom discussion (Cazden, 2001), building on students' funds of knowledge

(González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), and enacting a beginning repertoire, which

involves being familiar with various curricular materials, models of teaching, and

types of assessment (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Included in that "beginning

repertoire" are subject-specific practices. A few examples associated with the

teaching of literacy, in particular, are scaffolding students' talk (Maloch, 2002),

engaging in "read aloud" (Sipe, 2008), and organizing the classroom environment to

support literacy (Pressley, Rankin, & Yokoi, 1996). Important to consider is that the

possession of any one practice alone is not sufficient; rather it is knowing when,

where, how, and why to use a particular practice that is most important (Fairbanks

et al., 2010; Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

The components of my conceptual model represent, in many ways, all of the

frameworks discussed in this section.   It served as a lens through which I conducted

data analysis and as a guide to inform how the findings of this study were situated in the larger body of work that explored the process of learning to teach. The conceptualization of learning to teach has at times focused on stages of development (Berliner, 1994; Fuller & Bown, 1975; Huberman, 1989; Richardson & Placier, 2001); the metaphoric pendulum has certainly swung back and forth from a focus on knowledge to a focus on practice and many combinations of the two (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999); and there will forever be a range of scholars who hang their hats on a particular way of viewing learning to teach, whether those views are behaviorist, cognitivist, constructivist, sociocultural, or transformative. In this study, I drew on the frameworks for teacher learning that focus on the complexity of the many interrelated factors and influences that exist in learning to teach in varying communities of practice. In so doing, I hope to become smarter about how to better support preservice and in-service teachers wherever they are (literally and figuratively) along their journey in learning to teach.

Empirical Literature on Learning to Teach

The conceptual research on learning to teach makes evident that learning to teach happens on a continuum; thus the following section is organized in relation to that continuum. I examined the influences of prior beliefs/experiences on a person before that person enters a teacher education program; next I looked at the influence of teacher education; and finally I examined the literature that looks at the transition from literacy teacher education to beginning teaching settings and the influence that those settings after teacher education have on teachers' learning.

Before Teacher Education

Unlike any other profession, teaching is something about which everyone claims to know something. From the time we enter school at a young age, we begin to develop a set of ideas around teachers and teaching. What we "think" teaching means and the skills and knowledge we "think" that teachers possess are directly related to the teachers and experiences we have encountered during the schooling process. For a long time, I believed my fourth-grade teacher slept on the cozy polka-dotted couch in the corner of our classroom library. It wasn't until I saw her at the grocery store at night that I began to realize that perhaps there were things about her to which I was not privy. Preservice teachers (PSTs), equipped with a great deal of experience with the educational process, arrive at their first teacher education courses with hours of experience watching teachers in schools, in what Lortie (1975) has referred to as the "apprenticeship of observation." So it comes as no surprise that PSTs begin their quest to become certified teachers with a particular set of beliefs about teachers and teaching.

The first section of this review focuses on defining teacher beliefs through meta-analyses that examine both classic and current perceptions about those beliefs (e.g., Fang, 1996; Fives & Buehl, 2012; Kagan, 1992; Pajares, 1992; Richardson, 1996). Next, the focus shifts to the empirical studies in literacy teacher education that examine the role of prior beliefs in learning to teach literacy. Finally, the review ends with the impact that this research has on my study.

What are teacher beliefs? As of 2012, more than 700 articles had been published on empirical research about teachers' beliefs, spanning more than 58

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years of inquiry (Fives & Buehl, 2012). It is evident that many have studied what students bring to their teacher education program (e.g., Britzman, 2003; Kagan, 1992; Lortie, 1975). Yet, in spite of the vast literature, there is still little agreement about how to define the term "teachers' beliefs," because the characteristics used to describe them are often inconsistent across scholars' definitions. Fives & Buehl (2012) explore five ways to characterize beliefs across the literature, which helps to explicate the complexity of defining teacher beliefs. These include their (beliefs') "(a) implicit or explicit nature, (b) stability over time, (c) situated or generalized nature, (d) relation to knowledge, and (e) existence as individual propositions or larger systems" (p. 473).

The *implicit vs. explicit nature* of teachers' beliefs is a debated characteristic prevalent across the definitions of scholars. Much of the research views beliefs as implicit, and suggests that individuals are unaware of the beliefs they possess (Fives & Buehl, 2012; Kagan, 1992). That is, teachers' actions are guided by their beliefs without their awareness of the existence of those beliefs. Some other researchers either have not acknowledged this distinction in their work or have viewed beliefs as explicit and assumed that PSTs are conscious of those beliefs (Basturkmen, Loewen, & Ellis, 2004; Grisham, 2000). Further, some studies hold that beliefs are in fact measureable and that it is possible for teachers to rank their beliefs according to their degree of influence (e.g., Rimm-Kaufman, Storm, Sawyer, Pianta, & LaParo, 2006). The concern about the implicit vs. explicit construct is reflected in the decisions researchers must make about how to study beliefs. If teachers' beliefs are explicit, interview protocols or surveys would suffice for gathering information. But

if teachers' beliefs are implicit, then how are teacher education programs supposed to assess and influence these beliefs? Similarly, researchers must also consider the challenge of representing implicit beliefs accurately (Fives & Buehl, 2012). In undertaking this study, I subscribed to the position that teachers possess both implicit and explicit beliefs that influence how they interpret teaching and their practice. I used multiple forms of data gathering (e.g., interviews, observations, and documents) and looked at both espoused beliefs (what is said) and enacted beliefs (what is done in practice).

The second issue related to defining the construct of beliefs is whether one conceptualizes beliefs as *stable* or *dynamic* (Fives & Buehl, 2012), as "the resiliency of PSTs' prior beliefs has been extensively examined over the last few decades" (Olsen, 2008, p. 5). Along the stability continuum lie various perspectives about the nature of teachers' beliefs. Wideen, Mayer-Smith, and Moon's (1998) review of research studies demonstrated that teachers' beliefs are relatively stable and are resistant to change. Yet Richardson's (1996) review a couple of years earlier found contrary evidence. He noted that some believe that certain types of beliefs are changeable (i.e., more dynamic) and other types are not. For example, Rokeach (1968) believed that some beliefs are more central than others and that the less-central beliefs are easier to change than the central ones. If, in fact, certain beliefs are changeable, the field would benefit from further research that examines what types of beliefs are more stable than others.   The goal for this study was to examine what types of beliefs influenced my participants' learning to teach literacy.

Third, teachers' beliefs have been positioned in the research as being either *situated in contexts* or *generalizable across situations.* This dichotomy is related to the above feature (stable or dynamic) and extends the notion of teachers' beliefs as changeable by shifting the focus to whether beliefs affect and are affected by various contexts (Fives & Buehl, 2012). Richardson (1996) reported that changes in beliefs among preservice and in-service teachers were indeed influenced by the context of their teaching. And many researchers have contended that it is not only important but necessary for teacher educators to spend time unpacking the attitudes and beliefs that PSTs bring with them into their preparation program (Banks et al., 2005; Flores & Day, 2006; Hollingsworth, 1989; Pajares, 1992). Often referred to by some scholars (Britzman 2003; Slattery, 2006) as "uncovering autobiography," examining preliminary beliefs in the context of teacher education programs can help challenge deficit views of students (Ladson-Billings, 2001). Although there is recognition that contexts can influence beliefs (e.g., Niersheimer, Hopkins, Dillon, & Schmitt, 2000), some researchers still view beliefs as being context-independent and hold that a teacher's beliefs stay intact as he or she traverses different settings (Five & Buehl, 2012). On the basis of the philosophical assumptions (e.g., constructivist/interpretivist) and theoretical frameworks (e.g., situated learning) that I bring to this study, I view beliefs as situated in contexts and think that some beliefs have the potential to shift through particular experiences and interactions within communities of practice.

Arguably the most contentious of all the disagreements over beliefs research is the *relationship between beliefs and knowledge.* Some research has referred to

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beliefs and knowledge synonymously and does not articulate a distinction between the two (Kagan, 1992; Richardson, 1996), while others have contended that there is a fundamental difference between knowledge and beliefs (Pajeres, 1992). That difference, according to Richardson (2003), lies in the distinction that knowledge must actually be true in some external sense, whereas beliefs can be accepted as true by the individual possessing those beliefs. Similarly, Nespor (1987) viewed knowledge as being open to evaluation and examination but did not feel the same way about beliefs. He questioned whether knowledge and beliefs could actually be empirically distinguished. If knowledge and beliefs are symbiotic, it certainly makes it challenging for researchers to design studies that examine one and not the other. For this study, I view knowledge and beliefs as interwoven and agree with Olsen (2008) that "a teacher's way of knowing and being is inextricably linked to her lived experiences" (p. 18). Thus, this study attended to both her understandings (e.g., knowledge about pedagogy) and her dispositions (e.g., her beliefs about students).

Finally, the last characteristic of teachers' beliefs that the research addresses is whether beliefs are best understood as *individual propositions* or as *larger systems.* There is overwhelming agreement that teachers' beliefs do exist as part of a larger system (Bryan, 2003; Pajeres, 1992; Rokeach, 1968). First, there is recognition that teachers' beliefs about education exist within their broader beliefs and views of the world (Pajeres, 1992). Bryan (2003) used a single-case design to understand a science teacher's larger belief system. She found that the belief system was highly complex, with nested categories and sub-categories of beliefs all interacting to influence her practice. Second, a growing body of research suggests

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that teachers' beliefs should be studied in relation to sociocultural contexts (Fives &

Buehl, 2012). By examining teachers' beliefs beyond school settings, findings from

Mansour (2008) indicated that there are experiences and beliefs not explicitly

related to education (e.g., religious or political beliefs) that influence a teacher's

beliefs about teaching and learning. Understanding beliefs within complex systems

could further the field's understanding of the potential influences on teachers'

beliefs and practices. In my longitudinal study, I build on Bryan's (2003) case study

to contribute to the conversation about the complexity of belief systems. I examined

several categories of beliefs (e.g., self, environment, knowledge, specific teaching

practices, teaching approach, and students (Fives & Buehl, 2012)), as well as looking

for new categories that emerged from the data.

The research on teachers' beliefs remains complex and messy, largely

because of the confusion about how to define the construct of beliefs. Although

there is disagreement among scholars about how to define beliefs, there is one thing

that they can agree on: teachers' beliefs matter and it is important that they

continue to be investigated (Bryan, 2003). The majority of research on teachers'

beliefs has found that entering beliefs affect a teacher candidate's understanding

and attitudes in learning to teach (Britzman, 2003; Hollingsworth, 1989; Kagan,

1992; Nespor, 1987; Pajeres, 1992; Richardson, 1996). Although the field has come

to recognize that beliefs do guide people's actions, what we know less about is the

relationship between beliefs and practice (Kagan, 1992; Pajeres, 1992; Richardson,

1996), and the precise role that beliefs play in shaping practice remains unclear

(Fives & Buehl, 2012). Although there is difficulty in studying beliefs (Wideen,

Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998), I hope that this longitudinal study contributes to the conversation about the influence of prior beliefs/experiences on learning to teach literacy over time and across contexts.

How have beliefs been studied in literacy teacher education? Pajeres (1992) reminds educational researchers that it's important to make a distinction between general beliefs about teaching and subject-specific beliefs. Therefore, this section focuses on studies in literacy teacher education that examine the impact of beliefs on literacy teachers' perceptions and practice. The role and importance of teachers' beliefs have been investigated in several ways in literacy teacher education, drawing on cognitive, constructivist, and sociocultural theories (Risko et al., 2008). The studies I chose to review take a sociocultural approach to investigating the impact of prior beliefs on learning to teach and are based on several criteria. The study must look at teaching across the learning-to-teach continuum, collecting data across multiple contexts (i.e., during and after teacher education). Some research examined PSTs' incoming beliefs and how those affect and are affected by the experiences in literacy teacher education programs (e.g., Konopak, Readance, & Wilson, 1994; Lonberger, 1992; Wham, 1993). Other studies focused on practicing teachers and how their beliefs are/were affected by particular experiences during and after teacher education (Hollingsworth, 1989; Maloch et al., 2003; Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991). There are fewer studies that examined the evolving beliefs of teachers as they moved from preservice to in-service contexts (Deal & White, 2005). Therefore, I've chosen to focus on studies since 2000 that used a longitudinal lens to examine reading teachers' beliefs as they

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moved from the contexts of teacher education into the contexts of professional

teaching. On the basis of these characteristics (i.e., focus on literacy, sociocultural

framework, and longitudinal methods), I have selected four studies in literacy

teacher education research to review (Deal & White, 2005, 2006; Grisham, 2000;

Pierce & Pomerantz, 2006), paying particular attention to research questions,

methods, and findings.

Survey of research questions and methods. The four qualitative, longitudinal

case studies exploring the role of teachers' beliefs that I selected (Deal & White,

2005; 2006; Grisham, 2000; Pierce & Pomerantz, 2006) had similar research

designs and were interested in investigating the same aspects of literacy teachers'

beliefs. First, the research questions emphasized the factors that influenced

developing and existing beliefs and how those beliefs evolved across contexts.

Grisham (2000) and Pierce and Pomerantz (2006) expanded on those questions by

asking how those beliefs actually affected practice. Second, data collection occurred

at various points on the learning-to-teach continuum (e.g., student teaching, before

and after courses, in the first year of teaching).   Only Grisham (2000) looked past

the first year into the second year of teaching to examine the factors that affected

the participants' belief systems and consequentially their reading instruction. In

addition, with regard to data collected from classroom contexts, only two of the 19

participants across the studies were teaching in urban contexts (Grisham, 2000;

Pierce & Pomerantz, 2006). Third, the data collected from those contexts were

obtained through the use of interview protocols asking teachers about their

espoused beliefs and through observations to better understand beliefs through the

enactment of them in practice. Various artifacts (e.g., course papers, test scores) were also collected as a means of triangulation. And finally, all four studies employed the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 2009) to analyze the data.

   Survey of research findings. These investigations into teacher beliefs and their influence on reading instruction all contributed new insights into the influences on prior beliefs over time. Grisham (2000) identified PSTs with different theoretical orientations toward literacy instruction (i.e., skills-based or whole language) to look for patterns by disposition in relation to the impact of the preservice program and then the impact of the beginning teaching setting over time. Findings indicated that the teacher education program had a measurable impact on students' self-reported theoretical orientations toward literacy and teaching. By the second year, though, participants said the influence of the program on their concepts of teaching reading began to decline, citing an increasing influence of their practical experience. Across all participants, teachers rated their beliefs as more constructivist than their practices as a result of their teaching environment and/or their students.

   Deal & White (2005, 2006) inquired about how teacher beliefs about literacy instruction were shaped and changed over time. Both case study participants noted the powerful influence of the school context on their dispositions and literacy teaching development. Influences of the larger school community included students, teaching teams, and parents. It was evident from the data that the dispositions of both participants led to their inclination to reflect on their practice,

ultimately increasing their confidence in teaching. Their work suggested a need for

a deeper understanding of how these dispositions of effective literacy teachers

result from prior experiences, intuition, teacher education, or the beginning

teaching context. Although examining the development of dispositions in teacher

education programs has gained increasing attention, Deal and White encouraged

more studies to explore the dispositions of novice teachers. In their opinion, future

studies should consider how to assess and reinforce or develop supportive

dispositions in novice teachers.

Pierce and Pomerantz (2006) demonstrated that all three of their case study

participants held on to the beliefs they developed in their teacher education

program about quality of literacy instruction and cited the methods courses as being

an important influence on those beliefs. However, the practices of the participants

varied according to the school context in which they were employed. Data indicated

that the main reason for that variation was scripted materials mandated by the

campus, which caused the teachers to struggle. Pierce and Pomerantz's work

suggested the need for teacher educators to stay connected to the challenges,

methods, and materials of current classroom climates. In turn, teacher education

programs should create experiences that will allow PSTs the opportunity to reflect

on materials and build the confidence to modify and supplement them.

Contributions and limitations. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that

literacy teacher education programs do influence prospective teachers' beliefs and

practice in their first years of teaching. A positive feature noted across the studies is

the role played by methods courses and school-based experiences on developing

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teachers' beliefs and knowledge about reading instruction (Deal & White, 2006;

Grisham, 2000; Pierce & Pomerantz, 2006). However, both Deal and White (2005,

2006) and Pierce and Pomerantz (2006) believe that more attention in teacher

education is needed to help teachers learn to reflect on practice.   Continuing to

study teacher education programs that value reflection, school-based experiences,

and content knowledge as interwoven features is important (Deal & White, 2006).

The relationship between beliefs and actions in teaching has been well

documented (Richardson & Placier, 2001), and these four studies contribute to that

literature by demonstrating that school context is the most important influence on

teachers' beliefs and practices. Although teacher preparation was important in

influencing teachers' beliefs, it is evident that the translation of beliefs to practice is

significantly affected by school context (Deal & White, 2005, 2006). By the end of

the second year, Grisham (2000) noted, participants had moved away from

professional university theoretical influences on teaching. Thus, Pierce and

Pomerantz (2006) believe that teacher educators need to extend their support to

novice teachers as they transition into beginning teaching contexts. In addition,

further study is needed on the types of experiences in teacher education that foster

the ability to negotiate the challenges of schools' culture (Maloch et al., 2003) and to

help teachers to make instructional decisions guided by their beliefs rather than

solely by the constraints of a particular context. Remaining questions include how

best to capture such data, and what types of tools can be utilized to systematically

analyze the shifts in contexts represented by the data?

What does this research mean for this study? The contributions and limitations to both the broader beliefs research and, specifically, the literacy teacher beliefs research indicates a consensus that PSTs' beliefs, as well as their larger sociocultural histories, are central to the work of learning how to become a teacher (Lortie, 1975). The research also indicates the importance of researchers who study beliefs as affected by multiple situated and cultural histories and events (Risko et al., 2008). By examining the ways in which teachers' beliefs influence how a teacher learns to teach reading, and the contexts in which those influences occur, teacher educators can grow their knowledge about the types of experiences and settings that are valuable for PSTs to participate in before entering their first classrooms. This study hopes to answer the calls of researchers and build upon the literature about the role of prior beliefs/experiences in learning to teach literacy by:

1. Employing a qualitative, longitudinal case study design to consider the interaction among beliefs, experiences, and actions as my participant learns to teach over time (Bryan, 2003; Kagan, 1992; Richardson, 1996).

2. Investigating my participant's beliefs at different times in the journey. Exploring literacy teacher beliefs across time and contexts: during tutoring, student teaching, and beginning teaching (Deal & White, 2005; Risko et al., 2008).

3. Using multiple methods for collecting information about prior beliefs (course assignments, pre- and post- surveys, interviews, observations followed by interviews) (Fives & Buehl, 2012; Risko et al., 2008).

4. Drawing on methods of longitudinal analysis to explore the shifts and development of beliefs in my participant over an extended period of time (Saldaña 2008).

5. Looking at the complex systems that surround beliefs, not simply examining beliefs in isolation (Fives & Buehl, 2012).

6. Examining both stated beliefs and enacted beliefs (as evidenced in practice) (Kane, Sandretto, & Heath, 2002).

Teacher Education

Understanding the features of quality teacher education is critical to ensuring the preparation of effective literacy teachers (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Sailors, Keehn, Martinez, & Harmon, 2005). In 2000, Anders, Hoffman, and Duffy stated that research on preservice teacher preparation in reading accounted for less than 1% of the total number of research studies conducted since the 1970s. Since their chapter was published in the second *Handbook of Reading Research*, we have seen an increase in studies that examine how to prepare high-quality reading teachers. Reviews of research in literacy teacher education (Clift & Brady, 2005; Dillon, O'Brien, & Sato, 2010; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; International Reading Association, 2007; Risko et al., 2008) have highlighted field-based experiences as being widely used and a valuable component of teacher education programs. Across this research, including national reports (e.g., National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996; National Reading Panel, 2000), there is a call for increased attention to understanding how these field experiences affect prospective literacy teachers.

This study is grounded in conceptual frameworks of teacher learning that emphasize the importance of learning to teach in contexts of practice (e.g., Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hammerness et al., 2005; Hoffman & Mosley, 2010; Shulman & Shulman, 2004). Thus, I focus in this section on the literature in teacher education and literacy teacher education, in particular, that emphasizes the role played by field experiences in learning to teach. Guided by situated theories of learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), I examined the ways in which field experiences are influential in learning to teach and serve as critical practice spaces where learners are purposefully challenged and supported toward growth. I begin by defining field experiences and identifying the types of field experiences that research has cited as being valuable components of teacher education programs. Then I look at studies in literacy teacher education to learn about how the ways field experiences have been studied and the findings associated with these studies. I conclude by situating this research with the goals for my study.

What are field experiences? In this review, I used the term "field experiences" to represent the diverse types of experiences in preservice teacher education that involve working in a context of practice (i.e., natural setting) with learners. Early field experiences, or practicum, are those that occur prior to student teaching (Sailors, Keehn, Martinez, & Harmon, 2005). In 1996, the second *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education* devoted an entire chapter devoted to field experiences (McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996). This chapter signaled an increase in research aimed at defining the purpose of field experiences but lacked evidence to demonstrating that they were actually effective in preparing teachers. Since then,

the research on field experiences has grown, describing a variety of field experiences, including student teaching, tutoring, and community-based learning.

Student teaching. When graduates of teacher education programs reflect on their experiences, student teaching is widely cited as being the most influential component of their journey (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; Rosaen & Florio-Ruane, 2008; Su, 1992). There is also evidence that student teaching has the potential to affect the retention rate of teachers in the profession when PSTs spend extended time in the field combined with close ties to coursework (Darling-Hammond, 2000b). Knowing that the research supports student teaching as both valued and important, what do we know about effective programs and a well-designed student teaching component?

First, we know that exemplary programs in literacy teacher education include carefully supervised student teaching experiences (Harmon et al, 2001) that offer support and guidance for PSTs to have multiple attempts at translating theory into practice along with opportunities to reflect and to ask questions (Adams, Bondy, & Kuhel, 2005; Clift & Brady, 2005; Hoffman & Mosley, 2010). Second, successful student teaching opportunities provide multiple knowledge sources (e.g., cooperating teachers, parents, teacher educators) for students to draw on as they assimilate their teaching experience (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999). Finally, bridging the gap between theory and practice works well when coursework and student teaching occur concurrently (Adams, Bondy, & Kuhel, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2010).

There are, naturally, differences of opinion about the best way to organize

the student teaching component (e.g., professional development schools (PDS) vs.

community schools [Boyle-Baise & McIntyre, 2008]). In addition, research cites a

lack of connection between university campus-based teacher education courses and

student teaching contexts (Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009; Zeichner,

2010). However, if done well, bringing multiple communities into conversation

with a commitment to open inquiry seems likely to benefit PSTs and in-service

teachers as well as the students with whom both work (Zeichner, 2010).

Tutoring. There is widespread belief that tutoring, as an early field

experience, is an important component in literacy teacher education (Hoffman &

Roller, 2001) and that both PSTs and the students with whom they work benefit

from that experience (Hedrick, McGee, & Mittag, 2000). We also know that PSTs

value tutoring as part of their teacher education program (Sailors, Keehn, Martinez,

& Harmon, 2005; Worthy & Patterson, 2001) and that it has the potential to

influence PSTs' beliefs and attitudes about teaching (Fang & Ashley, 2004; Maloch et

al., 2003; Nierstheimer, Hopkins, Dillon, & Schmitt, 2000).

Research supports a tutoring component that subscribes to what Zeichner

(1996) calls an "inquiry-oriented practicum" in which PSTs build on their

accumulating experiences to develop new knowledge. This approach is then

transferred to the elementary student, with instruction based on the student's

experiences and moves them from the known to the unknown, drawing on a

strength's perspective (Johnston, 2004). It is equally important for teachers to work

one-on-one with the materials and tools of teaching, to create and reflect on the

results of their lesson plans, and to have the opportunity to read about theory of

learning, child development, and subject matter (Darling-Hammond, Hammerness,

Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005). The tutoring experience is enhanced when

there are multiple opportunities for students to engage in reflection, both in and on

their practice with multiple sources (e.g., peers, professors, online video cases)

(Hoffman et al., 2009; Schön, 1983).

Considering the widespread support of tutorial experiences in teacher

education design, one might wonder why it is not implemented universally. One of

the challenges could include a lack of resources (e.g., time, money, or supervision).

Perhaps another challenge might be gaining access to students in schools where the

administration has concerns with "pulling out" students during whole-class

instruction because of the discrepancy in teaching methodologies between the

classroom and tutoring contexts (Juel, 1996). This is especially true in classrooms

where teachers face increased pressure to follow structured programs that focus on

low-level skills (Valenzuela, 2004).

Community-based learning. There is evidence that the cultural gap

between children in many schools and their teachers is significant and increasing

(Banks et al., 2005; Sleeter, 2001, 2008). This reality often perpetuates naiveté and

stereotypical beliefs about urban children (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). And despite the

fact that teacher education programs are aware of the need to include topics about

diversity in the curriculum, this kind of coursework alone is insufficient to prepare

culturally competent teachers (Ladson-Billings, 2001). Many scholars have argued

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that community-based learning (CBL) experiences are critical but often missing from teacher preparation (Murrell, 2001).

Teacher educators have positioned community-based learning (CBL) as one way to avoid simply maintaining the status quo. These types of authentic experiences have the potential to change the perceptions of teachers by giving them the opportunity to examine themselves and their attitudes toward others (Cooper, 2007; Niersteimer et al., 2000), often resulting in an asset-based view of communities (Boyle-Baise, 2005; Mosley, Cary, & Zoch, 2010). For example, one documented change in PSTs' beliefs has been the elimination of the deficit view of families (Ladson-Billings, 2001). CBL also allows teachers to connect instruction with the knowledge and learning processes that children bring from home. Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti (2005) have termed this as "funds of knowledge." By incorporating this concept as part of CBL, prospective teachers might start to see students not as isolated individuals in classrooms but as members of a larger community (Zeichner & Melnick, 1996).

There are inevitably challenges associated with implementing CBL as part of a program design. One of the biggest of them is a lack of resources, contributing to the difficulty of initiating and sustaining a long-term partnership with the community (not just a quick in-and-out). The time involved in executing such experiences is extensive, and there is a need for a person who can facilitate the partnership (Potthoff et al, 2000; Tellez, Hlebowitsh, Cohen & Norwood, 1995). With schools of education vying for funds, time, and manpower, CBL translates into money that teacher education programs are struggling to amass (Wade et al., 1999).

In addition, with teacher education programs limited in the time they have with PSTs and the increasing expectations on teachers when they enter the profession, the imperative space for reflection and synthesizing of these experiences is limited (Cooper, 2007).

How have field experiences been studied in literacy teacher education?

I focus in this section on studies in literacy teacher education that provide insight into field experiences and their role in learning to teach. Specifically, these studies all used a longitudinal lens to examine preservice and in-service teachers who participated in field experiences as part of their teacher education program. By examining the effect of field experiences at different points on the learning-to-teach continuum (e.g., during teacher education and the first year of teaching), I was able to get a more thorough understanding of the outcomes of field experiences. I looked across research questions, methods, and findings of two large-scale studies (International Reading Association and Center on English Learning and Achievement) to better understand the contributions and limitations of the role of field experiences in teacher education and the ways these experiences have been studied.

International Reading Association. The International Reading Association's (IRA) National Commission on Excellence in Elementary Teacher Preparation for Reading Instruction was charged with developing and executing a program of research that identified qualities of effective reading teacher preparation. The commission designed three phases of research to investigate eight sites of excellence in reading teacher preparation (SERTE). I review in this section

the first and second phases and a follow-up study conducted by members of the

National Commission. In the first phase, scholars sought to identify critical features

of excellent reading teacher preparation programs (Harmon et al., 2001). Data were

collected through self-reporting documents created by faculties at each site, and

then analyzed using constant comparative methods (Glaser & Strauss, 2009) to

identify eight common features of excellence. One of the eight features was that all

SERTE programs provided carefully supervised apprenticeship experiences. These

experiences occurred over an extended period of time and in collaboration with

experienced teachers.

    In the second phase, Maloch and her colleagues (2003) conducted 101

phone interviews of graduates from the SERTE programs, distinguishing

participants from three program types: undergraduate reading specialization

program, general education program, and reading embedded program. They

examined the ways in which the graduates from the various program types talked

about their teacher education and teaching experiences. Data were analyzed

through four phases that included both individual site analysis and cross-case

analysis of interviews with all eight SERTE program graduates. Findings indicated

that many graduates attributed making important teaching decisions to their

previous field experiences. In addition, graduates of reading specialization and

embedded programs were more likely to value the importance of creating a caring

context for learning and to value a reflective stance in their teaching.

    Following the formal phases of the commissioned study, Sailors, Keehn,

Martinez, & Harmon (2005) conducted two studies that examined and described

what graduates from SERTE programs valued about their preservice teacher

preparation program. In the first study, 73 participants were interviewed by

telephone during their first year of teaching. Constant comparative analysis of the

phone interview data revealed that 90% of the beginning teachers identified field

experiences as something they valued from their preparation programs. They noted

specific statements about what they learned from those field experiences: classroom

management skills, how to adapt materials and instruction to meet individual needs,

how to work with students in various contexts, how to learn from knowledgeable

others, and how to develop professional relationships during field experiences. In

the second study, Sailors and colleagues (2005) collected and analyzed course

syllabi from the SERTE sites, identifying five common features of the early field

experiences. These common features included developing reflective teachers,

scaffolding of structured experiences and coursework, scaffolding by a

knowledgeable supervisor, offering a variety of contexts, and offering one-on-one

tutoring experiences. Overall, these two studies revealed that there was a

significant overlap between the field experience features valued by those who

completed the program and the features offered by the SERTE programs.

   Center on English Learning and Achievement. Pamela Grossman, Peter

Smagorinsky, and Sheila Valencia designed a series of research studies funded by a

grant from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) and

awarded to the Center on English Learning and Achievement (CELA). These four

studies (Bickmore, Smagorinsky, & O'Donnell-Allen, 2005; Cook, Smagorinsky, Fry,

Konopak, & Moore, 2002; Grossman et al., 2000; Smagorinsky, Wright, Augustine, O-

Donnell-Allen, & Konopak, 2007) examined the influence of the contexts of teacher education (e.g., experiences in university coursework and field experience settings in schools) on teachers' ideas about teaching and learning. Below, I discuss the two studies that investigated graduates from an elementary teaching education program.

Grossman and her colleagues (2000) followed 10 beginning teachers from their last year of preservice education into their first three years of teaching, collecting data through interviews, observations, and documents. Although the broader study focused on all of language arts, this study focused on investigating the settings of teacher education and the effect of those contexts on beginning teachers' understanding of writing instruction. Through the use of activity theory (Engeström, 1999, 2001), the authors found that field experiences, specifically student teaching, influenced the participants' knowledge of both conceptual and practical tools. They also found that "the elementary teachers felt well prepared, both conceptually and practically for the challenges of teaching writing" (p. 651). Further, in the first year of teaching, the in-service teachers were able to implement many of the pedagogical tools that they had learned and practiced during student teaching, although the degree and variety of tools they employed were dictated by the contextual constraints. Because this finding reiterates the well-documented conflict that occurs between teacher education settings and beginning teaching settings, Grossman and her colleagues suggest that teacher educators include in preservice preparation a greater emphasis on identifying predictable dilemmas that arise in the teaching of literacy to help teachers negotiate those tensions. They also

caution researchers about the limitations of looking only in the first year of teaching, as findings indicated that by the second year participants were more confident in implementing the tools they had acquired during their teacher education program.

Cook, Smagorinsky, Fry, Konopak, & Moore (2002) employed a longitudinal case study of a preservice teacher's experience in various settings of teacher education and the effect of those experiences on her notion of constructivist teaching. Using activity theory, researchers examined the multiple sites of her field experiences where she accumulated more than 200 hours of field experience prior to student teaching. Data collected included interviews conducted before student teaching, before her first year of full-time teaching, and before and after classroom observations. In addition, classroom observations accompanied by field notes and artifacts (e.g., course syllabi, coursework, lesson plans, state-prescribed curriculum, and group concept maps) were collected in an attempt to triangulate her interview data. Analysis and coding procedures focused on the tools that the participant mentioned in interviews or used in her teaching. Findings suggested that the participant experienced conflicts between theory and practice. This conflict occurred within her teacher education program (i.e., professor saying one thing but doing another) and between the espoused beliefs of the program and the beliefs of the school community where her field experiences took place. Although it was not a surprising finding, the authors recognized the importance of formal opportunities to reflect, allowing PSTs to process the internal contradictions between beliefs and practices. Future studies could look at case studies in which concepts taught in the

teacher education program are successfully supported in field experiences to better

understand the features involved in successfully moving from theory to practice.

    Contributions and limitations. These studies echo other research in literacy

teacher education (e.g., Harste, Leland, Schmidt, Vasquez, & Ociepka, 2004; Hedrick,

McGee, & Mittag, 2000; Nierstheimer, Hopkins, Dillon, & Schmitt, 2000; Worthy &

Patterson, 2001) that suggest that field experiences and early field experiences are

valuable and play an important role in learning to teach literacy. Overall, the CELA

studies offered detailed descriptions of field placements, including description of the

setting, the assignments or activities in which the PSTs participated in, how the

teacher education program and the field experiences aligned, and the role played by

instructors, supervisors, or cooperating teachers. Future research could continue

to draw on this model as a way to build information across programs. The research

makes evident that field experiences produce positive outcomes such as learning

how to build caring relationships (Maloch et al., 2003), developing teaching skills

and knowledge--including conceptual and pedagogical tools (e.g., Grossman et al.,

2000; Sailors, Keehn, Martinez, & Harmon, 2005), and connecting theory and

practice (Cook et al., 2002; Grossman et al., 2000). In addition, these studies

indicate that successful field experiences are carefully organized and supervised,

with multiple opportunities for reflection (Harmon et al., 2001). Finally, these

studies reiterate what the field has known for a long time: contexts affect learning.

These studies reiterate the lack of congruence between the contexts in teacher

education (e.g., coursework and field experiences), which has been identified by a

number of researchers as challenging to the development of teacher candidates'

development (Courtland & Leslie, 2010; Grossman et al., 2000; Harste, Leland,

Schmidt, Vasquez, & Ociepka, 2004; Smagorinsky, Wright, Augustine, O'Donnell-

Allen, & Konopak, 2007).

What does this research mean for this study? There is a consensus in the

research on teacher education that field experiences do matter and that they are

central to the work of learning how to become a reading teacher. The research also

indicates the importance of researchers continuing to examine these contexts to

learn more about their nature and their effect on PSTs. This study answers the calls

of researchers and builds upon the literature about the role of field experiences in

learning to teach reading by:

1. Employing a qualitative, longitudinal case design to better understand the

   effect of field experiences on beginning teachers and their long-term

   professional growth (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Clift & Brady, 2005;

   Grossman et al., 2000).

2. Attending to the call for more sociocultural approaches to studying how PSTs

   make sense of and interpret field experiences (Clift & Brady, 2005; Roasaen

   & Florio-Ruane, 2008).

3. Collecting data on my participant in all three types of field experiences:

   student teaching, tutoring, and community-based learning.

4. Examining the relationship between theory and practice, with an in-depth

   description of how the participant's field experiences were linked to other

   aspects of her teacher education program (e.g., coursework) (Harste, Leland,

Schmidt, Grossman et al., 2000; Smagorinsky, Wright, Augustine, O'Donnell-Allen, & Konopak, 2007).

5. Providing a detailed description of the characteristics of field experiences (e.g., number, length and placement; how closely connected they are to the rest of the program) in which the participant took part to potentially contribute to a database for literacy teacher education (Bickmore, Smagorinsky, & O'Donnell-Allen, 2005; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; Zeichner & Conklin, 2008).

After Teacher Education

This section reviews the small but growing body of longitudinal research that followed literacy teachers from preservice into induction years. I surveyed studies of literacy teachers' transitions by conducting an electronic search of several databases that included broad coverage of disciplines relevant to literacy studies (e.g., ERIC, Education Full Text, and PsycINFO). In keeping with the research design of my study, I defined "longitudinal" as looking at data collected over time from both preservice and induction years. I eliminated articles that did not draw on data gathered from both of these contexts, either in their report of data collection methods or in their references to larger data sets reported elsewhere (e.g., Hoffman et al., 2005). This process resulted in a total of 19 articles published between the years 2000 and 2010, deriving from nine large-scale longitudinal studies. Across these studies, I compared and identified patterns in research questions, methods, and findings.

Survey of research questions. Although every study selected for this review collected data across settings, the research questions varied according to which part of the longitudinal spectrum of learning to teach the authors chose to receive the most analytical attention: the university teacher education setting or the classroom setting of beginning teaching.

Looking into teacher education settings. Addressing the long-recognized disjuncture between university and school settings (Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999), researchers in teacher education settings have focused on how university programs might better support teachers to engage in high-quality teaching that transfers into new settings. Some researchers have traced forward from exemplary programs (Hoffman et al., 2005) and surveyed beginning teachers' perceptions of the influence of their preparation programs (Maloch et al., 2003). Some have visited language arts classrooms to identify what content, strategies, or tools introduced in the literacy methods coursework were actually adopted by teachers in their beginning years (Grossman et al., 2000; Massey, 2004). Other researchers have identified philosophical disjuncture within the preservice programs themselves (i.e., constructivist coursework vs. skills-based student teaching settings) (Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry, 2004). In one case study, Cook and her colleagues (Cook, Smagorinsky, Fry, Konopak, & Moore, 2002) found that a failure to develop or sustain constructivist teaching practices in schools was related to insufficient concept development during the preservice program. Though few longitudinal researchers were explicit about their relationship to the programs they studied, some researchers identified their

questions as a form of self-study, intended to help them reflect on and improve their own teacher education programs (e.g., Massey, 2004) and to identify program components needing modifications (Kosnik, Beck, Cleovoulou, & Fletcher, 2009).

Looking into beginning teaching settings. On the other end of the longitudinal spectrum, researchers have focused on beginning teaching settings in order to better understand the contextual constraints upon new teachers' instructional practices. These constraints have generally been identified with policy mandates, scripted curriculum, and high-stakes testing. Some researchers have explored teachers' perceptions of contradictions between their preservice courses and their practices in high-stakes teaching environments at the elementary level (White, Sturtevant, & Dunlap, 2003). Others have extended the inquiry into secondary English classrooms in order to see how teachers' instructional practices are affected by institutional structures (Smagorinsky, Wright, Augustine, O'Donnell-Allen, & Konopak, 2007), district-level policies (Grossman & Thompson, 2004; Johnson, Smagorinsky, Thompson, & Fry, 2003), and curriculum mandates tied to standardized testing (Smagorinsky, Lakly, & Johnson, 2002). Grossman and Thompson (2008) conducted an inquiry into the impact of a different curriculum on teacher learning and the trajectory of teachers' learning to thoughtfully adapt curriculum. This shift in focus from constraints to adaptation is also evident in Freedman and Appleman's (2009) study of multicultural urban secondary English teachers, which asked: "What factors help teachers to stay in urban teaching?" They sought to tease out which structures in the induction setting sustained teachers in inquiry and action toward social justice over time.

