CROSSING OVER FROM STUDENT TO TEACHER:
NEGOTIATING AN IDENTITY

by

Carol A. Beynon

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education
Graduate Department of Education
University of Toronto

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ABSTRACT

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, Graduate Department of Education, The University of Toronto, by Carol A. Beynon, 1996.

In this study I use a dialogic process with two student teachers, two of their university teacher educators, and their six cooperating teachers to investigate how student teachers learn to teach. By listening to the voices and analysing the texts of the major participants in the teacher education process, I identify some of the dilemmas that exist in the professional education of teachers. Six paradoxes emerge from the discourse with the student teachers that cause them to feel a loss of control in their search for personal meaning as an emerging teacher. As they consider the contradictions during the preservice program, the student teachers alter their personal expectations and begin to reconceptualize their views of teaching. At the same time, I examine the discourse and practices of the school-based and university-based teacher educators' roles in order to determine how they contribute to or help solve the contradictions which the student teachers encounter.

The major finding in this study relates to the value of the dialogic process which the student teachers and teacher educators participated in as part of this research project. The dialogic practice seems to have a profound effect on the student teachers' visions of themselves as teachers. The implications of this inquiry are used to promote ideas for transformation in teacher education.
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Dedicated to my mother and father,
Auralie and Robert Smyth,
whose encouragement
has been unfailing and ever supportive.
Even when my high school guidance counsellor
told me I did not have the intellectual ability
to go to university, my parents convinced me that I did.
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CHAPTER ONE

EXAMINING THE CONTEXT OF PRESERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION: FROM PROMISE TO PERPLEXITY

Introduction

I don’t know what to expect this year as I begin Teacher’s College and it’s something that I have been thinking a lot about. So many people have told me over the summer that it’s a make work year—that you don’t do anything really important....The feedback that I’m getting from teachers and friends who have been in various teacher’s colleges already for a year has been so negative, except for the student teaching part. Practice teaching is supposed to be the really important part of all this.

However, I rarely accept anything that someone says at face value--I need to experience it for myself....And I am so keen to become an excellent teacher that I will make this a good year for me. (Carlo, student teacher, September, 1995)

Learning to teach is a complex endeavour and is made even more complicated by the fact that no one knows the best way of preparing beginning teachers to teach (Britzman, 1991; Onslow & Beynon, 1996). In Chapter 1, I provide an introductory discussion about the major focus of this study—learning to teach and describe the current context of teacher education. Then, I describe the problem, the study, and its significance in the research on teacher education, and provide an outline of the organization of the remaining chapters.
The Context of Teacher Education

Negotiating the pathway from student to teacher is difficult and transformative, and has been described in a variety of different, often disparaging ways, depending upon the person to whom one speaks—whether student teacher, struggling beginning teacher, experienced teacher, administrator, or university teacher educator. Invariably, the reports about how one becomes a teacher are vague, frequently negative, divided around the inevitable discrepancy between theory and practice, and are frequently made by teachers, school administrators, and members of the public who are ignorant of what is really taught in teacher education programs. The images and expectations that student teachers have of themselves as developing teachers seem to vary significantly from the images which teacher educators, cooperating teachers, and school administrators have of them and their teacher education programs.

Based on my experience as a preservice teacher educator, I begin this study from the premise that student teachers expect to see themselves emerge as competent teachers at the end of their teacher education program; cooperating teachers and school administrators expect student teachers to learn the essential skills to handle a full-time teaching position with confidence as a result of their teacher education program; university-based teacher educators see student teachers as learners and expect their student teachers to engage in the study of education in order to begin the process of becoming a teacher. Although these images and expectations are not totally dissimilar, neither are they congruent.
Learning to Teach

Learning to teach is perceived as not difficult, especially by student teachers; student teachers frequently underestimate the difficulties involved in learning to teach (Weinstein, 1988). According to Lortie (1975), student teachers have already spent about 15,000 hours observing teaching and learning prior to entering their teacher education program, and may be already socialized—perhaps subconsciously—to the norms and expectations of the profession.

Learning to teach requires the study and understanding of principles of learning, and the application of learning principles through practice, self-evaluation, and personal, professional reflection (Cole & Knowles, 1993)—a simple but significant statement when in print, but almost impossible to describe in practice.

Teaching is a highly complex series of acts. It is not learned easily. Further, it cannot be done by formula or recipe. It is idiosyncratic. At the same time it must fit the learner, the context, and the knowledge or skill being taught. Teaching behaviour can seldom be transferred unchanged from one teacher to another. A technique or approach that works for one teacher may not be effective for another. (Huling-Austin, Odell, Ishler, Kay, & Edelfelt, 1989, p. 1)

A preservice program has two distinct components—a practicum in which student teachers observe and practise aspects of teaching in school classrooms for several weeks, and a university-based component where they study about teaching and the principles of learning in a structured and formal classroom setting.

During their preservice year, student teachers are placed for several weeks in school classrooms with experienced teachers (or cooperating teachers) who carry out the task of steering novice teachers through the first stages of their teacher
development. Student teachers usually value their practicum experience as the most valuable component in their teacher preparation program and report that it is in the practicum that they really learn about teaching, not in the faculties of education (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Juliebo, Jackson, & Peterson, 1995; Mayer & Austin, 1994/1995; Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1995). Other studies have found that the practicum site has a singularly critical impact on new teachers' practices in the beginning stages of their teaching careers (Juliebo et al., 1995; Zeichner & Liston, 1987) and may, in fact, inhibit new teachers from trying new forms of practice. The cooperating teacher is a highly influential teacher educator in the professional growth of student teachers. Writers have been calling for support programs for cooperating teachers for decades to ensure that the practicum is an educative site for the student teacher and that the cooperating teacher has an understanding of her or his role as a teacher educator (Cole & Knowles, 1993; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Holmes Group, 1986; Juliebo et al, 1995; Knowles, Cole & Presswood, 1994; Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1995; Zeichner & Liston, 1987).

On the other hand, student teachers tend not to see the value in their university courses and contend that the form and substance of the university-based program would be more helpful to them in learning to teach if it were related closely to their clinical experiences in schools. Student teachers enter preservice teacher education with prior beliefs and negative expectations (as was noted on the introductory quote in Chapter 1). They are forewarned by professional colleagues and friends to value their school experiences as student teachers, but to devalue their university courses. As they
proceed through the preservice program, student teachers are encouraged to value the practicality of teaching in the school classroom to the exclusion of learning to think formally about learning to teach in a university classroom-based setting with experts who have studied the process of education.

Three key dynamics are at work here, all of which grow out of the dichotomy of theory and practice, when theoretical knowledge is viewed as the property of an academic department and schools of education are viewed as only capable of hands-on practice. First, the elevation of academic knowledge over practice banishes practice to the realm of the practical. Second, schools of education are not thought of as capable of producing scientific knowledge unencumbered by values and beliefs. Indeed, the knowledge of school practice is devalued because it is contingent, situated, and resistant to unitary truths, immutable laws, or universal generalizations. Finally, the deeply held myth that one learns to teach solely by experience works against teacher education...

(Britzman, 1991, p. 39)

After completing the preservice program, most student teachers believe that the first year of teaching will not be that difficult (Beynon, 1994a; Jacka, 1994; Lortie, 1975; Veenman, 1984; Weinstein, 1988). They tend to enter teaching with unrealistic optimism as they make the transition from student teacher to classroom teacher. In a study of 118 beginning teachers, Weinstein found that her subjects showed a consistent tendency to believe they would experience less difficulty than other first-year teachers and that the work of teaching would be less problematic for them than for their colleagues.

Although teacher education has been the focus of numerous studies in the past as educational researchers have sought to learn about the teaching and learning process and to prepare novice teachers for public classrooms, the studies are disparate and the findings are varied. No one seems to know how to prepare the best teachers (Doyle,
Teacher education consists of a loosely coordinated set of experiences designed to establish and maintain a talented teaching force for our nation's elementary and secondary schools. The simplicity of this description belies, however, the complexities and contradictions that beset teacher education as an activity of enormous size and diversity. (Doyle, 1990, p. 3)

In spite of all of the studies, provincial reviews, and variations in program design, members of the profession remain highly critical of the way in which new teachers are prepared to assume professional responsibility because new teachers are perceived to have little practical preparation for their first year of teaching. Yet no other profession purports to make its newest members carry out exactly the same tasks on the first day of the job as their experienced colleagues with 20 years of experience.