Contributions and limitations. Taken together, the questions raised by these longitudinal studies offer a start toward developing a much-needed empirical knowledge base around the problem of transition from university to school-based settings for beginning teachers. They are collaborative inquiries; they cross multiple settings; and they share the aim of improving teacher education programs. Studies focused on the affordances and constraints of particular contexts for teaching suggest that it would be productive to further explore the institutional and political contexts in which new teachers are situated.

However, the existing research generally seemed to study context by physical setting (i.e., the classroom or school of the beginning teacher). Though some studies briefly described the surrounding communities, we have only just begun to take up longitudinal study that considers wider contexts, such as district, state, and national levels (e.g., Grossman & Thompson, 2004; Johnson et al., 2003). Such research seems especially important in light of current debates developing over national standardization. It is notable that only one longitudinal inquiry (Hoffman et al., 2005) was designed to link teacher education to outcomes for young students (i.e., by measuring students' engagement with literacy environments). This limitation in research seems particularly concerning in the current political climate in which teacher education programs are called upon to provide evidence of impact.

**Survey of research methods*.* Across the studies exploring longitudinal research in literacy teacher preparation, there are more similarities than differences in research methods. To examine the utility of these research designs, this synthesis compares the contexts and methods of data collection and analysis that the studies

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employed.

Looking across contexts. All of the studies, except Freedman & Appleman (2009), looked at classroom contexts that were either suburban or rural. Freedman & Appleman were interested in understanding why teachers choose to stay in high-poverty urban classroom contexts. Further, they collected data into their participants' fifth year of teaching, making theirs the only study to collect data past the third year of teaching. The majority of studies (11 of the 19) collected data only into the first year of teaching (Figure 3). Some research (Grossman et al., 2000) has indicated that the first year of teaching does not allow for a realistic picture of beginning teachers' potential and that only in the second year do teachers begin to enact their own vision for teaching. In light of this research, it seems concerning that many of these longitudinal studies have not extended beyond the first year of teaching, and thus can offer only limited views of how knowledge from preservice teacher education transfers to new contexts.
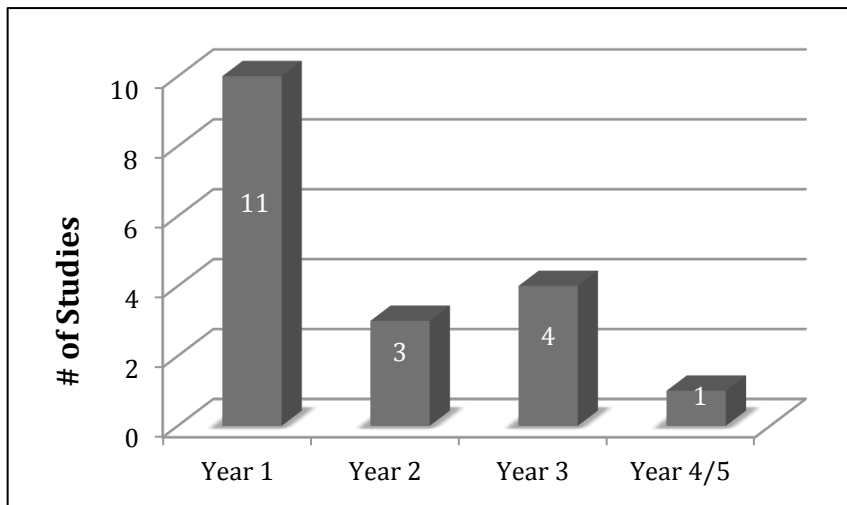
Figure 3. Number of Studies Per Year of Teaching

With regard to data collection, most studies were conducted primarily within the student teaching experience. Rather than looking at a teacher education program in its entirety, these studies chose to focus on the student teaching context. Cook and her colleagues (2002) are the only researchers who systematically followed students across three contexts: the university program, student teaching, and the first year of teaching. While Freedman & Appleman (2009) acknowledged gathering survey data on preservice teacher educators prior to the student teaching context, they don't give any information about how those data affect their experience in the program prior to student teaching. Otherwise, minimal attention has been given to gathering ongoing data across all of the teacher education preparation contexts. Increasing the data collection across multiple program contexts might allow researchers to better understand which program components lead to desirable dispositions and the acquisition of knowledge that beginning teachers accessed or built upon in their new classroom contexts.

Looking across methods. Except for two mixed-methods studies (Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Hoffman et al., 2005), all of the longitudinal studies in this review utilized an exclusively qualitative lens to explore teachers' transitions. Half of the studies engaged in case study methodology, allowing readers to capture the complexity of a particular participant. Of those utilizing case study, two studies (Grisham, 2000; Grossman & Thompson, 2008) extended their work by conducting a cross-case analysis.

In collecting data for these qualitative studies, 15 of the 19 studies employed both classroom observations and interviews as their primary data sources. Some

studies collected data from additional sources, including the classroom text

environment (Hoffman et al., 2005) and phone interviews (Maloch et al., 2003).

White, Sturtevant, and Dunlap (2003) utilized surveys in addition to interviews to

gather information about teachers' perceptions about literacy teaching at the end of

their preparation program and again at the end of their first year. Considering

specifically the types of interviews that occurred during data collection, less than

half of the studies interviewed anyone other than the participant. However, it is

encouraging to see that across the qualitative research 12 additional types of data

sources were utilized (Figure 4). An examination of how these data sources were

analyzed reveals that 83% of the studies employed open coding (Glaser & Strauss,

1967) as the predominant form of analysis. Overall, there is little transparency in

how analysis evolved into the findings, with limited explanation of the coding

process (except Deal & White, 2006; and Grisham, 2000).
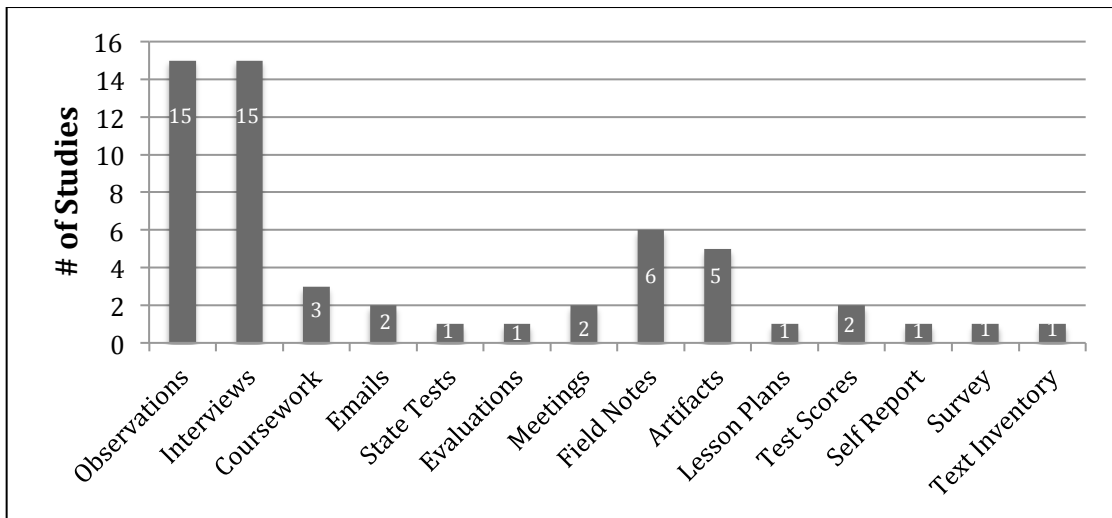
Figure 4: Data Sources Collected Across Studies

Contributions and limitations. More than ever, researchers are

acknowledging the importance of studying the transition between teacher

preparation and teacher induction, and the need for longitudinal research. These

studies demonstrated that teacher educators are finding the resources to sustain

complex research designs that involve an extended period of time in the field.

However, as new research emerges, the field would benefit from a wider range of

methods for studying this transition. First, with regard to contexts, there is a lack of

diversity among the schools where students and teachers are being studied. As the

diversity of the student population increases rapidly in the United States, with

predictions that by 2035 students of color will constitute the majority (Banks et al.,

2005), it is imperative that we do a better job of looking inside classrooms that

serve ethnically and racially diverse students. Second, when looking inside those

classrooms contexts, it is necessary for longitudinal research to extend past the first

year of teaching. By the time teachers are in their fourth year of teaching, only one

study (Freedman & Appleman, 2009) was still conducting research to better

understand how teachers were performing. In addition, no study looked closely at

the full teacher preparation program context. As Race to the Top advocates holding

programs accountable, we must have an even deeper understanding of what

"excellent" programs do across experiences. Third, only one study focused on

student outcomes in relation to teacher learning (Hoffman et al., 2005). With the

emergence of federal policy linking teacher learning to student learning, it's

important for researchers to find ways to evidence student outcomes in beginning

teachers' classrooms.

A survey of research findings. As a collection, the findings of these

longitudinal studies confirmed that there are indeed contradictions between

university and beginning teaching contexts. Deal and White's (2005, 2006)

conclusion that the school context was a powerful influence in reshaping novice

literacy teacher development was illustrative of the most common finding across

studies. Further, some researchers uncovered how curriculum materials influenced

literacy teachers' learning (Grossman et al., 2000) and instructional practices

(Grossman & Thompson, 2008). Some found that school districts played a key role

in shaping new teachers' concerns and supporting or deflecting opportunities for

subject matter learning (Grossman & Thompson, 2004). With respect to the

challenges posed by mandated curriculum and assessments, some researchers

found that teachers' perceptions of pressures on their literacy instruction varied

according to differences in contexts for teaching (e.g., if they taught in grade levels

with testing, or in schools with better or worse scores on previous testing) (White et

al., 2003). Next, I draw together the accumulated knowledge from these studies,

again grouped according to the settings on which they focused attention: the

university or the beginning teaching context.

The view from teacher education settings. It remains to be seen whether

longitudinal research will be able to trace back to teacher education programs those

dispositions of successful teachers that support effective instructional decision

making, self-efficacy, and resilience during beginning teaching (Deal & White, 2005,

2006). However, early evidence suggested that not only are graduates of exemplary

literacy teacher preparation programs more effective in creating literacy

environments and engaging students with them (Hoffman et al., 2005), but they are also distinguished in their instructional decision making, their negotiations within and around curriculum mandates in order to meet student needs, and building communities of support for ongoing learning (Maloch et al., 2003). These researchers documented that many graduates of reading specialization programs reported a continuation of relationships with faculty and peer communities from the preservice program and that these associations provided a source of support into their first year of teaching. In other words, the learning communities of the preservice program were closely related to how teachers later constructed communities and leadership roles for themselves in new contexts. Similarly, Freedman and Appleman (2009) found that many of the factors that supported teachers in staying in high-poverty, urban teaching settings could be related back to the teacher education program: a sense of mission, disposition for hard work and persistence, substantive practical and academic preparation, training in assuming a reflective teacher-researcher stance, and support from their preservice cohort and other professional networks continuing into their first years of teaching.

The view from beginning teaching settings. Many participants in these longitudinal studies responded to the disjuncture across teaching settings by adopting an accommodating stance toward mandates. For example, Smagorinsky, Gibson, Bickmore, Moore, and Cook (2004) described in detail how a beginning teacher in a school district that emphasized standardized testing, was unable to implement the student-centered vision that she had developed during university coursework. Minimal training in the teaching of writing during university

coursework, in combination with a constellation of factors in beginning teaching (i.e., high-stakes testing, community values on high test scores, pressure from colleagues), contributed to the perpetuation of formulaic structures for writing instruction (Johnson et al., 2003). However, though beginning teachers seemed to accommodate mandates, as judged through observations of their teaching practices, there is more to tell in their stories. For example, Grisham (2000) found that teachers' beliefs were more constructivist than their actual practices during their first two years of teaching, with teachers citing contextual factors as the main reason for the discrepancy. Despite conflicting practices, constructivist orientations toward literacy that had been developed in the preservice program remained constant into students' first two years of teaching. Further, preservice and beginning teachers described high-stakes testing environments as reshaping their instruction to a greater extent than it changed their personal beliefs about literacy instruction (White, Sturtevant, & Dunlap, 2003).

Some of the studies, however, indicated that not all beginning teachers are fully indoctrinated into the values of schools during their first years. Interestingly, some teachers felt they had more room to develop creative instructional solutions once they moved outside the student teaching environment (Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry, 2004). Further, teachers' accommodation or resistance seemed to shift over time. Massey (2004) found that her teachers moved through phases of accepting mandates, rejecting mandates, and appealing for help. Further, their phases of acceptance or rejection coincided with the presence and retreat of environmental stressors (e.g., testing). Similarly, Smagorinsky and his colleagues

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(2003) demonstrated how one high school English teacher who adopted an accommodating stance during her first year of teaching was able to progressively find more ways to resist mandates over time; she waited until restrictions were loosened, and then saw herself becoming a competent teacher "by learning to dance the acquiescence, accommodation, resistance waltz" (p. 211). These findings echo those of Grossman and her colleagues (2000), whose study suggested that new teachers' conceptual tools for literacy instruction resurfaced in the second year of teaching. For them, teacher education offered conceptual and practical instructional tools, a reflective stance, and a vision for literacy teaching that would persist over time.

Contributions and limitations. Despite the daunting evidence that the pressures of mandated curriculums related to high-stakes testing restrict beginning teachers' instructional practices (especially during their first year of teaching), I choose to view the collective contributions of these longitudinal studies as encouraging on several accounts. First, the "use it or lose it" stereotype of beginning teachers simply conforming to conservative school practices in their first years (Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry, 2004) is contradicted by evidence that teachers may not only preserve their beliefs, but also make progress over time in enacting the student-centered visions of literacy instruction acquired from their preservice programs. In addition, there is encouraging early evidence that exemplary literacy programs do make a difference in literacy teachers' practices, abilities to adapt to constraints, and abilities to continue their work in the settings where they are most needed. In summary, while these findings begin to uncover

how successful literacy teachers might flexibly adapt even under constraints, they are only first steps in identifying which features of programs most support teachers in going the distance with high-quality literacy instruction.

What does this research mean for this study? While there has been an increased focus on the transition of learning to teach literacy, more research is still needed to investigate literacy teachers as they move from the university into elementary schools (Dillon, O'Brien, Sato, & Kelly, 2010). In light of the contributions and limitations across research designs and findings, this study builds on this current literature and addresses some of the gaps in the longitudinal literacy research in five ways:

1. Across the studies, only three single-case designs were utilized to investigate the transition from preservice to in-service of an elementary school teacher (Cook, Smagorinsky, Fry, Konopak, & Moore, 2002; Massey, 2006; Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry, 2004). Further, two of these articles are from the same larger, longitudinal study conducted by the National Research Center on English Learning and Achievement (CELA). Implications of these single-case studies suggest that it is important to continue to look at other teachers' transitions from teacher education to first years of teaching to better understand the similarities and differences among participants across different teacher education programs. This single-case study might contribute new insights about the journey in learning to teach literacy across multiple contexts.

2. With regard to context, this study is unique, as data collection occurred in urban school contexts across three semesters of a teacher education program and in the first five years of teaching.

3. Relying on interview data of the participant without any additional data sources may limit the field's understanding of learning to teach (Cameron, 2001). Therefore this study collected a variety of data (e.g., coursework, observations, interviews, artifacts, documents, e-mails), triangulating across multiple data sources (Cameron, 2001).

4. Harmon and her colleagues (2001) concluded that future teacher education programs should continue to look to features of exemplary literacy programs whose graduates seem well prepared to negotiate shifts in contexts. This study attended to that call by looking at a successful graduate from an "excellent" literacy program (International Reading Association, 2007) across teacher education and beginning school contexts.

Summary

The empirical scholarship on learning to teach attempts to disentangle the role that prior beliefs/experiences before teacher education, teacher education, and school context after teacher education play in the process of becoming a reading teacher. This review of research was organized in such a way as to mirror the continuum of learning to teach. I began by examining the impact of what teachers learn from their own PK-12 classrooms, moving to the classrooms of teacher education, and then finally shifting back to the PK-12 classrooms again as beginning teachers. Drawing on situated theories of learning, I chose to examine what

research has to say about the role each of these contexts plays in teacher learning. Although learning to teach reading is not a linear transition, situating the review in this way demonstrates that knowledge gets constructed and reconstructed over time depending upon the social contexts, interactions, and experiences that one encounters during the journey of becoming a teacher.

It is clear from the extant literature (both conceptual and empirical), that understanding the contexts in which learning takes place is of great importance. Current scholars are continuing to conceptualize teacher learning by viewing practice enacted in a community as a central element and one that is of great importance when learning to teach (e.g., Ball & Foranzi, 2009; Grossman, 2011; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; Hoffman & Mosley, 2010; Zeichner, 2012). So, too, have empirical studies demonstrated the importance of investigating the influence of various contexts on learning to teach literacy. In particular, researchers have urged others to study beliefs as dynamic and influenced by contexts (e.g., Risko et al., 2008). Further, researchers have highlighted the need to consider the different settings in which literacy teacher education occurs and the ways in which these settings influence teacher development (e.g., Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999). Finally, researchers encourage future studies to continue to investigate the transition from teacher education to beginning teaching contexts, looking to features of exemplary literacy programs whose graduates seem well prepared to negotiate shifts in context (e.g., Harmon et al., 2001). At the intersection of these calls for future research are studies that look across all three bodies of literature (i.e., before, during, and after teacher education) to describe the

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transition of learning to teach literacy across contexts and time. Thus, this longitudinal case study takes into account this gap in the research and grows our understanding of how practice is shaped over time by various contexts, materials, and people.

I view this study as a way to tap into the multiple voices that my participant represents in the literature just reviewed: the voice of a preservice teacher, the voice of a first-year, induction teacher, and the voice of an in-service teacher in her fifth year of teaching. Taken together, these voices have the potential to speak loudly about the work of teacher educators and teaching. I hope to honor her multiple voices and to listen carefully to what she has to tell me about her journey and the challenging and often complex work of learning to teach.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this longitudinal case study was to examine the complexities in learning to teach literacy.   It centered on the lived experiences of one teacher and aimed to provide an in-depth description of the transitions and influences on her understandings and practices. I examined the contextual influences that contributed to her development as a literacy teacher before, during, and after her teacher education program. Specifically, the research question that guided this study was: How did a teacher's participation across multiple contexts over time influence her journey in becoming a literacy teacher?

This chapter outlines the methodology that I employed in order to investigate this question. The chapter is organized into five major parts. In the first section, I discuss my research design, including the philosophical assumptions that I brought to this study. The second section describes the participant selection and the various contexts in which data collection occurred. The third section explains the methods for data collection. The fourth section focuses on the procedures of data analysis. Finally, the last section includes an explanation of trustworthiness criteria and ethical issues attended to in the study.

Research Design

Philosophical Foundations

In conceptualizing this study, I approached the research with a particular set of philosophical assumptions that have guided the design decisions. Operating from a constructivist/interpretivist paradigm, I view the world and my research from a particular set of beliefs (Table 2). First, in terms of purpose, this study was an

attempt to describe, understand, and interpret the complexities of learning to teach

reading. Second, I see the nature of reality (ontology) as being socially constructed

(Crotty, 1998; Mertens, 2005). Therefore, in this research there are multiple

realities associated with learning to teach literacy, and that process can mean

different things to different people. Third, I believe that the nature of knowledge

(epistemology) is constructed in an interactive process between the researcher and

that which is being researched. "We are shaped by our lived experiences. These will

always come out in the knowledge we generate as researchers and in the data

generated by our subjects" (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011, p. 103). Fourth, as

discussed in previous chapters, this study was informed by a sociocultural

theoretical framework and, specifically, situated learning (Greeno, 2003; Lave &

Wenger, 1991; Putnam & Borko, 2000) because teaching is complex, contextually

bound, and was built in response to social interactions (Vygotsky, 1978). These

theoretical lenses afforded me the opportunity to examine teacher learning in many

different aspects of practice in order to account for both the individual learner and

the learning communities in which she was a participant. Thus I employed a

qualitative approach to the systematic inquiry of learning to teach literacy. Denzin

& Lincoln (2005) define qualitative research as "a situated activity that locates the

observer in the world" (p. 3), and they view the role of qualitative researchers as

"study[ing] things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or

interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 3). This

qualitative research investigated the phenomenon of learning to teach literacy by

studying the participant in her natural setting (e.g., teacher education program,

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classroom) in hopes of understanding the complexities of learning to teach. As the researcher and primary instrument for data collection and analysis, I attended to the following features of qualitative research to ensure an authentic approach to this inquiry (Creswell 2007; Merriam, 2009):

- focusing on the process - understanding and interpreting how the participant makes meaning of her experiences

- employing rigorous and transparent data collection and data analysis procedures

- providing rich description to ensure trustworthiness and to help the reader interpret his/her own meaning

In line with these features of qualitative research and the nature of the research questions asked in this study, I chose to investigate the phenomenon of learning to teach using a case study approach.

Table 2

Beliefs Associated with a Constructivist/Interpretivist Paradigm

Constructivist/Interpretivist Paradigm			
Basic beliefs	**Definition**		**For this study…**
Purpose	Reason for inquiry	What are the goals for conducting this research?	To describe, understand, and interpret the process of learning to teach literacy
Ontology	Nature of reality	What is the nature of reality?	Multiple, socially constructed realities about the process of learning to teach literacy
Epistemology	Nature of knowledge	What is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched?	Interactive link between researcher and participant
Theoretical perspectives	Philosophical stance informing the methodology	What are the theories that will inform the process of the research?	Sociocultural Situated learning
Methodology	Approach to systematic inquiry	What is the process of research?	Qualitative Naturalistic

Note. Adapted from Creswell (2007), Crotty (2003), Lincoln, Lynham & Guba (2011), and Mertens (2005).

Case Study

A case study is an "in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (Merriam, 2009, p. 40).   In particular, case study research situated in a constructivist/interpretive tradition and utilized in language and literacy studies is "interested in how teaching and learning happen through social participation" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 29). Thus, this case study is an in-depth, holistic inquiry of how a participant's learning to teach literacy is influenced by her social participation in particular learning communities. Through the use of thick, rich description, my goal was to understand, interpret, and describe the phenomenon of

learning to teach. Below are criteria for defining the types and rationale for case

study research and how those criteria related to the decisions I made in this

particular design.

Bounded. Case study research involves the study of an issue explored

through one or more cases within a bounded system (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2009).

Merriam (2009) describes a bounded case as a unit of analysis that you can "fence

in" (p. 40). This case study was considered bounded because I was interested in a

single entity (one teacher) who belonged to a specific cohort of teachers in a

particular teacher education program in which I worked. Additional boundaries

included the time frame of collecting data during a teacher education program and

her first five years of teaching.

Descriptive. Another important characteristic of a case study design is the

descriptive nature of the research. "A case study is a thick, rich description of the

phenomenon. Case studies include as many variables as possible and portray their

interaction, often over a period of time" (Merriam, 1998, pp. 29-30). I accomplished

this goal of case study research by collecting a variety of data sources in various

contexts and across time (see Data Collection section). Through the collection and

analysis of multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2009), I hope to offer the reader a

convincing, in-depth description of the complexities of learning to teach literacy.

Instrumental. According to Stake (1995), there are three purposes for case

study research: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. My case study was

characterized as instrumental because I used her as a case to learn about the

phenomenon of learning to teach across different communities (Creswell, 2007;

Merriam, 2009). Learning to teach is complex work that requires a careful

inspection of the process if we are to become better at preparing literacy teachers.

Selecting this particular bounded case helped me to illustrate this issue.

Single-case embedded*. This case study is a single-case embedded design

because it offered the opportunity for extensive analysis and heightened the insights

into one participant (Yin, 2009). I chose not to do multiple case studies because I

felt that the rich detail of the study would be lost as the focus would shift from a

meticulous description to more of a comparison between cases of teachers (Barone,

2011; Wolcott, 1994). In addition, I chose an embedded design because it allowed

for more than one unit of analysis in the case study (Yin, 2009). Since the goal of

this study was to look longitudinally across learning communities and was rooted in

sociocultural views of learning, there was potential for each of those contexts to

become a subunit of analysis.

Longitudinal*. According to Yin (2009), there were five potential single-case

designs: critical, extreme, average, revelatory, and longitudinal. My decision to draw

upon a longitudinal case study fell under the fifth design because I looked at the

interactions of an individual teacher over time in various learning communities. A

longitudinal design seems justified when the potential results of a single-case

investigation at various times may potentially indicate important changes.

Therefore, having investigated my participant over five years demonstrated

important changes and informs the research about what this case indicates about

the particular phenomenon of learning to teach.

Research Participant and Contexts

Participant

The focus of this study was Colleen (pseudonym), a thirty-four-year-old fourth grade teacher. I chose Colleen as the participant for this single-case embedded study through sampling strategies that prioritized information-rich cases strategically and purposefully (Merriam, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 2002). In this type of study, Creswell (2007) notes, it is important to find "individuals who are accessible, willing to provide information, and distinctive for their accomplishments and ordinariness or who shed light on a specific phenomenon or issue being explored" (p. 119). Colleen fit all of these criteria, and I chose her on the basis of my relationship with her from a larger study and through extreme and convenience sampling strategies (Patton, 2002).

The most important factor in my decision to select this student as my case study participant was my close examination and analysis of her data throughout the larger, longitudinal three-year study of an entire cohort of students (Hoffman, Mosley, Horan, Russell, Warren, & Roach, 2009). This analysis illustrated that the participant was a student who talked openly and often about the kind of literacy teacher she wanted to be. Her strength in visioning highlighted the fact that she was an exceptionally reflective teacher candidate (Mosley, Hoffman, Russell, & Roach, 2010), and I was convinced that a more in-depth and fine-grained analysis of her experience could contribute to the understanding of how teachers learn to teach literacy across learning communities. Because social constructivist researchers view their participants as "constructors of the knowledge generated by their

studies" (Hatch, 2002, p. 49), the success of the study, then, depended on the selection of a participant who had the potential to establish a collaborative relationship with the researcher. The time we had spent together over the years as colleagues gave me the opportunity to keep track of the influences on her development, allowing for the co-construction of knowledge about learning to teach literacy across communities and over time.

Next, Colleen could be considered an "extreme case," as she has had notable successes during her years of learning to teach. First, the teacher education program from which she graduated has been characterized as "excellent" by research studies conducted by the International Reading Association's National Commission on Excellence in Reading Teacher Preparation (Hoffman et al., 2005). Second, she has pursued numerous professional development opportunities beyond district expectations, even being featured in the DVD *Starting With What Students Do Best* (Bomer, 2011). Third, her campus administration invited her to take on many leadership roles on her campus, including conducting school-wide literacy workshops. In addition, they nominated her for the district's 2009-2010 "teacher of promise" award. And, finally, Colleen has been the subject of other empirical studies that have looked at teachers' literacy practices and responses to reform (Zoch, 2012) and professional learning associated with literacy coaching (Sailors, Russell, Augustine, & Alexander, 2013). This study adds to that work by offering a unique examination of her development as a literacy teacher over time and across contexts. Through the use of extreme case sampling, this study builds on the research describing what beginning and accomplished literacy teachers need to know and be

able to do and the ways in which learning communities might support their journey in learning to teach.

The last factor that contributed to my selection of Colleen as my participant was convenience sampling because of her accessibility and consistency in the larger study. I used Stake's (1995) criteria for narrowing the case selection. I began with the cohort of 19 students with whom I worked as a teaching assistant (TA) and facilitator for the majority of their courses across three semesters of a teacher education program. I narrowed the sample size to those who:

1. gave permission for research during the teacher education program (17 students)

2. stayed in Texas to teach after graduating from the teacher education program (13 students)

3. had been present for all phases of research (7 students)

4. taught in the district in close proximity to the university (4 students)

5. taught in an upper elementary testing grade all four years (2 students-Colleen and one other)

The process of convenience sampling revealed two students who would qualify for this particular study. Combining the convenience sampling process with the additional criteria outlined above (i.e., extreme case), I chose Colleen as my case study participant.

Contexts

Selecting Colleen as my participant afforded me the opportunity to look across multiple contexts to learn more about how particular learning communities

affected her journey in learning to teach. Specifically, this study looked to her

university teacher education program and multiple school contexts in a large urban

school district to examine how learning to teach literacy was socially constructed.

University. Founded in 1883, the university in which this study took place

was located in the southwestern region of the United States. It is one of the largest

public universities in the nation, with an approximate enrollment of 51,000

students, 40,000 of whom are undergraduates. More than 8,700 bachelor's degrees

are awarded annually in more than 170 fields of study and across 100 majors.

According to the campus website

(http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ima/stat_handbook), demographics indicate the

student population in Fall 2012 was 49.8% White, 19.1% Hispanic, 15.2% Asian,

4.5% Black only, and 12.0% Other. At the time of the study, the university was a

national leader in the number of undergraduate degrees awarded to minority

students. Other recognitions included a Princeton Review Best Value for 2012, a

16th place ranking for academic reputation in *U.S. News & World Report* 2014, and at

the graduate level, 40 university programs ranked in the top 10 nationally. For

2014, the College of Education was ranked first among public universities for

graduate-level programs, and for the sixth year in a row *U.S. News & World Report*

has ranked the College of Education number one nationally in research

expenditures, with a total of $61 million.

College of Education. At the undergraduate level, and the site of part of my

data collection, the College of Education had approximately 2,100 students. More

than 150 faculty members prepared students who were pursuing one of three

academic degrees: Applied Learning and Development, Athletic Training, or Kines-

iology and Health. The Applied Learning and Development degree was an

interdisciplinary major designed for students seeking teaching certification in the

state. In 2011 – 2012, there were 375 teachers who took the state certification test.

Students averaged 98% passing on those tests and the college had the highest pass

rate of any public institution of higher education in the state. The certifications that

Colleen was seeking during the first stages of data collection were Early Childhood–

Grade 6 Generalist and English as a Second Language.

   Early Childhood–4th Grade Generalist: Reading Specialization Cohort. One

of the most popular undergraduate programs pursued in the College of Education is

the Early Childhood–4th Grade Generalist. Those interested in pursuing it spent the

first two years of coursework selecting from recommended courses in an array of

content areas across the university (e.g., US history, math, psychology, applied

learning and development). With the completion of at least 45 hours of

coursework, students in their third year were grouped into cohorts and began their

professional development sequence in the College of Education. Approximately 20-

25 students experienced three semesters of coursework and field-based

experiences together. Students selected which cohort they would like to join, and

Colleen chose the reading specialization cohort. Those who selected this particular

cohort were asked to complete one other course in addition to the regular

professional development sequence. The next section illustrates the program of

work that Colleen completed during her teacher education program (Table 3).

Coursework and field experiences. During the first semester, students were considered Intern I, and they completed 12 hours of coursework in child development, social studies methods, reading assessment and development, and community literacy. Students also spent one and a half days per week in classrooms. In this first semester, students were assigned to pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms, where they observed the teacher and students and worked with small groups. In the second semester, Intern II students completed 12 hours of coursework, including reading methods, classroom management, math methods, and science methods. Two full days per week were spent in first–through fifth-grade classrooms for the field experience component. Students moved from observation in the beginning of the semester to writing lesson plans and teaching small- and whole-group instruction by the end. The last semester of the professional development sequence, referred to as student teaching, was spent working in schools four days a week for the entire school day. Students spent additional time in after school seminars and in a language arts methods course. During this semester, students worked in their field placement with their cooperating teacher to assume full responsibility for teaching all subjects for two weeks. Field experiences throughout the three semesters were tied to course content, and instructors utilized various sociocultural theoretical frameworks for literacy teaching to guide instruction. Examples of these frameworks included critical literacy (Freire, 1995), new literacies (Lankshear & Noble, 2006), and situated literacy (Gee, 2008).

Tutoring practicum. An additional component of the reading specialization

cohort was the tutoring practicum, which took place across all three semesters.

During the first semester students took part in a one-on-one tutoring practicum.

Each cohort member was paired up with a first-grade student and worked with this

student for one hour every Tuesday and Thursday. In addition, the cohort member

spent one night a week in the community tutoring adult English-language learners.

During the second semester, tutoring pairs combined and groups of four met for

twice-weekly tutoring sessions. This allowed preservice teachers (PSTs) the

opportunity to plan together and spend time observing their fellow cohort

members. In the third semester, students worked in larger groups every day for a

total of three weeks, creating an inquiry-based literacy project with an upper-

elementary classroom. Consistent throughout all of the tutoring components was

the creation of lesson plans with multiple opportunities for students to reflect on

those plans both in small groups and online immediately following their session.

After every session, electronic responses were read and responded to by a teaching

assistant (TA). Another important feature of the tutoring practicum was the

STELLAR website, an on-line case-based tutoring site where students could view

and respond to videos of exemplary teachers engaging in literacy tutoring. For a

more detailed description of this particular tutoring program and its impact on

various students in the same teacher preparation program, see Hoffman, Mosley,

Horan, Russell, Warren, and Roach (2009). Overall, the tutoring experiences were

spread across the entire program, carefully observed by faculty/TA with

expectations and opportunities for feedback and reflection, and closely aligned to

course readings and content. In this way, the tutoring practicum mediated the construction of knowledge and vision for students through the interactions of practice, reflection, and community processes.

Table 3

Professional Development Sequence for Reading Specialization Cohort

	Coursework		Field experiences	
	Time	Description	Time	Description
First semester	12 hours	Reading assessment and development Community literacy Child development Social studies methods	1.5 days per week	PK-K placement: Observation and small group instruction
			1 night per week	Adult English-language learners
			1 hour, twice per week	One 1st grader: Reading tutoring
Second semester	12 hours	Reading methods Science methods Math methods Classroom management	2 days per week	1st – 5th Grade placement: Observation, small group instruction, whole group lesson
			1 hour, twice per week	Two 1st Graders: Reading tutoring
Third semester	3 hours	Language arts methods	4 days per week	PK-5 placement: More involved role, co-teacher, full teach for two weeks
			Every day for 2 weeks	Group of upper elementary students: Language arts tutoring

City and School District. Both the university and the school district in which Colleen currently teaches are located in a large urban area sprawling over 4,285.70 square miles. The US Census Bureau estimated that the population in 2013 was approximately 885,400. In 2010, 48.7% of the population was White and 35.1% was of Hispanic or Latino origin. The city has now crossed the threshold of becoming a majority-minority city, and no demographic group exists as a majority of

the city population.   Top city industries include technology and innovation, biomedical and pharmaceuticals, and tourism. The majority of the city's elementary students were educated in the urban school district where Colleen has been employed for five years.

At the time of the study, the school district was the fifth largest in the state and the city's largest employer (more than 5,800 teachers). The school district served approximately 86,000 students – a population that has grown by 6% over the past five years. Demographic information indicated that 61.2% of the students came from economically disadvantaged homes and that the majority of students were Hispanic (60.0%). In this urban school district, as in many others, challenges presented by demographic shifts, accountability ratings, funding cuts, and competing reform efforts have been concerns for leadership at both the district and the campus levels. The district includes 124 campuses in the district, and Colleen has taught at two of these elementary schools.

Elementary Schools. Colleen spent the first three years of her career teaching fourth grade at Travis Elementary. It was one of the largest schools in the district, with a student enrollment of nearly 900. Ninety percent of the students identify as Hispanic, and nearly 60% of those students were considered Limited English Proficient (LEP). Travis qualified as a Title 1 campus, with 95.9% of its students classified as economically disadvantaged. In 2011 (Colleen's third and last year at Travis), the Southwestern Education Agency (SWEA) accountability system indicated that the campus was considered "academically acceptable." This rating was obtained with passing scores on the state standardized tests for at least 70% in

English language arts/reading, writing, and social studies; at least 55% passing on mathematics; and at least 50% passing on science. Colleen indicated that this rating brought increased attention from the district personnel in the form of "walk-throughs" and increased time spent on test preparation. This test-driven instruction dictated what and how teachers were to spend their instructional time. Given this increased pressure, along with an opportunity to return to her former campus where she did her student teaching, Colleen made the difficult decision to leave Travis and begin her fourth year of teaching at Bowen Elementary.

Bowen Elementary was located in the same district as Travis, but in a more suburban part of town. Not surprisingly, the demographics were significantly different from those of Travis. For 2011 – 2012, the nearly 800 students that attended Bowen mirrored the city's demographics, with 43% of the students classified as Hispanic and 44% as White. Only 32.7% of the student population qualified as economically disadvantaged and 7.1% were considered to be LEP. According to the SWEA in 2011 (there are no ratings for 2012 because the state changed accountability systems), Bowen received an accountability rating of "recognized." Although this was the second best rating a campus could receive, it is worth noting that the school missed the top rating of "exemplary" by only a few percentage points in the subcategory of science. These types of test scores allowed the school more freedom from district control and, as a result, the school culture seemed to have less of a focus on test-driven instruction than Colleen's previous campus. At the time of this study, she completed her first year as a fourth-grade

teacher at Bowen, and she had also spent a year on the campus in a student teaching placement during her university-based teacher education program.

Researcher Role

My role as part of the larger study of a cohort of teachers in this particular teacher education program began in 2007, as I started my doctoral program at the same university. I joined the cohort as a teaching assistant, university facilitator, and co-researcher and remained involved with this particular cohort of students for the next four years. During that longitudinal study, my role as a researcher in this program context was certainly complex due to my primary obligation of being the participant's teaching assistant and student teacher facilitator. These multiple roles made me think deeply about the ethical issues of collecting data versus my primary concern of helping the participant grow as an effective literacy teacher. I attempted to address these concerns by periodically asking her opinion about the data collection and how she felt about the research process. She responded in one of our interviews by saying, "It [research] made me want to go to graduate school. If you are conducting research then obviously we are at the cusp of something really neat. Research is some of the most important stuff…I always feel like a superstar for sure" (personal communication, September 12, 2009). Most importantly, my multiple roles afforded me the opportunity to spend extra time in her classroom and these additional reflective conversations enhanced our relationship and deepened our discussions about her growth as a literacy teacher. Finally, another positive outcome of my role as her student teacher facilitator was that the cooperating teacher and students viewed my role as an observer/coach as opposed to a

researcher, and I was able to minimize obtrusiveness. In this way, I carried out

research without disrupting the normal classroom routines. After she left the

program context, I continued to follow this particular participant as she entered her

beginning years of teaching and went into new communities/contexts for learning

to teach. In addition, I was a co-researcher for a study (Sailors, Russell, Augustine, &

Alexander, 2012) in which we investigated the nature of professional learning

associated with her campus literacy coach.   My various roles in these research

efforts provided me an intimate look at and detailed knowledge of the data in

relation to her journey in learning to teach across contexts. I also recognized that

this reality comes with a bias, and I did several things in the study to help alleviate

or minimize those concerns (see Trustworthiness and Ethics section).

Data Collection

Drawing upon and extending the data from the larger study, this dissertation

took an in-depth look at data collected on one participant in various learning

communities for approximately six and a half years (spring 2008 through fall 2013).

Guided by my research questions and consistent with case study research, I

collected data through sources that included interviews, observations, and

documents (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009).   This section is organized by types of data

sources followed by phase of collection for the new data.

Data Sources

Interviews. The purpose of conducting interviews is to gain an

understanding of the lived experiences of other people and the meaning they make

of those experiences, thereby allowing access to another person's perspective

(Patton, 2002). Interviews, as part of a case study research design, are often the major source of data needed for understanding the phenomenon under study, and Merriam (1998) believes that this is the "best technique to use when conducting intensive case studies" (p. 72). In light of my research question and my interest in understanding how particular communities have influenced Colleen's journey in learning to teach, conducting interviews provided me with access to the context of my participant's behavior (Seidman, 2006). Therefore, I collected and analyzed extensive interview data (Table 4) in order to better understand the phenomenon of learning to teach reading.

Table 4

Interview Data

Date	Type	Topic	Structure	Record Keeping	Time
Fall 2008	Participant	Knowledge Construction	Structured	Field Notes Artifact	30 min
Spring 2009	Participant: Stimulated Recall	Read Aloud	Semi-structured	Field Notes Video Transcript	90 min
Summer 2009	Participant: Think Aloud	Reflection on TE Program	Semi-structured	Field Notes Video Transcript Artifacts	90 min
Fall 2009	Focus Group	First Year Teaching	Semi-structured	Field Notes Artifacts Video Transcript	6 hours
Spring 2010	Focus group	First Year Teaching	Semi-structured	Field Notes Video Transcript	120 min
Fall 2010	Participant: Phone Interview	Second Year Teaching	Semi-structured	Field Notes	60 min
Spring 2011	Participant and Literacy Coach	Third Year Teaching: Coaching	Semi-structured	Field Notes	90 min
Summer 2013	Participant	Set Purpose and Goals	Semi-structured	Field Notes Video Transcript Audio	75 min
Summer 2013	Participant	Bowen/Travis Elementary New School Transition	Semi-structured	Field Notes Video Transcript Audio	90 min
Summer 2013	Participant: Stimulated Recall	Teacher Education Program	Semi-structured	Field Notes Video Transcript Audio	90 min
Summer 2013	Participant	Journey in Learning to Teach	Semi-structured	Field Notes Video Transcript Audio	90 min
Summer 2013	Participant and TE Professor	Reflection on Beginning Teaching	Unstructured	Field Notes Video Transcript Audio	75 min
Fall 2013	Participant	Closure	Semi-structured	Field Notes Video Transcript Audio	75 min
Total Hours of Interviewing					**22.25 Hours**

On one end of Merriam's (2009) interview structure continuum are highly structured/standardized interviews where the wording of questions is seen as the oral form for a written survey. On the other end are unstructured/informal interviews, which are more flexible and similar to an open conversation. For the purposes of this study, the majority of interviews were semi-structured, which fell

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in the middle of the continuum and included a mix of more- and less-structured

questions, allowing flexibility in the use of questions with no predetermined order

(Merriam, 2009). With an increase in flexibility, I also recognized I needed to listen

more and talk less. I was conscious of sharing my experiences only sparingly so as

not to let my voice take over hers, and I asked for clarity when I did not understand

something that had been said (Seidman, 2006).

Individual interviews. The majority of individual interviews lasted 90

minutes each for an approximate total of 25 hours of cumulative interviewing time.

I interviewed not only my participant on multiple occasions but also several people

associated with the various contexts she encountered over the five and a half years

of learning to teach reading. These interviews included her teacher education

professor, her literacy coach, and her cohort members. Questions asked of these

participants were related to Colleen's participation in a particular context.

Focus group interviews. Although the majority of interviews were with one

individual, two focus group interviews were conducted in the participant's first year

of teaching, each lasting six hours. In attendance were 10 to 12 of the participant's

cohort members from her teacher education program. The topics of the focus group

interviews included challenges and successes in first-year teaching and sources of

influence on teaching practice. Due to the interactive nature of this type of

interview, this data collection procedure involved socially constructed data

(Merriam, 2009), which was appropriate given the philosophical assumptions and

theoretical frameworks I brought to this study.

Stimulated recall interviews. Given the nature of this longitudinal study

and my interest in past events linked to her experiences in learning to teach literacy

(which are impossible to replicate), it was necessary for me to conduct stimulated

recall interviews (Dipardo, 1994; Gass & Mackey, 2009; Merriam, 1998). These

types of interviews relied on my participant's capacity to look back on previous

experiences for the purpose of recalling and verbalizing her internal processes. I

used video recordings of her previous literacy instruction as a tool for initiating the

interview and began by asking her three open-ended questions: (a) Comments? (b)

What do you have to say about this? (c) What's your sense of what was going on

here? (Dipardo, 1994, p. 170).

Types of questions. The key to getting good data from interviewing is to ask

good questions. Thus, I asked open-ended, clear questions that yielded descriptive

data (Merriam, 1998). Further, I drew from several different types of questions to

ensure variety in the data that were solicited. Patton (2002) identified six types of

questions (experience and behavior; opinion and value; feeling; knowledge;

sensory; background/demographic), and I drew from all of these across my

interviews (Appendix A: Interview Protocols). I also kept in mind the four basic

types of questions (hypothetical, devil's advocate, ideal position, and interpretive)

that Strauss, Schatzman, Bucher, and Sabshin (1981) suggested are useful in

eliciting information from reluctant interviewees. This was not necessary, however,

as she was never reluctant to share her thoughts. Equally as important, I attempted

to avoid the following types of questions: multiple questions that asked too many

things in one question; leading questions that might have revealed a bias or an

assumption on my part; and yes/no questions that limited the response of my participant (Merriam, 2009). Acknowledging the importance of a diverse corpus of question types, coupled with accounting for on-the-spot questions that arose from information collected in the moment, further strengthened the quality of my study.

Observations and field notes. Observations can be distinguished from interviews in two ways. First, observations take place in a natural setting. Second, observations represent a firsthand encounter with the phenomenon of interest (Merriam, 2009). Naturally occurring data are a valuable supplement to interviews and provide an added approach to ensuring quality of research (Roulston, 2010). Guided by my research question and theoretical framework, observations in this study included Colleen's literacy instruction in different contexts (e.g., teacher education program, local school contexts) (Table 5). In most instances, each observation was followed up by an interview with the participant. Additionally, stimulated recall interviews were conducted for the purpose of comparing the original interview that followed the observation with an interview conducted several years later.

I used field notes as a way to record my observations during data collection. According to Merriam (1998), field notes provide a written account of what the researcher sees, experiences, and thinks. The more complete the notes, the greater the potential for substantial data analysis. Therefore, to ensure thoroughness in this study, I expanded my field notes within 24 hours of collection. The content of field notes included description of the context (setting, people, and activities) and direct quotations from participants. Equally important was taking note of my own

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"feelings, reactions, hunches, initial interpretations, and initial hypotheses" in order to engage in preliminary data analysis and move beyond description to interpretation (Merriam, 1998). To make the experience and my role transparent, I added personal, methodological, and theoretical notes (Corsaro, 1985). Personal notes included my feelings and opinions. Methodological notes represented technical information important to the collection of the data. And theoretical notes documented the insights and hypotheses that arose in connection with my theoretical framework guiding the study as well as any patterns that seemed to be emerging. My field notes also contained a standard heading that included time, place, purpose of observation, participants, any documents associated with the observation, and audiotape/videotape identification (Merriam, 1998).

Table 5

Observation Data

Date	Topic	Record Keeping	Time
Spring 2008	Read Aloud Tutoring	Field Notes Transcription	30 min
Spring 2008	Read Aloud Tutoring	Field Notes Transcription	30 min
Spring 2008	Guided Reading Tutoring	Field Notes Transcription	30 min
Spring 2008	Guided Reading Tutoring	Field Notes Transcription	30 min
Spring 2008	Guided Reading Tutoring	Field Notes Transcription	30 min
Spring 2009	Read Aloud –Alamo Student Teaching	Field Notes Video Transcript	45 min
Spring 2009	Lit. Chart - Alamo Student Teaching	Field Notes Video Transcript	45 min
Spring 2009	Writing Groups Student Teaching	Field Notes Video Transcript	30 min
Spring 2011	Read Aloud	Field Notes Video Transcript Photographs	60 min
Spring 2011	Read Aloud	Field Notes Video Transcript	60 min
Total Hours Observing			6.5 Hours

Patton (2002) described dimensions of fieldwork that were important to keep in mind when making decisions about observational aspects of studies. I found this chart useful in demonstrating decisions made for this study about the role of the researcher and the methods for collecting observational data (Table 6). First, the extent of my participation in this study changed over time. Observations conducted during the tutoring and student teaching component of Colleen's teacher education program could be characterized as participant observation when I was more fully immersed in the setting, while during the other half of the observations, conducted in Colleen's first years of teaching, I played more of a spectator role. Second, this study allowed me the opportunity to achieve a balance of insider (emic) and outsider (etic) status. During the teacher education program, I was the participant's university facilitator and teaching assistant and therefore had an emic perspective. As she moved into her first years of teaching, I began to take on an etic perspective, as I had no insider status in the community of which she was a part. Identification of the emic vs. etic approaches to observation, as delineated from an anthropological perspective by (Pike, 1954), is important, as each perspective presents both value and challenges. Third, one of the really nice things about this study is the varied degree of collaboration along the continuum. At some moments in the study a team of researchers was present; at others I was a solo researcher; and on some occasions the participant was seen as a co-researcher. Fourth, in line with my university's institutional review board (IRB) expectations, there was full disclosure of the purpose and goals for all aspects of the research process both in conversation and as part of the consent form. Fifth, in keeping with the longitudinal nature of the

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study, the duration of the observations were ongoing over time. And, finally, the

focus of the observations varied from single elements to a more holistic view of

learning to teach literacy. Observations during the tutoring component of the

teacher education program had a specific focus because there were particular

concepts Colleen was working on in literacy instruction. As she moved into her first

years of teaching, I was interested in observing more broadly. I took a holistic view

of her literacy instruction asking, "What am I noticing about her literacy

instruction?"

Table 6

Dimensions Showing Fieldwork Variations

Dimension	Variation	In this study…
Role of the observer	Full participant ⟷ Spectator	Participant and spectator roles
Insider vs. Outsider perspective	Emic ⟷ Etic	Balance of insider (emic) and outsider perspective (etic)
Who conducts inquiry	Solo ⟷ Team ⟷ Participant	Variations in collaboration and participatory research
Disclosure of role	Overt ⟷ Covert	Overt disclosure
Duration of observations	Short ⟷ Long-term	Multiple observations, ongoing over time
Focus of observations	Narrow ⟷ Broad focus	Single elements and holistic view of learning to teach reading

Note. Adapted from Patton (2002)

Audio and video recording. I used audio and video recording as a way to

capture both formal interviews and observations. This approach provided a more

complete account of what transpired during those events and allowed the creation

of a permanent record. In addition, it afforded me the opportunity to cross-

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reference my field notes as well as to see things I might have missed. With respect

to procedures, I used both audio and video recordings to ensure that I had a backup

in case of technological malfunction with either device. In the presence of

audio/visual equipment, some participants might alter their behavior for the

camera. To limit this possibility and to minimize disruption, I positioned the camera

in a subtle place but close enough that the participant's voice was clear. Additional

microphones were on hand for more precise documentation. After the completion

of the recordings, I systematically catalogued each video and each audiotape with

the date, time elapsed, and event.   In addition, I stored all the tapes in a secure

location physically and in an electronic database.   I had a total of approximately 50

hours of audio/video tape. Each one of these tapes was transcribed within 24 hours

and no identifying information was used. Transcripts were labeled to correspond

with the video/audio documentation for easy retrieval.

Documents*.* For the purposes of this study, I defined "documents" broadly

as an overarching term for a wide variety of written, visual, digital, and physical

material (Merriam, 2009). Documents selected for analysis evolved from my

research topic and question. The types of documents collected were public records,

and personal, popular culture, visual, and physical material/artifacts (Merriam,

2009). I leaned primarily on personal documents and artifacts but solicited a

variety of document types, particularly ones that helped to provide data on the

context within which the participant was learning to teach reading. Document

collection included items such as federal, state, or district guidelines, lesson plans,

written reflections on teaching, coursework, journals, online entries, photographs,

and artwork (Table 7). These documents were important because of the role they played in shaping Colleen's literacy instruction and in what they indicated about the process of her learning to teach literacy.

I chose documents as part of my data collection because I recognized that documents offer the advantage of being easily accessible and my presence, as a researcher, did not alter the document (Merriam, 2009). According to Bowen (2009), "Documents provide background and context, additional questions to be asked, supplementary data, a means of tracking change and development, and verification of findings" (pp. 29-30). Documents collected in this study provided important contextual information, guided my interviews, and allowed me to corroborate evidence with my other data sources.

Table 7

Documents Data

Date	Type	What	Context
Spring 2008	Personal: Assignment	Myself as a Reader	First Semester of Teacher Education (TE)
Spring 2008	Personal: Online Reflections	Course Reading Responses	TE Program
Spring 2008	Personal: Survey	Pre and Post Tutoring	TE Program
Spring 2008	Personal: Questionnaire	Learning Style	TE Program
Spring 2008 Fall 2008	Personal: Exam	Oral and Written Final Exam	TE Program
Spring 2008 Fall 2008	Personal: Assignment	Tutoring Lesson Plans and Final Report	Tutoring – TE Program
Spring 2008 Fall 2008	Personal: Online Reflections	Case-based Reflections	TE Program
Fall 2008	Artifact: Drawing	Knowledge Construction	TE Program
Fall 2008	Personal: Assignments	Lesson Plans and Case Study	TE Program
Spring 2009	Personal: Assessment	Summative Assessment	TE Program
Spring 2009	Artifact: Painting	Vision of Teaching	Last Semester of TE
Spring 2009	Personal: TeXes Score	State Certification Test	After TE program
Summer 2009	Visual: Drawing	Journey in Learning to Teach	After TE before First Year Teaching
Fall 2009	Personal: Notes	Focus Group Notes	First Year Teaching
Spring 2010	Personal: Letter	Letter to Editor of Math Book	First Year Teaching
Spring 2010	Personal: E-mail	Teaching Philosophy	First Year Teaching
Spring 2010	Personal	Inquiry Project	Heart of TX Writing
Spring 2010	Personal	Vision for Classroom	After First Year Teaching
Spring 2011	Visual: Photographs of Classroom	Literacy Environment	Second Year Teaching
Spring 2011	Personal: Chapter Writing	Literacy Coach	Second Year Teaching
Spring 2011	Personal: Journal	Practicing Writing	Second Year Teaching
Fall 2012	Visual: Video	Katherine Bomer Video	Professional Development
Spring 2012	Personal: Journal	Most Frustrating Time	Third Year Teaching
Spring 2008–13	Personal: District Evaluation	PDAS	First Five Years of Teaching
Summer 2013	Visual: Drawing	Learning to Teach	Fourth Year Teaching
Summer 2013	Personal: Written Reflections	Learning to Teach	Fourth Year Teaching
Summer 2013	Personal: Journal	Thoughts About Teaching	Start of Fifth Year Teaching

Data Collection Phases

  Due to the nature of this longitudinal study and, specifically, the length of time devoted to collecting ongoing data on my participant, I report in this section only the three phases covering the new data collection: entry, data gathering, and closure. The timeline for the most recent data collection was July 2013 through September 2013. The first phase took place during July 2013. The second phase was the longest and occurred from July 2013 through August 2013, and the third and final phase occurred during September 2013. Below are descriptions of each phase.

  Phase I: Entry. In the first phase of the data collection process, my primary goal was to obtain permission from the participant and to clarify the goals of the study. I issued a consent form and a tentative interview schedule was created. The purpose of this phase was to establish access and rapport with the participant. In particular, I spent additional time with Colleen and conducted an initial interview, recording her preliminary feelings and thoughts about the study and any relevant feedback she had about the data collection plan. Because the work occurred near the end of the school year, I started to focus on understanding her current school context.

  Phase II: Data gathering. Once all necessary consent was granted, entry into the main data-gathering phase began. The primary goal of this phase was to conduct the majority of the interviews, to collect any relevant documents, and to complete any new observations. Although the process of data collection is not linear per se, I proceeded chronologically backward. That is, I began by addressing the role

of her current school context. After completing necessary data collection about Bowen Elementary, I shifted to data collection relevant to her previous school (Travis Elementary), where she taught for three years. From there, I proceeded with conducting interviews and gathering documents related to her teacher education experience and finished with data collection of her beliefs about literacy before she began her teacher education program. Collecting and examining data by context seemed relevant given my research questions concerned with the effects of particular learning communities on Colleen's learning to teach literacy over time. All the while, I recognized that data about any one of these contexts could emerge at any point during the data-gathering process.

A secondary goal of this phase was the narrowing of my study. As part of my research design, I conducted ongoing analysis throughout this phase in order to shape the direction of future data collection (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009). This exercise became important in order to allow for shifts in my preliminary plans as a result of what seemed to be emerging from the data. Part of doing qualitative, case study research is allowing for "continuous reassessment, recycling and reiteration" of the research design, and the process described here was useful in shaping the focus of my study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 287).

Phase III: Closure*. During the final stage of data collection, I conducted a final interview with the participant. The goal was to bring closure to the study and allow Colleen time to reflect on the impact the study had on her. In addition, this time was spent discussing data verification, giving the participant the opportunity to confirm, contest, or comment on any of my interpretations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Although member checks were implemented throughout the study, this process

became particularly important in the last phase.   Member checking, in the form of

both informal and formal interviews, was conducted with the participant in an

attempt to enhance the credibility of the data (Barone, 2011; Merriam, 2009;

Mertens, 2005). Although data analysis had been ongoing, formal data analysis

procedures began following the completion of this phase.

Data Analysis

Using a qualitative case study approach implies a particular way of collecting,

organizing, and analyzing data (Patton, 2002). Of primary importance was paying

attention to data management, as case study research generates an enormous

amount of data (Merriam, 2009). Knowing this, I first organized the data in a

meaningful way so that it could be easily retrieved. I created what Yin (2009)

referred to as a "case study database" (p. 118), or as Patton (2002) called it, a "case

record" (p. 49). I created both a hardcopy database and an electronic database

using ATLAS.ti-a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS).

Concurrent with the management of my data, and in line with qualitative research

expectations (Merriam, 2009), I began informal data analysis simultaneously with

my data collection process.   While collecting data, I wrote initial comments in the

margins related to pieces of data that struck me as potentially relevant or

interesting, given my research questions and theoretical frameworks (Miles &

Huberman, 1994). As Merriam (1998) described it, I was "having a conversation

with the data, asking questions of it, making comments to it, and so on" (p. 181).

Throughout all steps of the analysis process, I created analytic memos (Corbin &

Strauss, 2008) to document and facilitate my thinking. Included in these memos

were developing hypotheses and documentation of possible theme generation

(Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Upon completion of data collection, I began the more intensive and formal

aspects of data analysis. After the initial process of writing my notes and ideas in

the margins of transcripts and documents, I imported all of my data into ATLAS.ti

and began the coding process. My goal was to remain flexible by "coding [and]

working through iterative cycles of induction and deduction to power analysis"

(Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 65). Thus I used aspects of both constant comparative

(inductive) (Glaser & Strauss, 2009; Hatch, 2002) and longitudinal (inductive and

deductive) analysis methods (Saldaña, 2009).

Step One: Open Coding/Axial Coding

In the first step, I used the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss,

2009). This analysis technique was inductive (Hatch, 2002), and the goal was an

iterative process in which I reduced and channeled data into smaller, more

meaningful units of analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I began this process by

"open coding" the data, which allowed for categories to emerge and in essence to

"break data apart and identify concepts to stand for the data" (Corbin & Strauss,

2008, p. 195).   Similar to that of "pattern coding" (Miles & Huberman, 1994), the

goal of "open coding" was to look for patterns or relationships within the data in

order to group the data into themes or categories.

The initial process of coding in ATLAS.ti generated 429 codes (see Appendix

B). Keeping in mind my research question, I coded data samples for context (e.g.,

course readings), the time during Colleen's journey of which the data sample was representative (i.e., BTE: before teacher education, TE: teacher education, ATE: after teacher education), and the topic of the sample (e.g., time management). Appendix C provides a screen image of ATLAS.ti illustrating this coding scheme for one particular data sample. After coding all of the data, I refined those codes by cleaning up ones that were misspelled, ones that had the same meaning but were assigned different names, and ones that had a single data sample and could fit appropriately into another category. I also created an audit trail to ensure transparency (see Appendix D). After the refinement process there were 378 codes Next, I printed out all of my codes, cut each out individually, and arranged them first by time period (before, during, and after teacher education). Then I arranged them into categories within each time frame. On the basis of the data, my research question, and the conceptual and theoretical frameworks guiding the study, the categories that emerged were: understanding of self, understanding of students, understanding of teaching, understanding of learning, and understanding of literacy (see Appendix E).

Next, I developed a category memo that defined each of these categories, providing several examples to support the category and linking additional locations in the data where I coded for that category (Hatch, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994). This organization provided accessibility and quick retrieval of the data, allowing me to look within categories systematically to note related incidences of particular data coded in the same way (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). In addition, it gave me the opportunity to employ "axial coding," in order to seek out the relationships between categories and thus refine the category scheme (Merriam, 2009). In this recursive

process of looking across and between patterns, themes, and raw data, I worked to connect the patterns and hypothesize broad themes. Equally important was my search for negative examples of my data patterns, which helped me to determine whether or not my categories were justified by the data (Hatch, 2002). Through this process, the following themes emerged: Colleen intends to be a lifelong learner; she values and validates students' interests, histories, and contributions; she is committed to teaching for social justice; she believes a safe, trusting, and flexible community is essential to learning; and she believes words are central to literacy. Upon the development of these themes and "saturation of the data," I moved to the next step of data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 2009, p. 104).

Step Two: Longitudinal Coding

Equipped with possible hypotheses about Colleen's understandings, I began the last stage of my analysis guided by "longitudinal coding" techniques (Saldaña, 2009). Keeping in mind my research question that asked how Colleen's participation across multiple contexts over time influenced her journey in becoming a literacy teacher, I examined the data from a longitudinal perspective. With awareness about the relationships and patterns among and within the categories from Step One, I was interested in what happened to that pattern over time (before, during and after my participant's teacher education program). So the final step in my analysis was to engage in longitudinal coding in order to generate a theory about how the patterns looked across time and in different learning communities. Longitudinal coding is "appropriate for longitudinal qualitative studies that explore change and development in individuals through extended periods of time" (Saldaña,

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2009, p. 176). I combined all of the data samples within one category and put them in a document chronologically (before, during, and after teacher education). Then I reviewed the body of data "categorically and comparatively across time to assess whether participant change may have occurred" as it related to her understandings and practices associated with teaching literacy (Saldaña, 2009, p. 175). This process allowed me to characterize the evolution of her understandings and practices in depth and the influences on that evolution. From this, I selected representative data samples with which to write up my findings.

Trustworthiness

Corbin and Strauss (2008) believe that what sets research apart is not necessarily the choice of analytic method but rather the "quality" that a researcher puts into qualitative work that gives the findings significance. There is, however, dissension among researchers about how to evaluate qualitative research and the terms with which to describe its validity and reliability (Creswell, 2007). In order to make those concepts more transparent, Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed four criteria for establishing trustworthiness when doing qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. I addressed these criteria in my research design, as well as attending to the specific features of ensuring quality as part of a sociocultural case study, since issues of "quality" might look different depending on the type of qualitative research utilized (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002).

Credibility

Both researchers and consumers of research who are interested in creating and engaging in quality work must ask the question "Are the findings credible given the data presented?" (Merriam, 2009). Credibility in qualitative research parallels internal validity in quantitative research, and its goal is to ensure that the work of a researcher is perceived in the way in which it was intended (Mertens, 2005). In order to ensure rigor and increase the credibility of the findings in this particular study, I implemented four criteria: triangulation, prolonged and persistent engagement, peer debriefing, and member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Mertens, 2005).

Triangulation. There are four ways to use triangulation in qualitative research as a strategy for increasing credibility: methods, sources, theories, and analysis (Patton, 2002). For the purposes of this study, I focused on the triangulation of my data collection methods and sources. Triangulation of the data became particularly important in this case study research because of the depth and breadth of sources involved in the collection and analysis (Yin, 2009). When my findings became patterns across different data sources, the credibility of the research was strengthened. The longitudinal nature of the study gave me the opportunity to collect data using multiple methods (e.g., interviews, observations, document reviews, online reflections) and to draw on multiple sources within those methods (e.g., participant interview, phone interview, focus group interview) to gain a variety of perspectives. Having analyzed a large data corpus as well as extended time with the participant increases the credibility of my work.

Prolonged engagement and persistent observation. Although there were

no exact answers as to how long a researcher must engage in the research site

(Mertens, 2005), I was in contact with the participant for more than six years,

collecting data at various stages throughout that time period. Through this long-

standing relationship, I developed trust and rapport with the participant, which

allowed for a less obtrusive data collection process. In addition, in an act of

persistent observation, I sought out the elements of the study that emerged as most

relevant and focused on them in detail. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) stated, "If

prolonged engagement provides scope, persistent observation provides the depth."

My goal was to ensure both depth and breadth to enhance my work's credibility.

Peer debriefing. Peer debriefers give the researcher an opportunity to be

scrutinized for the purpose of exposing the inquiry to someone to whom the ideas

are not implicit. The goal of this process was to keep me "honest," by allowing the

peer to probe my research for any bias and or to clarify any misconceptions (Lincoln

& Guba, 1985). In this study, I was fortunate to have had two peer debriefers – an

uninvolved peer who is familiar with conducting research but not on this topic

(Mertens, 2005) and a second peer who took part in the larger study on which this

study was based and who is familiar with the research (Barone, 2011). The input of

both perspectives ensured a complex discussion about the study's design, findings,

and implications.

Member checks. Member checks are opportunities to solicit feedback on

the emerging findings from people who are involved in the study (Merriam, 2009).

Some argue that member checks are the most important part of establishing

credibility in case study research (Mertens, 2005). In this study, both formal and

informal member checks were conducted throughout the data collection and

analysis process, giving the participant multiple occasions to review the data. After

every interview, the audio was transcribed within 24 hours and sent to the

participant to ensure accuracy and to provide additional opportunities for input.

Also important as part of a single-case study design was the use of her words to

ensure that her voice was represented (Barone, 2011).

Transferability

Transferability in qualitative research parallels external validity in

quantitative studies, and it is concerned with how generalizable the results of a

study are (Mertens, 2005).   However, due to the nature of qualitative research, the

goal of generalizability is to link findings to theory, not to an entire population (Yin,

2009). For my study, I ensured transferability by providing a rich, thick description

of my participant and her learning communities. This was achieved through the

collection of data from multiple sources that yielded descriptive data about the

participant, her teacher education program, and school contexts. This approach

increased the likelihood that this design might have the potential for "transferring"

to other teachers and contexts (Merriam, 2009). In addition, this study

demonstrated how my findings related to sociocultural and situated theories of

learning (Putnam & Borko, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978) and teaching (Feiman-Nemser,

2001; Hammerness et al., 2005; Shulman & Shulman, 2004).

Dependability

　　Dependability in qualitative research parallels reliability in quantitative studies (Mertens, 2005). In a constructivist/interpretivist paradigm, it is pertinent that the researcher tracks the methodological changes over time and allows for those changes to be easily obtained. In order to document my process, I created and maintained an audit trail (Merriam, 2009) or case study database (Yin, 2009) in ATLAS.ti. This database included raw data (e.g., field notes, videos, artifacts, photographs, transcripts, analytic memos) and analysis products (e.g., coding pages, hypothesis notes) so that another researcher could trace all the evidence to support my findings. This detailed account of the methods, procedures, and decisions I made throughout my study enhances its dependability.

Confirmability

　　Confirmability, used to ensure objectivity, is the criterion for ensuring that the researcher's bias and judgment are minimized (Mertens, 2005). It's important to make transparent all aspects of the research process, and an audit trail (similar to the one mentioned above) can also provide confirmability of a study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Thus I incorporated a single audit to address issues of dependability and confirmability by tracking and providing access to five categories derived by Haperin (as cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 319): (a) raw data (e.g., transcripts), (b) data reduction and analysis products (e.g., theoretical notes), (c) data reconstruction and synthesis products (e.g., findings and conclusions), (d) process notes (e.g., methodological notes), and (e) personal notes (e.g., reflexive notes). The personal notes detailed my experiences, beliefs, and philosophical stances. Doing

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this allowed me to account for my own reactions, decisions, and questions revealing

my bias and judgments throughout the study.

Ethics

"The writer seeks ways of safeguarding the trip" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.

455). Many ethical issues arise when conducting research. In this study I attended

to those ethical issues in three ways. I addressed the role of the researcher, the

protection of the participant, and the protection of the data. Central to the

implementation of the trustworthiness criteria above was the ethics of the

investigator (Merriam, 2009), and I recognized the duty I had in "safeguarding the

trip" for all those involved in my study. My goal was to conduct this study with

credibility - reflecting often and openly, using rigorous methods, making my

decisions and opinions transparent, reporting any bias, revealing my role with the

participant and events under study, and protecting the confidentiality of the

participant(s) (Barone, 2011; Merriam, 2009).

The protection of the participant was a fundamental priority (Creswell, 2007;

Merriam, 2009; Mertens, 2005; Patton, 2002). I ensured that the participant was

fully aware of the purpose and goals of the study and the role she would play. An

informed consent was issued at the beginning of the new data collection process,

and a detailed explanation both in writing and in oral form accompanied that

consent form. Her confidentiality and anonymity were secured through the use of

pseudonyms that were assigned to both participants and contexts and used

throughout all written documents associated with the study. No identifying

information about any of the participants or contexts was included in the reports.

Finally, the participant always had the option of exiting the study, and she had the opportunity to learn and to grow as a literacy teacher.

Not only did I make every effort to safeguard the participant's anonymity, but I also worked hard to protect the data gathered during this study. Since data storage and handling are especially important during case study research, I developed backup copies of computer files, locked the data in a safe, and catalogued my data for easy identification (Creswell, 2007). In addition, the data gathered during this study were shared only with the participants (for member checking and triangulation of data), members of my doctoral committee, two peer debriefers, and in professional meetings and publications. Table 8 summarizes how the study attended to the ethics of doing qualitative research (Patton, 2002).

Table 8

Ethical Issues Checklist

Criteria	Definition	How the criteria was addressed in this study
Explaining purpose	How will you explain the purpose of the inquiry and methods to be used in ways that are accurate and understandable?	The purpose of the study was made clear in the informed consent form as well as in person. The participant had plenty of opportunities to ask questions before proceeding with the study.
Reciprocity	What's in it for the interviewee?	The interviewee had an opportunity to learn from the research as well as resources (e.g., books) for her classroom.
Risk assessment	In what ways, if any, will conducting the interview put people at risk?	There were no known risks other than loss of confidentiality involved with interviewing the participant(s).
Confidentiality	What promises of confidentiality will be honored?	Confidentiality was honored through pseudonyms, and careful and secure storage of data
Informed consent	What kind of informed consent is necessary?	The participant completed an informed consent form at every phase of the research study.
Data access and ownership	Who will have access to the data?	Access to the data was given only to the researcher, the participant, the peer debriefers and my dissertation committee
Interviewer mental health	How will you and other interviewers likely be affected by conducting interviews?	There was no effect on the interviewers.
Advice	Who will be the researcher's confidant and counselor on matters of ethics?	My confidants and counselors were the chairs of my dissertation committee.
Data collection boundaries	How hard will you push for data?	The participant(s) always had the option of exiting or opting out of any part of the study.
Ethical vs. Legal	What ethical framework will guide you?	IRB authorization; criteria outlines (Merriam 2009; Patton, 2002)

Note. Adapted from Patton (2002)

Strengths and Limitations

The biggest strength of this research was the longitudinal nature of the study.

Looking over time at the impact of prior beliefs/experiences, teacher education, and

school contexts offers a more thorough understanding of the factors that influenced

Colleen's journey in learning to teach. As a result, this design afforded me extended time with the participant, which does not happen often due to the limitation of resources (both financial and time). I feel fortunate to have been able to draw on prolonged engagement and to have built trust with my participant. Our relationship as colleagues and friends enhanced both the data collection procedures and the trustworthiness of the data.

There are, however, limitations to this study, and I make them transparent here in the hope that future studies might be able to build on the work I have begun. The scope of this research was limited to one literacy teacher's experience in learning to teach literacy across various learning communities. My goal was to provide a rich description of the participant's journey to reveal the complexities in learning to teach literacy. I recognize that this study could be extended in the following ways:

1. I am one investigator and a beginning researcher with limited experience. I addressed this limitation through the use of member checks and peer debriefers. However, additional investigators with more experience in conducting qualitative research studies might provide additional insights into various research designs and theoretical frameworks to guide this type of inquiry.

2. This is a single-case study. Additional studies that look at other members of the same cohort could shed light on the similarities and differences between teachers from the same teacher education program.

3. Interview data were gathered on adults, as gaining access to schools and students over time is challenging. It would be interesting to solicit the opinions of students about the role their teacher plays in their learning.

4. I attempted to address student outcomes beyond a single test score in this study, but it was a very small part of my data collection and analysis. Studies that emphasize how learning to teach relates to student outcomes are important in light of the current political climate in which teacher education programs are called to provide evidence of effectiveness (Cochran-Smith, 2001).

5. Although I address the influences of my participant's prior beliefs that she brought to her teacher education program, absent from my study was the role of race, class, and gender in a teacher's transition from one context to another. Exploring that aspect of teaching might lead to more critical questions about how teachers' sociocultural knowledge and institutional factors are related to social reproduction and agency.

Chapter 4: Colleen's Evolving Understanding of Self and Students

This longitudinal case study is grounded in sociocultural and situated perspectives, which view learning to teach as a social practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). These theoretical lenses enabled me to examine my participant across time and within multiple learning communities, focusing on the interdependent relationship between the participant and the context. Thus, this chapter presents themes and analysis related to the study's research question: How did a teacher's participation across multiple contexts over time influence her journey in becoming a literacy teacher? My analysis is derived from six and a half years of qualitative data collection and reveals four salient themes associated with her development as a literacy teacher over time and across contexts. The first two themes, presented in this chapter, illustrate how her understanding of self and students are influenced over time and across contexts. Then in Chapter 5, a discussion of the third and fourth themes, understanding of teaching and understanding of learning, is presented.

This chapter is organized into three sections: Introduction to Colleen, Colleen's Evolving Understanding of Self, and Colleen's Evolving Understanding of Students. In the first section, I provide a brief demographic description of Colleen to contextualize the case study and to give you a better sense of her journey as a whole. Although information contained in this section has been compiled based on interview data, it will read more as a narrative rather than quoting specific data to avoid moving back and forth between data sources. However, I apply quotes in the text where I use her actual words. The second section describes the influences on

Colleen's understanding of self (i.e., Colleen intends to be a lifelong learner) across

contexts and how that understanding translated into practice. The third section

reveals Colleen's understanding of students (i.e., Colleen values and validates

students' interests, histories, and contributions) and how she enacts that

understanding in practice both in her teacher education program and in her first

five years of teaching. Although each section is organized thematically, the analysis

within each theme unfolds chronologically. This allows the reader to examine the

various settings (i.e., before, during, and after teacher education) that have

influenced Colleen's journey in becoming a teacher. Themes indicate that it is not

about any one influence on Colleen's development as a literacy teacher but rather

how multiple influences came together to support her in seeking out communities of

practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) that allowed her to reflect on her

understandings of self, students, teaching, and learning across various school

contexts.

Introduction to Colleen

Dressed in a mid-calf skirt and T-shirt, with straight, dark blond hair and a

backpack in tow, Colleen first arrived to class in the spring of 2008 to begin her

teacher education program. Her quiet, unassuming demeanor was misleading even

from day one, as her art and her writing spoke loudly. During the "get-to-know-you"

activity that day, it was her magazine-clipped collage that all the students admired,

oohing and ahhing collectively. An artist from the moment she was born on April 4,

1980 in Topeka, Kansas, Colleen attributed the beginning of her personal literacy

journey to her love of pictures and photographs. In addition to being five years

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older than the other students (considered by the university as a non-traditional student), she stood out to me right from the beginning because of this first-day glimpse into her creativity. As her teaching assistant and student teaching facilitator, I might have thought that Colleen was about to spend the next three semesters learning from me. The truth is, I learned far more from her. Although I didn't know it at the time, now, after spending nearly seven years following her work and growth as a teacher, I recognize that I (and hopefully others) have much to glean from her journey in becoming a literacy teacher, a journey that spans 34 years across multiple contexts (before, during, and after teacher education).

Before Teacher Education

According to Colleen, she wasn't always the engaged and focused student that I encountered throughout her teacher education program. Although always regarded as tremendously intelligent, being placed in advanced English classes in both middle and high school, she reported that she rarely read a thing and instead would have rather spent her time watching television, flipping through fashion magazines, and cheerleading. She attended three different elementary schools growing up and two different middle schools before settling into a high school for four years (Figure 5). Her college years were equally peripatetic, as she spent her first semester at a university in Kansas before becoming homesick and returning home in the spring. The following year she enrolled in an art school in Georgia and remained there for three years until she dropped out for the second time mainly for financial reasons and decided that she would move to an urban city in the Southwest to find a place of her own with her boyfriend. In 2003, she began taking

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classes at the local community college as a prerequisite to attending the university in the same city. During her three years of coursework, Colleen met the man who is now her husband, and she gave birth to their first child, Chloe (pseudonym), in 2006, which halted her plans for entry into the university.

Teacher Education

Ironically, one year later it was her role as a new mom that pushed her to continue her studies and was ultimately the reason that our paths crossed. Even as Colleen entered Southwest University (pseudonym) in 2007 as a non-traditional student, she was not sure that she wanted to be a teacher. She did know, however, that she wanted to learn more about her baby. In taking classes that taught her about kids and how they learn, she began to recognize the importance of reading in that process. Thus, her goal was to grow both her knowledge about how kids learn to read and her children's book collection. So, it was with an interest in raising her child well and with an aspiration of gathering information about her development that got her started in education. Ultimately, this was her reason for entry into the teacher education program, where she selected the reading cohort because she knew that she would have to take an extra reading class and that seemed like a good idea in light of her goals on behalf of Chloe. She spent three semesters in the program as part of Cohort E, a decision that proved to be pivotal. As she put it in an interview during her second year of teaching, "The cohort changed my life path, especially in regards to how I feel about good teaching, and best research-based practices" (Interview Transcript, 2011). Colleen graduated in 2009, completing a

nationally recognized teacher education program and earning both a Generalist

Early Childhood – Grade 4 and an English as a Second Language teaching certificate.