At the beginning of that first year of teaching, new teachers are suddenly expected to assume the same responsibilities as teachers who are veterans: their classes are the same size; they teach the same number of hours; and they are expected to shoulder their fair share of duties and extracurricular activities....To compound the task, often the less desirable and less prestigious classes are assigned to new teachers because of the common practice of recognizing the seniority of more experienced teachers by awarding them the more desirable and more prestigious ones. (Jacka, 1994, p. 7)


pre-service programs are frequently criticized as being too academic and
theoretical with little opportunity for student teachers in faculties of education to learn from their own experience. (Vol. III, p. 15)

Others criticize preservice programs because they are perceived to be too brief and too shallow to prepare beginning teachers (Carnegie Forum, 1986; Holmes Group, 1986):

It seems to us that it is an insult to the job of teachers to believe it [how to teach] can be learned in one academic year at a university faculty of education, with perhaps five months of formal instruction and four months of practice teaching, as is presently the case. What is remarkable about the present system is how many teachers cope so well with such limited preparation. (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1995, p. 17)

In acknowledging the complexity of the teacher education process, the commissioners from the Ontario study called for an extended program—a two-year consecutive program—in which novices could study about teaching and learning in more depth in relation to their clinical practice in schools.

What is worrisome in the Ontario report, however, is the commissioners’ apparent stand against the knowledge that comes from academic research. Their solution to the current problems faced in teacher education merely offered a greater allotment of time in school observation and practice. The same is true for the American reports:

The lack of critical engagement with the details of the proposals offered by the reports has resulted in the lack of careful judgement about individual proposals or clear practical alternatives...which has impoverished the education debate. (Fraser, 1992, p. 10)

There are many stakeholders involved in the teacher education business which complicates any suggestion for change. Implementation occurs at several levels and by several different groups: by the university instructors during design and implementation
of university courses, by cooperating teachers during field experiences which should but do not relate to university courses (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987), and by school administrators who not only select the experienced teachers who will be the school-based teacher educators, but also hire newly-certificated teachers assign them to difficult positions in their first year of teaching (Jacka, 1994). “It is one thing for self selected national boards to call for major changes in teacher preparation; it is quite another for change actually to happen” (Fraser, 1992, p. 9).

Instead of seeing student teachers as “transformative intellectuals—that is, critical thinkers who are also engaged in the process of transforming the society in which we live” (Fraser, 1992, p. 13), student teachers are perceived in the reports as merely “passive receptacles” of the expert knowledge (Blackmore & Kenway, 1995) during their teacher education programs.

Change in preservice teacher education is required so that beginning teachers can develop a realistic understanding of knowledge and its relationship to learning. Student teachers need to understand how knowledge is acquired and how it is used in society. The volume of research which outlines the history of teacher education, the current, popular beliefs about the weakness of current preservice programs, and the concerns of beginning teachers require that something be done. However, there are some who are concerned that the change which is being called for may not be the best for education.

Under the shadow of the present neo-conservative assault on education, the esteemed model of the teacher has become that of the technologist, technician, or applied scientist. There is little talk...about the need for teachers to make
critical and informed judgements with respect to both their own practice and what they consider to be the meaning and purpose of education. What is missing from the neo-conservative discourse is the image of the teacher as a transformative intellectual who defines school as fundamentally an ethical and empowering enterprise dedicated to the fostering of democracy, to the exercise of greater social justice, and to the building of a more equitable social order. (Giroux & McLaren, 1987, p. 273)

I begin this study with the personal beliefs that preservice teacher education will only be ameliorated:

- when teacher education programs are developed which encourage beginning teachers to question current practices in schools and allow them to inquire into controversial and appropriate strategies for teaching and learning,
- when teacher education policies and plans are no longer based only on scientific and administrative theory but informed by views of critical theory that recognize that student teachers are not a unified group with totally similar interests who require the same bland diet of teacher education curriculum,
- when issues of social inequality and injustice related to the education of children and to the education of new teachers and their assignments in their first teaching positions are addressed in the school system, and
- when teachers are recognized as professionals.

**The Problem**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how student teachers learn to teach. This study is motivated from my experience as a preservice and inservice university teacher educator for the past 18 years. During this time, I have taught hundreds of preservice teachers and worked alongside many cooperating teachers and university colleagues. Through my experience, I have been frustrated by several aspects of preservice teacher education—the concern which student teachers have for being given a *bag of tricks* to use in order to become successful teachers in schools, the lack of consistency between cooperating teachers’ expectations of student teachers during the
student teaching component and the university instructors’ expectations during university courses, and the lack of knowledge which teacher educators (i.e., both cooperating teachers and university faculty) seem to have about how teachers learn to teach.

To begin the study, the images and expectations of beginning teachers according to the student teachers, their cooperating teachers, and their university instructors are examined in an attempt to contextualize the sources of criticism and to expose the chronic dilemmas that exist in the professional education of teachers. The study began with the following questions:

- How do student teachers learn how to teach?
- How do cooperating teachers and university teacher educators believe that student teachers learn to teach?
- What expectations do student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university teacher educators have for themselves and of each other in the process of learning to teach during the preservice program?
- What sources of conflict emerge for student teachers (and other participants) during the preservice program and how are they resolved?

In this study, the responses of student teachers about how they learn to teach and their expectations of the preservice program are carefully compared with the expectations of their cooperating teachers and university-based teacher educators. In listening for the fundamental interests, values, assumptions, and implications for future action in the voices of the participants in the teacher education process, especially those of the student teachers, I take a mutually reflective stance with the participants in probing, uncovering, and making explicit the fundamental values and assumptions that guide teacher education. By using a dialogic process in this study, I reveal the
expectations of the participants and attempt to inquire into those expectations to make some sense of what can reasonably be expected of the graduates of teacher education programs at this point in time. Through this study, I illuminate and clarify the paradox of theory and practice as it relates to the pedagogy of the academy and that of the school classroom so that one informs the other. By listening to and analysing the voices of the major participants in the teacher education process, I articulate some of the dilemmas that exist in professional education.

Teachers new to the profession often find themselves socialized into the status quo of the educational system yet they seem powerless to bring any change to current practice (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). The results of this inquiry are used to promote ideas for transformation in teacher education and to provide ways for student teachers to learn about teaching as they establish their professional identities as teachers.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant because over the past ten years there has been an increasing interest in restructuring teacher education. Some writers suggest that

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1 The reformation of teacher education programs across North America is being called for as a result of numerous critical reports (e.g., in Canada, refer to For the Love of Learning, the Report of the Royal Commission on Learning, 1995, or Tomorrow's Teachers: A Report of the Holmes Group, 1986, or A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986 for change advocacy in the United States). Teacher education is perceived to be the key to the reform of education in general—the premise being that if new teachers begin to teach using new methodologies and beliefs, then eventually the whole system will be changed. The proponents of this view have missed two major points: (i) new teachers in a system have absolutely no power to create an environment of change; they are evaluated using traditional methods by school administrators who expect them to maintain a traditional environment—and they are questioned if they attempt to use new approaches. One of the first effects the system and the profession has is to water down their idealism and interest in reform because new/different beliefs challenge the comfortable status quo; (ii) there are too few new teachers being hired in any one site in the Ontario context for them to be able to work toward change in a supportive environment.
school improvement is only possible with a major restructuring of teacher education.

Statements such as the following appear frequently in print:

The education of teachers is a topic of no small controversy. The problems of education and of our schools are often laid at the feet of those who prepare teachers; the solutions are often claimed to be found there as well. If we could only, the position goes, improve the preparation of teachers, we could solve the problems to be found in our schools. (Pearson, 1989, p. 129)

Schools can never be more effective than the quality of their teachers....The improvement of teacher education is integral to the improvement of schools. (Houston, Haberman, & Sikula, 1990, p. ix)

You cannot improve student learning for all or most students without improving teacher learning for all or most teachers (Fullan, 1994, cited in For the Love of Learning, Volume III, p. 11, Royal Commission, 1995).

The Ontario Royal Commission on Learning (1995) asserts that

student teachers need longer blocks of time working in schools, but just as important, they need assistance in thinking critically about their work in schools, so that they can more than merely replicate what they see. Like a pendulum, there is a movement away from the present practice--spending too much time in the faculties and not enough in actual classrooms--to the opposite extreme--trivializing formal instruction in the philosophy of education and pedagogical methodologies, and emphasizing classroom experience instead. (Vol. III, p. 17)

However this simplistic approach to an old problem may merely promise increased emphasis on practice in school settings in an attempt to alleviate the current problems of teacher education with no guarantee that practices in schools and practices in faculties of education will be altered in any way to reflect what is known about teachers' professional knowledge. Munby (1996) criticizes the Report of the Royal Commission for minimizing the importance of a "coherent view of professional
knowledge" (p. 127) when it speaks of reformation in teacher education.

It is critical that teacher education programs are developed which improve and alleviate the concerns of current practices, provide student teachers with opportunities to think critically about their work in schools, and are based on the professional knowledge of teaching. Such a system of training as suggested by the Report, unless monitored carefully, could contribute to a further reinforcement of the conservative nature of schools as young teachers have their ideals blunted to alternative possibilities.

The Study

Through a methodology based in critical ethnography, 2 this study attempts to identify the concerns about teacher education through a detailed description of the images and expectations that student teachers have for themselves and the images and expectations that others (i.e., cooperating teachers and university faculty) have for them as they learn to teach.

The study is situated in the one-year, post-baccalaureate, university teacher education program in Ontario where I teach, and in which student teachers are prepared for teaching positions in elementary and secondary schools. The academic year is divided into 20 weeks of university courses taught by teacher education faculty members, and 10 weeks of field experiences supervised by selected cooperating teachers in local schools.

As a faculty member in this teacher education institution, I decided to pursue

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2 See Chapter 3 for a full description of the methodology.
this particular study because of my sense that there is something fundamentally flawed in the education of teachers, because of my optimism that something can be done to improve the situation, and because of a personal commitment to my own professional growth as a teacher educator. During the 18 years of my employment at this particular Faculty of Education and during the years before that as a practising elementary and secondary school teacher, I listened as student teachers, beginning and experienced teachers, and school administrators complained about the poor quality of preservice education in the province. Some school administrators to whom I spoke asserted that when they hired new teachers from any teacher education faculty, they had to retrain them completely because they had learned little of relevance or practical value during their teacher training.

At the same time, I have listened to and observed the concerns expressed by the general population with the current educational system. I worry about the future of teacher education when I hear reports that education must be improved so that our students can become the country's human resources to compete (and win) in a global market rather than to provide an education whose primary goal is to develop pupils who will work toward a more just society. It was my hope that by working through a study based in critical ethnography, I might arrive at some conclusions that would have the potential to offer some glimmers of hope for redirection in the future of teacher education and ultimately affect the entire educational system.

The remainder of the dissertation is organized into six additional chapters. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the development of critical theory and its
relationship to research and practice in teacher education. It offers an explanation of how critical theory informs this particular study. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used in this study. Critical ethnography, the chosen form of methodology, is compared with conventional educational ethnography and reasons are provided for its use in this study. An outline is included to show how the participants were chosen and how the data were gathered and analyzed. The findings and preliminary analysis of the study are presented in Chapters 4 through 6. In Chapter 4, the main participants, the student teachers, are introduced and tell their story. The university teacher educators are introduced in Chapter 5, and the cooperating teachers in Chapter 6. The study concludes with the implications and conclusions in Chapter 7.

Summary

Learning to teach is an ongoing process and student teachers and beginning teachers are always in the process of becoming, of trying to develop an identity as a teacher. Yet no one knows how to prepare the best teachers; no one knows how it is that students learn to teach or become teachers. At the same time, there are widespread beliefs that there are inherent and fundamental weaknesses in the educational systems of North America and in the professional education of teachers. There have been a number of studies and reports calling for immediate reform in teacher education in spite of the various studies over the past ten years which indicates that little has changed. In education, it is easy to mandate change; it is almost impossible to ensure that it really happens.

This chapter has provided a brief overview of the context of teacher education
within the current educational system and provides an introductory background to the problem of learning to teach which is to be studied in this thesis.
CHAPTER TWO

CRITICAL THEORY AND TEACHER EDUCATION

Introduction

Linguists, sociologists, historians, and anthropologists have long discovered important differences in the discursive practices of culturally, socially, and historically remote peoples, differences that no doubt have deep implications for differences in social cognition and human interests. For many people, the “discursive turn” now occurring across the social sciences could not come soon enough. It has been delayed mainly by institutional forces to do with the boundaries between academic disciplines and with the vested interests of those tied to earlier ways of perceiving the world. Its arrival is now having an impact even on the most conservative of disciplines. (Corson, 1995b, p. ix)

The rise of critical theory has had a significant impact on recent developments in research and shows potential for affecting the restructuring of both education (Corson, 1995a; May, 1994) and teacher education (Smyth, 1989). In this chapter, I address the topic of theory development in education and its conflict with practice from an historical and philosophical perspective. I offer a brief background of educational research methodologies from the development of logical positivism through to and including the rise of critical theory, and I discuss the potential impact of critical theory on teacher education as it relates to this particular study.

What is Theory?

The tradition of educational research was founded in a positivist paradigm in
which researchers sought *truth* based on empirical findings. The truth became theory.

"In fact, the word, theory, has been appropriated by the behaviourists to mean an empirically verifiable set of neutral ‘facts’ that have been inductively derived largely by observation alone" (English, 1994, p. 16). Early educational researchers believed that unless a circumstance was obvious and verifiable then its relevance to scientific debate was only marginal. English explains that theories were developed as explanations or narratives.

No theory ever came from “thin air.” It has precedents, antecedents, and traces from many other ideas—all within a discourse which enables it to be envisioned, expanded, checked, debated, verified, criticized, changed, and ultimately, abandoned for another more promising narrative. (p. 17)

Theories can be seen simply as stories created to explain a certain phenomenon. Because things change as more is learned about them, the stories (or theories) change and usually become invalid and outdated. Theories describe a dominant or influential point of view in seeing the world and are based on common sets of assumptions which are intended to shape perceptions and experiences. English (1994) reminds us that theories are "language and culturally dependent." In other words theories are contextually bound within a certain, limited set of ideologies and responses in a closed and controlled reality.

The idea of reality is simply not possible as the old positivistic science conceptualized it—i.e., as a kind of objective and idealistic world of the universal laws and numbers that produced *truth*. Reality is far more immediate, temporal, subjective, and corruptible than those who were interested in “scientizing” educational administration ever perceived. (p. viii)
English's (1994) concept of theory and theory development offers an emancipating means of looking at theory which is quite different from the traditional, positivistic-structuralist view in which theories were considered to be *rules* to enlighten educational practice. Theories were held in high esteem, were ruled by science, and were developed by the dominant group for the good of the people. In present times, critical theorists note that the *rules* are flawed because they were generated within a liberal-democratic, politically-neutral perspective of education in which schools were believed to provide a level playing field for all students.

Times have changed. Critical theorists note that schools are hierarchical, bureaucratic structures that favour the members of the dominant society and disadvantage those from marginal classes. At the same time, practitioners (i.e., teachers and administrators in schools) complain that educational theories are irrelevant and insignificant--that theories are developed by researchers who are far removed from the realities of the classroom and who have little idea of what classroom practice is actually like (May, 1994). Practitioners protest that researchers have intruded deeply into their lives, exposed their deficiencies, and yet given them no voice in the analysis or interpretation of the data. In short, teachers have stated that theories are largely worthless to them in practice. Rather than being informed by research, teachers are being advised by personal experimentation in their own isolated classes:

> The gap between theory and practice in education is a worrying one. While various educational theories are regularly expounded and regularly replaced in academic circles, they often bear little relevance to or have little impact on classroom life. No wonder then, that educational theories discussed in universities and colleges of education
during their training come to be seen by many teachers as marginal; of academic interest perhaps, but of little “practical” value. (May, 1994, p. 1)

Educational researchers from a critical perspective still seek truth, but in alternative and reflexive ways using different modes of inquiry that will have some affect on teachers’ beliefs and their practices. In the next section of this chapter I provide a brief, historical overview of how theory has developed in relation to educational research beginning with logical positivism and concluding with the rise of critical theory. I conclude the chapter by providing a brief description and rationale for the significance of critical theory in relation to the research on teacher education.

An Overview of the History of Theory Development in Education

The Rise of Logical Positivism

Educational research, a relatively new field, has traditionally followed the heritage of social science research. Although education has been informed by the teaching and writing of such orators and philosophers as Aristotle, Socrates, Bacon, and Descartes, one of the earliest researchers to influence the still contemporary style of research was the nineteenth-century philosopher, Auguste Comte.

His theory of knowledge stressed that science consisted of a precise and certain method, basing theoretical laws on sound empirical observation. For him the social sciences were kin to the natural sciences, sharing the same epistemological form. (Hughes, 1990, p. 18)

For Comte, there was no speculation involved in the research of human behaviour; the social life of individuals was the result of interacting forces that produced particular and predictable sequences in behaviour. Comte disregarded such human behaviours as
choice and morality and contributed to strengthening the scientific-determinist view of positivism which became firmly entrenched as the form of research.