After Teacher Education: Travis Elementary

Upon graduation, she was hired at Travis Elementary, located close to the

university. Travis was a Title 1 school (95.9% economically disadvantaged) with a

predominantly Latino/Latina student body (90%), and it was here that Colleen

would spend her first three years as a fourth grade teacher, enrolling her daughter,

Chloe, in the same school because she believed that it was important to immerse

herself and her family in the community of the school. Her beginning years were not

unlike those of many beginning teachers, filled with both challenges around

classroom management and standardized testing and considerable student success

and growth. Although she was a beginning teacher, she was given many

opportunities to display her leadership and knowledge with other faculty in the

school. It was here where Colleen cultivated her beliefs as a teacher for social

justice, and she often referred to herself as an "education soldier," fighting to ensure

equity for all her students.

At the beginning of her third year, her son, Evan, was born, causing her to

miss the first half of the school year. Returning to the classroom mid-year proved to

be challenging as she tried to set up a new classroom community during a time

when the district had labeled the school as a "focus school" because of its

standardized test scores, she was given a student teacher, and she was balancing her

teaching life with being a new mom. Toward the end of her third year, her former

cooperating teacher from her teacher education program began recruiting her to

move to the elementary school where she had done her student teaching.   Colleen

had always envisioned going back to Bowen, a place that she viewed as the model

school at which she could grow her practice in a professional community with

people whom she trusted. More than leaving Travis, it was about going to Bowen.

Thus she chose to leave, though with much reservation about leaving a place she

had come to love and about which she cared deeply.

After Teacher Education: Bowen Elementary

Colleen began her fourth year of teaching at Bowen Elementary School. The

campus demographics were much different than those of Travis. At Bowen, 44% of

the student body identified as White. In addition, Bowen did not qualify as a Title 1

school, since only approximately 32.7% of its students were considered

economically disadvantaged and received free and reduced lunch. Ironically, she

was asked to teach in the same portable where she had spent her student teaching

semester. In a way, she had come full circle. The move to this new school proved to

be a success for the family, as Chloe was blossoming and the school was close to

their home.

Unlike Travis, where Colleen's classroom was self-contained, at Bowen she

was asked to teach all of the language arts for two separate fourth grade classes.

This structure gave her the opportunity to focus on her literacy teaching and to

witness first hand how instruction for one group of students might or might not be

effective for another set of students. Although still considered a new teacher,

Colleen felt that she was welcomed into the school community, which comprised

mostly veteran teachers, and she was valued immediately as a professional who had

much to contribute. As she starts her fifth year of teaching at Bowen, she does so

with great enthusiasm and high expectations for herself and her students.

Conclusion

Looking across the trajectory of Colleen's life, focusing particularly on her

teacher education program and two beginning teaching contexts, the next section

presents themes from my analysis that sought to uncover the influences on her

journey in becoming a literacy teacher. Although the scope of this dissertation does

not allow me to report on all the themes, the themes addressed below are those that

were most salient in the data and that demonstrate how Colleen's understandings of

self, students, teaching, and learning have been shaped and reshaped over time and

across contexts. The four themes that emerged from the data are these: Colleen

intends to be a lifelong learner; she values and validates students' interests,

histories, and contributions; she is committed to teaching for social justice; and she

believes a safe, trusting, and flexible community is essential to learning.

elementary school

Topeka, KS	April 4, 1980
Born	

Kansas	1985 - 1989

Kindergarten - 1st Grade
Southlane View Elementary

2nd Grade - 4th Grade (first half)
Kingswright Elementary

Georgia	1990 - 1991

4th Grade (second half) - 5th Grade
Chatglen Elementary

junior high

Georgia	1991 - 1994

6th Grade - 7th Grade
Dukesheights Middle School

8th Grade
Evanwood Trail Middle School

high school

Georgia	1994 - 1998

9th Grade - 12th Grade
Rockvalley High School

college

Kansas	1998

University of Midwest

Georgia	1999 - 2002

College of Art and Design

Southwest	2003 - 2006

Southwest Community College

birth of first child, Chloe
January 9, 2006

Southwest	2007 - 2009

Southwest University

Teacher Education Program 2008-2009

teaching

Southwest	2009 - 2012

1st Year - 3rd Year Teaching
Travis Elementary

birth of second child, Evan
August 5, 2011

Southwest	2012 - 2014

4th Year - 5th Year Teaching
Bowen Elementary

Figure 5: Timeline of Colleen's School Experiences

Colleen's Evolving Understanding of Self

"There is never an end to learning, and if I see one then I know I took a wrong turn": Colleen intends to be a lifelong learner.

> Deep down, I know I have mountains to learn – huge, life-encompassing mountains. Becoming a teacher is an act – a life-learning-exercise in thinking-study. My best growth comes from not the curriculum documents, but my own life as a learner between the drapery of skills and concepts. I didn't know teaching was an intimate self-learning study with myself, but it is. (Journal Free Write, July 2013)

It is appropriate to begin with Colleen's understanding of self. As with all forms of human activity (including teaching), it is not possible to disentangle her view of self from her views on students, teaching, and learning. Over time, the data revealed that she continually saw herself as a learner in order to make sense of her world and to articulate her place in it. This understanding of self was directly related to her interaction with others and her participation in various communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). This section will explore how her view of being an eternal learner was an important part of her identity as a teacher, how that belief influenced her teaching practice, and how her goal of being a lifelong learner was supported and challenged over time.

Before Teacher Education

PK-12 Experiences. Although Colleen reported that she didn't particularly enjoy the traditional aspects of schooling (e.g., feeling tested) and never really bonded with any of her teachers, in her later years she did love to learn and considered herself "the quintessential sponge-girl" (Class Assignment, January 2008). She enjoyed acting in plays, attending summer drama camps and analyzing poetry in high school. She often would immerse herself in philosophy and history.

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She loved learning about the lives of historical figures and writers in particular:
Lincoln and the Civil War, the wives of Henry VIII, biographies of various
writers/poets (e.g., Sylvia Plath, Ann Lamott, Maya Angelou, and Barbara Crooker - a
poet/mother, living an ordinary life much like her own). Perhaps she saw herself in
the words and lives of these women–a lot of feminist writing/manifestos. She
attributed her love of learning about these people to the person she has become; "it
has all melded into the information seeker I am today (seeking teaching wisdom)"
(Journal Free Write, August 2013). Although she didn't know it at the time, the
voices of these men and women would help to build her future teaching identity.
She had thought she wanted to be a writer, and she recognized that learning more
would help her to become one. At the age of 19, she wrote a note card to herself that
said, "Reading makes me smarter and the more you read, the more you know and
the more you can write" and posted it above her bed (Interview Transcript, August
2009). Although she hasn't become a professional writer (yet!), her goals of
learning more and working on her craft of writing have undoubtedly influenced her
journey in becoming a teacher.

Sister. Colleen's older sister has been a big influence in her life and on how
she positions herself as a learner. Her sister is the family member that Colleen has
mentioned most often over the last seven years (other than her children). She has
talked often and openly about the role of her sister in her life. She remembers
fondly the times when her sister would read to her as a child, and yet Colleen always
had a sense that she never really got "into" reading the way her sister did. Perhaps
her grandmother was the culprit of that sentiment:

My grandmother always says, in a snooty tone, that she can pick out a reader (or a first-born child) minutes after meeting him or her—which always leaves me, a second-born/late-reader, cross-eyed and grumpy. I don't know if her attitude was what first hindered me reading (I'm still hunting the culprit), but I know it was my older sister's successes in life that gave me the inspiration to start up and do something with myself. It was hard being the younger sister of the essay winning, 4.0 earning, book-loving, magna cum laude, #1 female law school graduate of 2004. (Class Assignment, January 2008)

There is a hint of resentment in her statement and at the same time an acknowledgment and an appreciation that her sister has influenced her to *do* and to *be* something more. Evidence of that is hanging in Colleen's bathroom - a Thoreau quote that her sister gave her many years ago. She claims she has looked at it every day of her life since it was gifted to her. "What people say you cannot do, you try and find that you can." It's almost as if her sister understood the dynamic between them when she gave Colleen the quote. So much of the passion within Colleen to push, to dream, to learn, and to achieve in life and in teaching has been in large part in reaction to and with admiration for her sister. It is no coincidence (in my opinion) that throughout the data there is evidence of a self-critical Colleen, always wanting to learn more.

Teacher Education

The nature of being in college and taking coursework to become a teacher inevitably positions one as a learner, so it's not unusual that Colleen saw herself as a learner in the teacher education program. However, there were aspects of her program–specifically her professors and her student teaching experience–that facilitated her view of herself as a learner in regard to her teaching identity. At the end of her program, rather than entering teaching as someone who thought she

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knew it all, she entered her first year realizing, "I still have a lot to learn" (Course

Reading Reflection, Spring 2009). Thus, her teacher education experience helped

her to solidify the belief that positioning herself as a learner was an essential part of

being a teacher and central to her view of herself as a future teacher.

Professor. When Colleen decided on the reading cohort so that she could

take an extra reading class to acquire a specialization and consequently learn more

about her daughter, she had no idea who would be leading her program. She recalls

the first time she realized she was going to have a male cohort coordinator.

> This sounds funny but it was like picking doctors, and I always prefer a
> female doctor. So when it came back that Tim Houston [pseudonym] was my
> person and I had no idea who he was, I was like, oh my gosh, I'm going to
> have this man leader for a year and a half? Oh gosh. (Interview Transcript,
> August 2013)

Dr. Houston would in fact become Colleen's cohort coordinator and would also

become a huge part of her growth as a teacher. She often noted how lucky she felt to

have been a part of his cohort, and over the years she attributed many positive

things about herself as a teacher to him. "Tim Houston, in particular, was a good

foundation for me" (Interview Transcript, November 2008); and "My belief in myself

came from Dr. Houston" (Journal Free Write, August 2013).

As cohort coordinator, Dr. Houston was in charge of arranging all aspects of

Colleen's teacher education experience. He was the lead instructor for her courses

in Reading Assessment and Development, Language Arts Methods, Reading

Methods, and Classroom Management, and he carefully selected highly regarded

instructors for her additional courses. Although there were many things that he

taught his students, Colleen felt that his modeling of himself as a learner and the

way he responded and reflected with each student was perhaps the biggest

influence on her.

> I think that a big aha is Dr. Houston and how he taught us, the way he would
> want us to teach kids. And how he was genuinely answering everything,
> writing back to us and questioning us for our choices. I'd never had that with
> a professor. I'd never had that with any teacher, actually. And so I had an aha
> about what a teacher is because of how he taught us, and I still try to emulate
> that: that smart, critical responsiveness that he had, that is still a kindness
> without being overly mushy-gushy and praising. And that's something that
> takes time and experience to become, of course, but that was my biggest aha
> through the whole thing, was how lucky I was to have learned from someone
> so practiced. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

As part of his instruction, Dr. Houston would respond daily to students' on-line

course reading reflections as an opportunity to build trust and a relationship with

the student, to assess where the student was as a learner, and to push the student's

thinking further. Borrowing, in part, from theories of cognitive coaching (Costa,

Garmston, Anderson, & Glickman, 2002), he seemed to select his words carefully in

order to position himself as a learner. He would write things such as "I've been

confused about this myself." or "I wonder what it would look like if…" or "We will

continue to think through this." The choice of the word "we" implied that learning

to teach was not a solitary act and that in no way was Dr. Houston claiming to be one

with all the knowledge.

About midway through the first semester, after Dr. Houston had established

the pattern for course readings (read, reflect on-line, participate in class discussion),

he decided to create a learning opportunity for his students. He asked the class to

read an article about the role of decoding in literacy assessment (Beck & Juel, 1995).

As usual, his students read the article and posted an on-line response. This time,

though, he waited to respond to their reflections. In class the next day, he asked the

students what they thought of the reading. Many of them agreed with the article

and at the conclusion of the discussion, Dr. Houston announced that he didn't

actually support the authors' message, but he had assigned the article as a way to

establish the importance of being a critical reader. Amazingly, five years later

Colleen remembers this incident and recounts it in an interview.

> We are accustomed to agreeing with a professor, so that was an interesting trick, and I've remembered that the whole time. I try and read critically everything that I get, as far as articles and books and it's like, who do I really trust? Which books can I count on, and I always go back to the ones from my program because they came from people that I value their opinion.
> (Interview 3, August 2013)

It is clear that she received the message that Dr. Houston intended for his students

to get all those years ago.

When the time came for Colleen to apply her readings and class discussions

with Tim in the practice of teaching (e.g., tutoring), she reflected on the ways in

which her practice illustrates being a learner in front of her students:

> And so when I go in there, I can feel a little bit more confident knowing that I'm learning too and that we can discover it together and that's something that I think has sort of been threaded through all of the classes that I've taken…And so I always come back to that, when I get stumped or if I freeze and I'm up at an overhead and I'm like, oh my gosh, I don't know how to spell mountain, is it ai or ia, I think, hey guys, guess what? I've never really known how to spell this word and so can you guys help me learn how to spell it? Do you know any tricks to how to spell it? And to be real explicit and that's something that Dr. Houston has always said is just be honest with these kids and be explicit of yourself as a learner and as someone that enjoys learning.
> (Interview Transcript, November 2008)

In her efforts to be comfortable positioning herself as a learner, Colleen found that

her program provided her with continuity of information across courses, coupled

with models of teaching (e.g. Dr. Houston) and opportunities to practice what it

looked like to be a learner with students. Equipped with both the theory and the

practice of positioning oneself as a learner, she entered her student teaching

experience in the last semester of her program and tried out these notions in a

classroom with 20 students.

Student Teaching. Colleen began her student teaching experience excited to

implement the many aspects of being a learner that Dr. Houston had modeled for

two semesters. By the time she completed her program, she had logged 1,000 hours

of field experience. Of those hours, the last were spent in her student teaching

placement at Bowen Elementary, where she went five days a week, observing and

teaching in a fourth grade classroom. Her total teach included three weeks of full

time teaching for the entire school day. Within that "total teach" time period,

Colleen conducted an inquiry unit on the history of Texas. In particular, she focused

on the stories of the Alamo and the various perspectives of those who recount its

history.

Throughout the unit, Colleen always chose to use the word "we" when

referencing the students who were learning. "A long time ago, a long, long time ago

we sat here in these same groups and **we** made some charts…**We** have gone on a 20-

day adventure learning about the Alamo" (Observation Transcript, April 2009).

From the lessons I observed during the unit, it was clear that she intended to make

the students feel as if they were all learning together, both from and with one

another. It was important to her that the students did not see her as a teacher who

subscribed to a "banking concept of education" (Freire, 1970), a teacher who had all

the information/answers and was going to give them to her students. In one of the

last lessons of the unit, she highlighted her position as a co-learner by recognizing

that her students had the power to contribute to the conversation and the growing

understanding of the history of the Alamo.   Below is a transcript that begins after

Jack, a student, showed Colleen a newspaper article he had located that contained

diary excerpts about Davy Crockett's death.

> C: I have one more thing to share. Jack brought up something. A really great….He found an article.   Let me read it to you. So they have the diary from the Mexicans that they read. And then they have what a lot of the Texans and…
> S: And Anglo-Americans.
> C: The Anglo, great word, Anglo-Americans. Listen to this. *The historians want to find out whether the diary is real and if this story is true. Whether Crockett died early in the battle, which is what the* [pauses for student contribution] *Mexicans believe. Or at the very end, which is what the* [pauses for student contribution*] Texans believe, he will always be an American hero.* **So something I just learned** from reading that is that there are a lot of different viewpoints and a lot of different legends. So I might add that there are a lot of legends.
> S: Because many people have different thoughts.
> C: Different thoughts.
> S: Just because it's in a diary doesn't mean that it's true, because a diary is from somebody's perspective.
> C: Mm-hmm [shakes head in confirmation].
> S: So it wouldn't be the truth. That's why we can't write it as a . . . a fact.
> C: A fact, yes.

(Observation Transcript, April 2009)

In this lesson, I saw Colleen interrupt what she was doing to listen to what

Jack had to say and to read the information he had brought to her attention. After

she'd read it, she took the paper to the front of the room and stopped the small

group activities in which the students were engaged. She validated Jack's

contribution, made in private, and shared it with the rest of the class ("I have one

more thing to share…Jack brought up something…He found an article. Let me read it

to you."). She proceeded to read the piece, mixing the text and her own comments

to engage the students in its interpretation. After she finished the reading, she

positioned herself as a learner ("So something I just learned from this piece…").

This organic teaching move on her part demonstrated to her students that they

were equal partners in the learning experience and showed that Colleen was

learning to become thoughtfully adaptive (Duffy, 2005).

In an interview after my observation of her lesson, she reflected on her role

as a learner while teaching the unit.

> I am learning this whole topic too. So great, you're [students] from Texas,
> you've been here much longer than me. Come on, share it. So I would hope
> that in ten years if I am teaching Texas History, I won't be a big jerk and have
> my ideas set out and you need to hit each one or else we haven't done it right.
> But I just think that they naturally are curious kids. (Interview Transcript,
> April 2009)

She downplays her role in encouraging her students to get involved in the learning

process ("I think that they are naturally curious kids"). Not crediting herself too

much is part of her style of remaining a learner. Further, she believes that no matter

how long you teach any particular topic, there is always more to learn and new

perspectives to be gained and shared ("So I would hope that in ten years if I am

teaching Texas History, I won't be a jerk and have my ideas set out"). In fact, as she

continued the interview, she actually envisioned what the unit might look like in her

own classroom.

> I feel like if I had my own classroom and I had a chart I would maybe want to
> do my chart more like start as a whole group but make it more of a center
> later where they could investigate, have a huge pile of books. Here is your
> pile of books, now dig. **We** have this time to be investigator[s]. I'm not going
> to stare over your shoulder and we're not competing and go. (Interview
> Transcript, April 2009)

In this statement, Colleen offered a way that she might change the current unit to

further promote more student-driven learning rather than teacher-driven learning.

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And again, the use of the word "we" suggests that everyone in the classroom, including the teacher, is on a learning journey together.

Upon completion of her student teaching experience, Colleen left her teacher education program with many goals as a teacher. One of the most prevalent in the data is her goal of being a lifelong learner, further substantiated by her last two final assignments for the semester - the creation of a vision statement and the final written exam. Below is the image of Colleen's vision statement (Figure 6) (the only one that was painted), which begins with these first words: "I come to teaching as a lifetime learner." It is evident that Colleen intends to be the kind of teacher who is always becoming, always learning. In her final exam of the semester, she writes, "I think a literacy teacher is always learning. I will always be working on finding the new and the necessary to bring back into my room to discuss, debate and investigate. There is never an end, and if I see one, then I know I took a wrong turn." As she turns toward Travis Elementary and her first year of teaching, securely tucked into her belief system is the conviction that she is first and foremost a lifetime learner.

I come to teaching as a lifetime learner. I build my foundation on being a critical reader, interpreter, consumer, and knower and I resist the pressure to conform for the sake of the status quo. I anticipate cultivating a lifetime of questioning, determination, and hope in each of my students—the same goals I have for myself, by simply remaining open, reflective and mindful of my choices and actions. I, then, travel this path *with* my students by thinking and studying globally, and acting locally with a just hand and mind.

In my classroom I see only possibilities, never limitations. I envision the air, rich with ideas, filling the hearts, minds, and fingertips of my students— allowing them a playground of thought and action. I see comfort and community within this room, also trust and acceptance—we work hard at this. At our most distant rung, a springboard for taking risks and facing challenges—feasible and possible for all—points off toward the future.

I see books, computers, tools, and projects—growth! I hear words and sounds, sometimes quiet and pensive, often boisterous

and escalating, and as the room hums, the purpose (we are purposeful!) intensifies. Our space teems with ideas that spill out of each crack and crevice, that bubble up and pop on the children. There is organization that, within each child's mind, is a crafter's table of possibility. There are gardens and gardens of this growth: images, words, holes to peek down and wonder, mirrors that reflect, bags that hold surprises and mysteries. I see the movement and noise, the stillness and silent thoughts, bouncing, treading on the hum—not the tick of the clock. This is a non-threatening, unassuming place to be. I step back and wonder how we got here, but I know it is simply a product of our dedication, and ourselves, and I admire my students. My heart quickens with the impetus of learning, and I am happy.

I continue to balance my own ideas with the students', and I always probe further because I know that we must. We must because knowledge is empowering and valuable, and because this is where we grow it. I am only one of many gardeners, and we are here, tending our space.

Figure 6. Colleen's Vision Statement

After Teacher Education: Travis Elementary

Colleen entered Travis as a first year teacher, enthusiastic and hopeful for

her upcoming year of learning with her students. Fortunate to have had excellent

models of teaching in her teacher education program, she felt lucky to have both

read about and seen what it looked like when a teacher positioned herself/himself

as a learner. Although there was evidence that Colleen was able to accomplish this

in student teaching and tutoring with her students, it was much harder to enact in

her first year of teaching than she had imagined it would be.

> The nature of teaching expects you to come into a room fully prepared and
> the ideal or idealistic teacher knows everything and is nurturing and all these
> pieces that are just naturalized in my head about who a teacher is and what
> they're capable of doing…so, to come in tiny and small and have to fake it, is a
> heart wrenching, huge mountain to climb for anybody. So no wonder there is
> so much guilt and tears at the beginning---you can't live up to this thing and
> you've had wonderful training and you know all these things. You've seen
> great teaching. You are around Dr. Houston and you are reading amazing
> articles and so you know it and you can taste it and feel it when it's around
> you, but then you're in your own room and you can't make it happen; it is
> devastating. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

Despite the frustration that this quote reveals about being a new teacher and being

overwhelmed by the daily tasks of teaching, she was supported in many ways by

faculty in her school community. They were the faculty members, like Colleen, who

were interested in learning. "If you look closely inside our school, you'll find pockets

of like-minded teachers and teachers with special energy…We all tend to be

motivated and interested in learning…We meet and reflect and debrief our practices

as often as we can" (Sailors et al., 2013, p. 563). One of the most influential of those

like-minded people was Hillary, the campus literacy coach, who supported Colleen

and helped her to continue to grow and learn as a teacher. And when she needed

additional opportunities to be a learner, she sought them out, looking beyond the campus, even beyond the district for professional development where she could learn about the things she believed would enhance her identity as a teacher and ultimately her students' experiences.

Literacy coach. Colleen met Hillary as she was starting her tenth year in education, having taught second, third, and fourth grades. In her current position as the literacy coach at Travis Elementary, she had spent four years supporting literacy instruction across the campus. In her words, "I see myself as a learner. In each teaching experience I have, I see it as an opportunity to learn…and I encourage that in others around me" (Interview, Spring 2011). Hillary believed her role as a coach was best accomplished by positioning herself as a learner with her fellow teachers. It is no surprise that Colleen and Hillary became fast friends. And it is no coincidence that Hillary had graduated ten years earlier from the same teacher education program as Colleen, under the guidance of Dr. Houston as her cohort coordinator.

The interaction between Colleen and Hillary consisted of a formal weekly planning session, where they would delve into book choice, word choice, and best research practices. They worked together to write curriculum for the district, were asked to be in a professionally filmed teacher-coach video, and were the focus of a chapter on coaching as a way to enhance instructional literacy practices. They would also meet informally, often stopping in the halls to chat about the daily tasks of teaching or to laugh and shake off the struggles. They spent time outside of school playing Bunco, attending happy hours, and swapping stories about

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motherhood. At the heart of Colleen and Hillary's partnership were a mutual trust

and a shared vision of what education is all about. They both believed they were

teachers because they loved to learn and because they cared about supporting kids.

This common belief, in turn, allowed them to co-construct knowledge about

teaching. And as Hillary said about their work together, "We are better when we're

connected" (Interview, Spring 2011).

In Hillary, Colleen had another person from whom to witness what it meant

to be a learner.

> She offers her vulnerabilities to us so we can all learn, and with clear and
> organized language, she puts the AHA! into our challenges (through
> discussion, trial and error, and anecdote), and stands firmly behind what she
> believes in… even when it doesn't seem to work the first time. She knows it
> takes time for a good thing to brew, so she encourages the same tenacity and
> dedication that she herself has. (Chapter Writing, Spring 2011)

Even though Hillary was considered the "coach" and in a role of teaching teachers,

she often made it clear that she did not have all the answers and that being a teacher

did not mean you always got it right the first time. Hillary's modeling of what it

looked like to support teachers set forth an example of how to continue to be a

learner. There was no challenge that she was not willing to put her time, hard work,

and dedication into to help both teachers and students. And in the process she

recognized that she, too, would grow as a result.

In Colleen, Hillary had the opportunity to learn from her expertise in writing

instruction.

> I've learned a lot about the writing process from Colleen. She is a part of the
> Southwest Writing Project and has opened my eyes to see writing workshop
> like I see reading workshop. I always felt confident about managing a
> reading workshop, but really struggled with managing writing workshop and
> feeling like I was meeting the needs of all my students. I learned from

Colleen how to grow a community of writers who understand the purpose of writing on a much larger scale. (Sailors et. al., 2013, p. 562)

Heather's positioning of Colleen as being more knowledgeable about writing instruction gave Colleen confidence in her teaching. It didn't matter that Hillary was technically "the coach." Heather's support of Colleen's passion and strength as a writer and as a writing teacher enabled her to feel as if she was a contributing partner in the friendship. At the core of this reciprocal relationship was that each of them saw herself as a learner. And each of them believed that the other one made her a better teacher. They would often make big plans and dream together even when it was hard to see past the daily challenges (e.g., high stakes testing). This type of learning partnership was a great model for Colleen to have in her first three years of teaching and demonstrated the reciprocal nature of participating in a community of practice (Putnam & Borko, 2000).

Southwest Writing Project (pseudonym). Much of Colleen's frustration in her first year of teaching was attributed to the pressure of high-stakes testing. In fourth grade, the state required a writing test in addition to the math and reading tests that began in third grade. This extra writing test created an additional burden and filled much of Colleen's writing instruction time. With test prep a priority for the district and thus her campus, it did not allow Colleen did not have the time to do much authentic writing practice in her classroom. This, in turn, meant that she was not able to position herself as a learner, and model for her students what it meant to be a growing writer. With little professional development offered in her school community to do the kind of writing instruction in which she believed, she set out to find opportunities to grow herself as a writer and as a teacher of writing. One such

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opportunity was the Southwest Writing Project (SWP) located on the same campus where she had completed her teacher education program. Colleen applied and was accepted into the program.

SWP is one of 200 network sites that are part of the National Writing Project, an organization of teachers interested in teaching teachers of writing and devoted to improving the quality of literacy teaching and learning. Comprised of teachers interested in teaching teachers of writing, Colleen attended SWP's three-week Invitational Institute the summer after her first year of teaching. She participated in morning lectures and book clubs, developing her knowledge of the writing process and participating in inquiry around the teaching of writing. In the afternoons, she would apply that knowledge during a creative writing time spent exploring her own writing processes. The culmination of the writing institute was an inquiry project that students presented to the group. At the end of her report, she wrote, "If we want to empower our students, we have to start with ourselves, and it's not an easy journey to take. I will try to lead by example, in that case…it will be baby steps, but in the end, I expect giant learning leaps. Here we grow!" (SWP, Summer 2010). After her participation in the institute, Colleen grew into the role of teacher consultant, both attending and leading workshops on a variety of topics (e.g., multilingual writers, digital literacies). With this experience, she continued to develop herself as a literacy teacher with an identity as a learner.

Colleen's continued experience with SWP has benefited her in many ways as a learner. She learned how to become a better writer herself, how to make the processes of her writing more explicit and how to provide opportunities for her

students to do authentic writing. These changes in turn affected not only her

writing instruction but all of her instruction. She gives credit to SWP for helping her

to make her reading and writing practices more transparent. The only downside to

her participation in professional development such as SWP is that her desire always

to be a learner often meant she committed to many learning opportunities outside

of her regular workday. But as she said on a questionnaire, "I like to be involved

with teachers I admire, and to continue to learn from them/with them. Sometimes I

get a bit over my head, but it has allowed for great opportunities with my students!"

(Interview Questionnaire, Spring 2011). And ultimately, that's why she continues to

learn. It is for the students.

After Teacher Education: Bowen Elementary

Colleen's move to Bowen for her fourth year of teaching enriched her identity

as a learner in new ways. As a result of her time spent with SWP, her years of

experience as a teacher at Travis, and the change in context, Colleen's literacy

instruction in her fourth year began to shift as she made her life as a reader and

writer more explicit in her instruction. This kind of development was possible in

large part because the administration at Bowen was one that trusted Colleen as a

professional. She was allowed to try things out in her classroom as she saw fit,

which led to a much more organic style of teaching.

Administration. At the same time Colleen joined Bowen Elementary, the

district announced that Donna Wallace (pseudonym) would be the new principal.

Prior to that, Donna had been serving as the school's assistant principal, and before

that, she had been the school counselor, the position she held when Colleen was a

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student teacher at Bowen. Although Colleen didn't know Donna well, she did know that everybody supported her and that her leadership had fostered a sense of camaraderie among the staff. In fact, the teachers took a mid-year campus climate survey and the administration scored a 100% approval rating in every category. According to Colleen, the teachers felt that they were able to voice their opinions and could ask for support. This was possible because "she really just trusts the teachers, and she presents herself as a learner" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). In Donna, Colleen had found another person who recognized the importance of remaining a learner throughout her career, even when some might equate her role as a principal with authority. With respect to instruction, the principal did not push the teachers to implement any particular program instruction, she was not pushing any particular program or technique, and so Colleen had the freedom to make decisions about both her own learning and subsequently her students' learning. "I get to be a learner, and I'm allowed to be a learner" (Interview Transcript, July 2013).

Building on the momentum she had gained from being a part of SWP, coupled with the freedom to make decisions about all aspects of her instructional time, Colleen realized she was becoming a better teacher through her own study of herself as a reader and a writer. She now prioritized doing the things she loved, reading and writing. Subsequently, she felt that this allowed the array of teacher voices that continuously "rang in her brain" to resurface (e.g., Hoffman, Bomer, Checkley, Thomas, Wood-Ray, Anderson). She began carrying her "turtle shell library" (her backpack) everywhere she went. It was filled with the writers/poets

she admired (e.g., Riordan, Rowling, Frost, Keats, Dickenson, Hughes) and with them, tucked neatly inside that backpack, were her own words of wisdom–sketched across the pages of her writer's notebook.

The act of thinking about her own thinking and the increased attention on her own learning meant she could now make her learning process visible as part of her classroom teaching.

> I've learned that I have to write reader responses if I want them to. I have to read my book and talk about it if I want them to, how I want them to, and I'm taking myself on the journey of a reader. I know what's happening on this page before I'm even done with this paragraph because my eyes just see it and that's something a reader does. So, I'm thinking about my reading as I'm reading and even in my own writing. I stop and think about my process there, and I make notes about it because that's important to bring back to them. And so I'm using myself as a teacher researcher, researching my own learning. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

The researching of her own learning has made her life as a reader and writer more visible to her students. In making transparent the processes that readers and writers go through, she created a classroom that encouraged all participants to be active learners.

> I show my own writing. I carry my writer's notebook with me everywhere, and I participate in writing groups where I share my writing—a scary deal, of course, and I bring in favorite sentences and I write reader responses. I read the books the kids are into and I show off the books I used to love. I swoon often about words, and it's genuine swooning. They swoon soon, too. When a part gets tough or boring, I mention it. I remember a time I noticed my book, The Lightning Thief had rotating parts, where I would be glued to the page, and then parts where I was, "ho hum, get to the good stuff," and we had a talk about that. They had smart additions to that conversation. It all stems from what I'm really doing. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

As she did this, she had a real sense that she had grown; she felt like she could call herself a writer now, not just a person who liked to write sometimes. And with that came a shift in her reading, too. She noticed more how her actions as a

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reader helped her as a writer and that understanding her writing processes had

made her a more accomplished reader. For her, "it's symbiotic," and the key is "how

to make that work for the kids" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). In describing the

specific ways in which her instruction has evolved, Colleen said:

> I've evolved a lot as a writing teacher from my own writing. I've evolved as a reading teacher, now, from my own reading. It's dawned on me that I need to have my own independent reading book—I have to participate in the learning of the class—I have to model my own ideal student-hood (including homework), and I need to know the lingo—the good books, the text structures/genres, I have to deeply understand and practice this. It's not rote teaching. It's active, meaningful, attentive teaching. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

Even as she recognized her growth as a teacher, she was steadfast in her goal

to continue to be a learner and her commitment to be reflective about her teaching.

"I'm still not amazing though – not that this is my goal, but I, again, am human, a

mother, walking a mindfulness practice. I am starting year five soon. I am eternally

at the bottom of my mountain" (Journal Free Write, July 2013). It is with a humble

perspective that Colleen entered her fifth year of teaching recognizing there was still

so much to learn.

Conclusion

> What's a lifetime learner? I don't know, but I'm going to be one. So, what a lifetime learner is to me has changed, for sure, because I really am a learner and learning about my learning, whereas before yeah, I love to learn, very different. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

Consistently over time and across contexts, the most salient aspect of

Colleen's understanding of self was the view that first and foremost she was a

learner. Both her sister and her daughter have been motivating factors behind

pushing her to learn more, to do more, and to be more. She has had great models in

her life who demonstrated for her what it looked like to be a learner, among them Dr. Houston, her cohort coordinator; Hillary, her literacy coach; and the many teachers she works with as part of SWP.   Her role as a learner has been influenced by her campus administration, by her experience in student teaching, and by her readings both in her schooling experiences and beyond. As a result of these contextual influences, the data revealed that there was a visible change in Colleen's identity as a learner. From loving to learn, seeing models and practicing how to be a co-learner with her students, surrounding herself with co-learners, to modeling her life as a learner in front of her students, Colleen has clearly demonstrated that she intends to be a lifelong learner (Figure 7).
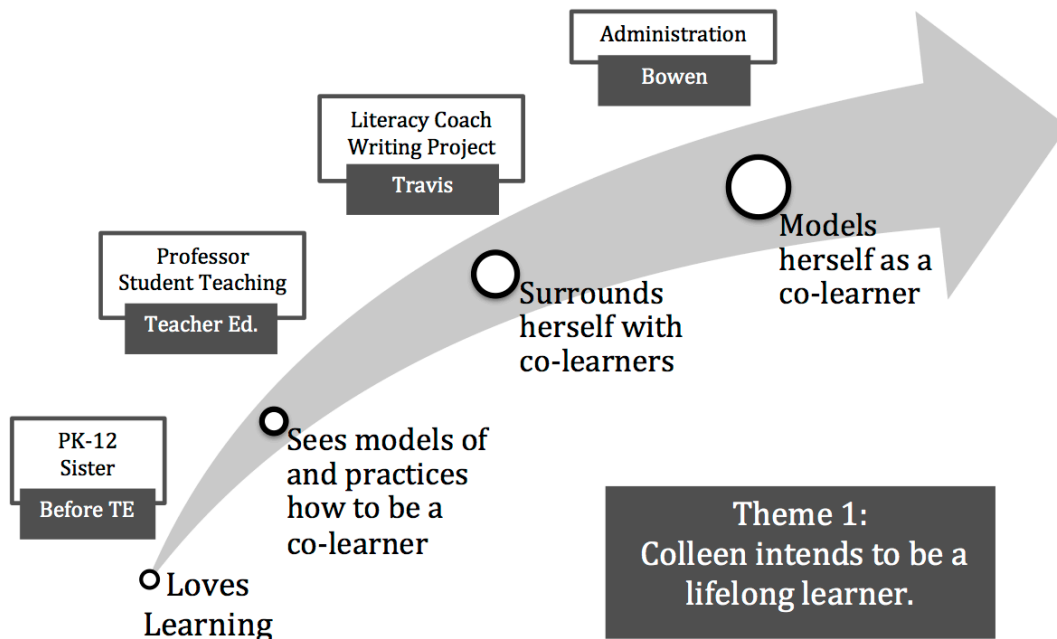
Figure 7. Contextual Influences on Colleen's Understanding of Self

As Colleen transitioned from one context to another (before, during, and after teacher education), it was evident that her strong understanding of self,

nurtured in her teacher education program, gave her the ability to negotiate the

complexities inherent in becoming a literacy teacher (Fairbanks et al., 2010). This

confirms the findings of longitudinal studies on learning to teach literacy that found

that teacher education programs do make a difference in novice teachers' practice

(e.g., Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Grossman et al., 2000; Hoffman et al., 2005). It

extends this research by demonstrating that the learning communities of the

preservice program were closely related to how Colleen later constructed

communities of practice in new contexts (Maloch et al., 2003). She sought out

models of teaching at Travis (e.g., literacy coach) who also valued the importance of

being a co-learner and who were similar to the models she had been exposed to in

her teacher education program (e.g., professor). When she wasn't getting what she

wanted in terms of her own learning (i.e., writing instruction), she sought out

professional development outside of her school district and with close ties to her

teacher education program (e.g., SWP). Equipped with a strong sense of self and

recognizing the importance of having co-learners and models to learn with and

from, Colleen actively pursued new communities of practice that were made up of

like-minded people she trusted and with whom she could reflect. This enabled her

to collectively negotiate new understandings about her self as a literacy teacher

(Wenger, 1998).

Colleen's Evolving Understanding of Students

**"The most important teacher in the classroom is the student": Colleen values
and validates students' interests, histories, and contributions.**

> Because our classrooms are a reflection of the minds and histories of the
> students (and teachers) inside the room, it is imperative to begin the year
> getting to know the learners...We have to know how to relate to the learners,

how to bring the issues important to them and their families to the forefront of learning. What will they need to understand and utilize to function as a viable member in their home community, nationally, and globally? First we focus here and then we move outward. We have to use the resources familiar and local to reach out toward the global and the socially critical. (Final Exam, December 2008)

At the end of the second semester of Colleen's teacher education program, she revealed in her final written exam that knowing the students is of central importance to not only a classroom community but to the students' community at large. Across the last six and a half years, her teaching had been greatly influenced by her belief that teachers must value students' interests, histories, and contributions in the classroom, with the ultimate goal that students take ownership of their own learning. This section will look to uncover how she came to believe that this was an important part of her teaching, how she translated that belief into her practice, and how her goal of prioritizing students' interests and ownership of learning was supported and challenged as she moved in and out of various learning communities and school contexts.