The assumptions underlying positivism were rooted in the sharing of natural and social sciences, and reality for positivists was confined to what could be scientifically measured or proven. Another influential philosopher, Emile Durkheim, shared Comte's views of empiricism and stretched the paradigm further. Durkheim's work is significant in understanding the evolution of social science research. His writings were firmly entrenched in structural-functionalism—the belief that the individual existed for the good of society.

Durkheim insisted that society was a moral phenomenon in that collective ways of thinking, perceiving, acting, included elements of constraint and obligation and, therefore, constituted a collective moral consciousness. This, he held, was expressed in religion, in law, in the division of labour, in institutionalism itself. (Hughes, 1990, p. 23)

Durkheim was committed to the superiority of scientific methodology in studying society through social facts. In fact, the significance of Durkheim's work was his commitment to the study of society as a natural science and schooling as a socializing and integrating force. Durkheim's work was influential and emphasized the transmission of and the perpetuation of the accepted culture; the individual was secondary to the needs of the state.

At no point does Durkheim ask to what extent the "physical, intellectual and moral states" required by the "political society as a whole" are determined by, or serve the purposes of, particular groups within that society; advantaging some groups over others....The emphasis is on the transmission of a culture, or more specifically, the transmission and perpetuation of an accepted (or acceptable) culture. Who determines what is acceptable...and who benefits from and is disadvantaged by this determination are not questioned. (Hughes,
Growing out of this tradition was an emphasis on empirical research in the production of knowledge. "The truth of a statement was said to be determined by its correspondence with the facts; if there was correspondence, it was true; if it did not correspond, it was false" (Hughes, 1990, p. 36).

Out of positivism grew logical positivism in which philosophers argued that the logical nature of the scientific method was as significant as the scientific nature. Logical analysis assisted in the understanding of philosophical problems by reconstructing philosophical statements in the language of logic. The logical positivists believed that other criteria were needed for observation of the unobservable in human behaviour. In spite of the realization that some human actions could only be known by the person involved (e.g., mental states), logical positivists believed that all observations had to be explained in physically descriptive language. Emotions such as love or anger could be explained in empirical terms because facial and other expressions were observable.

The beliefs people hold, the values they subscribe to, the judgements they make, their tastes and preferences, are all publicly verifiable since they issue in, or result in, publicly observable behaviour, artifacts, and so on. Values are objective in the sense that they are held by persons who report their values and beliefs (Hughes, 1990, p. 40).

Hughes posits "that whatever the characterization of these protocol terms, it was the observational language that was ontologically and epistemologically privileged as beyond reasonable doubt" (p. 39). Thus, it was believed that human behaviour could be accurately and objectively measured and described through quantifiable
methodological tools such as surveys, questionnaires, and scales.

An example of the perceived power of objective observation can be seen in traditional practices of teacher evaluation. Teachers, especially student teachers, are almost always evaluated by being observed in the clinical setting of their classrooms. The main emphasis of the evaluation is on the lesson being taught as the observer watches and records (using checklists, scales, or field notes) the actions of the teacher and the physically observable responses (or lack thereof) of the pupils in the classroom. The main aspect of the evaluation customarily concludes with the bell at the end of the class and the report is written based on the responses, facial expressions, and perceived level of attention of the pupils in the class, rather than indications of verifiable learning that may or may not have taken place. Experienced teachers and student teachers complain that the outside evaluator rarely has any real knowledge about what is occurring in the classroom nor any idea of the context in which the learning activities were to occur.

The Rise of the Interpretivist Movement

Although many regarded logical positivism as the only real approach to research, there was criticism from some quarters with the quantification of human action rather than the quality of it—that pattern searching was more important than the individual(s) involved in the research. The individual was forced to fit into the societal generalizations which were created, and individual acts were explained as interactions with society at large. Thus, it was posited that human behaviour cannot be measured in scientific terms—that a more interpretative stance was required. A different method
was needed, one that was based philosophically on recognized actions and events from within human life, not as observed externally.

Knowledge of persons could only be gained through an interpretative procedure grounded in the imaginative recreation of the experience of others. The sociopolitical world is a symbolic world created by the human mind and cannot be understood as simply a relationship of material things. (Hughes, 1990, p. 90)

The interpretative movement grew slowly and remained under the influence of the empiricist search for neutrality and objectivism to examine and explain social action. The philosophy behind social science research was changing to one based on the relationship between social action and social interaction—that is the relationship of the individual to society and to its culture in general. All action, however, was still examined in the context of the dominant culture; theories were developed which were rooted in what was acceptable to mainstream society.

May (1994) cites the influential work of Talcott Parsons in which he notes that

It is clear that the Parsonian view of schooling regards the school as a neutral institution designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills that they will need to do well in the wider society. Some will be more successful in this endeavour than others. However, it is assumed that because everyone has the same opportunities to begin with, the more successful must be so because of differences in their individual abilities and/or effort. (p. 14)

Even in present times, many people such as politicians and members of the middle and upper class society continue to further the Parsonian view of schools as societal agencies with a prime role of socializing young people into becoming good citizens according to the ideologies of the dominant culture. They see the role of teachers as socializing pupils to fit the class structure in society rather than educating them.
Similarly, many teacher education programs are based on the belief that new teachers must be socialized into a way of thinking and practising in order to be able to socialize pupils appropriately.

Max Weber was influential in trying to reconcile interpretative understandings with rigorous scientific criteria, and he advanced a different kind of interpretative understanding, called verstehen: the attempt to reconstruct the subjective experience of social beings. Weber believed that social action could be observed individually and not in the context of the social world, but insights gleaned had to be supported by scientific and statistical data. Townsend and Robinson (1994) contend that Weber was a creative genius in his understanding of bureaucracies and they discuss how his analysis moved across all levels from the individual, to the group, to the public sphere moving philosophically from the hard positivistic methodological approaches to more interpretative stances:

Methodologically, Weber transcends the core duality of our era’s approaches to research. His cross-cultural and cross-historical technique merits respect for its potential to bridge our era’s two most distinct, strongly contesting, and uncompromising ways of knowing. Put another way, Weber’s approach can help unite the “hard” logical positivism of objective cause-and-effect explanations of behaviour (which Weber calls Eklaren) with the “soft” interpretivism and personal meanings of hermeneutics (Verstehen in Weber’s terms). (Townsend & Robinson, 1994, p. 187)

Weber’s concept of verstehen and his notion of status groups allowed a fuller exploration of social reality which could admit more complex and even conflicting experiences to descriptions of social reality.

In realizing the restrictions that structural-functionalist and interpretivist thought
placed on concepts of teaching and learning, many educational researchers began to resist the status quo and sought alternative strategies for making sense of what was occurring in education.

Gramsci contributed to the culturalist concept that control by the dominant group is never total, and always open to resistance. "His concept of hegemony describes the organization of consent through invisible cultural dominance, rather than through visible political power" (Corson, 1993, p. 6). Functionalist analysis was heavily criticised for its neglect of a critical investigation into the content of the educational process and the disempowerment of many pupils who did not fit into the dominant cultural paradigm (May, 1994).

**The Rise of a New Sociology in Educational Research**

In the late 1960's and 1970's, a school of thought emerged which challenged the structuralist views of education that schools were democratic institutions which promote equal opportunity for students in terms of curriculum, instruction, and expectations. Theorists argued that schools were reproductive agencies which sought to reproduce the status quo of the mainstream society (in terms of norms, values, and ideologies) in their students. Students who grew up in middle or upper-class homes in which the values reflected those of society were seen to be at a distinct advantage when they entered school and could more easily reproduce the expectations of the schools, and thus be more successful. This contrasts with Parsons' view that students achieved success in the neutral setting of education because they either worked harder or were more intelligent.
Even though social reproduction theory was a significant factor in the rise of critical theory, it was criticized for its lack of impetus for social change (May, 1994). It described more accurately the state of affairs, not what could or should be. Thus, concerns about the failing of social reproduction theory gave way to cultural reproduction theory. Giroux (1983) points out that social reproduction theory leaves educators with the sense that there is little they can do to address educational inequities. Instead conflict theorists have moved beyond to question how knowledge is “constructed, inculcated and at times, resisted in the classroom” (May, 1994, p. 20) to what should be done and how it could be implemented.

Bourdieu (1977) introduced the concept of *habitus* which represents the way in which culture becomes embedded in the individual, becoming a disposition to act one way or another. Habitus includes the cultural, academic, and linguistic capital which are at the core of a person’s behaviour; the habitus is shaped by the ideologies and norms of the person’s culture. Such capital is of great advantage in schooling if the child comes from the dominant culture. If the child comes from an alternative culture, then the capital which s/he brings is ignored or devalued, and s/he must begin to assimilate and learn the capital of the dominant society as well as the curriculum of the school.