Before Teacher Education

PK-12 experiences. Colleen describes herself as a really quiet kid who sort of "fluffed through" her school experiences (Interview Transcript, November 2008). Because reading came naturally and was easy for her, she never gave much thought to the process or to her role in that process. When it came to reading instruction, her teachers focused on "code over meaning" (Course Reading Reflection, February 2008), neglecting the idea that a reader's transaction with the text (Rosenblatt, 1982) played an important part in comprehension. Further, she never felt as if teachers took into account her strengths or prioritized her interests in their

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instruction. "I don't remember adults paying all that much attention to me. I really

don't. I don't remember having relationships with teachers the way that I have

relationships with these kids at all" (Interview Transcript, November 2008). As a

result, Colleen felt there were many occasions during her schooling experience

where teachers took her attention for granted, and she simply blanked out. In her

opinion, taking ownership of her learning would have been possible if she had had

the support of a guiding teacher. From what she recalled as she looked back on

those early elementary days, "I don't remember the teacher sharing the process of

the assessment with me and/or interviewing me about my goals" (Course Reading

Reflection, April 2008). Giving students a glimpse into the process of learning and

the space to develop their interests, she believed would have been a positive step for

her toward developing confidence and ownership. Consequently, she is determined

in her own teaching to identify students' interests and thus capitalize on their

strengths in order to make learning fun and to tailor it to the individual learner.

Being a mom. The birth of Colleen's first child before she entered Southwest

University influenced her view of students and gave her a perspective that others in

her cohort did not have. Being a mom, and entering the teacher education program

to learn more about how to raise her daughter well, gave her a purpose that

translated into seeing her students not as her job but as people's kids. "I have a

great responsibility. I have such great minds in my classroom. Their parents trust

me that I am going to teach them something and that they are going to be wiser in

the end" (Interview Transcript, August 2009). She translated her desires for her

daughter, Chloe, into what she would imagine all parents would want for their

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children: for school to be a safe place where their child learns and grows. In her mind, the place to start in order to achieve that goal was to know her students as if they were her own.

Teacher Education

  Course readings*.* Course readings were a big part of Colleen's experience from day one of the teacher education program and were important influences on her growing understanding of the role of students. Daily, the cohort was asked to read on and post electronic responses to various topics (e.g., assessment, critical literacy, fluency, funds of knowledge). Professors responded to these reflections, and then the readings were discussed during class lectures, expanded on through assignments, and eventually drawn upon in practice while working with individual students, adults, and entire classrooms. In the following on-line response for her Reading Assessment and Development class, Colleen reflects on Winograd, Paris, and Bridge's (1991) piece in *The Reading Teacher* about improving the assessment of literacy:

> This article had a similarity to our GYC [Guiding Young Children] class in its focus on keeping lesson plans' objectives aligned with the evaluation—especially in regard to differentiation and the tweaks made to accommodate variant learners. (I think it is telling that these classes, articles, and tutoring sessions have all begun molding together nicely, as of recent.) We are really being trained to notice the little things about a learner—their miscues, how they self-correct, what they say in "their own words," their backgrounds and personalities—to really tailor the assessment and thus, instruction (and vice versa), to the learner. It is becoming more tangible as a set of ideas we can really implement. (Course Reading Reflection, September 2008)

Her reflection on this article demonstrated that she recognized the importance of "noticing" things about a learner and the significance of using that knowledge for

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differentiating both instruction and assessments for students.   She also appreciated

the author's offering of tangible advice for how to accomplish this in practice.

To complement this reading, Colleen's coursework often included the

viewing of exemplary teachers who modeled various aspects of instruction on which

the readings were focused. In one video clip in which a teacher demonstrated the

use of writer's notebooks, Colleen was able to extract from the video the teacher's

ability to validate the students and to let their ideas and interests fuel the class

discussion. In her final exam she reflected on how the teacher was so effortlessly

individualizing instruction through her words and actions: probing, revoicing, and

validating the students' contributions.

> The teacher is skilled at using her strategies: wait time, probing for further participation ("How will they do this…?"), helping them develop metacognitive awareness, as well as an agency for learning, within themselves ("Where do you remember that from?"), and she acknowledges the group's growth and purpose when they have stunned her with their rich comprehension of only 2 pages of text. At the end of the clip, Mrs. Bomer has the kids write down one question, wondering or idea in their notebooks, providing a springboard for discussion the following day. She is keeping them tied to the content, and curious for more information. Throughout the clip I noticed the teacher's attention to revoicing student comments, annotating their thoughts, and keeping the end-point of the discussion open. I was particularly fond of how she took notes herself, giving the classroom a very democratic (we all learn from each other) sort of tone. (Final Exam, December 2008)

Not long after she reflected on this video and her reading assignment (among

others), Colleen attempted to transfer what she was learning from these aspects of

her program into her tutoring with Vanessa.

Tutoring. During the first semester of her teacher education program,

Colleen participated in a one-on-one tutoring practicum. She was partnered with

Vanessa, who was part of a large Hispanic family (fourth of six children) and was a

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first grade, ESL student.   Colleen worked with Vanessa every Tuesday and Thursday

afternoon for an hour, creating and implementing tutoring plans. In addition to

creating tutoring plans, students reflected on those plans both in small groups and

on-line immediately following their session. A teaching assistant read and

responded to electronic responses after every session. Colleen described her

experience as follows:

> This tutoring experience challenged me quite a lot in respect to my own
> confidence as a teacher, as a learner (an idea-implementer), and as an
> observer. This program compared to other tutoring programs I've taken part
> in, taught me to see the student as a learner – as a specific individual – and
> emphasized the input rather than the curriculum and the output. I worked
> much harder in this program and saw some great results in respect to my,
> and my tutee's growth. (Post-Tutoring Survey, May 2008)

In planning for her February 14, 2008 session, Colleen created a lesson that

took into account both the holiday excitement and what she had previously learned

about her student's family. At the same time, as she did for much of the semester,

she set up her lesson plans with purposeful choices in order to give Vanessa some

ownership in her learning. "Today she has a choice between two books, although I

have a good idea which she'll choose. The first is called *Happy Valentine's Day,*

Dolores by Barbara Samuels, and the second book is called *The Ballad of Valentine* by

Alison Jackson" (Tutoring Lesson Plans, February 2008). Vanessa selected the first

text as Colleen predicted. When Colleen introduced the book, she linked the text

selection to Vanessa's life and validated Vanessa, letting her know that she was

listening to her in the previous session.

> C: Today for our story. This one is called *Happy Valentines Day, Dolores.*
> C: **You told me last time that you like books about girls who are**
> **adventurous.**

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C: **Dolores is a little girl who has a sister just like you.** She has a cat and the thing about Dolores is she likes to go into her sister's room. This is a story about that and Valentine's Day, so I am really excited to share it with you.
C: Okay are you ready?
V: Yeah.
[Colleen reads book.]
C: She's making a heart out of ketchup. Mmmm....She's having fun.
C: (Points). . . This is Dolores.
[Colleen reads book.]
C**:** Look at that face. She's done with that. She says, "never again." **I bet that's what your sister would do if you went into her room.**
V: Yeah...she would be mad.
(Read Aloud Transcript, February 2008)

Colleen continued throughout the read-aloud to relate the story to Vanessa

and her sister, saying things such as, "What do you think about their relationship.

Do you have one with your sister that is fun?" What I remembered most about this

tutoring session was her ability to get her tutee involved in the comprehension of

the story through recognition of the similarities between the characters and her

tutee's life (i.e., "I bet that's what your sister would do if you went into her room").

This kept Vanessa's interest high (which had waned in other sessions). Reflecting

on her time with her tutee that day, Colleen wrote:

> I was more in control of the session (verbally and mentally –if this makes sense) so it was easier for me to transition into things as well as let the spontaneity free. I think she is becoming more comfortable with me –she actually sprawled out on the floor (in relaxation) during the read-aloud. We had a great time with that story and I think I'd like to add more Dolores books if they are relevant. I've promised her glitter-glue and Amelia Bedelia Baseball for next session, so I know she knows what she wants! It sure works best when she has power, too. (Tutoring Reflection, February 2008)

This reflection illustrates that Colleen was carefully watching and noting

things about her student in order to gain information for future sessions. She

recognized the importance of following through with what she promised ("glitter-

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glue and Ameilia Bedelia Baseball"); she noticed what her body language indicated ["I think she is becoming more comfortable with me - she actually sprawled out on the floor (in relaxation)"]; and she learned that when you are well-planned things go more smoothly ("I was more in control of my lesson so it was easier for me to transition into things as well as let the spontaneity free."). Being in control, however, doesn't mean teacher-centered instruction, sticking only to what was planned. It's having the capacity to diverge slightly from the intended course to allow the student's spontaneity to have a role in the learning journey. I observed Colleen thoughtfully adapting her instruction in similar ways on multiple occasions throughout her time with Vanessa (Duffy, 2005; Fairbanks et al., 2010), and as she said in her reflection, "It sure works best when she has power, too."

In addition to 17 sessions with Vanessa, the teacher education program provided two other tutoring opportunities that helped to complement this initial tutoring experience: pair tutoring and adult tutoring (see Theme 3 for more on adult tutoring–El Puente). At the end of the first semester, Colleen was paired with another cohort member, Jennifer (pseudonym). Tutoring became a joint undertaking and included two preservice teachers and two students. Colleen and Jennifer would alternate roles: one of the teachers would plan for the tutoring session while the other observed. In an interview at the start of her first year teaching, Colleen reflected on how this format was a highlight to the tutoring process.

> Doing read aloud in tutoring was key. More than anything the semester where we did it with a partner and we had two kids. Seeing the other person and being able to reflect with them was the best of all. Sure, I can watch a video on-line, and I can check up with it, and I can have someone watch me

but it's different with your peer when you are learning the same thing. (Interview Transcript, August 2009)

Structuring the tutoring sessions this way gave Colleen a peer to reflect with immediately, provided her a chance to watch another person work with her tutee, and allowed her to practice what it was like to manage two personalities, taking into account two students' interests and contributions. In her opinion, she believed that having more opportunities to work in pairs would have been beneficial to her growth as a teacher, even suggesting "I think I would get paired up with someone sooner in tutoring" (Interview Transcript, August 2009). This purposeful scaffolding on the part of her program's cohort coordinator was an intentional "release of responsibility" over time for the preservice teacher (Vygotsky, 1978): moving from one-on-one tutoring to two-on-two tutoring to small group, and then to a full class as part of student teaching. This gave the preservice teachers an opportunity to build their understanding of how to take into account students' interest, move instruction from the known to the unknown, and give students ownership and power in their own learning journey.

The continuity between the various aspects of the program allowed for a relatively smooth transition between the well-cited and often problematic leap from theory to practice (Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009). Course readings across different classes, opportunities to watch models of teaching, and tutoring experiences with one elementary student, two elementary students, and adults all offered concrete ways to transfer the theory about teaching to the actual act of teaching.   In the end, all of these aspects of the teacher education program facilitated her understanding of what it means to value students' interests, family

life, and contributions and, most importantly, how to take that understanding and translate it into practice. Were the integration of and participation in these program components helpful in preparing her to value her students' lives in her future classrooms? In the next section, we see how her understanding of students and what she learned in her program are translated into her beginning teaching years.

After Teacher Education: Travis Elementary

Colleen left her teacher education program with a firm belief that central to her teaching was the importance of getting to know the learners, building instruction from their interests and histories, and ultimately allowing the students to be individual investigators of their own knowledge. She had practiced doing this with one student, two students, adults, and a classroom full of fourth graders during her student teaching semester. However, this expectation she had for her teaching and for her students wasn't as easy to enact in her first year as she had thought it was going to be.

> It's only been 3 weeks. It has been tough. I came in with assumptions about them. Getting to know them has been really tough. I have some really strong personalities. These kids that need me sooo much, and I've got 14 other kids that I haven't talked to because I am having little battles everywhere. I feel bad because it was my giant goal to know all of them and to write to them every night. To have back and forth conversations and dialogue journals and then you realize some of them aren't even going to write yet because they don't know what I expect yet. I had big, gigantic, idealistic hopes that need to be stretched out so that at the end of the year I will have gotten to know them and made progress somewhere. (Interview Transcript, August 2009)

First year teaching. In tutoring where there was just one student and in student teaching, where the classroom community, management scheme, and routines were established, Colleen was able to focus her attention on her goal of getting to know the students and on building instruction from student

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contributions. In turn, when she enters Travis Elementary as a first-year teacher,

she realizes that her goals were harder to achieve when she had so many other

things to worry about. No matter the challenges that Colleen faced as a first-year

teacher, though, she knew how important it was to tap into her students' interests,

especially because she also recognized that her students' lives were not similar to

her own and that their home lives represented many challenges for them.

> Social distractions for my kids tend to revolve around the home and the
> troubles they have. My kids have been privy to gang violence and death, teen
> pregnancy (siblings), taking care of younger siblings, lots of late night
> hospital visits, and over saturation of media and video games. Their family
> lives are busy and many of them don't have much of a "social" life with
> friends, because family comes first. I try to honor this with lots of relevant
> literature, and open discussions, and providing them with ways to write
> about their experiences. I want to build on their experiences, not ignore or
> detract [from] them. (Questionnaire, February 2010)

So despite her struggle to get to know the students early on in her first year, Colleen

persisted, making every effort to set up daily routines in her classroom to try and

advance her goal. She believed that tapping into her students' funds of knowledge

(Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) would honor and encourage her students, and she

used writing as the vehicle to accomplish this.

> To counteract the waning morning minds and to bring the focus back on the
> students and stories inside the room, I open each day with one of my
> student's essays on the overhead. Each essay is focused on a topic that I've
> created as part of their homework, and we share our views on the theme
> (often a bit controversial – violence in the media, or otherwise universal –
> getting involved in our communities), and we spend a few minutes sharing
> opinions, ideas, and stories. I've squeezed in my essay moment to build our
> understanding of the world and our place in it and I see the best responses
> are coming from topics familiar to their lives. (SWP Application, February
> 2009)

> By setting aside time every morning to honor the stories of her students,

Colleen demonstrated her dedication to ensuring that her students had a voice in

her classroom. Not only did she attempt to create space in her day for things outside of the district curriculum, she also found ways to shift her instruction when she realized it wasn't working for her students. Her read aloud choice was one example of this. Both in an interview in the first month of school and in a focus group interview midway through her first year, Colleen spoke about the importance of text selection and how she realized she needed to change her book from something *she* liked to something *they* liked.

> We just finished our first chapter book. I wanted to bring in a book that I loved like The Color of My Words and that's so important but I have um 15 boys and 5 girls and that didn't fly so I had to readjust. I know this is a really weird book and I wasn't really into it but I had to change everything I thought about words and books and what I like. So I read Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key and they loved it and it was like bringing in a bunch of boys gross stuff about a kid that doesn't fit in. I've got a few kids that really struggle to fit in and so the community's been a really tough thing that I'm really focused on pretty much this whole time. Anyway so this book that I'm thinking in my head is bad turned out to be one of the best community building things even for those kids that had a hard time connecting with other kids. (Focus Group Interview Transcript, November 2009)

Although the act of shifting a read aloud text might seem like a small instructional decision, often times teachers are so determined to continue with what they had planned, stick to the script, or to select texts that they feel support *their* objective, that they lose sight of how powerful it can be to give students ownership in that decision. It also served as an example of Colleen's ability to reflect-in-action (Schön, 1983) and thoughtfully adapt her instruction in response to her students' needs (Duffy, 2005; Fairbanks et al., 2010). Just as Colleen learned to offer her tutee, Vanessa, book choices in tutoring and opportunities to have a voice in their sessions, it is evident that she continued to learn the importance of really listening to her students' needs and interests. In so doing, she understands that giving her

students the power to influence the classroom activities can be leveraged to get her students to her ultimate goal of being independent thinkers. "I am giving them what they need right now, but I am going to try and point them towards where I want them to go. I think they are used to being told what to do" (Interview Transcript, August 2009). Listening and valuing students does not mean you have to sacrifice learning. It is a balance between what students have to contribute and what the teacher has to contribute. Colleen's ability to create this type of learning environment in her classroom as a first year teacher seemed to point to her maturity as such skills often takes years of practice to develop.

Students. Another important contextual influence on Colleen's understanding of students was the students themselves. She took notice of not only the struggling students but also her "gifted and talented" students. In her first and third years of teaching, her school was labeled by the state as a "focus" school, and so the administration placed increasing emphasis on raising the standardized scores of the students who were struggling. This meant that there was an increased "barrage of district materials" and specific pacing requirements. All of which meant that Colleen's instructional time was being filled with stuff that didn't give her or the students much choice. She realized that there were students whose needs weren't getting any attention, so she decided to do something about it.

> I started Student Council with one of the girls from my team. We had been
> talking about how we need more leadership and a lot of the kids in this
> demographic we are always so focused on the low babies [students] that we
> never think about these guys who have leadership qualities and really
> making a change in the community. (Second Year Phone Interview,
> November 2010)

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Working with a like-minded faculty member, Colleen established an organization that would help to foster leadership skills in addition to harnessing the strengths of her advanced students. Colleen embraced all of her learners by knowing where they were and providing opportunities to help those students to grow. She had everyone's class nominate a student to join the group. In their first meeting, they played a get-to-know-you game before brainstorming issues they felt needed to be addressed on their campus. The students were really interested in fixing up the outside community and its appearance. One suggestion the students had was to add benches to the front of the school so people would stop sitting on the flowers. This effort to develop leadership skills for students did not go unnoticed by the administration on campus. As part of the statewide appraisal system for teachers, the Travis principal noted how hard Colleen worked to honor her students and wrote in her second-year PDAS (Professional Development and Appraisal System) report, "Colleen respects and is sensitive to all learners [and] also encouraged use of all skills and talents. She modeled and encouraged appreciation for students' learning styles, interest, and needs. Colleen designs learning experiences that show consideration for these students' characteristics" (PDAS Summative Appraisal, November 2010).

Colleen's understanding of students evolved and deepened in her first three years of teaching at Travis. She demonstrated her ability to remain student-centered despite the curriculum constraints. The data revealed that she learned how to create opportunities in her classroom to give her students a voice. Whether it was through her morning writing/sharing routine, through the establishment of a

student council, or through shifting instructional decisions such as a read aloud choice, she worked hard to make her classroom a space where students were heard and validated. This was made possible by her continued willingness to reflect in and on her practice as she strove to find ways to enhance her student-centered instruction (Schön, 1983).

After Teacher Education: Bowen Elementary

In an interview before her fifth year teaching, Colleen thought back to some of the constraints she had felt while being employed at a "focus" school so designated because of the campus standardized test scores. She entered Bowen wanting things to be different in her new classroom and school community. "Why block out the pace (in chunks, like the district), and in turn, block out the natural evolution of genre and ideas and links (so we can't see) already present? We can't let the Have-to-Do crush the Watch-it-Happen-and-Support-It." Thus, she began her fourth year of teaching enthusiastic about the idea that the Bowen administration would take a hands-off role. In turn, this would give her complete ownership of her instruction time with her students. She felt that this freedom would allow her to individualize instruction on another level, providing each student the opportunity to create his or her personal learning journey. She used the experience and knowledge she had gained from her teacher education program, coupled with three years of teaching at Travis, to find ways to position her students as experts and in control over their own learning. What follows are three examples that demonstrating how Colleen valued her students' interests, giving them opportunities to develop identities as experts on vampires, poetry, and comedy.

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Students. One Friday morning, Colleen introduced *Bud, Not Buddy* to her fourth graders. After she read the synopsis on the back of the book, a one-minute talk ensued about vampires in preparation for beginning the new read aloud text. The students were super excited about the book, and one student in particular took to the topic immediately. This student, John (pseudonym), often struggled with focusing on his schoolwork, and his previous teachers had a hard time knowing how to support him. In Colleen's class he was given a TA (teaching assistant) as part of his modifications. On this day, after Colleen introduced the book, John said, "Well I created this other thing and actually I am really thinking about writing a book about it [vampires]." Colleen received John's comment and validated him by saying, "Are you really? That's so awesome." The rest of the class headed off to begin reading workshop, but John stayed at his desk and began writing his book about vampires. Colleen proceeded with her instruction with the rest of the class and let John write his vampire book.

The TA later approached Colleen in confusion, "Well I didn't know if I was supposed to say don't do that because it's reading time." Right in line with her philosophy of "We can't let the Have-to-Do crush the Watch-it-Happen-and-Support-It," Colleen responded to him by saying, "Don't! He's writing about vampires. He needs to go and go and go." In the end John wrote 10 pages for his book on vampires. More writing than he had done all year. And as Colleen reflected on the moment, like a proud mom, she boasts, "It's extraordinary! Yeah!" (Interview Transcript, August 2013). By allowing John to build on his interests and supporting his enthusiasm for vampires, Colleen set him up for success by thoughtfully

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adapting and individualizing her instruction in the moment (Duffy, 2005; Fairbanks et al., 2010).

Much like John, Mark (pseudonym) was another student in Colleen's class who also had a history of difficulty in his early schooling experiences. He had come from a different school in the same district where his mom felt that he had been swept under the rug due to behavioral issues and his dyslexia. He qualified for special education services in Language Arts, which meant that he was in Colleen's room for only one hour each day. Although he was gone for much of her instruction time during the week, she spent a lot of time with him when she had the opportunity.

> I really paid attention to the way he went through text slowly, methodically, paying attention to each individual letter. So we worked on chunking and looking at pictures, prereading a lot, and inferring from little text clues (we had a lot of little conversations to make connections) and getting him into books at his own level, rereading. We worked on his comprehension and memory and his attention with it. He was very distracted and would get off task the second I turned away, so I couldn't turn away. And his writing – short sentence fragments/ideas, sound spelling, and you know, he did grow. He grew and he had confidence and he didn't have confidence or energy for words before. He came in kind of grumpy, and he left jolly and that's a triumph. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

Colleen spent most of the year supporting Mark in this way. She gave him one-on-one attention, helped him to gain confidence, and ultimately changed his attitude toward writing. One specific example of how his confidence and energy grew occurred at the end of the year when the students were creating poetry books as a fun way to celebrate all they had learned about language, sentences, and words. Contrary to most of the year, Mark worked independently and with ease on his poetry book.

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> We were doing our poetry books at the end of the year, and he always had struggled with writing and feeling good about putting a lot of sentences down. Not that quantity is what I'm looking for, but it was not a joy, we'll say, and he latched onto poetry. This magic poetry bug infected him, and he was just pouring it out and he'd go home and write poetry. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

Not only was Mark writing in school, he was even choosing to spend his free time writing. On Appreciate Your Teacher Day, he demonstrated his love of poetry and of Colleen by giving her a poem he had written for her at home. Naturally, she was extremely pleased. "It made me cry, and I was so proud of him" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). In addition, it taught her not only something about Mark as a writer but about the impact of poetry as a genre.

> I had this aha about him…it was how freeing to write poetry. With me, poetry is about sounds and smells and feelings; it isn't about periods and lines and punctuation. And everything he said, of course, was beautiful and to have a teacher cry. I mean…this is really important to me, a student of mine and you know, he's a poet. That's a big deal, so I learned a lot about the power of poetry and even being able to maybe start with poetry and give everybody a chance, where there isn't as tangible a format. I mean…that's awesome. So I learned a lot about what poetry is through him. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

Colleen learned that poetry was a good way to get reluctant writers to begin to express their thoughts. Although spending time exploring the genre of poetry had always been a part of her yearly plan, it wasn't until now that she recognized the importance of when to formally introduce poetry. Her experience with Mark led her to grow her knowledge about how to meet individual needs of students, particularly those students who struggled to write. Colleen completed her fourth year of teaching with new insight into her future instruction, and Mark left fourth grade with a new identity as a poet. In this way, it is evident that Colleen and her student were engaged in a joint enterprise of creating meaning about the role of poetry in

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learning to write in their community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

One final example of Colleen's ability to meet the individual needs of her students and tailor instruction in such a way as to allow students to build on their interests came in the spring of her fourth year. George (pseudonym) was also an unenthusiastic writer in Colleen's class and often found writing laborious. She had introduced writer's notebooks to the class as a place to collect ideas and to play with language and images. It was entirely their own, and she put no parameters or requirements about what the writer's notebook had to contain. It was a space for drawing, writing, and thinking. George, who had been a reluctant writer most of the year, made a sudden shift when Colleen celebrated his goal of being a comic writer and encouraged him to pursue his interest.

> Another one of mine is going to be a comic and his mom came back after Spring break and she was like, "I don't know what you did, but he wrote in his writer's notebook the whole time. He's like making jokes and coming up with this stuff." She was blown away, and so am I. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

By providing her students with a writer's notebook and in turn a place for them to explore their ideas and interests, Colleen helped George to fuel his passion for becoming a comedian through writing. Equipped with this tool and a clear purpose and audience, he found that his enthusiasm for writing jokes blossomed even during the school holiday (Bomer, 1995).

These three examples (John, Mark, and George) demonstrated how Colleen's understanding of students was translated into practice. Having the space in her

instructional day to allow students the freedom to build on their interests has given

her the chance to see her goals coming to fruition.

> My goals for the kids are as unique as each learner. What one student needs
> to create their writing energy, space, motivation, and focus, may be very
> different for the next child. I want the kids to know themselves as
> communicators of ideas, growing opinions, and art (word-craftsman), and to
> take big risks with language! (SWP Application, February 2009)

One student created writing energy when he realized he could express his

enthusiasm for vampires; another student for the first time was freed of the logistics

of writing to focus and express his thoughts through poetry; and another student

found his writing passion through comedy and the use of a writer's notebook to

draft jokes. Colleen structured her classroom in such a way as to support these

students in finding their own learning journey. This type of progress and growth,

measured by an increase in time spent on task writing, a shift in attitude toward

writing, and the proliferation of text, certainly yields student outcomes worth

valuing as teachers are called upon to provide evidence of student learning

(Cochran-Smith, 2001).

Conclusion

> Teaching from the voices of the people in my room and their stories, that's
> critical. You must do that. I mean, there's no other way! To be a real teacher,
> you must teach *from* the kids. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

Looking across Colleen's journey in becoming a teacher, it is evident that her

understanding of students has evolved. From recognizing her own history of

schooling and the lack of one-on-one attention that she received, to valuing the

interests of one student in tutoring, to managing the individual needs of 20 to 40

students across two different learning communities, Colleen has demonstrated that

"real" teaching must come *from* the kids: born from their interests, their histories, and their contributions. It is evident that the students themselves influenced her ability to accomplish this. In addition, her course readings and tutoring opportunities in her teacher education program; her administration's and district's expectations for instructional time; and her choice of texts (e.g., read alouds and writer's notebooks) are all contextual influences that enhanced or constrained her goal/belief of valuing students' interests, histories, and contributions. In the end her understanding of students and her practices have shown us that, contrary to what some might think, it is the student not the teacher who is the most important teacher in the classroom (Figure 8).
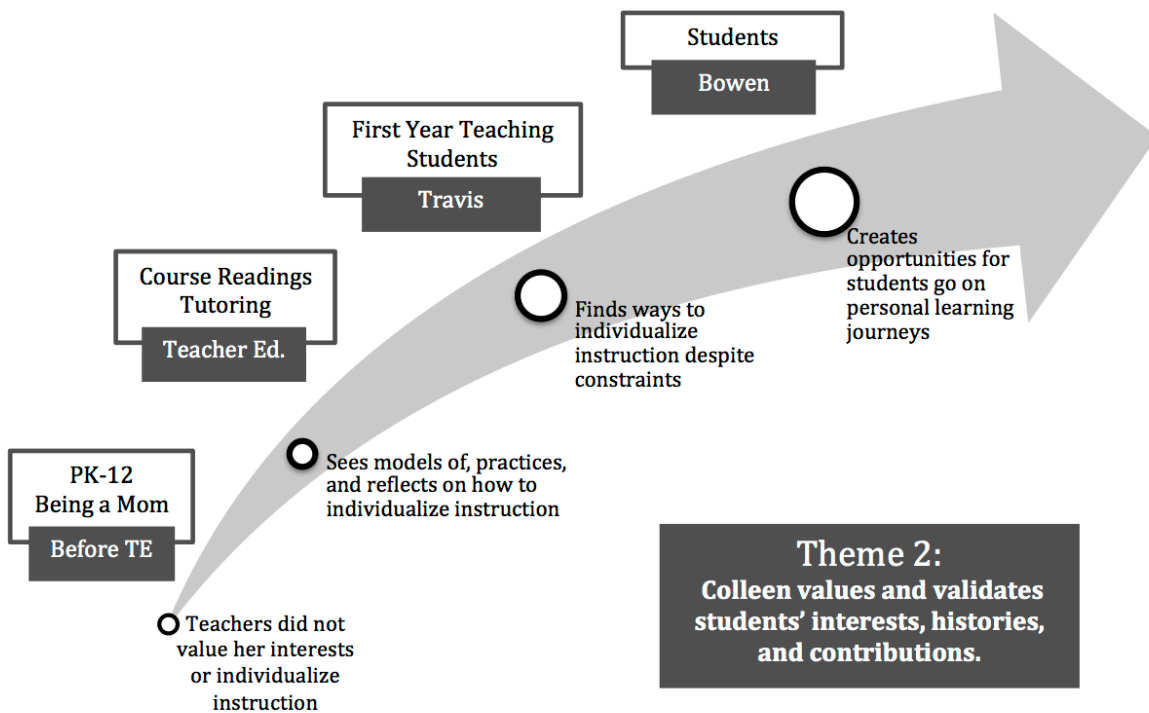
Figure 8. Contextual Influences on Colleen's Understanding of Students

The data on Colleen's journey revealed that her teacher education program provided opportunities for her to develop a reflective stance that allowed her to

sustain student-centered instruction as she transitioned across contexts. Thus, this study confirms the longitudinal research on learning to teach literacy that found the importance of reflection to be a vital aspect of a teacher education program (Cook, Smagorinsky, Fry, Konopak, & Moore, 2002; Deal & White, 2005; 2006; Maloch et al., 2003). Specifically, this study demonstrated how her program field experiences (e.g., tutoring) supported her in learning to reflect-in-action (with peers, teaching assistants) and to reflect-on-action (on-line, through lesson plans, with professors) (Schön, 1983). Simultaneously, Colleen was exposed to course readings and videos that enabled her to reflect through revoicing (Bahktin, 1981) as she borrowed scholars' words and reappropriated and recontextualized them to make sense of her work in those field experiences. Through this reflective practice, thinking about her own thinking, she developed strategies for continued planning, analyzing, and learning in tutoring (Hammerness et al., 2005; Schön, 1983). When Colleen began teaching at Travis, her ability to value and validate her students, even in a difficult context, was made possible by this reflective stance, as she found ways to support her students despite narrow curriculum requirements (e.g., changing read aloud text, creating "me" presentations) (Pierce & Pomerantz, 2006). And at Bowen, this reflective stance allowed her to "thoughtfully adapt" her instruction in the moment as she built off of her students' contributions, giving them full ownership of their own learning journey (Duffy, 2005; Fairbanks et al., 2010).

Chapter 5: Colleen's Evolving Understandings of Teaching and Learning

Colleen's Evolving Understanding of Teaching

"A great fire was built when I found a purpose-study in the teaching of justice, peace": Colleen is committed to teaching for social justice.

> I build my foundation on being a critical reader, interpreter, consumer, and knower, and I resist the pressure to conform for the sake of the status quo. I anticipate cultivating a lifetime of questioning, determination, and hope in each of my students – the same goals I have for myself, by simply remaining open, reflective and mindful of my choices and actions. I, then, travel this path with my students by thinking and studying globally, and acting locally with a just hand and mind. (Vision Statement, Spring 2009)

Central to Colleen's understanding of teaching was her commitment to issues of social justice. Across contexts and time, the data revealed that her journey in learning to teach was influenced by her belief that literacy instruction could be used to empower her students. One of Colleen's goals as a teacher thus far in her career has been to give students a voice and the tools to be able to use that voice in the future in order to "cure, protect, and enlighten his or her respecting community" (Course Reading Reflection, January 2008). Essentially, Colleen believed that she was learning to teach in order to emancipate. This section will explore how issues of social justice became important to Colleen, how particular contexts have influenced her views on social justice, and how teaching for social justice looked different across different contexts.

Before Teacher Education

Friends. In one of Colleen's journal entries, she reflected on the mistakes she's made in her literate life. One such mistake, in her opinion, was an incident she recalled with her black friend from high school. He had been invited to be a

spotlight student in a magazine for black men and women, and he had his friends

interviewed. Colleen was one of those friends. During the interview, Colleen was

interrupted in the middle of her statement when she said, "He wasn't black." She

reflects on the experience in her journal.

> Had I continued that thought, I would (at that time) have continued with
> some blanket colorblind statement such as, "and neither am I white. We are
> friends regardless of color." But color *was* the issue. He is a black man. My
> terrible statement got printed, and he responded in text about it, not wanting
> to name me. He was generous. He was/is also a smart, capable, courageous,
> wild-thinking man that I admire. Black is part of his identity that is there,
> deep in familial ethos and meaningful. Just as my whiteness has built up the
> parts that I am, I was, I will be. This moment, I have yet to redeem. (Journal
> Free Write, August 2013)

In Colleen's recalling an incident that had happened two decades earlier, it

seemed possible that it was influencing her current approach to topics of race,

specifically, and social justice, more broadly. It also demonstrated her willingness to

question her own white privilege (McIntosh, 1998) and the ways in which growing

up as a white woman was part of her identity, affording her certain things. This

internal dialogue Colleen was having about race seemed to further suggest that she

recognized the power of words, and how conversations could become racialized

even when that was not the intended outcome.   Why did this matter to her?

> It matters to my literacy journey because I was a student then. I wasn't
> practiced in racial dialogue, but I knew what I felt – he was my friend, first
> and foremost, and what I admired about him (which wasn't focused on his
> lovely caramel skin or history), was his ambition, his long talks, his
> philosophy and his convictions. People like him wow me. I aim to become
> one. But, I needed to screw up my words, in order to see the possibilities for
> justice and right-ness in myself. (Journal Free Write, August 2013)

As she continued to work toward redeeming herself from this moment, it seemed

reasonable to think that she might see teaching as the vehicle to do so. Further, this

instance could potentially influence her goal of helping others to be more aware of the power of language.

Teacher Education

    Professor. In Colleen's first semester of her teacher education program, she took a course titled Community Literacy. Dr. Williams, a new assistant professor to the university, taught the course. Dr. Williams's vision for this particular class was to provide preservice teachers with the opportunity to learn about students' families and the local communities of which those students were a part. She believed it was important to make transparent the notion that individual classrooms are located within larger sociopolitical contexts and that there are particular belief systems and language uses of any community that influence the ways in which students participate in schools (Cochran-Smith, 1995). The ultimate goal was to help the preservice teachers understand how that knowledge could be used to transform pedagogy (Cazden & Mehan, 1989). This course helped Colleen to begin to think about teaching and learning in a whole new way. "Community Literacy [was] about teaching in a demographic that needed voices in a different way than maybe I'd grown up [with] and there is power in that and that's real substantial stuff" (Interview Transcript, July 2013).

    She also credited Dr. Williams for being the first person to introduce her to issues of social justice and critical literacy.

> Dr. Williams was so fired up, and she was new I think that semester. I mean she had like go energy, and I was a little afraid of her and I was in awe, inspired by this person that was like, this stuff matters. And so not only am I learning about watching these wonderful children, I'm learning from this person who is like wildly passionate about…all I can think of is social justice,

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but this critical learning lens, and I'm like yeah, critical learning lens and that hit a huge chord with me. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

Dr. Williams introduced Colleen to the concept of teaching for social justice and helped to deepen Colleen's understanding of such topics through the following course assignments: an inquiry project, book clubs, weekly course readings, and an adult community-based field experience El Puente (pseudonym).

At the start of the semester, Dr. Williams asked students to research the literacy practices of a low income, predominantly Latino urban community where they would be tutoring first-graders at the neighborhood elementary school. This inquiry project resulted in both a written report and an oral presentation on the literacy practices valued in that community. Students' presentations included the literacy practices located in restaurants, churches, on walls as graffiti, and on bumper stickers. Colleen's group focused on the visible artwork throughout the community and the messages being conveyed through the use of multimodal literacies.

Book club was the other big assignment for the course, and students were asked to explore in depth a particular theme related to social justice or critical literacy. Each week, students would meet in groups to discuss one of five texts: Clark (1990), Horton & Freire (1990), Hershon (1984), Kozol (1970), or Purcell-Gates (2000). Colleen's group chose to read Horton & Freire's book (1990) *We Make the Road by Walking.* Throughout data collection, Colleen's reference to this text would continue to resurface, and she would often mention its influence on her understandings and practice. In one particular interview, before the start of her

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fifth year, I asked her what readings stood out still from her teacher education

program.

> We did that book club where we all read different books and of course, We
> *Make the Road by Walking.* I reference that book all the time, both as a
> human and as a teacher. I love that book. I allow myself to change my mind,
> or contradict myself over time, because of that book, because of Myles
> Horton and his great ability to continue to learn–to amend his ways based on
> the times, the need, the truth of the matter. Awesome message. It connects
> to Moll's Funds of Knowledge article–the one about the inquiry project in the
> community. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

This quote demonstrated the role that this text played in Colleen's evolving view of

teaching and learning and the importance of making mistakes as part of that process

(see Theme 5). Not only did Colleen acknowledge that this text influenced her

teaching identity, but she also connected it to another text she read during her

coursework, signaling the lasting impact that these carefully chosen texts by Dr.

Williams had on her.

In addition to book clubs, it was also apparent that Dr. Williams's selection of

weekly course readings had a big influence on Colleen's evolving understanding of

social justice pedagogy. The readings for the Community Literacy class centered on

topics such as literacy as a social practice (Barton, 2007), literacy practices in homes

(Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), literacy practices in education contexts (Dyson &

Genishi, 1994), adult literacy learning (Rogers & Kramer, 2007), and literacy as it

relates to issues of power (critical literacy) (Freire, 1995). At the very beginning of

the course, Colleen posted an on-line response after reading a chapter from Rogers

and Kramer's (2007) book entitled *Adult Education Teachers, Designing Critical*

Literacy Practices.

We are, for example, reading an important piece on literacy instruction that could be used to empower many people, and yet those are the same people who are the most unlikely to access it or read it, and it's about them. I love that I am, essentially, learning to teach in order to emancipate. It is our job as humans on this Earth, I believe. I want everyone to be able to make, and own, his or her political decisions in a democratic society. I want them to be able to access and comprehend viable information that will be used to cure, protect and enlighten his or her respecting community. It is so important. It is peace work. (Course Reading Response, February 2008)

It seems that early on in Colleen's program, despite not being exposed formally to social justice pedagogy before beginning the program, that she was positioning herself as a teacher who intended to take up these practices. The question became how she would she enact them in the classroom. What did these course assignments and readings mean for Colleen's actual literacy practice with adults as she took part in an adult ESL tutoring experience named El Puente (pseudonym).

El Puente. El Puente was a nonprofit organization that offered biweekly English classes for adults at night, and it was the community-based field experience component of Dr. Williams's Community Literacy course (Mosley & Zoch, 2012). Preservice teachers (PSTs) participated one night a week, for two hours, in this adult ESL tutoring practicum located in a community center in the same neighborhood where the PSTs' elementary school students lived. The first part of the class was devoted to direct instruction while PSTs supported individual students. During the second part of the class, PSTs taught a lesson that they had created ahead of time. Colleen describes her overall experience with El Puente.

It was very real. It kind of took my breath away, that I'd go down [to the] East Side late at night and go into, a part of the YMCA off Sanders Street (pseudonym) and it was a little bit like heart beat-y. You'd go in and there was the guy lingering by the door and there was a gate that had to be unlocked sometimes and so you were, I mean you were really in the community, to participate in that. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

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This type of experience was certainly new for Colleen and for the rest of her cohort as well. Many of them had never even driven through the neighborhood where El Puente was located despite the fact that it was only a few miles from the university. For Colleen, the data revealed three major themes regarding El Puente's influence on her. First, it gave her a new model of teaching – someone she could observe working with English as a Second Language (ESL) students. Second, it gave her an opportunity to practice some of the things she had been reading about in her course. Finally, participating in an adult ESL practicum helped her to have a better relationship with the parents of her future elementary students.

One of Colleen's favorite parts of El Puente was getting to observe the teacher.

> I liked El Puente. That was great. That teacher was awesome. She was another, I forget what her name was, but she was a fifth grade teacher somewhere and she was a firecracker person. She was a volunteer and she would come after her long days and she looked tired, but she'd always bring interesting stuff and get this group reading and talking in English. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

Bernice (the El Puente teacher) offered Colleen the opportunity to see a new model of teaching in action. On the first day, Bernice told the group that she was not really their teacher, but that they were all teachers and that they were going to learn together. From the beginning Bernice positioned herself as a learner. This resonated with Colleen (see Theme 1), and she remembered that first day when Bernice told the class she would teach them some things, but they were going to teach her a lot more. Colleen echoed the same sentiment about her role as a tutor for adults. "I can relate to this—it is often how I feel walking into the El Puente

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classroom" (Course Reading Response, April 2008). And teaching Colleen is just

what they did.

Bernice showed Colleen what an ESL teacher looked like when she didn't

work off of a scripted curriculum but rather built instruction based on the group

that was in the class on any given night. "Bernice was entirely open, unencumbered

by method and strategy—she was thus able to develop her own path as she

ricocheted through the needs of her students" (Course Reading Response, April

2008). Bernice built instruction from her students' needs and interests by planning

weekly topics that surfaced from prior conversations with the adults. Some topics

during the semester included politics, sports, and weather. She addressed these

topics with her students using a variety of resources to get at grammar rules, in

addition to covering notions of democracy and how to be active in the community.

According to Colleen, Bernice used various multimodal literacies (e.g., PowerPoint,

songs, videos) to increase interest and personal connectedness. She also offered

Colleen advice when it was her turn to take on the lesson, and Colleen appreciated

the support Bernice gave her. "She took on sort of a cooperating teacher role for us.

We were not just observers, but participants, which I think was important"

(Interview Transcript, August 2013).

Being a participant *was* important to Colleen and the second influence El

Puente had on her was that it gave her an opportunity to try out some of the things

she was learning about in her course readings. Colleen was assigned a chapter in

Rogers & Kramer (2007) about an ESL teacher named Angy in the St. Louis area who

believed in helping her students not only navigate learning a new language but also

helping them to become agents in the community. After she completed the reading, she began to think about what she wanted to do for her lesson plan at El Puente. In her on-line reflection, she thought through her plan.

> We discussed last week about bringing information on the political elections coming up, and about the candidates and the terms used in these campaigns, debates, and in the related news stories. The class brought it up, and because Jenna and I weren't totally sure if that would be a safe topic avenue to take ("The personal is political/political is personal (185)"), we were totally thrilled with their interest. I am still learning (who isn't?) about the dynamics of politics myself, and I think this could make for a great discussion. I thought about maybe bringing our computers and looking up the candidates web pages, discussing the main points and topics (much like we did in our Community Lit. class) and then making charts of how it all fits together, highlighting the topics that are most important to the group, and then having them write a few sentences with the words they've just learned (perhaps in a letter form?) to express their personal opinions. I am more excited about this lesson than any yet, especially having a nice break from grammar (they mentioned a burn-out as well). (Course Reading Reflection, March 2008)

Her writing revealed several instructional moves on her part. It illustrated that she was listening to her students ("they mentioned a burn-out [on grammar] as well"). She was building on their interests by planning a lesson on the political elections since "the class brought it up." She was incorporating things she had learned during her Community Literacy class ("much like we did in our Community Lit. class"). She was linking her instruction to relevant current events in order to help her students learn about topics such as justice and democracy ("The personal is political/political is personal."). And she was collaborating with her peer in the cohort (Jenna) to create her lesson plan ("because Jenna and I weren't totally sure if that would be a safe topic avenue to take"). El Puente offered Colleen the space to practice planning to teach for social justice with the support of Bernice, Dr. Williams, her cohort members, and a teaching assistant.

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Finally, El Puente gave Colleen the opportunity to really get to know these adults, and she believed it influenced the way in which she worked with her future students' parents. "I suddenly learned how much I didn't know about knowing about people, how one-sided I'd been my whole life (Interview Transcript, July 2013). Getting to know these adults allowed Colleen to better understand better the importance of a home-school connection.

> It made me think about the parents and I think about that a lot when I am speaking to a parent on the phone, and I can tell that English is their second language. I feel closer to them. If we hadn't done that I don't think that parent aspect would have been as strong. I know kids go home and struggle with little nuances of language like the endings of verbs and I see it in their writing. Their parents sound just the same as they do on the phone. How cool that they are working on it together? I feel more comfortable with the parents of my kids b/c I worked with those people. (Interview Transcript, August 2009)

Having listened to the adults at El Puente struggle with learning English allowed Colleen to understand the reality of her fourth graders and their parents, many of whom were learning English for the first time. As a teacher, this ability to empathize with those who struggled to learn English helped her to have a better relationship with the parents of her students, made her a more sensitive and caring ESL teacher, and ensured an assets-based view of these families (Boyle-Baise, 2005; Mosley, Cary, & Zoch, 2010).

Shortly after completing her experience at El Puente, Colleen wrote in her final exam about the impact the experience had on her ideas about teaching and critical literacy.

> We can accomplish these critical literacy ideas into our classrooms by surveying the kids, offering choices about topics to investigate, giving them ample time and materials to do their research and by supporting their work with resources that complement and stretch their thinking. We need to bring

in many texts—modern and historic, multi-modal, and electronic. We also need to keep up to date ourselves about what the students may need. We are not here to simply tell them how to be literate in today's world; we are here to help them discover the paths to their own literacy freedom. (Final Exam, April 2008)

This quote shows that Colleen valued knowing her students, provided multiple resources, and created ownership in her classroom. It is evident that El Puente was a powerful learning experience for her. The success of the experience seems to have been a result of the thoughtful integration of it with the course readings and class assignments. The simultaneous nature in which these aspects of her Community Literacy course took place allowed for the integration of both the theory and the practice of teaching for social justice. Dr. Williams made this possible, and Colleen was grateful to have had her as her course instructor. "She totally sold me on teaching being more than letters and numbers and walking in a line and cute kids. She gave teaching a philosophy. She gets it and so I learned a lot" (Interview Transcript, August 2013). Dr. Williams's ability to coordinate assignments, readings, a community-based field experience, and the space to connect these experiences through reflection suggests that a key part of teacher education coursework is the professor's leadership and vision to provide continuity across both university and field-based experiences (Clift & Brady, 2005; Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009).

After Teacher Education: Travis Elementary

The preparation that Colleen experienced in her teacher education program around topics of social justice became very important to her classroom and to the community of Travis. She developed strong bonds with the bilingual teachers on

her campus and joined them in the fight for equity in district resources. In addition,

she wanted to grow her knowledge about topics of social justice, so she turned to

her teacher education program and the people she trusted, joining the Social Justice

Group (SJG).

Bilingual teachers. The bilingual teachers accounted for about half of the

faculty at Travis. The division between bilingual and English-only classes proved to

be a big source of tension on campus. In Colleen's opinion "it had a lot to do with

social justice" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). Much of the tension stemmed from

the allocation of resources. The bilingual teachers felt like there was a big

discrepancy in the amount of time and resources they were allotted and the amount

available to the English-only teachers. Examples of that included book availability,

support from the administration, placement of student teachers in English-only

rooms, and curriculum specialist support from the district. Colleen recalled a time

when Donna, a writing specialist with the district, came to help her with a writing

lesson, but the bilingual fourth-grade teachers did not receive any support.

Colleen's hunch was that the district didn't offer Donna's expertise to the bilingual

teachers because Donna did not speak Spanish. The problem with that, as Colleen

saw it, was that "the bilingual teachers want and deserve support with teaching the

same way" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). And, unfortunately, they were not

getting much of it.

One of the biggest reasons for the lack of support of bilingual teachers was

because of the district's deficit view the district had of bilingual students. The goal

was to transition students into English as quickly as possible. As one of the bilingual

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teachers noted, their vision was to "fast track them to English, since it's easier for

them" (Journal Free Write, August 2013). This was disturbing to Colleen.

> There is disservice around us, up and down us, in us, out of us. We cannot be
> silent and deem this issue a null and empty fight. It is potent. My teacher
> friend wields a critical teaching eye that calls out disparate threads in our
> own district regarding English-only and bilingual classes, often having to do
> with resources, positive district support, experienced specialists. (Journal
> Free Write, August 2013)

Colleen tried to support her colleagues insofar as she could, and she certainly took

the time to listen. She recalled one conversation in particular that she had with an

outspoken bilingual teacher.   On what was a more than frustrating day for her

colleague, Colleen asked her what bothered her most and she responded,

"Everything!" The teacher went on to say (in Colleen's 'loose words'):

> When the district says they have a bilingual department, I don't know what
> that is. Someone gets paid for that title but nothing is being done that is
> known…there are no Spanish resources, but they created these English
> resources. It should be done for the Spanish kids, too. So, we just don't
> service those students? That's all they [district] talk about, the ELLs, these
> kids who need it, and then they don't provide it. It wouldn't matter if there
> were only one student, if that one student was their child, they'd fight for it.
> (Journal Free Write, August 2013)

> Colleen's initial reaction in the moment of the conversation was to help build

her colleague's confidence and to empower her teacher friend.

> So I told her she is using her best work, doing her best job. I told her she
> should become a teacher researcher in her own classroom. "How do I do
> that?" she responded. She has had talks that she and another friend could
> become the Fountas and Pinnell of bilingual education. That's what's needed.
> This is what we all need as teachers and students, of a just, peaceable world.
> (Journal Free Write, August 2013)

Even though the struggles she was witnessing didn't affect Colleen's role as a

teacher per se, she realized that the injustices the bilingual teachers were facing

were in fact an injustice to all. Thus, after Colleen had time to digest the

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conversation, she decided it was important for her to think of ways to raise awareness about justice with her students in her own classroom. She decided to read a book by Emma Tenayuca called *That's Not Fair,* and she had the students discuss times in their lives when they felt like things weren't "fair," times when they felt that they had been a victim of injustice. Topics that surfaced from the discussion centered around family and sibling rivalry, or having to share a bed with too many people, or a missing parent. This discussion led to a writing opportunity, and Colleen created a website where she published the kids' writing and sent the link to the parents. Her goal in doing this in her classroom was to spread awareness about the ways in which kids can use writing as a tool to voice the injustices that they believe they have encountered (no matter how trivial). She knew she might not be able to "fix" the district (macro level), but she could certainly start in her classroom (micro level) with building conversation about topics related to justice. And so she did!

Social Justice Group. Dr. Williams from Colleen's teacher education program, along with a former elementary school bilingual teacher named Michele, started the social justice group (SJG). It was an informal gathering of teachers who were interested in issues of social justice. They met once a month, usually on Saturday afternoons at a different location each time, as different teachers would host the group at their respective schools. Attendance was optional: some teachers who didn't miss a meeting and others who attended as they were able. Usually 10 to 15 people attended each meeting, and their teaching experience varied from kindergarten to university. The majority of the meetings focused on the teachers'

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experiences with addressing social justice in their classrooms. There were also

opportunities to join a book club where a group of teachers would read a

professional book and discuss the potential ways to incorporate ideas from the book

into the classroom with students. Colleen talked about the importance of this group

on her pedagogy at Travis.

> And then as time went by with that group, I was able to pull some resources that I'd used. Teachers in that group are teaching in schools that were like mine, (teachers who worked with the same demographic of kids, they were able to verbalize important issues with Mexican-American families in Title 1 public schools). It was/is an important conversation to have, to seek out. So that was supportive and then I was able to learn about new books and different award winners, for example and the Thomas Rivera and the Jane Addams, they are international books, so I got more resources…people to know/teachers, experiences. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

The SJG provided Colleen with the resources to support her social justice pedagogy.

It also allowed her to reconnect with the people she trusted from her teacher

education program. And it helped her to build conversations with new teachers in

order to learn more about the ways in which she could become better at supporting

the Mexican-American students and families in her class.

One example of the influence of this group on Colleen's practice was a race

unit that she taught in her second year. It began as a potential project that Colleen

and Michele (another SJG member) wanted to do for the Race Unity Conference,

Colleen talked about her decision to do the unit:

> I wanted to do something that I wanted to do and not really use TAKS questions. Anyway, so I'm going to be doing the race unity conference with Michele at the end of April. So I ordered a bunch of books, and I thought it would be fun because we've done a lot of stuff with Peace stuff. And I brought in a lot of current events, and I thought it would connect really well. And it's a huge topic and I mean, I don't even really know how to go about it, but I just figure, bringing in good books and letting them share their thoughts is just one way to do it. (Interview Transcript, March 2011)

Each day of the unit, Colleen would begin the lesson by revisiting the picture book

from the previous day before moving on to the current day's lesson. Many of the

picture books she chose to use were Jane Addams award winners for their message

of promoting peace, social, justice, and equality in the world. She had learned about

the award winning picture books through her SJG meetings. She would begin her

new read-aloud by activating prior knowledge, reading the front and the back of the

book, and giving students opportunities to predict aspects of the story. She would

then proceed to read the picture book, stopping often to check for understanding, to

solicit student input, and to model her own thinking/reading processes. Along with

the read aloud, she would always provide additional information about the day's

topic that she had gathered ahead of time in order to supplement the reading.

Below is a section of a transcript from the end of her day two lesson of her

race unit. After having completed the book, *Nasreen's Secret School: A True Story*

from Afghanistan by Jeanette Winter, Colleen said to her students who were sitting

on the carpet around her:

> We have been thinking about race and what race is, and I feel sometimes
> confused. I feel like a lot of people don't talk about it and so on the front of
> your page, I've given us a little question that came from what you guys said
> yesterday. A lot of you took the word, race and you started thinking about
> racism and you thought about people that are racist and you thought, well
> that's…and it hurts people. It's not giving them their rights. I remember you
> guys saying a lot about that, right? But we have to think also about what is
> this and so I looked up some stuff about race, and I found this neat website. I
> wrote [pointing to handout], *what is race? Is it real? Is it based on how we*
> *look or what we're made of? What do you think?* So I went to this website and
> they had a bunch of little things you could click on and then it just seemed
> like too many, so I picked two that I thought were important and I put them
> on the back and these were two ideas they had about race, as we build our
> information about what we're thinking. (Observation Transcript, March
> 2011)

Colleen concluded the read aloud by modeling herself as learner ("I feel sometimes confused"); she validated the students' contributions from the previous day ("I've given us a little question that came from what you guys said yesterday"); she demonstrated to her students the use of technology to gather additional information on the topic of race to help supplement the read aloud for the day ("So I went to this website…"); and she continues to position herself as a co-learner with the use of the word "we" ("as **we** build our information about what **we're** thinking").

She directs the students' attention to the handout and begins to read the title.

C: *Race is a modern idea*, modern meaning now type idea. So this book won an award for being fair. It was fair about a different culture and it was fair about this girl's life and it was true. It was a true story. So yeah, and it got an award for that and an award for being true and honest to who this girl was and the kind of life she was living. So when we take that idea and we want to be more unified by race, we want to be more accepting. We want to think about, it's going to be a tough journey I think for us to get there, but we want to think about how these books help us understand what race is. It's a real thing and we don't know and how we now learn from it and see how they treat each other and the whole world community because we're trying to learn more about the world as we go, right? So, I picked these two on the back, particularly because of your ideas about racism and the first one that Ricardo [pseudonym] read was *color blindness will not end racism.*

S: What's color blindness?

C: What's colorblind? Some people say, if we just pretend everybody's the same and looks the same and acts the same, and you're kind of blind to how people look then everybody will be happy. So does anyone want to read this little paragraph under colorblindness? Kristal, do you want to read it real loud?

K: [Kristal reads the paragraph] *Pretending that race doesn't exist is not the same as creating equality. Race is more than stereotypes and individual prejudice. To combat racism, we need to identify and remedy social policies that advantage some groups at the expense of others.*

C: So pretending that race doesn't exist doesn't help. I think that's what they're saying. That in order to be less racist people, perhaps we need to fix

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things that give some people more power than others, so in our book, did someone have more power than someone else?

S: Yes.

S: Uh-huh.

C: Yeah, there are kind of a lot of different places. So I can think of two main ways that someone in here had more power than someone else. Do you want to talk to your neighbor? Do you want to think about it? Think together? Who had more power and in what ways? You can turn and talk to somebody. Who had more power? Think about it?
(Observation Transcript, March 2011)

Students turned to one another and began talking. Colleen helped to facilitate those without a partner and those who were struggling to get a conversation going. The group came back together and they discussed issues of power that occurred in the story. Students shared their thoughts on how women were forbidden to go to school or work outside of the home and about how boys had more power than girls in their culture. They also mentioned how even though the males had more power, the story ends with the dad being taken away because of his race/ethnicity with no explanation of why. Students predicted that maybe he was taken to become a soldier.

The read aloud time concluded with Colleen reminding students about their graffiti wall (i.e., butcher paper used to record students thoughts about the topic of race). She gave them markers and told them that they were not required to write anything but if they felt inspired to write something they could. She also told them they could add stuff throughout the week so they could witness how their ideas changed and how they grew. She modeled how to interact with the chart by adding her own thought:

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One thing I wanted to add because I did go to that website and I felt very powerful about color blindness not working. Like, can we be unified if we are only looking at, if we're not looking at each other, what beautiful colors we are? So, I don't know, I'm going to put that pretending race doesn't exist isn't the same as being equal. And I want to put that on there because that really inspired me. (Observation Transcript, March 2011)

The students went off on their own to write things on the graffiti wall, with the majority of them being engaged in writing something. Colleen went over to a student who was stuck and had a conversation with him as others then began to transition into their independent reading books.

After Teacher Education: Bowen Elementary

Language. When Colleen arrived at Bowen to begin her fourth year of teaching, she described the language that teachers used to speak to children as "glorious." It cast a celebratory tone, and it felt like everyone in the school community was honoring one another (see Theme 4). The irony of that wonderful sense of community that Colleen felt was that she believed that "they were **not** honoring something else" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). While issues of social justice were huge at Travis, they seemed nonexistent at Bowen. This was evident through the language used to describe particular groups of students who were in the racially/ethnic minority on the campus.

During one faculty meeting, Colleen became uncomfortable with a conversation about the shifting demographic of the neighborhood and thus the school enrollment. The new principal attempted to start a dialogue, with the best of intentions, to try and open up communication regarding a historically complicated topic at that school.

We had gotten a new principal, and she said we have to talk about some things that haven't been talked about on this campus. We have to talk about the elephant in the room. And even that terminology sort of surprised me that wow, the elephant in the room is this changing demographic. Wow, you guys don't know really how to talk about it (the community, children who struggle in different ways than they were used to/understood) and you're afraid of it. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

In Colleen's opinion, the language used to describe the situation and the growing number of Latino/Latina students was telling. It demonstrated a lack of awareness about the power of words to position some students as better than others. Already an uncomfortable with the situation, it soon got worse. One of the teachers turned to Colleen in the meeting and began to tell her about what had been happening on the campus before her arrival. The faculty member whispered to Colleen:

"You wouldn't have believed it when this other principal was here, she would turn families away, saying we don't offer bilingual classes, which I think is probably against the law, right?"

And so, this…it makes my heart beat, I mean I can't even believe it. It blew my mind. So here I am coming to a place that is obviously ignoring something purposefully in some cases and unknowing in others. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

When Colleen told the story, she began to tear up as she told the story. She was visibly upset that a school as wonderful as Bowen on so many levels would not measure up to her standard on issues of equality. Her biggest concern was how the language of the faculty disempowered some students. It was frustrating, for her, because these teachers were unknowingly speaking in biased ways about certain students. For example she heard one teacher say, "Such an aggressive boy, he has a future as an athlete for sure"—spoken about a new African American student who was obviously pushing boundaries and feeling blue about his move (Interview Transcript, July 2013). To Colleen, these microaggressions (Pierce, 1970) were an

indication of how small acts could occur with little conscious awareness of the effects on those who are deemed different. Over time, the implication of these small acts was that they had the potential to coalesce into larger issues of marginalization.

There wasn't anyone Colleen felt like she could talk to about what she was hearing and witnessing in her new school. The Social Justice Group was on hiatus due to the birth of Dr. Williams's son and the departure of Michele for a university position in another state. Suddenly Colleen felt herself fighting a lonely battle about issues that had been such a dominant topic of conversation at her previous campus. In addition, since she was a new teacher at a school with a faculty comprising predominantly veteran teachers who had been at Bowen for 10 or more years, she felt she hadn't been there long enough to begin to voice her concerns at the campus level. So she did what she knew how to do well, something she had learned about in her teacher education program and practiced during her time at Travis. She decided she would turn to her classroom instruction and use texts to open up conversation with her students about topics of social justice.

Texts. Without a school-wide interest in topics such as equity and justice, Colleen made sure to find ways to teach social justice through her classroom instruction. The texts she chose were an important and useful tool for her in accomplishing this goal.

> I feel like it's a disservice to teach through books that don't have bigger social issues embedded into the text. We talked a lot in my team at Houston about literature units—strong women, identity, being new… A lot of teachers use "cute" books, which are nice for bedtime, but even "cute" animal characters seem to have privileged lives and voices - this can be discussed. I am not even very good at verbalizing this, and the differences in book choice I've seen at Bowen, just yet. I have to stay aware, careful with my language and

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question things with the students. It's hard to do with a class full of young people, but it's necessary. (Interview Transcript, July 2013, 48:29)

Colleen believed that it was important to incorporate issues of social justice in her instruction whether she was teaching kids of a different background or kids of her own background. She wanted to use culturally relevant books as a way to unveil the hidden biases that we all have in our thinking. She felt that the best way to make visible the unintentional bias we all have about how we see the world was through talk. She believed that texts and talk were pivotal tools in helping students to become more cognizant of their own beliefs and how their language use was indicative of a certain set of values. She wanted every student to know that they he or she had power in the words they chose to use.

> This needs to be a discussion with children; I want them to see, realize, think about, and understand that their language, whether culled from parents, church, books, friends, or media, matters, and we have a social responsibility as the newest brains to have a wide scope of it and a critical view of it. I think we need to use our literacy as empowerment for all, for a peaceable world. And, it cannot be, without talk. (Journal Free Write, August 2013)

Talking, reading, and writing were clearly essential to Colleen's hopes for instilling critical thinking in her students. At Bowen, she has been able to observe and spend time with veteran teachers talking about the academics of literacy teaching. She had gained a wealth of knowledge about running a classroom and about how to teach the necessary literacy skills to empower students. At Travis, she was focused on getting their words and ideas on paper, believing that having a voice was the most important thing. At Bowen, she realized that sentence and text structure matter just as much and would have empowered her students at Travis

even more. She recognized that you have to have both the content and the structure in order to really equip students with the tools to use language in powerful ways.

> I realize now how it goes hand in hand. I can empower them with sentence boundaries and legible handwriting, strong verbs, specific imagery and feeling in their writing. I can help them use their voices better if they have a practiced sense of genre and how to "speak" to real audiences. I didn't use genre this way at Travis—I used stories that would relate to their lives, but I didn't tie it to the writing they were already doing. I didn't know and I couldn't learn without the expertise that was there [Travis] over here [Bowen]. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

Being a part of two totally different learning communities allowed Colleen to strengthen different aspects of her literacy instruction. "Did I learn more about the subjects I teach at Bowen? Yes. Did I learn more about critical literacy at Travis? Yes. I will become a hybrid in time, I suppose" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). That's the thing about becoming a teacher. A teacher will always be a hybrid of the communities/contexts of which he/she is a part (Cuban, 1993). Colleen was no exception.

Texts, talk, and writing were at the core of Colleen's teaching for social justice in her own classroom. And while this is very important to her, I think she felt like there was a lot more to be done, especially at the macro level both in society and at Bowen, to engage a wider group of people to become committed to social justice issues. There is a sense of obligation as she puts it, "to shine a light on the inequalities between campuses, though I'm not sure the best way yet, nor do my small experiences make up much of that enormous thunder cake of American public education" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). I have no doubt that as Colleen continues to grow she will soon take a bite out of that "thunder cake of American

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public education" and there will be many students who benefit as a result of her hunger for equality.

Conclusion

> I intend to be a teacher who values the multi-patterned lives and languages of my students, but even more than value them, I want to empower them. I want to take what is whole (as in, all brains united as one classroom conscious) in the classroom because of my many unique students, and snap it all together, like rubber bands on a growing rubber band literacy orb (eh?), and hand one out to the students to put in their backpacks on the road to adulthood. It sounds like a hair-brained hippie plot, but in theory, I think it sails. (Course Reading Response, January 2008)

Across the last six and a half years of data collection, Colleen has demonstrated that she is committed to issues of social justice. At the core of her understanding of teaching was that it would forever be interlaced with caring about the equal opportunity for students' participation in schools and beyond. Her teacher education program helped her to become more aware of her own normative assumptions, based on her experiences before the program, by engaging directly with a range of theoretical perspectives (Boyle-Baise, 2005; Cooper, 2007). In addition, her program provided opportunities to understand how those theories transferred to praxis (e.g., El Puente, student teaching). At Travis, she learned about the importance of advocating for student populations who had been underserved by the school, district, and society (e.g., bilingual students). And her work at Bowen made her realize that she could create her own spaces for reading and talking about social justice even in communities that were not having those conversations. Ultimately, she viewed teaching as her way of helping students develop the tools they needed to empower themselves (Figure 9).

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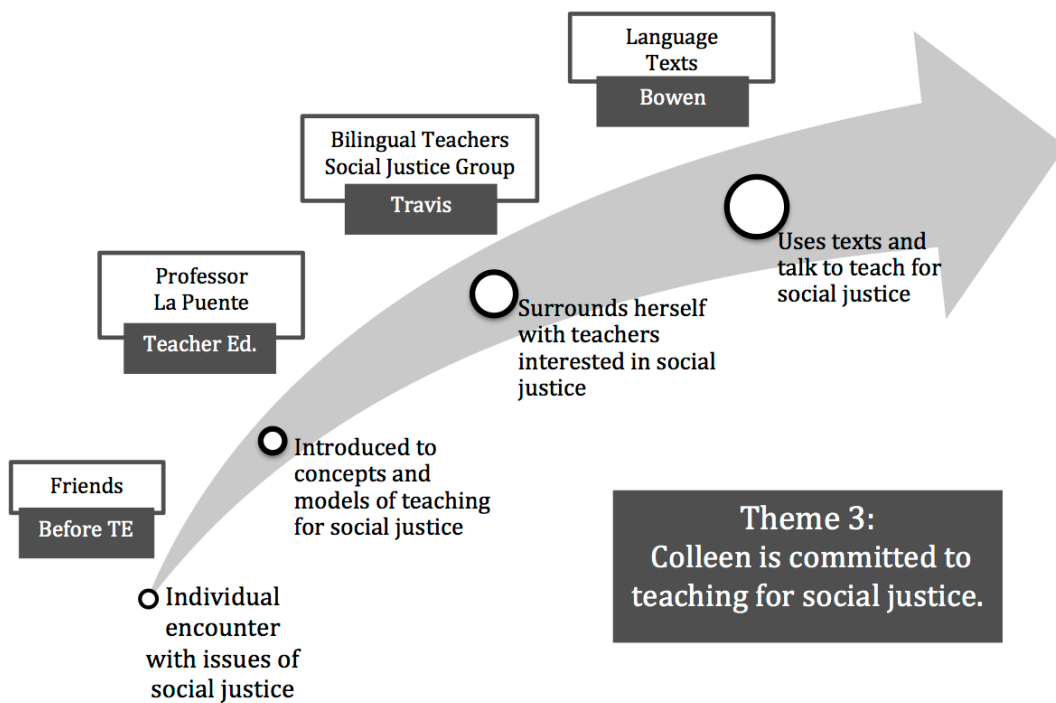
Figure 9. Contextual Influences on Colleen's Understanding of Teaching

Colleen's teacher education program provided her with opportunities to see models of teaching for social justice (e.g., her professor), to practice teaching for social justice (e.g., El Puente), and to critically reflect on the cultural and racial aspects of teaching (e.g., course readings), challenging her assumptions about communities different from those in which she grew up (Cooper, 2007; Mosley, Cary, & Zoch, 2010). This study confirms the longitudinal research on learning to teach literacy about the importance of continuity and congruence among aspects of the teacher education program (Courtland & Leslie, 2010; Harmon et al., 2001). It extends the research by illustrating how Colleen's identity as a literacy teacher committed to teaching for social justice, established in her teacher education program, is sustained across contexts. Her heightened awareness for issues of social justice was evident by her agency in seeking out and supporting communities

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that furthered her goals toward teaching for social justice (e.g., SJG, bilingual teachers). By her second year, she continued to transform her classroom instruction through agency, creativity, and her voice (Britzman, 1993) by creating her own space to talk about issues of social justice on her campus and with her students. Alternatively at Bowen, where it was harder to find teachers who shared her passion for social justice issues, she continued to find ways to enact this aspect of her professional identity in her classroom.

Colleen's Evolving Understanding of Learning

"There is more to learning than knowing the right answer": Colleen believes a safe, trusting, and flexible community is essential to learning.

> What I envision for my classroom is a community of learners that will allow my students to grow to be the best, most informed versions of *who they are.* I want to foster a community of individuals learning together…Our classroom should be a place where everyone feels safe, respected, and loved. It should also be a place where we all discover things about ourselves and our world. (Vision of a Classroom, Fall 2010)

Colleen's understanding of learning was an important part of her teaching identity and her journey in becoming a teacher. Themes 1-3 have revealed many of her beliefs about learning, including what is important to learn (e.g., concepts of social justice) and how to help people learn (e.g., drawing on funds of knowledge, giving students ownership).   Research tells us that both the learner and the community in which learning occurs are important aspects of the learning process (Bransford, Derry, Berliner, & Hammerness, 2005). Previous themes in this chapter have highlighted the importance of the learner. In this theme, the focus shifts to the community aspect of learning and the kind community that Colleen believed was essential to both her and her students' learning. Looking across Colleen's journey,

the data revealed that in her view a safe, trusting, and flexible community best

supported the kinds of learning she hoped to accomplish in her classroom. This

section will explore how the learning communities of which Colleen was a part

(before, during, and after teacher education) affected her understanding of learning

and thus her classroom community.

Before Teacher Education

  PK-12 experiences. Colleen's own schooling gave her a sense that learning

was an individual process rather than a social one. As she looked back on her

education, she often talked about how learning occurred through the transfer of

information from either teachers or texts. Thus, learning in her experience meant

that knowledge was acquired through listening, reading, and memorization.   This

gave her little room to take risks with her learning, in part because she didn't feel

safe enough in her learning environments to do so.

> I realize that today when I am learning and I'm falling face flat into it, like
> jumping into a pool and it swallows you all up, that's where I feel like I'm
> taking risk and really growing. And so I want kids, of course, to end up
> feeling safe enough. I even in school didn't feel safe enough. I was just doing
> what I was supposed to do. But the growth that's able to happen when you
> jump in and into that pool or you land face flat in it is big and big growth.
> (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

Juxtaposing her current learning processes and the type of learning community she

experienced as a child allowed Colleen to create an image of what she hopes for her

own students. Instead of replicating what she knew about learning from her own

experiences in school, she chose to make her students feel safe enough to engage in

the kind of learning that was transformative, hopefully producing "big growth." Her

valuing of a particular type of learning community, different from her own PK-12

experiences, was made possible through her participation in various learning communities, starting with her teacher education program.

Teacher Education

Through assignments, course readings and being part of a cohort, Colleen's teacher education program created a safe place for her to examine and reflect on her early learning experiences and to make sense of her work as a teacher. She was given the opportunity to learn about theories of learning while at the same time being part of a community that supported and modeled those same beliefs.   Her program's courses and instructors subscribed to the following learning theories: learning as socially constructed (Bruner, 1986), literacy as a set of social practices learned within communities (Barton, 2007), and "appreciative" as opposed to "deficit" or "subtractive" views of learning (Johnston, 2004; Valenzuela, 1999). The program provided ample opportunities for students to showcase through action what they were learning (Hammerness et. al., 2005; Kennedy, 1999) and spaces to reflect in and on that practice (Schön, 1983). Below is a description of how being part of a cohort model and completing her "Myself as a Reader" assignment along with course readings influenced Colleen's growing understanding of learning and thus her practice.

Cohort. Colleen's teacher education program was organized into cohorts. She selected the Literacy Cohort E with 18 other students, and for three semesters, she and her peers worked closely together under the guidance of a cohort coordinator and a small group of faculty. Cohort "Excellent," as Colleen and her classmates affectionately referred to it over the years, had a strong community

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emphasis. It consisted of a network of people, with close relationships between

professors, teaching assistants, cooperating teachers, and students. The cohort

model was set up so that all prospective teachers did their coursework and field

experiences together, which provided mutual support. Although there were varying

opinions on the benefits of the cohort model (Beck & Kosnik, 2001), the data on

Colleen's experience pointed to the cohort model being an incredibly beneficial part

of her teacher education program. Additionally, there were aspects of the cohort

model that she looked for when she sought out new communities in which and from

which to learn.

The cohort model provided a safe and flexible environment for Colleen to

engage with the theory and practice of becoming a teacher. Dr. Houston (see Theme

1) and Dr. Williams (see Theme 3) modeled daily a collaborative and communal

approach to teaching and learning. Even the teaching assistants were an integral

part of the community and of Colleen's evolving understanding of learning. She

reflected in an interview after the program about something her teaching assistant

said to her that stood out about her learning experience: "I think what I am learning

is that literacy and learning are messy. I remember that being exactly what Alice

told me. Learning is messy. I've latched on to that" (Interview Transcript, Summer

2009). The notion that "learning is messy" was something that Colleen voiced often

over the last six years. She was continually in search of communities that valued the

idea that learning didn't happen by getting things "right," but rather was "born of

trial and error and reflection" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). The cohort model

subscribed to this belief and therefore gave Colleen a safe and caring environment in which to practice and try out models of teaching.

According to Colleen, the best part about the cohort was the relationships that she established with her peers, which have continued to flourish long after she left the program. Students were given the opportunity to work together through groupings such as inquiry projects, paired tutoring, and book clubs. Colleen felt that the relationships that were established through those experiences were pivotal in her learning how to become a teacher.

> Those friendships were genuine as equal peers. Having them go along the journey, too...that was the most important part. We still have those relationships. We go meet every week or so but I can tell everyone is getting busy. Reconnecting in that safe spot. And with you guys and Tim it was b/c you were modeling how to be a teacher with a student and be genuine and authentic and caring about them. That caring community was 100% evident all the time. We could come in with our learning blemishes and all accept them and learn from them. That's why it makes it harder to go into the school and realize that it's like being a business and not everyone cares like that. It was the best nurturing, learning experience anyone could have, hands down! (Interview Transcript, August 2009)

The cohort clearly provided a caring community that Colleen cherished, but there was one aspect of the cohort model that Colleen believed could have been developed further. She felt that there was room to grow the cohort community by being more inclusive of the members of all the school communities in which the field experiences took place. In her view, having more time to interact with members of various school communities, would have furthered her understanding of the dynamics of a variety of school contexts outside of her own classroom.

> Could we share reflective learning time with graduate students who have time and experience? Especially in regards to how children are treated? How teachers are treated? Could there be extended time in two or three very different schools? There has to be a "felt" discrepancy in order to have that

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conversation, and discrepancy needs to be internalized as one person, not only as a conversation between people from different campuses, because then it gets taken personally or misunderstood. People need to see the highs and lows of many types of schools in order to get a bigger picture of what is fair, what isn't, what's working, what isn't. (Interview Transcript, July 2013)

Although in reality bringing together multiple school communities was perhaps difficult to achieve because of resource constraints (e.g., time, money), extending the cohort model from university campuses to the schools and bringing together preservice and inservice teachers from various campuses could potentially support preservice teachers in their transition from teacher education to beginning school contexts. With researchers (Zeichner, 2010) calling for increased university-field connections, there is the potential that a more inclusive cohort model could serve as a useful tool in bridging that partnership.

Myself as a reader assignment. The first assignment that Colleen was asked to complete in her teacher education program was an essay describing herself as a reader. Specifically, she was asked to think about her habits, attitudes, beliefs, development, difficulties, and sources of influence as a reader and was encouraged to interview her parents regarding her early literacy development. Through the uncovering of her literacy autobiography (Britzman, 2003; Lortie, 1975), Colleen began to reveal her understandings of reading, specifically, and learning, more broadly. For example, although reading came easily, she writes in her essay, "It was learning to care about what I wrote or read that took a long time for me" (Course Assignment, January 2008). For Colleen, learning to read did not happen necessarily in a supportive and caring school community. In her classes, she didn't remember being supported by any particular teachers in her learning journey. Thus

the absence of a caring learning community meant that Colleen came into the program without knowing that trust and caring were an important part of the learning to read process.

Before starting the assignment, students read Paolo Freire's (1983), *The Importance of the Act of Reading* as inspiration and an introduction to the relationship of reading the word and the world. This reading served to support students in the retelling of their literacy history as well as to make transparent the view of literacy to which the professors subscribed; they believed that the act of reading the word could not be separated from the act of reading the world, which was made possible through one's own experiences and interactions as part of the social world. Colleen continued to revisit this concept and other Freire readings frequently over the course of her teacher education program and into her beginning years as a teacher [e.g., "Freire would agree, in order to have good dialogue, you need to have a good relationship with whom you are speaking" (Course Reading Reflection, February, 2008)]. When asked in an interview about what readings she felt were significant influences on her views of learning, she responded enthusiastically, "Freire. He was big!" (Interview Transcript, August 2009).

Colleen's personal path into literacy would serve as a basis for how she would interpret the learning theory and experiences she would eventually be exposed to in the program. The combination of reading Freire and the Myself as a Reader assignment set the tone for the rest of the semester and gave her a spring board to continue to use her course readings as a tool to mediate her thinking as well as to reconstruct her own learning experiences. For example, in the on-line

reading response below, Colleen reflected on how practice, reflection, and

community were essential for her in learning to teach. She believed that learning

didn't just come from her readings alone but rather from the act of participating as a

learner and with learners in communities of practice.