In this view, education is seen as supportive of those who have the valued capital, and disparaging of those who do not. Because many of these cultural attributes are tacit, it is very difficult for socially and culturally different pupils to develop the indispensable capital during the school years when the curriculum and mode of
instruction begins with the assumption that everyone has the socially acceptable background. Social institutions such as schools value the habitus of the upper-middle class and they implicitly develop curriculum and expectations as if everyone had access to the same habitus.

The possession of the dominant habitus then, in Bourdieu's terminology, becomes a form of symbolic capital and its legitimation as a natural rather than a social gift becomes an exercise in symbolic violence by the school in its power to dominate disadvantaged groups. (May, 1994, p. 24)

In a similar vein, Apple (1982) lists the major functions of schools in society. He explains that schools select and certify the workforce, and through streaming of classes prepare some students (usually from the disadvantaged classes) for working-class attitudes and labour through a skills-oriented, non-thinking curriculum; meanwhile, schools prepare others (usually from the dominant mid-upper class population) in upper-class thinking for intellectual-type, highly-paid positions, thus maintaining the stratification of society. Schools maintain privilege by passing on the norms of the dominant culture and defining these norms as the legitimate knowledge. Finally, Apple notes that schools legitimate new knowledge, new classes, and social strata in the context of the dominant society. The dominant values of society are the dominant values of the schools and are defended by the state.

Conflict theory, as presented by Apple (1982) and others, grew out of the belief that there were oppressed groups in society and that their interests were not being
integrated into the mainstream. To be successful, members of the marginal cultures\(^3\) had to learn and internalize the ideologies and customs of the powerful in society. May (1994) acknowledges that such an ideology is functional because the power of the capitalist class determines both the explicit and hidden curriculum in schools. As such, researchers and educators are urged to question current practice and to find collective, collaborative, and formal ways to emancipate those who are oppressed in overt and implicit practices both in classroom teaching and in the education of new teachers.

As a result of the perspective as outlined above by Apple, Bourdieu, May, and others, reality in the educational system is being reclaimed in a different and controversial way. There is a change in the discourse, called the "discursive turn" by Corson (1995a) which brings a critical perspective to the debate. Corson states that this discursive turn has been delayed in occurring and has been slowed by those who continue to view the (educational) world through historical and conservative lenses. For change in the educational system to occur, these researchers base their work in critical theory and they posit that the discussion must begin to consider the discourse and power of the current system in order to identify, investigate, and challenge the structures which dominate and repress human action to improve the social existence of those currently disadvantaged by the system.

**Critical Theory**

Critical theory is a research activity in which the researcher seeks the

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\(^3\) By members of marginal cultures, I mean cultural and social minorities as well as members of other traditionally disadvantaged groups such as women, disabled people, and so on.
relationship among truth, knowledge, and power. It has been based in a tradition of radical "intellectual rebellion" (English, 1994; Thomas, 1993). English (1994) states that

when a person seeks to discover or uncover the hidden relationships embedded in language and power, it is called reflective discourse or critical discourse. Critical discourse, sometimes called critical theory, is an attempt to expose the hidden sociopolitical relationships at work in the world in scientific communities and educational administration. (p. 15)

Critical theorists “are concerned with critical understanding of fundamental interests, values, assumptions and implications for human and social action” (Aoki, 1989, p. 9).

The term critical describes both an activity and an ideology. As a social activity, critical thinking implies a call to action that may range from modest rethinking of comfortable thoughts to more direct engagement that includes political activism....The goal of critical thinking...[is that] it challenges the relationship between all forms of inquiry and the reality studied and sustained. (Thomas, 1993, p. 18)

Critical inquiry challenges accepted truth and knowledge in ways that subvert norms, rules, and symbols which are commonly taken for granted in a policy or community, such as in language policies and curriculum (Corson, 1993) or in the field of teacher education. In many cases, members of a community are not even aware of the norms which guide their practice or the practices that routinely repress, dominate, and disempower members of that community (Corson, 1993). Through questioning and revealing underlying principles behind the values and norms, a new kind of power emerges--one which offers freedom to those who are shackled by the ideologies of their community. Such an emancipatory search takes the researcher from merely describing what is to what could be (Thomas, 1993) and what should be. In education, critical
theory looks outside school or organizational structures and examines the linkages between them and the larger sociopolitical network and forms of power (English, 1994, p. 124).

In relation to teacher education, then, and simply put, "one can learn to teach in order to educate or to indoctrinate" (Pearson, 1989, p. 37).

**Critical Theory and Teacher Education**

Instead of merely improving practice, critical theory is intended to disrupt the social conditions of educational practice (Corson, 1993; 1995a; Freire, 1985; Hollingsworth & Sockett, 1994). Teacher education lives within the realms of schooling and, as a result, is subject to the same constraining structural norms, ideologies, and values that govern schools. Just as schools are premised on the fundamental beliefs of the dominant society, so too are teacher education institutions:

The language, rituals and behaviours of teacher education are realized in an institutional context. Conduct is structured by codes of culture which govern the ways in which people think, feel, and "see" and act toward the practices of schooling. (Popkewitz, 1987, p. 2)

Just as schooling evolved to socialize youngsters into society, so too did a specific group emerge who had the authority and power to develop and implement the curriculum (overt and hidden) and the norms of the schooling that would inculcate and reinforce society's ideologies and beliefs into the minds of students. New teachers were trained to take over these responsibilities, overtly through such activities as teaching lessons during *practice* teaching and subtly through maintaining the norms of the culture through classroom management (Popkewitz, 1987).
If field experiences in schools are for student teachers to practice and be evaluated on their ability to convey the codes of the system to students, then student teachers who understand the structures and codes of the dominant society in education are better able to demonstrate these particular attributes and will be more successful at teaching. Student teachers who come from a different background may be impeded in their own understanding of what is important and may not be able to achieve the desired results.¹

There are likely to be few problems of assimilation to the dominant culture because the composition of teacher education classes continues to be a homogeneous grouping of white, middle class candidates (McIntyre & Byrd, 1996). Thus if new teachers are rewarded for conforming behaviour in becoming professionals, then change is unlikely unless they have critical views of the system. Student teachers who attempt to question the norms and structures generally do so with personal risk.

Townsend (1995) confirms the homogeneity of the teaching population but points out the problems that politicians have when confronted with such a problem:

Politicians have accepted the story that board staffs are too lily white and that minorities have been historically disadvantaged by past intentional prejudice. These politicians subscribe to the familiar cause-effect link that if more minority-group members were in teacher ranks, as role models, they could raise learning outcomes for now-unmotivated minority youth. Yet and again to the dismay of some, authorities have not rushed ahead with crash courses for preparing ethnically diverse teachers. The notion of risk to contextual stability

¹ By different student teachers, I mean students from social or cultural minorities in society. They may not be aware of the cultures and norms of the dominant culture in society, will not realize that those values are implicitly valued and rewarded in schools, and may be unsuccessful (in the eyes of their supervisors) in transmitting these norms to the pupils. The pupils on the other hand, may resist what seem like peculiar methods because they are so accustomed to norms of the hidden curriculum.
here enters into policy makers' talk. Interviewees tell me that, until recently, the department has been concerned that greater aggressiveness in affirmative action might have been divisive and therefore potentially destabilizing. (p. 155).

In short, there appears to be a recognition of the need for affirmative action programs to diversify the teaching population, but, paradoxically, the implementation of affirmative action programs remains unlikely because they might upset the status quo of the dominant culture.

There is some hope for eventual change in the writings of critical theorists as Paolo Freire (1985), from a broader social perspective of education, and Deborah Britzman (1991) from the perspective of preservice teacher education.

The Contributions of Paolo Freire to Teacher Education Research

Freire (1985) describes government educational programs in South America which were designed to teach illiterate peasant farmers to read and write. Although the exercise appeared to be a commendable and just affair to liberate the peasants from their prison of ignorance, Freire exposes the pitfalls of such an intervention. He shows that the teaching methods that were used were irrelevant in helping the peasants learn anything more than reading and writing; they learned nothing about their situation or their place in society. The peasants' teachers used a curriculum in their teaching that made use of statements to help them read which were of little illuminative use to them in genuine learning.

Likewise, the curriculum of teacher education has been described as *intellectual*
that is set up to maintain power and control in schools by providing student teachers with a bland curriculum diet that furthers the ideologies of the current process. Student teachers are often given methodological bags of tricks to help them be successful in the classroom to maintain the status quo. Success in student teaching is an excellent report from the supervising teacher, and an excellent report is truly powerful because it is the most influential route to employment in the system. Supervising teachers, on the other hand, hold all of the power in that it is they who determine who will receive the excellent teaching reports that will permit beginning teachers to obtain teaching positions.

Power is measured in terms of quiet and compliant pupils who can regurgitate the content that teachers put into their minds. Freire (1985) refers to this type of teaching as a banking method that visualizes pupils as empty vessels waiting to be filled. If pupils are perceived as empty vessels, then student teachers also must be vessels waiting to be given the codified knowledge of teaching which they then impart to their pupils.

In his situation, Freire (1985) argues for a meaningful curriculum for his peasants that would make use of "generative words" in order to open dialogue with the peasants about their role in society. This curriculum would form a critical component in their learning so that they could use the new knowledge not only to read and write, but to discuss ways of emancipating themselves from their poverty. Freire calls for an

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5 The curriculum of teacher education was described in these terms by a dean of a faculty of education during a meeting that I attended just prior to beginning this study.
emancipatory curriculum for both pupils and teachers. He reminds us that the peasants develop their own way of seeing and understanding the world, according to cultural patterns that are marked by the ideology of dominant groups in their global society; their ways of thinking are conditioned by their behaviour that conditions their thinking, having been developed and crystallized over a long period of time (Freire, 1985, p. 1).

Lortie (1975) states that there may be a parallel for beginning teachers. As pupils in classrooms, student teachers have been conditioned to the norms of the system after thousands of hours of experience in classrooms before they enter teaching. In fact, many may have chosen teaching as a career because of a holistic acceptance of the educational system, or the inner need to pass on the knowledge to others, or the urge to exercise power over others. Thus, before they even begin teaching, it appears that new teachers will work willingly toward maintaining the status quo.

Freire (1985) notes that those who put theory into practice must strive to recreate the situation in which the participants live and they must rethink their thinking in terms of those disempowered by the system. In his advocacy of generative words, he champions the people's words and demands that they become an integral part of the teaching. Succinctly, Freire says "we all have a lot to learn from peasants and if we refuse to do so, we can't teach them anything" (p. 25). Thus, he exhorts educational researchers to challenge the people (student teachers) to decode the structures, language, and discourse (of the educational establishment). In Freire's terms then, by understanding the codification's deep structure, student teachers can understand the dialectic that exists between the categories presented in the surface structure. They
may also see the unity between the "surface and deep structures" (p. 52) in order to
reconstruct their former praxis and become capable of an emancipated way of engaging
in teaching and learning.

Freire (1985) emphasizes that the relationship between theoretical context and
the concrete context has to be made real. The researcher/educator's role is to propose
problems about the codified existential situation in order to help the learners arrive at a
more critical view of educational reality in order to resist current practice.

Freire's thoughts are relevant for teacher education. If teacher education is to
become more than teacher socialization, then beginning teachers must be released from
the influential forces that socialize them so they can access the "generative language"
of educational discourse. This release will enable them to begin the process of
decoding the dialogue of power so that they can arrive at a critical view of the reality
of truth in education in order to emancipate themselves and their students. Deborah
Britzman's research complements Freire's ideas from the perspective of preservice
teacher education.

The Contributions of Deborah Britzman

Deborah Britzman's (1991) work focuses on critical research into teacher
education. In her research on teaching she focuses on such themes as social justice,
change, empowerment, and emancipation to guide those becoming teachers. She
articulates the dichotomy in the profession in which theory and university are
antithetical to field and practice. In raising the difficult problems of the inherited
discourses of student teaching and theorizing about the contradictory realities, Britzman
overtly discusses the common misconceptions of learning about teaching. She advocates a dialogic model of teacher education—one that empowers aspiring teachers to ask the hard questions and not to seek the most facile answer to pedagogical questions.

When we stop and look at teachers in this way—to see teachers as being shaped by their work as well as shaping their work—we are able to shift the discourse of teacher education from an instrumentalist belief in controlling and manipulating variables—an orientation based upon the suppression of subjectivity—to a dialogic discourse. (Britzman, 1991, p. 1)

Robinson (1996) also talks about the power of discourse and contends that discourse affects all levels of teacher education in a way that cannot be neutral and is determined by the individual's level of understanding and her/his place in the context. Robinson talks about the ways in which power affects the discourse in educational settings. She cautions:

There is something of a parallel one-sidedness in the academic debate on the use and abuse of power. Given a diversity of views and a requirement for coordinated action, the exercise of legitimate power requires discourse patterns that both recognize and reduce diversity....Illegitimate power not only arises through the exclusion of relevant voices, but it also arises through the adoption of processes that, although highly participative, fail to raise and publicly resolve the genuine doubts and criticisms that participants hold about the validity of each others' claims. (p. 127)

In relating this comment to teacher education, Robinson states that all participants' voices (student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university teacher educators) must be included and heard. But she also acknowledges a responsibility to place all of the voices in context to assist in understanding and learning, to give power to all voices.

Student teachers' voices must be acknowledged, heard, and encouraged in the
discourse according to Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) because “learning to teach means engaging in acts of forgetting, discarding, silencing, and ignoring” (p. 78). If the curriculum of learning to teach does not include such emancipatory practices, then student teachers remain as prisoners throughout their own preservice education according to Freire (1985).

Concerned about the representations that student teachers bring to teaching, Britzman (1991) explains that aspiring teachers must be confronted at the outset with examination and re-examination of who they are as teachers because learning to teach is personally constructed. What is being called for then is a totally new curriculum in teacher education—a curriculum that is based on political upheaval of the current state of affairs and a curriculum that actually discloses and undermines the control of the dominant society in the educational system. This new curriculum could not happen in schools of education alone; similar resistance would have to be played out in the classrooms of schools themselves, like that discussed by May (1994) in his study of the reformation of Richmond Road School and by Corson's (1993) recommendations for dealing with the emancipation of minorities in language education.

Cochran-Smith (1994) says that universities are generally perceived as liberalizing institutions, using such methods as inquiry and critical reflection for student learning. But university courses are generally offered in a depository way, to further Freire's notions of the banking method, that directs certain, limited types of learning. Meanwhile, in the practicum, teacher education students are socialized into the conservative norms of the schools (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987). In
developing a solution to these problems, Cochran-Smith advocates an idealistic model of collaborative resonance in teacher education in which student teachers learn in mutually constructed learning communities, constructed between the university and the schools, where the purpose is not how to teach but how to continue learning. She notes that the way to link theory and practice is through a self-critical program in which systematic inquiry about learning (both teacher and student) is paramount.

**Criticisms of Critical Theory**

Reviewers have found the conceptual framework of critical theory wanting in terms of offering alternatives and hope for the disempowered (Blackmore & Kenway, 1995). However, it appears that those involved currently in critical research are looking to explain not just what could be, but how it might be accomplished. It is quite easy to be critical; it is much more difficult to offer viable solutions. May’s (1994) description of the work in multicultural education at Richmond Road School in New Zealand provides a concrete example of practitioners’ use of a critical perspective in developing school curriculum and methods that actively promotes the emancipation of pupils who are normally disadvantaged in the educational system. Developing such solutions ensures that researchers become immersed in the situation with informed practitioners to work together toward resolution and contributes toward a connection between theory and practice.

The theories or stories must change with the context and speak as only one voice offering hope. Reflexivity is an integral part of critical theory.

“Transmission” models of education exclude and deny students’
In contrast, critical pedagogy...is based on the experiences and viewpoints of students rather than on an imposed culture. Critical pedagogy, however, is not limited to students' experiences and this allows for critical and reflexive engagement...with the nature of social and cultural relations and the differential positioning(s) which result from these relations. (May, 1994, p. 198)

Summary

Teacher education has been the subject of much debate and criticism by both positivist and critical theorists. No matter what the epistemological foundation, most researchers agree that serious restructuring of teacher education is needed.

Teacher education involves learning about teaching and teaching about learning, both of which are different and complex issues. It appears that in spite of the thousands of studies devoted to teacher education, more questions have been raised than answered. However, educational critics (naively) believe that education can be improved through a better teacher education system—that, if trained properly, beginning teachers can enter the profession with emancipated ideas about the learning process and can collectively and radically emancipate the current system. Such thoughts seem highly impractical in a system that has been traditionally delimited by the dominant culture. However, altering and emancipating the curriculum of both preservice and inservice teacher education to critique the nature of teacher education and then schooling might be a useful place to start. Encouraging professionalization which encourages the study of learning and schooling instead of teacher training would provide an alternative.