> There cannot be dialogue without questioning (problem-posing), and there
> can't be questioning without trust and acceptance of the community.
> Gathering meaning from the environment is not work only of the eyes, but it
> is the art of *practicing with it* as a member and learner. I see that this is the
> difference between simply using a teaching model and partaking in it.
> (Course Reading Reflection, March 2008)

Colleen's reflection indicated that she valued exactly the same things that being part

of a cohort had provided for her. It was a trusting and accepting community that

gave her the opportunity to engage in dialogue about teaching and learning and also

the opportunity to "practice." And the "art of practicing" and reflecting on that

practice within a trusting community was what she felt becoming a teacher was all

about.

Colleen left her program believing that she learned best when she was in a

safe, trusting, and flexible community that allowed her to practice and reflect on that

practice. She felt strongly about the positive experiences and relationships she

gained being a part of Cohort E. She also left the program believing that learning

was messy!

> Learning is messy! When you are in the thick of it and your computer
> crashes, and your paper is flying out of your ears, and you don't know what
> to do the next day for your student and you are sad that you are actually in
> the middle of the best learning you ever had. I would say trust them with all
> of your assignments b/c there is a reason and hang in there b/c you are
> doing something purposeful and super. (Interview Transcript, Summer
> 2009)

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Do the things she learned by taking part in the "best learning she's ever had" translate across contexts, and is she able to foster this type of learning community in her own classroom? The next section reports on how her understanding of learning (importance of feeling safe, trust, opportunities to practice and reflect, allowing learning to be messy) that she adopted in her program translated into her beginning teaching years.

After Teacher Education: Travis Elementary

    Administration. The student enrollment at Travis Elementary was around 900 for the three years when Colleen was teaching fourth grade there. It was one of the biggest schools in the district, employing a large faculty, with eight teachers on Colleen's grade level team, as well as a principal and two assistant principals.

    Isabella (pseudonym), the school's principal, was in her second year when Colleen began working at Travis. The year before Isabella's appointment, the school had experienced a 50% teacher turnover rate, and by the time Colleen was in her second year, there was only one position was available for a classroom teacher (Zoch, 2012). Isabella in a short time had increased continuity across the faculty for the school, and Colleen got along well with her. Colleen shared many times over the six and a half years of data collection that she felt supported by her principal, calling her "very loving" and "one of my people" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). After Colleen's first year of teaching, the district nominated her for the Teacher of Promise award, and she talked about what it meant for Isabella to have attended the awards ceremony.

        My Principal and Hillary, the literacy coach, came and sat in the audience and
        cheered for me and came and gave me hugs and they were real proud of me

and I thought, the Principal just drove really far, you know, to sit in an audience and introduce me to her Principal friends. And I think that that, to me, felt good and supportive, like more than just having some award but that they would come out there and do that with me. (Focus Group Interview Transcript, April 2010)

Isabella continued to demonstrate to Colleen that she valued her teaching throughout her time at Travis by asking her to take on leadership positions. For example, Isabella asked her to conduct a workshop for kindergarten and first-grade teachers on writers' notebooks. This gesture made Colleen feel "more confident" in her teaching and "very supported" (Interview Transcript, November 2010).

Although Isabella and Colleen had a great working relationship, and Isabella was respected among the teachers, there was still tension between the administration and the faculty at Travis. In part, this was due to the additional assistant principal (AP) position that kept getting filled and refilled, and in part, it was due to the pressure that the state accountability rating system and the district were placing on the campus. As a result of these two things, there were conflicting notions about what was important in terms of learning.

Colleen describes the AP at Travis as having an angry sentiment, which created a tone on the campus that didn't feel right. "That voice was always very talked down to, managerial, like you work in a restaurant or something. That feeling where you're like a minion, pushed around" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). Colleen also described the voice as "abrupt and accusatory," which she felt created a learning environment that wasn't safe or based in trust qualities that she had come to value as important in her teaching and learning. In turn, the teachers became

"abrupt and accusatory and threatening" in their classrooms (Interview Transcript, July 2013).

Even though the presence of this angry sentiment arguably originated with the administration, Colleen was quick to point out that they did not have an easy task. Travis was considered a "focus school" as a result of the campus scores on the state assessment test. This meant that the district was pressuring the administration and that caused people to play the blame game as to the reasons for the low test scores.

> She's [Isabella] wonderful and you know she's in a very tough position. I understand and I mean, I almost feel like it's even redundant to say, of course it's the test and all these pieces and these schools are expected to do and everybody's blaming the year below them and everybody has been blaming the parents and then they are blaming somebody else. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

The pressure from the district created an underlying tone of blame that pervaded the campus community. "There was a feeling, it was subtle, that these kids couldn't learn it all…a 'throw your hands up' kind of feeling, of course I (we-the folks in my boat) fought against it, verbally, and with the passion of our lessons" (Journal Free Write, August 2013). In response to this negative atmosphere pervading the school community, Colleen surrounded herself with like-minded people [e.g., literacy coach (see Theme 1)], turned her energy towards her classroom community, and tried to create the type of learning community she believed was important to her students.

Classroom community. The accountability-driven school community that Colleen was experiencing at Travis had a direct impact on her instruction and her ability to create a classroom community that was aligned with her beliefs about learning. Colleen believed that learning happened in a flexible community that

allowed one to practice and to try things on. In her first year of teaching, this was

not allowed. Instead, she became afraid of messing up, and she abandoned many of

the things she had set out to do in her classroom. When she could not find support

for her view that learning happened through practice and that learning was messy,

as had been the case in her teacher education program, she implemented lesson

plans based on the programs she was asked to use.

> I'm not allowed to mess up at Travis and without it being a punitive thing.
> The feeling of "messing up" is what's valuable—how we value the learning.
> We can't treat teachers as robots in the obsession for "smarter kids," we have
> to let the teachers unravel their best intentions in a real classroom, we have
> to *show them how to* (as opposed to make them use) use a variety of
> resources, and then we have to get them to hunger for success that they,
> themselves, create a measure for. I think the difference is the feeling of
> failure as a step in a bigger process, vs. the feeling of failure as failure . . .
> There's just too much pressure and weight, and not enough time. You can't
> add scripted programs to an already vulnerable time frame and not subtract
> community time, paper tower time, paper making day, recess, arts . . . etc. We
> can't allow "buy-in" to be selling our guts and humanity. (Interview
> Transcript, August 2013)

As a result of this pressure, Colleen spent much of her planning time aligning

curriculum with the state standards and focusing her energy on the state

assessment. Her instruction was more heavily based on scripted programs than she

would have liked, but because it was her first year of teaching she felt like she

needed to "follow the rules" and accommodate (Smagorinsky, Lakly, & Johnson,

2002). The administration asked her to create grids to document what she was

doing, and to ensure that she was teaching what someone told her to teach at a

certain time of the day. For guided reading, she was supposed to fill in a list of

names/groups and times, ensuring that lessons would all start up at the "right" time

each day. Although this didn't seem to align with her philosophy on learning, she

did it anyway and ironically it felt successful to her when she completed what she

was asked to do.

> I still struggle with seeing all of them [students] enough each week because it is real structured. They want to walk in and see that I'm doing exactly what I'm supposed to be doing which has taken me months to master being on track with that. But you know that feels successful to me. (Focus Group Interview Transcript, November 2009)

If Colleen's instruction in her first year of teaching was characterized as

focused primarily on "following the rules" and test preparation, her second year

represented a hybrid of test preparation and authentic learning as well as "bending

the rules." Colleen had come to recognize through her experience as a member of

Cohort E in her teacher education program that learning happened best when you

surrounded yourself with like-minded people. She knew that in order to grow as a

teacher she needed to surround herself with people she could trust, who cared

about what she was doing, and who had similar views on learning.

> A teacher needs years in order to grow. As with any good expertise, it comes with practice, not just books…but rather, the application of sought knowledge and a filtering of this knowledge with authentic experience. Year one, at a focus, title 1 school, a job I was thankful for, so ready for (life wise). I was also a fresh fish. Colorful, capable of speaking my goodness. I've used a boat analogy before: before one *rocks* the boat, the time must be taken to get *ON* the boat, to bring all the ideas, goodies, learning, and *observe* the boat. Who is on your boat? I'm a hyper-observer. Later I could usually tell, more or less, who was on *my* boat. My little teacher life boat. I seek these people out, for my own growth now. You have to have like-minded people on your boat. (Journal Free Write, Summer 2013)

After spending her first year getting *on* the boat and *observing* the boat, Colleen

began to assemble a group of people who would support her on her teaching

voyage. Joining Colleen on her boat in her second year were the literacy coach at the

school (see Theme 1), a couple of grade level team members, people she had met

through SWP (see Theme 1), and members of SJG (see Theme 3). It was with the support of these like-minded people that gave her the confidence to begin to take more ownership of her instruction and to "bend the rules." She reflected on her years at Travis and the frustration she felt between the mixed messages she was receiving from people both on and off her boat.

> When I watched the video of my student teaching, I'm doing fishbowls and KWL's and all of these like teacher tricks and things, all these things. And then I went gung ho into my first year at Travis with all of my things and things were a total disaster. Because it's like painting – you have an idea- it's not solid, it's a feeling and you get a few tools to make it happen. You never take everything at once and try and work out a masterpiece on a set time crunch. Some days it's cruddy, and a spill must be turned into a "Beautiful Oops" – and you watch often, step back, rethink. I didn't think I could do this at the beginning – and the powers that be (focus-school-district) would make me believe I couldn't, while saying I could (literacy coach, teacher texts, my principal)...mixed messages. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

The "powers that be" were telling Colleen that there wasn't enough time to incorporate the "Beautiful Oops" that occurred in the classroom; that there wasn't enough time to "step back, rethink," and there wasn't enough time to allow learning to unfold organically. With her first year completed and like-minded people supporting her, she decided she would find ways to create the type of learning experiences in her classroom that she valued. As a result, Colleen's instruction became more of a balance of what she wanted to do rather than what others wanted her to do. One example of this was the race unit (see Theme 3) that she did in conjunction with a member of the SJG. This unit gave Colleen a chance to use high quality multicultural children's literature and a literature chart, literacy tools that she believed would foster authentic learning in her classroom. Literature charts had been introduced to her during coursework in her teacher education program, and

she used them in her student teaching experience. While at Travis, she built upon

her knowledge of them in a professional development with the school's literacy

coach. It was through the use of the literature chart that she was able to

compromise and combine her beliefs with the expectations of the district.

> Having a literature chart where we map our thoughts. That's awesome.
> That's real; that's the real stuff. The fact that the questions on the top come
> from the TAKS test is not so real but at least we are mapping something.
> (Interview Transcript, Fall 2010)

This balance of test preparation and authentic learning was not ideal in

Colleen's opinion, but it certainly moved her in the right direction and was many

steps ahead of her previous year. Not only was she beginning to take more

ownership of instruction in her classroom, she was also taking the opportunity to

engage in what Ayers (2001) referred to as "creative insubordination." Colleen was

consciously making the decision to ignore some of the district's expectations

because she felt strongly that they didn't serve her students' learning.

> I remember when the clipboard people were coming through my room. Two
> times in a row, I wasn't doing what I was supposed to be doing because I
> didn't want to. And I used my charm and my, 'oh, I'm so sorry' to get me
> through that. Next time I will be honest. And they were like, 'okay.' Worked
> out. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

With growing confidence, like-minded people by her side, and the conviction to

stand up for what she believed, Colleen ended her second year on a high note,

revealing, "I'm where I am supposed to be" (Questionnaire, Spring 2009).

Colleen's third and last year of teaching at Travis was heavily influenced by

her maternity leave and the birth of her second child, Evan. It was also a further

validation of her views on learning, especially the importance of knowing her

students and building a safe and trusting learning community. Her third year was

marked by both personal excitement and challenges as she welcomed her son into

the world and was forced to miss the first half of the school year.

> I'd had a baby and I had a student teacher and they're all these things mixed
> up around year three, that made it really tough. So I couldn't come back from
> having a baby and be all normal. That was a tough transition that kind of,
> shouldn't even count and yet, so many teachers have babies. That's really a
> tough thing and nobody talks about that transition, but the end of my second
> year, I felt alright at Travis. I really did and I think that you need to spend
> time in one place, in one grade maybe in order to feel that way. And so I felt
> confident coming back after maternity, I'd just jump in and do all those same
> things, but I can't because I didn't know the kids. They'd had somebody else.
> That's impossible. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

Colleen reflected on her struggle to enter the school year midway. She realized it

was incredibly hard to establish the type of learning community she had envisioned

when the students had already spent many months together and with another

teacher's vision of a learning community. Central to her belief about learning was

that it originated with the students. The problem was she didn't know the students,

and there wasn't the luxury of time since the second half of the year brought about

time constraints with three state assessments and focused time on preparation.

Colleen's frustration with not being able to "jump in," coupled with a student

teacher who was overly critical, made her begin to lose confidence in herself as a

teacher.

> And I felt like I shrunk back a few steps, being a teacher, being with him
> because he was very critical and analytical of me and I know that he had to, I
> am sure, analyze me and send emails about what he thought about me and I
> just felt overexposed and I thought, am I even doing this right or well? So
> that was hard for me. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

Colleen would later come to refer to this third year experience as "a half a year

disaster after having a baby" (Interview Transcript, August 2013). The combination

of being a new mother, being scrutinized by a student teacher, and struggling to

accomplish what she had hoped for her students in her third year really gave her perspective about what she wanted for her fourth year of teaching. At the top of that list was a learning community that she felt would support her in accomplishing her vision. She didn't know it at the time, but her wish would come to fruition when she switched schools to Bowen Elementary.

Although Colleen's move to Bowen would be a good one, her departure from Travis was difficult as she recognized there were many people (e.g., literacy coach, teachers, principal, students) who had helped her to grow her understanding of learning and, in turn, her practice of it. During her time at Travis, she gained confidence in protecting her students' learning in the face of external accountability pressure. She was further reminded about the importance of surrounding herself with like-minded people who shared the same beliefs about learning as she held and she solidified in her mind the notion that a trusting and safe learning community requires time spent getting to know the learner.

After Teacher Education: Bowen Elementary

As a result of Colleen's experiences both in her teacher education program as well as her time at Travis, she knew how important it was to have a cohort of people to learn with and from. She also recognized the significance of a trusting community in facilitating her growth in becoming a teacher. "I'm not chastised by the administration. I'm still NEW compared to the other teachers – and I'm trusted! Fancy that!" She wasted no time assembling like-minded people as soon as she set foot on the Bowen campus, and she quickly found out who was "on her boat" and whom she could trust.

Faculty.   Colleen immediately felt the joyous tone cast across the school

community, even in her first few days on campus. She commented in multiple

interviews about the celebratory nature of the faculty, as there was always "a lot of

cheering going on at Bowen" (Interview Transcript, August 2013). In her first

faculty meeting of the year, she was shocked to see that they spent a good deal of the

meeting in laughter. It was during these meetings that she witnessed what it meant

to be part of a school that valued taking the time to establish a caring and

trustworthy community.

> Oh, you're offering me to have a bottle of water and to sit here and laugh with
> each other and there's even a minute in the beginning of every faculty
> meeting where people are thankful and grateful for each other and there's
> laughter? (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

She began her fourth year of teaching surrounded by this supportive and positive

faculty. Although the entire faculty was encouraging and caring, there were specific

faculty members whose teaching and learning philosophies Colleen immediately

gravitated toward, and she connected with them instantly. As she referred to it, "I

was building my people" (Interview Transcript, July 2013).

Susan was the first person Colleen really bonded with on campus because

she had been the inclusion teacher in her classroom during her student teaching

experience. In her current position, Susan was teaching third grade, and she

provided an instant support system for Colleen. Often they would talk about

reading instruction after school. From Susan, she would learn what it meant to be

vulnerable and a human being struggling to be the best teacher you can be. "It was

her first year back with her own class – she had huge goals and hopes, and she really

struggled. She was able to show her vulnerabilities and talk smart books and ideas.

I love that" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). Colleen's professional friendship with

Susan was affirming to Colleen's notion that learning isn't about getting it all right.

Perhaps the most influential faculty member at Bowen was Lisa, Colleen's

unofficial mentor. Colleen described her as "on my edge of the world, mentally"

(Interview Transcript, July 2013). Lisa was a veteran fifth grade teacher and Colleen

saw a lot of herself in her. She described a community building activity the faculty

did at the beginning of the year where Colleen first realized, " Lisa thinks about

things the same way I do" (Interview Transcript, July 2013).

> We did this thing at the beginning of the school year and you map your
> personality or whatever and then you line up like a graph and you stand in a
> spot. So here are all the teachers on one side and here's me and Lisa, by
> ourselves in this corner and I was like "Lisa, we are the same!" (Interview
> Transcript, July 2013)

Coupled with similar thinking patterns, Colleen learned a lot from watching Lisa's

teaching and presenting style. After spending two weeks doing professional

development with Lisa, she realized that what she loved most about her was the

way she said things. In the training, Colleen could tell the difference between people

just giving out information irrespective of the audience and Lisa, who was

interacting with the teachers in a different way.

> She isn't giving everybody everything all at once and she's not rehashing
> everything that they've always learned so that they'll remember it every day,
> which is what I do too and so I'm learning about how my execution style
> needs to change. It does. And then, hopefully we have time to share at the end
> and so they love to share and so even thinking about how we share in a
> better way is something that I'm working on, too. (Interview Transcript, July
> 2013)

From Lisa, Colleen learned the importance of "less is more" when disseminating

information, whether it be to fourth graders or adults. And she learned that

prioritizing class time for sharing is just as important (if not more so) as the

teaching component. The opportunity for students to share gives students an

audience, which in turn provides opportunities to discuss what it means to be a

good listener and to support one another's writing. In the end it helped to create the

safe and trusting classroom community that Colleen valued as important to the

learning process.

Sarah was a new cohort graduate from the same program Colleen had

attended five years before. Naturally, she could relate to Sarah because she "knew

where she had come from" (Interview Transcript, July 2013). In addition, Sarah had

been a student teacher in Lisa's classroom and was now a grade level team member

with Lisa, whose teaching style Colleen admired (as evidenced above). Being new

hires, Colleen and Sarah spent two weeks in the summer doing the new-school

training together. Colleen was drawn to Sarah because of something she said on the

first day they met.

> She said something brilliant. I wrote it down and I pulled her aside. It was
> about a child's cultural capital that they bring in, some wonderful term. And
> she's fighting for wonderfulness and so I pulled her aside and said, "I love
> your words, and I think I need to know you." (Interview Transcript, August
> 2013)

Colleen would come to learn that Bordieu's (1986) term "cultural capital," to

which Sarah was referring, was actually philosophically aligned with her own beliefs

about learning. At its most basic level, cultural capital is the non-economic related

assets (e.g., knowledge, skills, education) that people have that give them an

advantage. Sarah believed that teachers should be tapping into the cultural capital

that students brought with them to school. Her thoughts were parallel to Colleen's

beliefs about valuing a student's history, culture, and interests (see Theme 2). In

Sarah, Colleen found new ways to talk about the importance of instruction moving

from the known to the unknown, building on the students' "funds of knowledge"

(Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005), and valuing the learner in the teaching and

learning process.

Classroom community*.* With like-minded people supporting her, a

celebratory faculty as a whole, and a hands-off administration, Colleen began to see

a shift in her instruction. As a result of the trusting and safe community at Bowen,

Colleen was given the space to practice and to try out new things in her classroom.

Subsequently, the following things began to happen with her teaching: her

instruction became more organic/authentic, she began to focus on the process of

learning rather than a single answer, and her assessment became more formative

rather than summative.

Throughout Colleen's fourth year of teaching, she had more ownership over

both her and her students' learning. This freedom to make instructional decisions

based on what was actually happening in her classroom, rather than what someone

or some document was telling her to do, allowed Colleen the opportunity to shift her

focus to modeling her authentic learning process. This, in her opinion, allowed her

instruction to be more transparent and her classroom to be a more authentic

learning environment.

> The way I keep a notebook in my own life; I use in the classroom as authentic
> modeling. How we glue text into notebooks and code them with color, with
> symbols, with thinking. It's all very organic, but it is *becoming* a **way** that I do
> things. I put stars by things that are test-related. I underline vocabulary. I
> circle words I don't know or I think are spelled wrong. I squiggle lines under
> delicious text that takes my breath away. These are things I do, that are

> becoming habit of me as a teacher and writer/reader, which I transfer into my classroom and become teaching tools—things we can all count on. This makes it less fuzzy and ambiguous. I am seeing the structural habits coming from my inside, out. **<u>Not from the outside, in.</u>** (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

Taking the outside pressure off of what happened in her classroom shifted her reading instruction in particular. Her classroom was filled with a lot more talk, sharing, rereading, re-talking, them reading and taking notes, and her doing less quizzing. She believed she was becoming a better guided reading teacher by listening to her students' reading more intently and following her instincts more and not worrying about who was listening to her guided reading script talk.   There was also an absence of a timer, signifying start and stop times. As a result, the way she pulled reading groups was not according to the ding of a bell but to the needs of the group.

With this shift in instruction, Colleen noticed a difference in the students' attitudes about reading and their time spent being actively engaged in the reading process.

> How wonderful that I have the mind-scape and time now to start a group tape-recording book club/listening… The action in my room—the reading action—is off and away. I have moments, in week 3, when all kids are engaged in a focused reading activity. They are excited about their books, and I am in awe of the attention they have to it. Some kids even, are just reading their own picks, because they'd simply faint if I pulled them from their novel. Engaged. And, it's trundling off, organically. This is the first time it's ever seemed to work, and why? Because I'm not force testing, rushing people into anything. I'm following my gut, and I have experience with the tools in order to make best decisions. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

Having ownership of her teaching gave students' ownership of their learning. Students were reading books they were interested in, and they were no longer being asked to be on the same page at a certain time. One group was using a book she

purchased from Half-Price Books, and then there was a *Lightning Thief* group full of

boys. Some best friends who had been separated the previous year in their class

were learning to work together wisely while reading *Hunger Games*. Learning

became enjoyable for both the students and Colleen.

After completing what she felt was a successful fourth year of teaching, she

began her fifth year wanting to do something with her students that demonstrated

the notion of process. She wanted to establish a classroom community that valued

learning as a process and understood how learning takes time. She decided to have

her students make paper. In an interview, she talked enthusiastically about this

decision:

> This project had so much more meaning than I originally intended – process
> and time, of course, but recycling, following direction, new vocabulary, and
> publishing. We published out first short piece on the paper for Back to
> School night. I had poems, excerpts from stories, rambling
> autobiographies…a sampling of what we'd begun the year with. They chose a
> piece that spoke to them, drafted, peer edited, and published. Now
> publishing on your own homemade paper is monumental – you must think
> wisely. There is no second piece if you mess up. (Interview Transcript,
> August 2013)

For Colleen, making paper represented her belief that authentic learning was a

process, it took time, and it ended up somewhere useful. Thus, she began her school

year conveying to students that learning wasn't about "getting it right." Learning

was a journey, and they were going to go on it together in a safe and trusting

classroom community where the process was valued.

Colleen also learned from her experience of making paper that it was okay to

slow down instruction and to take the time to be fully engaged in the learning

process. She had often been frustrated in the past by the fast pace at which she was

asked to complete tasks so that students could then be assessed.

> We are programed to create "knowers" of skill and concept, quickly. And
> then tested on them, squelching the natural ambition-progression for many
> learners. To turn the lens then, to *process*, to be able to wisely assess
> process…rather than knowing. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

As a result of focusing on process more than on "knowing" the right answer, which

could be quantified, the way she measured learning began to shift. Assessment for

Colleen became about naming and noticing. Catching students doing things well.

Instead of formal assessments consuming her instructional time, assessment

became more formative rather than summative.

> The habit of checking in with their work each day, with each student, is a big
> responsibility, but I look into their writing—how they are expressing their
> thoughts about their reading in writing—and I comment, make notes with
> them, cheer them on, and get wowed each day. I connect this to grammar, to
> genre, to concepts in class, to vocabulary, to all things. I leave notes with
> them that I see the next day and I comment on how they are taking
> ownership of some things: capital letters! Handwriting! Semicolons! It is
> various by day and by learner. And in just a couple weeks, in a week, in a day,
> I see growth, and I make a big deal out of it and it transfers among learners,
> and they all begin to do it, and what have I done? Nothing, but notice, each
> day, the little bits of Wow, and share that with them. (Interview Transcript,
> August 2013)

Instead of measuring learning through a single test score, assessing learning was

about what students were doing right, giving them confidence, demonstrating that

someone cared and was listening. The purpose in this listening, according to

Colleen, was "not to fix them and make them do – or make them accomplish *my*

goals, but rather to listen and see what they are doing to make it work, so we can

notice it and add to it later"(Interview Transcript, August 2013).

Assessing students' reading began to look different than it had in her first three years of teaching. Colleen took her time getting to know her readers. She was no longer doing the paperwork that had proved to be useless to her in the past. Some of her kids received Developmental Reading Assessments (DRAs), while some got interviews and books pulled from the shelf to find good fits and strong interest. She unrolled her reading groups sporadically when it made sense, when it fit.   She has used assessment resources as they became necessary. "I never loved Flynt Cooter [a formal assessment instrument]. But, I'll pull it out when it seems most needed, and voila! Sense is made. I see the purpose in these resources when I need them, not when I'm asked to use them" (Interview Transcript, August 2013). Assessment, then, was continuously happening in Colleen's classroom, and it looked different across time and students. There was no longer a one-size-fits-all mentality for understanding where kids were in the learning process.

As Colleen's instruction became more organic, as she recognized that learning was more about the process rather than a single answer, and as she understood that it was not about using one assessment tool for all students, she also realized that it was not about having one teaching method or curriculum. It was a process of knowing your kids, watching them, and using that information to move them forward in their learning (Duffy, 2005; Fairbanks et al, 2010).

> How nice. To be able to rest in a place where you've seen kids grow through your plans and day-to-day interactions. To have a bit of a Rolodex-brain that thinks through possibilities for each kiddo as you're in the midst of talking with them, watching them, working with them. It's nice to have a bank of teacher guts, and to not have to know the ONE answer, but to see the many paths. (Interview Transcript, August 2013)

As she nears the completion of her fifth year of teaching and her second year at Bowen, Colleen does so having learned from her colleagues and her students that there was more to learning than knowing the right answer and there was more to teaching than having the one right way.   Having both the freedom and the ability to adapt her instruction and assessment as she deemed necessary has brought about a different type of learning community for her students than she was able to have in her first three years of teaching.

Conclusion

> In any classroom I see only possibilities, never limitations. I envision the air, rich with ideas, filling the hearts, minds, and fingertips of my students-allowing them a playground of thought and action. I see comfort and community within this room, also trust and acceptance – we work hard at this. At our most distant rung, a springboard for taking risks and facing challenges – feasible and possible for all – points off toward the future.
> (Vision Statement, Spring 2009)

There is little doubt that the process of learning is influenced by the norms of the community in which the learning occurs. Colleen entered her teacher education program with learning experiences that discounted the social nature in which it materialized. Being a part of Cohort E showed her that learning happened when there was a caring and trusting community that gave one a safe place to practice and allowed learning to be flexible and messy. Travis taught her the importance of surrounding herself with like-minded people, especially in a community where some didn't share her same views on learning. And Bowen gave her a community where she was celebrated, where she could teach "from the gut," not from a script, and where she had ownership of her classroom. Over time she realized that she learned best when she was trusted and received in a community for the creative

professional that she was. As a result, her classroom community became a place

where students took ownership of their learning and were celebrated for their

learning process and their growth rather than for knowing the right answer (Figure

10).

The figure contains the following text labels:

Faculty
Classroom Community
Bowen

Administration
Classroom Community
Travis

Cohort
Myself as a Reader
Teacher Ed.

PK-12
Before TE

Given total ownership to create a safe, trusting, and flexible classroom community

Struggles in a community that is not safe, trusting, and flexible

Sees models and is part of a safe, trusting, and flexible community

Learning is an individual process

Theme 4:
Colleen believes a safe, trusting, and flexible community is essential to learning.

Figure 10. Contextual Influences on Colleen's Understanding of Learning

Colleen's teacher education program gave her the opportunity to reflect on

her own autobiography in a safe and trusting cohort community of practice so that

when she left the program she did not replicate the types of learning communities in

which she was a part during her own PK-12 experiences (Britzman, 2003; Cuddapah

& Clayton, 2011; Flores & Day, 2006). This study extends the longitudinal studies of

learning to teach literacy (e.g., Cook, Smagorinsky, Fry, Konopack, & Moore, 2002;

Grossman et al., 2000) because it demonstrates how her understanding of learning,

developed inside of her teacher education program, was sustained over time and

emerged in particular contexts. Her ability to navigate Travis, a challenging context that was more closely aligned to her own PK-12 experiences, was successful because she sought out safe, trusting, and flexible communities of practice to support her (e.g., cohort, faculty). Beyond the first years of teaching (Grossman et al., 2000) and into Colleen's fourth year of teaching at Bowen, the understandings she established in her teacher education program fully emerged in her practice located in a school context that was safe, trusting, and flexible. In turn, this allowed her to make her own instructional decisions, leading to more thoughtfully adaptive teaching (Fairbanks et al., 2009) and a safe, trusting, and flexible classroom community.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Implications

The goal of this longitudinal case study was to examine the complexities in learning to teach literacy over time and across contexts. I sought to understand the influences on a participant's journey in becoming a literacy teacher by looking at the multiple communities where she learned to teach and the influences of those communities on her understandings and practices. By taking into account the interdependent relationship between her and the context, this study considered how the participant developed understandings of and for herself as a literacy teacher before, during, and after her teacher education program. In line with features of qualitative research and framed by sociocultural (Vygotsky, 1978) and situated (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Wenger, 1998) theories of learning to teach, the question that guided my inquiry was: How did a teacher's participation across multiple contexts over time influence her journey in becoming a literacy teacher?

Guided by this research question and consistent with case study research, I collected data over six and a half years through sources that included interviews, observations, and documents (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2009). These data were analyzed using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 2009), coupled with longitudinal analysis (Saldaña, 2009). Findings from this study indicated the important role that reflection and community played in Colleen's evolving understandings and practices and therefore her professional identity. The data revealed that Colleen intends to be a lifelong learner; she values and validates students' interests, histories, and contributions; she is committed to teaching for

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social justice; and she believes that a safe, trusting, and flexible community is essential to learning.

This chapter is organized into three sections. The first section is a discussion of the findings, and it is arranged chronologically (before, during, and after teacher education). It includes a summary of the influences on Colleen's evolving understandings of self, students, teaching, and learning. These findings are then situated in the existent longitudinal research on becoming a literacy teacher and explicate the role that community and reflection played in Colleen's evolving understandings. In the second section, I discuss implications of this research for practice, policy, and research. Last, in the conclusion section I end with some final thoughts about Colleen's journey in becoming a literacy teacher.

Discussion of Findings

In this section, I summarize the findings in relation to the research question: How did a teacher's participation across multiple contexts over time influence her journey in becoming a literacy teacher? (Figure 11)? Across the learning to teach continuum (before, during and after teacher education), findings indicate that Colleen's understandings were shaped and reshaped by her reflective stance and by her participation in both organically occurring and self-selected communities of practice. I situate the study within research on learning to teach, more broadly, and the longitudinal research on learning to teach literacy, more specifically. This study confirms and extends research that aims to provide evidence of the multiple influences and complexity involved in becoming a literacy teacher.

Before Teacher Education

Summary. The findings from this study suggest that the contextual influences before Colleen's teacher education program that seemed to have had the largest impact on her development as a literacy teacher were her PK-12 experiences, her family, and her friends. Colleen did not necessarily enjoy her PK-12 experiences. In her course assignments, she described them as solitary, and she felt that her teachers were not supportive of her interests and did not understand her as a learner. As she encountered new models of teaching and learning in her teacher education program that valued the student and provided a safe and caring community, coupled with opportunities to reflect on her own autobiography, she quickly established new understandings about herself, students, teaching, and learning. As a result, she did not replicate the "cultural myths" of teaching that derive from one's histories in schools (Britzman, 1986).

Colleen's family was another important influence on her understandings of self, students, teaching, and learning. Colleen's sister served as a model for a "successful" school-goer (i.e., valedictorian), and literacy was valued in her family. Since she was surrounded by a sister and a mom who valued learning, her lack of enthusiasm for her educational experiences did not detract from her love of learning about the arts, history, writing, and literary female literary protagonists. Further, her role as a mom when she started her own family motivated her to learn more about how to be a better teacher for her daughter, and it also allowed her to see her students in her own classroom as someone's children. When Colleen gave birth to

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her son at the beginning of her third year of teaching, she tried to balance her expectations for her own child's needs with those of her fourth grade students.

What does this study contribute to research? This study confirms the ample research that illustrates the role that prior beliefs and experiences play in a teacher's understandings and attitudes toward learning to teach (Fives & Buehl, 2012; Hollingsworth, 1989; Kagan, 1992; Pajeres, 1992; Richardson, 1996). It also provides further evidence to support studies that have demonstrated the importance of teacher education programs that give students opportunities to reflect on the understandings about teaching and learning that they bring to their programs (Banks et al., 2005, Britzman, 2003; Flores & Day, 2006; Slattery, 2006). Despite growing up in a school system that didn't value her as a learner, Colleen did not replicate her own experiences for her students. Instead, exposure and opportunities to practice and to reflect on new theories of teaching and learning within a supportive and caring community during her teacher education program motivated her to be a different kind of teacher, the kind she wished she had had during her PK-12 experiences. Contrary to Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon's (1998) contention that a teacher's beliefs are stable and resistant to change, Colleen's prior beliefs seem to be dynamic as she engaged in course readings (e.g., Freire, 1970), assignments (e.g., Myself as a Reader), and field experiences (e.g., tutoring) during her teacher education program, where she acquired understandings about teaching and learning that were very different from her own PK-12 experiences.

Teacher Education

Summary*.* The findings from this study suggest that the biggest contextual influences on Colleen's understandings during her teacher education program were her professors, her cohort, her field experiences (tutoring, student teaching, El Puente), and her coursework (readings and assignments). All of these aspects of her teacher education program combined to provide her with models of teaching and learning, opportunities to practice, and the chance to reflect on these models and her practice in a caring and supportive community.

First, we learn from the data that Colleen's program offered her multiple opportunities to see models for teaching and learning. Her professors served as examples for what students were learning about in the program (e.g., Dr. Houston and Dr. Williams). Concurrently, she was exposed to videos of exemplary teachers engaging in these same concepts of teaching and learning, and she observed other teachers in her field experiences enacting similar practices (e.g., cooperating teacher, El Puente teacher, peers in the cohort). Taken all together, these models served as examples for things they were reading and talking about in coursework.

Second, the findings indicated that accompanying these models were multiple opportunities to practice what they were reading and seeing in their program. The field experiences in her teacher education program consisted of tutoring, student teaching, and community-based learning. Each of these field experiences was carefully planned, guided, and offered sustained interactions with students. In this way, Colleen's understandings and practices of teaching and

learning were scaffolded through the gradual release of responsibility purposefully planned by her professors (Vygotsky, 1978).

Third, equipped with the knowledge about theory gained from the models of teaching along with multiple opportunities to practice, Colleen was provided the space to reflect on what she was experiencing in each of these practice-based experiences. She appreciated the many opportunities for open dialogue and critical reflection about the cultural and racial aspects of teaching, which helped her to develop asset-based views of communities that were different from those in which she grew up (Boyle-Baise, 2005; Cooper, 2007; Mosley, Cary, & Zoch, 2010). In addition, the opportunities for reflection on both situational and relational aspects of her teaching practice helped her to make sense of the role of context and the ways it influenced her understandings of self, students, teaching, and learning.

The multiple opportunities to see models, to practice, and to reflect on her understandings and practice were all made possible because it happened in a community of practice that was safe, trusting, and flexible. Taking part in a cohort model with caring professors allowed her to engage in trial and error and to grow new understandings of teaching and learning. The findings suggest that it is not about any one of these features of her program in isolation but rather Colleen's journey makes clear that it's about the careful integration of all of them, resulting in continuity across coursework and congruence among aspects of the program.

What does this study contribute to research? This study confirms the research in teacher education that cites field experiences as being an important influence on preservice teachers (Clift & Brady, 2005; Dillon, O'Brien, & Sato, 2010;

Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; Risko et al., 2008; Sailors, Keehn, Martinez, & Harmon, 2005). It also confirms the research on the importance of field experiences that are carefully planned and supervised, offering scaffolded and sustained interactions with students (Clift & Brady, 2005; Harmon et al., 2001), and the importance of congruence between Colleen's field experiences with other aspects of her teacher education program (Courtland & Leslie, 2010). The seamless integration of all aspects of her program was made possible by the opportunities she had to reflect in and on her practice in a supportive and caring community as part of a cohort model (Hoffman et al., 2009; Schön, 1983).

Therefore, this study confirms the longitudinal research on learning to teach literacy that found the importance of reflection as part of a teacher education program (Cook, Smagorinsky, Fry, Konopak, & Moore, 2002; Deal & White, 2005, 2006; Maloch et al., 2003). The continuity between the various components of Colleen's program, joined through reflection, allowed for a relatively smooth execution of the well-cited and often-problematic leap from theory to practice (Cooper, 2007; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; Harste, Leland, Schmidt, Vasquez, & Ociepka, 2004; Hoffman & Mosley, 2010). The findings suggest that Colleen's experience in tutoring Vanessa and in student teaching helped her to develop the disposition to reflect on the materials of teaching and to build confidence in modifying and supplementing them on the basis of her students' needs and interests both in the moment and for future instruction (Pierce & Pomerantz, 2006). In turn, we see Colleen find ways to create these same types of experiences in her classroom at Travis despite the district/campus instructional

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mandates (e.g., literature charts with testing language; shift in read aloud text). In the end, the interaction among these aspects of the teacher education program (practice, reflection, community) facilitated her understanding of how to position herself as a co-learner, to value students' interests, histories, and contributions, to teach for social justice, and to create a safe and trusting classroom community.

Further, this study extends the longitudinal studies of learning to teach literacy because we know very little about how practice in these experiences develops over time (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000; Clift & Brady, 2005). This study offers research that illustrates the ways in which the experiences of tutoring, student teaching, and El Puente helped Colleen to thoroughly conceptualize her understandings of self, students, teaching, and learning such that she was able to broker the district's scripted curriculum in constructivist ways when she was in a school context that had conflicting views about teaching and learning (Cook, Smagorinsky, Fry, Konopack, & Moore, 2002). There were certainly moments at Travis when she tried out practices that were antithetical to the understandings and practices she developed during her teacher education program (Grossman, et al., 2000). However, she was still able to find ways to remain a learner, to value and validate students' interests, to teach for social justice, and to create a safe and trusting learning community in her classroom, all of which were understandings that she had developed while participating in her teacher education program.