Giroux (1983) reminds us that radical change begins at the grassroots level and
will be accomplished by collective and collaborative action:

Resistance is a valuable theoretical and ideological construct that provides an important focus for analysing the relationship between [teacher education,] school and the wider society. More importantly, it provides theoretical leverage for understanding the complex ways in which subordinate groups experience educational failure, and directs new attention to new ways of thinking about and restructuring modes of critical pedagogy. (Giroux, 1983, p. 107)

Many people enter the teaching profession because of a desire to help others and make a difference in others' lives. By seeing, talking about, reflecting upon, and understanding the realities of their existence next to that of the repressed in their classrooms, and by helping their disempowered students and families see their ways through the normative views of the educational structure, teachers may choose to find alternative and emancipatory paths. In this vein, those who are currently determining the path of education (those who are members of the dominant society) need to take a critical look into their own practice in relation to the institutional structure; they must seek change for those who are routinely denied opportunities that others have. This, as I see it, is where the hope lies—in helping student teachers understand how to really help their pupils become empowered through education.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Resistance entails wildness. An appeal to our wild side invokes a call to reject inhibitions imposed by assumed meanings and to cultivate in their place the fiercely passionate and undomesticated side of our scholarly nature that challenges preconceived ideas....The core of critical ethnography is the study of the process of social domestication and social entrapment by which we are made content with our life conditions. If, as Karl Marx says, we constantly make up domineering false conceptions about ourselves, about what we are, and about what we ought to be, and then bow down before our creations, we therefore live in a partially illusory world. “Intellectual wilding” is resisting domestication by identifying those illusions and questioning their necessity. (Thomas, 1993, p. 7)

In the process of learning to teach, student teachers find themselves struggling to negotiate the path as they change identity from student to teacher. During the preservice program, they are required to study education in two distinct and disparate educational settings—in formal university-classroom settings taught by university-based teacher educators, and at the front of active, public-school classrooms, supervised by experienced, practising teachers. Student teachers are taught, supervised, and examined by university teacher educators in traditionally-designed university courses, and they are generally guided, taught, observed, and examined by cooperating teachers in conservative classrooms in the practicum setting. Student teachers are given models of teaching to study and replicate in the university and different models again to
replicate in their practicum setting. At the same time, they are told to experiment with their own styles of teaching. The curriculum and practices of teacher education are intended to illuminate the process of teaching to the novice, but may, in fact, pose contradictions that complicate the process of learning to teach.

It must be difficult for students to walk on the wild side of the path as they cross over from student to teacher, as Thomas (1993) encourages, when they have two very different paths to follow.

In acknowledging that the process of learning to teach is complex, the questions raised in this study require a methodological framework that encourages the contradictory discourse to be heard and allows me, as a researcher, to gain proximity to the participants. Critical ethnography, as a research method, seems to offer an appropriate, reliable, and rational means of collecting informative data while offering the possibility of sharing the data analysis in a critical way with the participants. The method allows me to do my data collection with student teachers, cooperating teachers, and faculty members inside university and school classrooms where, together, we can observe, question, and participate in the life of the preservice program.

In this chapter, I describe and provide a rationale for the use of critical ethnography as the methodological framework, and I sketch the procedures that I followed in carrying out and analysing the data gathered in the study.

**Critical Ethnography and Educational Research**

Ethnography is a form of educational research that is situated in the context of schools and classrooms with teachers and students. In this study, the research was
positioned in two contexts—the classrooms of the teacher education institution and the classrooms of the public school. Ethnography is the study of lived experience that examines how we come "to construct and organize what has already been experienced" (Britzman, 1991, p. 9). Ethnographic methodologies are based in anthropology and based on the premise that human beings share common characteristics (Adelman, 1985). Ethnography, as one form of cultural analysis, provides an active, descriptive account of the teaching and learning situation, and presents an opportunity to develop relevant and useful research to those it informs (Simon & Dippo, 1986). It brings researchers and practitioners closer together to develop theory out of practice (Burgess, 1985; Hammersley, 1990; Woods, 1986).

Although thousands of studies exist on all aspects of education, educational practitioners remain both sceptical and critical of the usefulness and relevance of research (see Chapter 2):

Some of it seems very artificial. It seems to be simply a means to an end. A piece of paper awarded to the person who's done the research at the end, to prove that he/she has satisfied the examiners. The actual research is meaningless and irrelevant to any working teacher. (Rudduck & May, cited in Woods, 1986, p. 1)

Ethnography as an educational research method shows potential for overcoming such criticism in that it is viewed as a means of hearing and responding to the voices of

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6 In this study, the audience labelled practitioners is perhaps wider and more varied than the norm in educational research. The practitioners consist of cooperating teachers, university teacher educators, and student teachers. Student teachers are novices to the formal study of education, yet they are intelligent adults in academic study and need to rely on comprehensible educational research in order to assist them in crossing over from student to teacher. As well, university teacher educators are constantly engaged in educational research but rarely about their own practice—that of teaching teachers. As such, keeping in mind Shulman's (1987) comments, it would seem that critical ethnography can be a useful means for communicating with the various practitioners in teacher education.
those actually involved in the teaching and learning process—those of the student
teachers and the teacher educators. This type of research may be more accessible to
teacher educators and student teachers than some other approaches in that those
involved in education actually have a chance to participate in and to read accounts of
others doing similar work. They can reflect about the choices and decisions their
colleagues have made to inform their own practice. Harrington (1992) calls such
studies “pedagogical puzzles” (p. 717) where the readers—in this case, beginning
teachers—have the opportunity to consider with their own struggles while seeing
similarities in others’ professional situations.

Conventional Educational Ethnography and Critical Ethnography

Educational ethnography, as a research method,

is concerned with what people are, how they behave, how they interact
together. It aims to uncover their beliefs, values, perspectives,
motivations, and how all these develop or change over time from
situation to situation. It has to do all this from “within” the group and
from within the perspectives of the group’s members. It is their
meanings and interpretations which count (Woods, 1986, p 4).

Conventional educational ethnography and critical ethnography are similar in procedure
but significantly different in purpose, use of data, researcher/participant interaction,
and interpretation of data.

Ethnography emanates from the premise of uncovering beliefs, values, and
ideologies by situating the researcher within the group. Critical ethnography differs
from conventional educational ethnography, however, in the technique of the discourse
and analysis. The language in critical ethnography "arises out of a concern to combine

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7 When I refer to teacher educators in this study, I mean university-based teacher educators and cooperating
teachers in school.
a critical conception of social and cultural reproduction with the study of particular organizational or social settings (May, 1994, p. 48).

The main purpose of critical ethnography is to study a cultural phenomenon with two intentions—the first, to expose the subversive ideologies of the dominant culture that unnecessarily repress and dominate a marginal group in that culture, and, the second, to suggest viable means of emancipating members of the marginal group.

In beginning this study, I saw the marginal group as student teachers attempting to learn to teach in two conflicting environments. In their practicum schools, student teachers are required to adopt the ideologies of schooling that seek to reinforce the status quo in terms of the purposes of schooling; in their university-based classes, student teachers are challenged to examine carefully the norms and ideologies of the current school system and their role as teachers in that system but still in traditional classrooms, being taught and evaluated by traditional methods.

The following table (Table 1) represents a comparative summary of the tenets of both conventional educational ethnography and critical ethnography as outlined in the work of Anderson (1990), May (1994), Thomas (1993), and Woods (1986). The table compares conventional educational ethnography and critical ethnography in terms of

- the similarities and differences in both kinds of research
- how the findings are reviewed and presented
- the interpretation and analysis of the data in finding meaning
- defining the perspective of the researcher and participants in the analysis and writing up of the study
- affirming the influence of society on the study
- the use of facts within the research and professing whose interests are being served by the research study.
Table 1: A Comparison of Conventional Ethnography and Critical Ethnography

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONVENTIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY</th>
<th>CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• consists of description and obvious forms of analysis</td>
<td>• consists of description and a type of analysis that is reflective and reflexive in that it digs below the surface findings to make a political statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• interpretation of meanings</td>
<td>• value-laden interpretations of meanings to challenge current policies, research, human action, and social justice issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reviews what is found</td>
<td>• reviews and critiques with a political purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• speaks for subjects to audience of researchers</td>
<td>• speaks on behalf of fellow participants as a means of empowerment of participants to the audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• studies culture in order to describe it</td>
<td>• uses knowledge gathered from study for purposes of social change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• recognizes impossibility of research free of normative and other bias but tries to repress the bias</td>
<td>• uses results to aid emancipatory goals or to negate repressive influences that lead to unnecessary social domination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• acceptance of status quo</td>
<td>• celebrates normative and political position as means of invoking social consciousness and societal change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• describes what is</td>
<td>• rejects status quo and seeks freedom through rebellion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• affirms assumed meanings</td>
<td>• describes what could and should be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• seldom reveals perspective of research subject on researcher</td>
<td>• challenges assumed meanings through analysis which penetrates to a deeper level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• acceptance of domestication in society and tries to understand it</td>
<td>• researcher and subject generally share similar, critical perspectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• accumulation of facts</td>
<td>• active resistance to domestication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• qualitative methodology</td>
<td>• does not assume reality of facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• uses core ethnographic procedure of data collection, analysis, and interpretation based in grounded theory</td>
<td>• juxtaposition of dialogue with facts to uncover alternative realities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• adherence to symbolic interactionist paradigm</td>
<td>• qualitative methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• adherence to resistance theory to provoke social change for those being oppressed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* based on the work of G. Anderson, J. Thomas, S. May, P. Woods*
Critical thinking "describes both an ideology and an action" (Thomas, 1993, p. 17) which challenge concepts of truth; hence it is both pedagogical and political (Simon & Dippo, 1986). Critical ethnography creates both radical and political ways of re-thinking about a condition and implies a call to action.