Her ability to enact these understandings in practice, even in difficult school contexts, was made possible by her reflective stance and her commitment to surrounding herself with communities of like-minded people to support her in

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similar ways as had been the case in her teacher education program. This study

seems to suggest that it's not in isolation that any one aspect of her program had the

greatest influence on her long-term growth as a teacher. Rather, it is how they came

together to support Colleen in seeking out similar communities of practice that

allowed her to continue to reflect on her understandings of teaching and learning

long after she left her teacher education program.

Colleen left her teacher education program not with a list of knowledge and

skills but rather with the capacity to think, talk, and act like a teacher (Putnam &

Borko, 2000).   Viewing the role of teacher education as not the acquisition of

knowledge and skills, but rather as increasing access to participation in the

practices of teaching shifts the attention to aspects of community that support and

guide the participant in learning to teach. As a result, when she enters new school

contexts as a novice teacher (i.e., Travis and Bowen), she actively pursues new

communities of practice that are composed of like-minded people whom she trusts

and with whom she can reflect.

After Teacher Education

Summary. The biggest contextual influences on her development as a

literacy teacher related to her beginning school contexts were faculty (literacy

coach, bilingual teachers, administration), professional development (Southwest

Writing Project, Social Justice Group), tools (texts, language), and the students in her

classrooms. Looking across two different school communities made for an

interesting comparison about the influence of particular aspects of school contexts

on a teacher's first years. In both contexts (Travis and Bowen), Colleen sought out

like-minded people with whom to reflect in order to manage the tensions that inevitably arose from contextual constraints (e.g., district policies). At Travis, she developed both a professional and a personal relationship with Hillary (literacy coach), who helped her to navigate the scripted curriculum mandates in an attempt to preserve Colleen's goal of student-centered instruction in the face of district mandates and administration enforcement (e.g., morning student stories). At Bowen, it didn't take Colleen long to seek out faculty who were "on her boat." Once again she found an unofficial mentor in Lisa, a veteran teacher who helped Colleen grow in her presentation style. And she sought out Sarah, a former graduate from the same teacher education program that Colleen attended, whose philosophies about social justice were congruent with Colleen's. These and other like-minded people whom Colleen assembled in both contexts all positioned themselves as co-learners with peers and among students.

Colleen also sought communities outside of her school and the district to help her grow as a literacy teacher. She self-selected professional development that enhanced her understandings and practices with regard to writing instruction and social justice. She participated in the Southwest Writing Project (SWP), furthering her understandings about effective writing practices. She joined the Social Justice Group (SJG) which brought together citywide educators committed to teaching for social justice so that she could broaden the conversation and enrich her own learning about these issues. Interestingly, Colleen continued to seek out opportunities that were linked to the university and the teacher education program where she was prepared. SWP was, and continues to be, a writing professional

development experience that is located at the same university, and the SJG was founded by Dr. Williams, one of her cohort professors. This seems to be indicative of the lasting influence of her program on her growth as a teacher.

What does this study contribute to research? This study corroborates previous research that identified school context as an important influence on a literacy teacher's development (Deal & White, 2005, 2006; Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Smagorinsky, Wright, Augustine, O'Donnell-Allen, & Konopak, 2007). Further, this extends the longitudinal research on learning to teach literacy that has explored the disjuncture between university settings and beginning school contexts (Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Grossman et al., 2000; Smagorinsky, Gibson, Bickmore, Moore, & Cook, 2004). One of the major reasons that this discrepancy occurs between where preservice teachers were prepared and where they wind up teaching is that novice teachers face pressures from district-level policies of mandated curriculum and assessment (Grossman & Thompson, 2004, 2008; Johnson, Smagorinsky, Thompson, & Fry, 2003; Smagorinsky, Lakly, & Johnson, 2002).

Colleen's response to these policies was similar to that of the participants in Smagorinsky, Lakly, and Johnson's (2002) study who learned to dance the "acquiescence, accommodation, and resistance waltz." Colleen also does this three-part dance throughout her time at Travis, with less accommodation and more resistance as the years progress. Just as Grossman and her colleagues (2000) argued for looking past the first year of teaching, this study also demonstrates that by year two at Travis, Colleen's understandings and practices were more closely

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aligned as she began to find more ways to engage in "creative insubordination" (Ayers, 2001), consciously making the decision to ignore some of the district expectations because she felt strongly that they didn't serve her students' learning. By year four, when Colleen entered Bowen, she hung up her dance shoes and no longer had to entertain the district pressures in the same way.   In part, this was because of a "hands-off" administration that trusted her as a professional and allowed her to make choices about what aspects of district curriculum she used to supplement her literacy instruction. When Colleen was given this freedom, her instruction became more organic, which led to more thoughtfully adaptive teaching in which she built instruction in the moment through what she was noticing about her students (Fairbanks et al., 2010).

In addition, this study extends the longitudinal research that examined the transition from preservice to inservice, by demonstrating that close ties to where a teacher was prepared and a reflective teacher-researcher stance developed in those programs helped to navigate that transition (Freedman & Appleman, 2009). Colleen was able to continue to reflect and enact the understandings she developed in her teacher education program as she moved about in varying school contexts because of the continuation of relationships with her cohort and professors and because the learning communities of the preservice program were closely related to how she later constructed communities and leadership roles for herself in new contexts (Maloch et al., 2003). Colleen sought out like-minded people on both her school campus (e.g., literacy coach) and off campus (e.g., the Social Justice Group and the Southwest Writing Project). This provided her with a sense of community and like-

minded people with whom she could reflect in order to find creative ways to work around scripted curriculum and testing pressures in her first three years of teaching. By the time she entered Bowen, and was supported by an administration who gave her ownership of her classroom decisions, she was finally able to engage in literacy instruction that she felt was entirely integrated with her understandings about self, students, teaching, and learning.

This inquiry into the influences on Colleen's journey in becoming a literacy teacher extends the important research conducted by the above-mentioned studies about the transition from teacher education into beginning school contexts in two ways. First, it provides new research on the influences of a teacher's understandings and practices developed in a teacher education program by looking beyond the third year and into her fifth year. In addition, this study offers a look at the contextual influences on a teacher across two different school communities. Although longitudinal studies in learning to teach literacy have looked at multiple graduates across different school communities, there have been no studies that have looked at one teacher across two different beginning school contexts.

Second, the results of this study provide evidence that teacher education does matter. Teacher education programs, such as Colleen's, that are designed to build communities that support teachers within the program ultimately help to sustain them outside of the program in various school contexts. With this support, coupled with the careful integration of spaces for reflection inside of her program, Colleen continued to be supported in making sense of the theory-practice binary. Although particular components of her program (i.e., student teaching, tutoring)

seemed to be influential on her growth, it was the purposeful, planned reflection spaces and shared communities of practice that ultimately sustained Colleen in difficult school contexts.   In the end, the understandings she developed in her teacher education program fully emerged in her later teaching practice because she valued (much like her program) the importance of community and a reflective stance on teaching and learning.

How did a teacher's participation across multiple contexts over time influence her journey in becoming a literacy teacher?

Findings

Contextual Influences

BEFORE TEACHER EDUCATION
- Experienced minimal support from her teachers as a learner and no awareness of her interests
- Motivated by sister's success
- Saw her students as someone's child
- Recognized the power of language

PK-12 experiences

Sister

Being a mom

Friends

TEACHER EDUCATION
- Provided models for how to be a co-learner, to value/validate students, to teach for social justice, and to create a safe, trusting community
- Provided opportunities to practice being a co-learner, valuing/validating students, teaching for social justice, and creating a safe, trusting classroom community
- Provided opportunities to reflect on being a co-learner, valuing/validating students, teaching for social justice, and creating a safe, trusting classroom community

Professors

Student teaching

Course readings

Tutoring

El Puente

Cohort

Myself as a reader

AFTER TEACHER EDUCATION
- Continued to reflect by surrounding herself with co-learners and like-minded people to create her own safe and trusting community
- Remained a learner by seeking out professional development outside of campus and district
- Thrived in a community that gave her ownership of her teaching, allowed her to make mistakes, and celebrated authentic/organic teaching
- Created a safe, trusting classroom community for her students that valued students' interests and gave them ownership and opportunities to read, think, and write about topics of social justice

Literacy coach

SW Writing Project

First year teaching

Students

Bilingual teachers

Social Justice Group

Administration

District

High stakes testing

Language
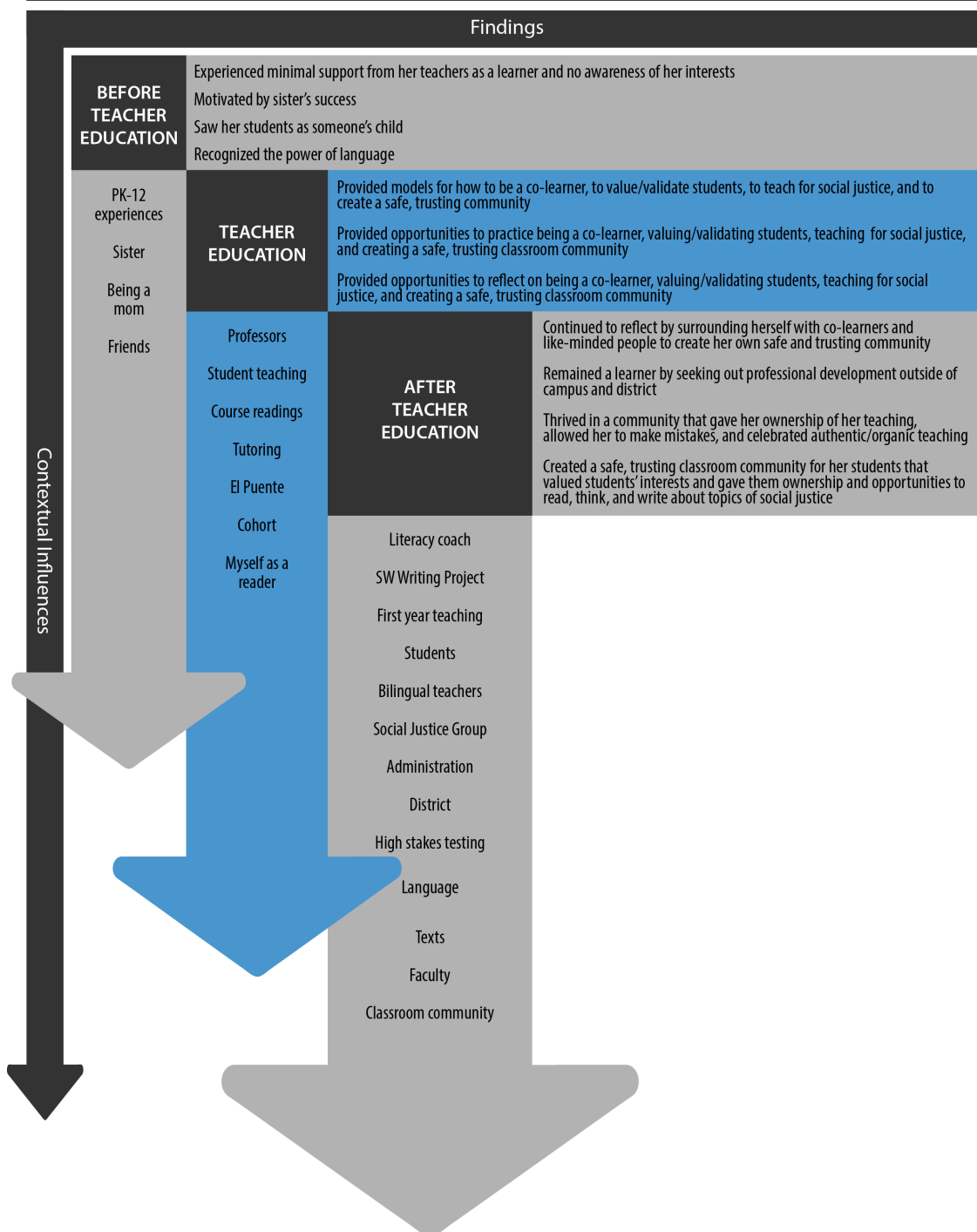
Texts

Faculty

Classroom community

Figure 11. Findings Related to Research Question

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Implications

Drawing from data collected over six years, this study suggests that high quality literacy teacher education programs have an enduring impact on novice teachers (Harmon et al., 2001; Hoffman et al., 2005; Maloch et al., 2003). This study extends existing literacy teacher education research by following a teacher further into her teaching career, offering detailed descriptions of Colleen's experiences both during and after her teacher education program. Findings indicate that the opportunities Colleen had in her teacher education program to practice and reflect on her teaching as part of a safe, caring community helped her to develop a reflective stance to navigate the constraints of beginning school contexts. Coupled with her careful selection of and participation in communities of practice with like-minded people (many of whom had close ties to her program), Colleen was able to enact her understandings of self, students, teaching, and learning in her practice during her induction years. In this section, I reflect on the implications that those findings have for practice, policy, and research.

Implications for Practice

Teacher education. The contributions of this longitudinal study encouraging for teacher education on several accounts. First, the findings have implications for the design of teacher education. This study suggests that the careful integration of all components of a program within a caring community, coupled with a commitment to a reflective stance on self, students, teaching, and learning did have a long-term influence on Colleen. Thus, teacher education programs should offer scaffolded field experiences that are carefully planned, supervised, and tied

closely to coursework, providing both formal and informal spaces to reflect within a caring cohort community. As part of those field experiences, teacher education programs could offer opportunities for preservice teachers to analyze, critique, and adapt the kinds of prepared curriculum materials that they are likely to encounter in their first years of teaching (Grossman et al., 2000; Grossman & Thompson, 2008). In addition, teacher education programs could engage preservice teachers in reflective practices such as self-study and participatory action research that they could use in future contexts for ongoing professional learning (Zeichner, 2009). Providing these types of opportunities as part of a teacher education program, will help to develop teachers with a strong disposition to be reflective practitioners (Shon, 1983) capable of negotiating tensions as they transition across multiple and diverse contexts.

Second, the findings have implications for how teacher education programs continue to support their graduates. This study suggests that it is both important and possible for teacher education programs to stay in touch with their graduates as they navigate new school contexts. By using the resources of the university to widen the focus of teacher education programs to include both preservice and inservice teachers, the gaps between preparation programs and school contexts that have historically plagued the profession might begin to narrow (Cuban, 1993). Knowing that Colleen's program continued to support her by providing opportunities to stay connected to the university, teacher education programs should establish strong preservice learning communities that can be extended into induction years as a continuing source of support. Some promising options might

include: inquiry as part of a master's program during the first years of teaching (Freedman & Appleman, 2009); pathways into alumni and other professional networks (Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Quartz, 2003); or online social networks as part of continuing professional learning communities (Lieberman & Mace, 2010). In addition, university-based teacher education programs could continue to support literacy teachers' transitions into and through the first years of teaching by doing self-study of their own programs, involving beginning teachers as participants and/or co-researchers, thus providing ongoing opportunities for reflection and support (Deal & White, 2005; Massey, 2004).

School contexts. The contributions of this longitudinal study in regard to school contexts are encouraging on several accounts. Colleen thrived in a safe, trusting, and caring community that gave her ownership of her instructional decisions. Communities that provided opportunities to reflect with like-minded people seemed to support Colleen's understandings and practices related to self, students, teaching, and learning. Thus this research sheds light on the types of communities and leadership that seem to support new teachers. At the campus level, school administrators should provide informal and formal opportunities for inservice teachers to reflect with others to build strong working relationships among teachers committed to student learning (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000). One possibility for accomplishing this would be to provide models of teaching along with school-based coaches to support teachers in trying out new practices in a caring and supportive community (Sailors & Shanklin, 2010). At the district level, leadership should

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provide opportunities for teachers to engage in self-selected professional development that is relevant to the teacher and embedded in communities of practice that provide ongoing support (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). It seems that school communities where the leadership supports teachers in self-selecting communities of practice that value a reflective stance on teaching and learning will help to ensure that teachers have ownership of their learning.

Implications for Policy

This study has demonstrated that small-scale investigations of teacher education programs do have the potential to contribute important research about how we prepare literacy teachers. Thus, federal and state policy on teacher education should draw from multiple genres of peer-reviewed research instead of relying solely on large-scale, quantitative studies (Floden, 2008; Zeichner, 2005). In regards to funding, federal and state funding should be directed toward research that continues to explore the complexities involved in learning to teach over time and what teacher education programs of successful graduates are doing well (Clift & Brady, 2005). In particular, funding should be directed to those teacher education programs whose goal is to stay connected to their graduates and aim to support them in their first years of teaching with the goal of increasing retention. Further, funding should be directed toward school districts and campuses in supporting teachers to participate in self-selected professional development that is intensive and on going (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009).

As teacher education programs are asked to provide evidence to legitimize their effectiveness, it's important to recognize that accountability and increased

transparency of teacher education programs are not the problem. It's the methodology by which we ascertain the quality of a teacher education program that needs to be examined. I urge policy makers to focus on research such as this study that demonstrates what preservice teachers actually do inside of teacher education programs rather than valuing the simplistic ratings of colleges of education based on the use of syllabi as both an indicator of content and quality. It seems to me that the answer to understanding the effectiveness of teacher education lies in the commitment of teacher educators, researchers, and policy-makers to combine their efforts and resources. In so doing, we might gain a better understanding of the features of teacher education programs whose graduates are successful in navigating the transition between teacher education and beginning school contexts.

Implications for Research

This longitudinal case study has taken a situated view of learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) in hopes of uncovering the contextual influences on a participant's journey in learning to teach literacy. This is a single-case study, and additional studies that look at other members of the same cohort could shed light on the similarities and differences between teachers from the same teacher education program. Further, more multi-institutional studies that look at cases across different programs could potentially increase the conversation about the different pathways of teacher preparation (Anders, Hoffman, & Duffy, 2000). In light of the evidence that Colleen continues to be supported by her teacher education program long after she graduates, there is a need for more studies that focus on how programs stay connected to their graduates and continue to support them

(Freedman & Appleman, 2009).

In thinking about this study in particular, there are several aspects of Colleen's journey that seemed potentially noteworthy but weren't fully explored. First, in light of the data that revealed that Colleen's aesthetic side was an integral part of her journey in becoming a teacher, a more in-depth analysis that explores the ways in which she draws on her artistic and aesthetic self in understanding her growth as a teacher could provide new research on the use of aesthetic education as a tool in learning to teach (Greene, 2011). Second, reflection played an important role in both Colleen's teacher education program and the way she navigated tension in school contexts. Thus, a more in-depth analysis that looks at the ways she reflects through art and poetry, explored through the theoretical lens of social semiotics (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress, 2003) and transmediation (Albers, Holbrook, & Harste, 2010; Siegel, 2006), could potentially provide new research on the influence and role of a multimodal approach to reflection in becoming a literacy teacher. Finally, although this study did not focus on identity as a theoretical framework, I acknowledge it as central to understanding the role that multiple contexts played in her "becoming" a literacy teacher (Olsen, 2008; Peressini, Borko, Romangnano, Knuth, & Willis, 2004; Wenger, 1998). Over time, the data made evident that Colleen was engaged throughout the last 6 ½ years in the recursive and introspective process of becoming, being, and thinking as a teacher. As Colleen's understandings and practices evolved so too did her identities. Because identities are always shifting and multiple, a focus on contextually specific ways in which

Colleen's identity evolved would allow for a more dynamic approach to studying her

journey in becoming a literacy teacher (Gee, 2000).

Conclusion

I conclude this dissertation with a drawing that Colleen did at the

culmination of our data collection when I asked her to do a retrospective of her

journey in becoming a teacher (Figure 12).   It is a symbolic representation of this

study's findings that sought to understand the influences on Colleen's journey in

becoming a literacy teacher. Captured in this way, it illustrates that Colleen was an

active participant drawing upon contexts in particular ways to shape her journey.

This image serves as a visual reminder that learning to teach is a complex, ongoing,

and non-linear process, and that both the individual and the various contexts for

learning to teach influence a teacher's development in mutually constitutive ways.   I

hope this image and this study demonstrate the beauty and complexity involved in

becoming a literacy teacher as an intricately woven medley of past, present, and

future contexts and the importance of teacher education programs in supporting a

teacher's active participation across these contexts.

Figure 12. Colleen's Illustration of the Influences on Her Journey in Becoming a Literacy Teacher

Appendix A: Interview Protocols (Summer 2013)

Before Teacher Education
1. Tell me about your literacy experiences growing up?
2. Reread your literacy autobiography (done in teacher education)? Anything resonate?
3. How does the schooling experience you are experiencing in your student teaching and in tutoring differ from your own schooling experience?
4. What made you want to become a teacher?

Teacher Education
1. Tell me a little bit about your teacher education (TE) program.
2. Are there any particular course readings or things that you read during your teacher education program that stuck out to you?
3. Why did you choose your particular TE program?
4. Tell me about your TE program.
5. What were your biggest successes during your TE program?
6. What challenges did you have in your TE program?
7. What aspect of your TE program has been the biggest influence on you?
8. What was your TE program missing?
9. Describe your CT. What role did she play in your journey in learning to teach
10. What did you get out of El Puente?
11. What would be one thing you would change about your TE program?
12. Did you keep a journal during TE?
13. Show vision statement/painting: what would you change about your vision now? What still resonates with you?
14. Tell me about your tutoring experiences or how tutoring influenced you.
15. What did you think about STELLAR online?
16. How do you feel about your student teaching experience?
17. What do you think has been the most influential thing about your program on your teaching of literacy?
18. Tell me about your two-week takeover.
19. Are there any other challenges that you haven't spoken about yet about your TE program?
20. Do you remember having an "aha" or big success in your TE program?
21. Where does that saying come from [lifetime learner]?
22. If you went back to your TE Program, how do you think you would approach it differently?
23. Let's take a look back at your same classroom and you in student teaching (before viewing video). Does it feel weird to look back?
24. Does anything surprise you here? Is there anything that stands out? (looking at her image from TE program)

After Teacher Education
1. Where do you find your support system to continue what you do?
2. How do you think the leadership that you're under now is different from the leadership from your previous campus?
3. How would you characterize your literacy instruction this past year? How would you say daily life in your literacy classroom is for you?
4. Did you feel as much pressure about test results?
5. How was your fourth year of teaching?
6. Describe the community at Bowen.
7. How would you describe the leadership in your school?
8. Are there people there you talk with about your literacy instruction?
9. What or who do you perceive as having an influence on your professional learning?
10. How would you describe your literacy instruction last year?
11. What do you think are the biggest influences on your instruction?
12. What types of school wide initiatives in literacy instruction did you incorporate?
13. How is the curriculum here different then your other campus?
14. How do you make decisions about your literacy instruction?
15. Tell me about what your literacy environment looks like in your classroom.
16. Tell me about any success/challenges you have experienced this past year.
17. Tell me about your decision to transfer to Bowen.
18. You mentioned last time we met that you wished everyone could experience two different school contexts. Tell me more about that.
19. You also mentioned last time that each context had its unique challenges. Tell me more about that.
20. What is the curriculum on your campus?
21. You mention you had to form habits. What would you consider your habits are now? What habits would you like to acquire?
22. You are passionate about social justice ("we cannot be silent.") When do you think you acquired this language around speaking up and fighting for what you see as fair, just, right? Were you always like this?
23. What are some of the tools that you really draw on in your literacy teaching?
24. So no regrets or pangs of, I miss my Travis kiddoes?
25. If you could do anything differently in your classroom that you want to do but you feel like you can't do right now, what would that be?
26. What would get you to go back to Travis?
27. Do you think all of your work in writing has helped you toward those insights?
28. In what way do you feel you've evolved as a reading teacher?
29. As you move into your fifth year teaching, is there anything that's really sticking out in your mind as your reflect on your own development as a teacher?

Abstract B: Master Initial Code List

Before Teacher Education Codes

BTE-writingidentity
BTE-viewofliteracy
BTE-art
BTE-visualliteracy
BTE-reading.writingconnection
BTE-pace
BTE-viewofreading
BTE-apathytowardsreading
BTE-Family
BTE-readingidentity
BTE-viewofteaching
BTE-viewoflanguage.words
BTE-race
BTE-viewofwriting
BTE-poetry
BTE-college
BTE-criticalliteracy
BTE-books
BTE-ahamoment
BTE-learner
BTE-learningwaseasy
BTE-PK.12Exp

Teacher Education Codes

TE-vocabulary
TE-cohort
TE-viewofprogram
TE-authenticteaching
TE-inquiry
TE-growth
TE-fundsofknowledge
TE-perspective
TE-classroommanagement
TE-criticalliteracy
TE-modeling
TE-lessonplans
TE-LaFuente
TE-studentownership
TE-family
TE-missingfromTE
TE-ahamoment
TE-reflection
TE-readingstrategies
TE-influenceoncurrentteaching
TE-writing
TE-viewoflearning
TE-guidedreading
TE-discussion
TE-technology
TE-language
TE-standards
TE-ZPD
TE-tools
TE-Colearner
TE-viewofschooling
TE-concerns
TE-literaturechart
TE-management
TE-culturalllyrelevantteaching
TE-readaloud
TE-curriculum
TE-viewofreading
TE-suggestionforprogram
TE-summarizing
TE-agency
TE-adaptability
TE-freedominclassroom
TE-artidentity

TE-flexibility
TE-foundation
TE-individualizedinstruction
TE-influenceofhome
TE-identity
TE-becomingateacher
TE-cognitivecoaching
TE-charttextsupport
TE-Calfen
TE-confidence
TE-continuity
TE-contexts
TE-criticallyreading
TE-buildingonpriorknowledge
TE-bestpractice
TE-facilitatorofconversation
TE-behaviormanagement
TE-bookclubs
TE-diversestudents
TE-emphasisonliteracy
TE-equity
TE-parents
TE-overachiever
TE-namingthegems
TE-NCLB
TE-nontraditionalstudent
TE-PD
TE-probbing
TE-problemsolving
TE-processvsproduct
TE-power
TE-leadership
TE-lessismore
TE-KWL
TE-integratedinstruction
TE-lifeexperiences
TE-math
TE-modelsofreaders
TE-manipulatingtext
TE-loveoflanguage
TE-luxuryoftime
TE-CourseReadings
TE-tutoring
TE-studentcentered

Teacher Education Codes Continued

TE-learner
TE-Professors
TE-modelsofteaching
TE-studentteaching
TE-textchoice
TE-socialjustice
TE-FieldExperience
TE-vision
TE-community
TE-challenge
TE-cooperatingteacher
TE-assessment
TE-viewofteaching
TE-balance
TE-viewofliteracy
TE-coursework
TE-STELLAR
TE-success
TE-selfcritical
TE-trust
TE-literacypractices
TE-learningismessy
TE-highexpectations
TE-importanceofUT
TE-caring
TE-ESL.ELL
TE-favoritepart
TE-praise
TE-differentiatedinstruction
TE-pacing
TE-writingconference
TE-spelling
TE-socialpoliticalcontext
TE-wordstudy
TE-structured
TE-readerstheatre
TE-questionning
TE-roleofteacher
TE-textsupport
TE-tryingonhats
TE-varietyofcontexts
TE-regretsaboutTE

TE-viewofstudents
TE-practice
TE-accountability
TE-timemanagement
TE-importanceofmakingmistakes
TE-textstructure
TE-writersnotebook
TE-wordwork
TE-goal
TE-journey
TE-invitations
TE-grouping
TE-inclusion
TE-readingwritingconnection
TE-payingattentiontostudentinterests
TE-art
TE-safe
TE-relationships
TE-scaffolding
TE-strengthofCT
TE-research
TE-questionningTEexperience
TE-explicitinstruction
TE-teachingphilosophy
TE-TA
TE-bigidea
TE-assets-based
TE-runningrecord
TE-dialogue
TE-fluency
TE-valuesdifference
TE-validatingstudent
TE-positivereinforcement
TE-texashistory
TE-textconnections
TE-importanceofbeingopen
TE-guidingyoungchildren
TE-images
TE-likemindedpeople
TE-waittime
TE-roleoftext
TE-viewofself

After Teacher Education Codes

ATE-readinglikeawriter
ATE-challenge
ATE-learner
ATE-studentcentered
ATE-selfcritical
ATE-growth
ATE-authenticteaching
ATE-Travis
ATE-contextcomparison
ATE-accountability
ATE-viewofteaching
ATE-PD
ATE-viewofself
ATE-literacypracticesnew
ATE-trust
ATE-Vision
ATE-modeling
ATE-calfenteachers
ATE-literacypractices
ATE-shiftinthinking
ATE-SocialJustice
ATE-community
ATE-textchoice
ATE-travisadministration
ATE-firstyearteaching
ATE-vocabulary
ATE-Calfen
ATE-likemindedpeople
ATE-Leadership
ATE-travisteachers
ATE-assessment
ATE-practice
ATE-district
ATE-curriculum
ATE-Reflection
ATE-positivereinforcement
ATE-viewofreading.writing
ATE-modelsofteaching
ATE-importanceofUT
ATE-viewofliteracy
ATE-WriterIdentity
ATE-ZPD

ATE-HeartofTX
ATE-standards
ATE-criticalliteracy
ATE-Calfenadministration
ATE-managingmaterials
ATE-literacycoach
ATE-discussion
ATE-success
ATE-viewoflearning
ATE-classroomcommunity
ATE-family
ATE-parents
ATE-tools
ATE-highexpectations
ATE-technology
ATE-language
ATE-surveillance
ATE-organization
ATE-ownership
ATE-importanceofmistakes
ATE-management
ATE-habits
ATE-co-learner
ATE-literaturecharts
ATE-praise
ATE-writersnotebook
ATE-tension
ATE-writinginstruction
ATE-ELL.ESL
ATE-viewofstudents
ATE-books
ATE-inclusion
ATE-scholars
ATE-mentor
ATE-pace
ATE-fifthyearteaching
ATE-PDAS
ATE-goals
ATE-influenceofTE
ATE-balance
ATE-gradelevelteam
ATE-fundsofknowledge

ATE-billingual
ATE-bigidea
ATE-art
ATE-mentoring
ATE-bestpractices
ATE-makingsenseofTE
ATE-bookflood
ATE-makingmistakes
ATE-makingadifference
ATE-passion
ATE-problemsolving
ATE-cooperatingteacher
ATE-confidence
ATE-thirdyearteaching
ATE-socialjusticegroup
ATE-secondyear
ATE-studentsuccess
ATE-strugglingstudent
ATE-testing
ATE-integration
ATE-viewofwriting
ATE-math
ATE-readaloud
ATE-scriptedcurriculum
ATE-resources
ATE-learningismessy
ATE-journeyinteaching
ATE-power
ATE-groupwork
ATE-namingthegems
ATE-studentidentity
ATE-studentownership
ATE-administration
ATE-ahamoment
ATE-writersworkshop
ATE-inquiry
ATE-travisfamilies
ATE-viewoflife
ATE-needs
ATE-teacherresearcher
ATE-professor
ATE-race

After Teacher Education Codes Continued

ATE-state
ATE-timemanagement
ATE-transitionfromTE
ATE-textstructure
ATE-TexesScores
ATE-textconnections
ATE-authenticassessment
ATE-audience
ATE-bookclub
ATE-bookstudy
ATE-cohort
ATE-assessmentleadstoinstruction
ATE-protection
ATE-perspective
ATE-poetry
ATE-flexibility
ATE-hiring
ATE-facilitator
ATE-importanceofbooks
ATE-images
ATE-diverselearners
ATE-groupdiscussion
ATE-fromtheknowntotheunknown
ATE-guidedreading
ATE-herlearningstylevsstudents
ATE-fourthyear
ATE-lackofexperience
ATE-knowledge
ATE-conferences
ATE-comparisontofirstyear
ATE-lonely
ATE-chartpaper
ATE-library
ATE-importanceoftakingrisks
ATE-importanceofreading
ATE-influences
ATE-differentexpectationsthanTE
ATE-safe
ATE-sciences
ATE-studentexample
ATE-strengthsperspective
ATE-teacherdominatedinstruction

ATE-supportsothers
ATE-studentteacher
ATE-teachingresources
ATE-words
ATE-waittime
ATE-teacherlanguage
ATE-valuingoftexts
ATE-writinggroup
ATE-culturallyrelevantteaching
ATE-differentiatinginstruction
ATE-identityasareader.writer
ATE-changeinteachingpractice
ATE-classroommanagement
ATE-home/schoolconnection
ATE-positionsstudentasexpert

Appendix C: Screen Shot of ATLAS.ti Coding Scheme

- The way I pull reading groups, not to the ding of a bell, but to the needs of the group.

- The way I listen to groups working together, as not to fix and make them *do*—or make them accomplish *my* goals, but rather to listen and see what they are doing to make it work, so we can notice it and add to it later. I want a step-back approach to their group work. That isn't to say, I don't expect dignified behavior. I do.

- The way I keep a notebook in my own life that I use in the classroom as authentic modeling. How we glue text into notebooks and code them with color, with symbols, with thinking. It's all very organic, but it is *becoming* a way that I do things. I put stars by things that are test-related. I underline vocabulary. I circle words I don't know or I think are spelled wrong. I squiggle line under delicious text that takes my breath away. These are things I do, that are becoming habit of me as a teacher and writer/reader, which I transfer into my classroom and become teaching tools—things we can all count on. This makes it less fuzzy and ambiguous. I am seeing the structural habits coming from my inside, out. **Not from the outside, in.**

ATE-authenticteaching   ATE-literacypracticesr
ATE-growth~   ATE-shiftinthinking

ATE-authenticteaching
ATE-groupwork
ATE-habits
ATE-studentcentered

ATE-accountability
ATE-authenticteaching
ATE-habits
ATE-identityasareader.writer
ATE-modeling
ATE-tools
AuthenticTeaching
Important Quotes
Teachingismoreorganic.authentic

Code

Definition of
Category Link

Analytic Memos

Appendix D: Audit Trail

First Level Coding (See Appendix A):

BTE - 37 codes
TE - 195 codes
ATE - 197 codes

Cleaned Up Codes/Merged Codes

-ones that were misspelled
-ones that were duplicates/identical but different names
-ones that had just one code that could fit appropriately into another category.

Before Teacher Education Codes
-merged teachers(1) with PK-12 Exp
-merged learning was easy with tookinforeasily
-merged family with famliy, sister, mother, father, daughter
-deleted scholars(1) bc it was already coded as books and she was referring to the ones she loved.
-renamed language to view of language.words
-merged love of words into viewoflanguage.words
-renamed reading to view of reading
-merged genres into reading identity
-deleted "literary influences (1)" b/c it was talking about family which was already coded as such
-merged journaling (1) into "writing identity"
-deleted "creativity(1) b/c it was already sufficiently coded as "art"
-deleted "growth" (1) b/c she talks about getting better at art but it was already coded as such.

Teacher Education Codes
-deleted TE(1) bc it was already coded TEwithvariouscodes
-merged "challenge(15) with challenges(9)
-merged family with famiy and being a mom
-merged growth and growthsinceTE(2)
-merged ELL and ESL and renamed code to be ESL.ELL
-merged inquiry(10) with inquiry(3)
-merged literaturechart with literaturecharts with litunit
-merged pacing(4) with pace(1)
-merged perspective(9) with perspectives(3)
-merged professor(28) with professors(3)
-merged readaloud(5) with readaloud(1)

-merged refection(2) with reflection(6)
-merged validating student(2) with validating(1)
-merged Colearner(6) and co-learner(1)

After Teacher Education Codes
-merged assessment(14) with assesment(1)
-merged challenge(46) with challenges(19)
-merged family(5) with family influence(4)
-merged growth(3) with growthsinceTE(5)
-deleted importance of process (1) b/c it was coded more precisely with other codes
-merged journey and journeyintoteaching(2)
-renamed langlearners to ELL.ESL and merged ESL with ELL.ESL. this is consisted with codes in TE
-deleted identity(1) b/c it was already coded as identityasreaderwriter which was more specific
-deleted teachers(1) b/c it was coded as more specific (SJG, Travis)
-merged time(1) with timemanagement(1)
-merged writers notebook(4) with writersnotebook
-merged PD pd and ProfDev

Total Number of Codes
BTE-22
TE-172
ATE-184

Appendix E: Data Analysis Categories

UNDERSTANDING OF SELF	UNDERSTANDING OF STUDENTS
BTE-learner	TE-authenticteaching
BTE-learningwaseasy	TE-studentcentered
TE-learner	TE-studentownership
TE-vision	TE-fundsofknowledge
TE-selfcritical	TE-caring
TE-Colearner	TE-viewofstudents
TE-highexpectations	TE-praise
TE-viewofself	TE-payingattentiontostudentinterests
TE-teachingphilosophy	TE-validatingstudent
TE-journey	TE-assets-based
TE-lifeexperiences	TE-positivereinforcement
TE-overachiever	TE-individualizedinstruction
TE-agency	TE-diversestudents
TE-identity	ATE-studentcentered
ATE-learner	ATE-authenticteaching
ATE-selfcritical	ATE-positivereinforcement
ATE-growth	ATE-differentiatinginstruction
ATE-viewofself	ATE-highexpectations
ATE-highexpectations	ATE-ownership
ATE-co-learner	ATE-praise
ATE-viewoflife	ATE-viewofstudents
ATE-herlearningstylevsstudents	ATE-fundsofknowledge
ATE-passion	ATE-strugglingstudent
	ATE-studentsuccess
	ATE-studentidentity
	ATE-studentownership
	ATE-home/schoolconnection
	ATE-travisfamilies
	ATE-fromtheknowntotheunknown
	ATE-herlearningstylevsstudents
	ATE-positionsstudentasexpert
	ATE-studentexample
	ATE-strengthsperspective

UNDERSTANDING OF TEACHING	UNDERSTANDING OF LEARNING
BTE-race	BTE-learningwaseasy
BTE-criticalliteracy	TE-community
BTE-viewofteaching	TE-balance
TE-ESL.ELL	TE-trust
TE-teachingphilosophy	TE-cohort
TE-socialjustice	TE-inquiry
TE-criticalliteracy	TE-viewoflearning
TE-LaFuente	TE-learningismessy
TE-viewofschooling	TE-importanceofmakingmistakes
TE-culturalllyrelevantteaching	TE-likemindedpeople
TE-curriculum	TE-scaffolding
TE-valuesdifference	TE-leadership
TE-socialpoliticalcontext	TE-luxuryoftime
TE-equity	TE-lessismore
TE-criticallyreading	TE-safe
ATE-SocialJustice	TE-relationships
ATE-criticalliteracy	ATE-authenticteaching
ATE-classroomcommunity	ATE-trust
ATE-culturallyrelevantteaching	ATE-community
ATE-ELL.ESL	ATE-likemindedpeople
ATE-fundsofknowledge	ATE-practice
ATE-socialjusticegroup	ATE-positivereinforcement
ATE-billingual	ATE-Reflection
ATE-race	ATE-viewoflearning
ATE-diverselearners	ATE-classroomcommunity
	ATE-ownership
	ATE-importanceofmistakes
	ATE-learningismessy
	ATE-inquiry
	ATE-fromtheknowntotheunknown
	ATE-supportsothers
	ATE-safe
	ATE-importanceoftakingrisks
	ATE-makingmistakes

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