Simon and Dippo (1986) note that for ethnography to warrant the status of critical it must meet three conditions:

1. the work must employ an organizing problematic that defines one's data and analytic procedures in a way consistent with its project;

2. the work must be situated within a public sphere that allows it to become the starting point for the critique and transformation of the conditions of oppressive and inequitable moral and social regulation; and,

3. the work must address the limits of its own claims by a consideration of how, as a form of social practice, it too is constituted and regulated through historical relations of power and existing material conditions (p. 221).

This study of teacher education meets Simon and Dippo's three conditions in that

1. The data and analysis are organized around the problematic that preservice teacher education is in need of reform (as noted in Chapters 1 and 2), and that in order to address the issue of reform, one must listen to the voices of the participants themselves in order to respond. In this study, the participants are those who are directly involved in teacher education (i.e., student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university instructors) and their voices open up to critique many issues of preservice education.

2. The study is situated in the public sphere of one large university-based teacher education program where ethical review was approved in order to allow the study to proceed in order to investigate, critique, and seek transformation of the conditions of oppressive and inequitable moral and social regulation.

3. This study is limited due to the constraints of its existence historically and
due to its perceived importance in the public sector. Preservice teacher education is carried out in the university setting but is governed and regulated by government legislation and policies. The schools in which preservice teachers observe and practise are also regulated by the same government legislation as well as by local system policies. Thus, the existing historical and material conditions limit the study at one point while encouraging the researcher and participants to inquire deeply into the motivation for current practices during the study and to radically rethink where resistance to existing teacher education norms would better serve the educational system.

Limitations of Critical Ethnography in Educational Research

Within the educational research tradition, ethnographic research has been the subject of some criticism. The critique has ranged from a general lack of rigour, statistical testing, reliability, validity, and generalizability, to researcher and participant bias (Anderson, 1989; Asher, 1976; Hughes, 1990; Stenhouse, 1985). It is said to be highly susceptible to many interpretations and effects may be wrongly attributed to factors that are associated rather than causally related (Best & Kahn, 1993; Hughes, 1990); it has been condemned for the tension that results in narrowness versus breadth, or specificity versus scope in attention to detail, and the lack of theoretical rigour that can emerge when ethnographic researchers appear to abrogate the need for theoretical perspective by allowing meaning to emerge from the data. Such criticisms can also be ascribed to other methods of quantitative and qualitative research methodologies and serve as useful cautionary notes for critical ethnographers to consider as they engage in such research. However, judgements about any research methodology must be made with recognition of and conciliation to the epistemological context of the approach.

May (1994) refutes the claim that the critical research form is highly susceptible
to researcher and participant bias. He says that all research is theory-laden and as such, a researcher must begin from a theoretical position of some description—whether this is articulated or not in the ensuing study. The point of critical ethnography (and this study in particular) is not to produce a statistical piece that has generalizability across the main population, but to provide an intensive and in-depth examination of one setting from which the main population (i.e., readers of the study) can argue that the experiences, analysis, and implications relate to their experiences in similar cases. Thus the study becomes relatable as opposed to reliable (Bell, 1987) and should help in comprehending the situation in context which, in turn, could assist in understanding teacher education in general.

Another feature of critical ethnography is that the research study is intended to be useful to practitioners. Teachers frequently complain that, in general, the theoretical work of educational researchers is irrelevant to them in classrooms. (May, 1994) contends that

> we know from the literature on human judgement and decision-making...that most individuals find specific cases more powerful influences on their decisions than impersonally presented empirical findings....Although principles are powerful, [others' stories] are memorable, and lodged in the memory as the basis for later judgements. (p. 32)

Critical ethnography, based on and informed by critical theory, relates actual lived experience and analyses about individuals and their relationships with others.

Because all research methodologies have some inherent form of weakness, critical ethnographers must be aware of the major limitations in order to develop a study that overcomes the deficiencies. May (1994) points out that in order to invalidate
the limitations

a number of research characteristics are employed in critical ethnography. There is an emphasis on reflexivity—the ability to reflect on the research process….There has also been a move towards more collaborative research, including the negotiation of research outcomes with participants. This kind of researcher/practitioner collaboration attempts to democratize the research context, and is consistent with emancipatory aims of critical ethnography. (p. 52)

The Value of Critical Ethnography in Educational Research

Critical ethnography, on the other hand, has significant strengths that are missing from other methodologies. The descriptions are thick and rich, emphasizing understanding (Anderson, 1990), and they treat experience more reflectively and analytically (May, 1994). Ethnographies are critical to the illumination of existing theory, yet new theory develops during the research process (Hammersley, 1990; Stenhouse, 1985). Finally, ethnographic study openly acknowledges that the prime benefit of the method belongs to the practitioner participants. In allowing the voices of the individuals to be heard, subjective as they may be, a candid picture of the way social action is experienced at the grass roots level is exposed. In fact, critical ethnography bridges the gap between macro- and microanalysis because of the dialectic between social structures and human interaction (May, 1994).

Educational research is designed for change in practice, and practitioners are meant to be the primary audience, not only other researchers. Therefore the strength of critical ethnography as a form of educational research is its foundation in actual practice as described, shared, and analyzed by the actual participants. It would seem that if the problem studied is a timely and significant issue, and if the study is carried
out and written up carefully and critically, then practitioners would see the relevance of research using a critical ethnographic format. Its potency lies in the systematic and critical investigation of powerful, significant phenomenon through studious and protracted inquiry, and in-depth involvement by practitioners as the prime researchers.

Beginning the Study

The Problem

May (1994) explains that critical ethnography begins as a value-laden project that directs attention to things that are not right in our culture in order to move from critical theory toward political practice. This particular study grows out of my interest in and commitment to the academic growth and professional development of beginning teachers. As a teacher educator, I have been frustrated by the criticisms levelled at teacher education programs by current students and experienced teachers who contend that their teacher education program was a waste of time, by criticisms from educational administrators and beginning teachers who suggest that preservice education is wasted because new teachers in the province of Ontario are not properly prepared for the demands of the profession, by university teacher educators who do not (or will not) see the links between what is taught in the curriculum of the faculties of education and what is learned in the field experiences. The argument can be made that student teachers are pawns, caught in the cross-fire between schools and teacher education institutions. As such, they are powerless to improve, support, or even defend their own situation. This study is one attempt to draw attention to the things that are not right in the culture of teacher education in order to direct change in political
practice through critical theory.

The purpose of doing critical ethnography is to focus on the dialectical relationship between the social and institutional structures affecting teacher educators and student teachers in the educational process, and the intersection between choice and restraint (Anderson, 1989; Lather, 1986; May, 1994). In this study, the findings have emerged as data were gathered and the articulation of the problem has become more defined as the research unfolded.

Although critical ethnographers usually begin with a general idea of the issue to be studied, rarely do they adhere to their first idea (May, 1994; Thomas, 1993; Woods, 1986).

Critical ethnography is even more difficult, because the focus of attention often lies in areas at first glance unnoticeable and within data sources possessing mechanisms to conceal, rather than reveal, their secrets....All ethnography possesses the potential for ad hoc restructuring of the initial topic. Critical ethnography is especially susceptible to the need for flexibility, because the questions that are most interesting may not be revealed until considerable background data emerges. (Thomas, 1993, p.35)

As this particular study developed, the focus of attention expanded as the academic year progressed. Although I began by asking the question--how do student teachers learn to teach?--the discussion grew beyond the initial question to delve into the contradictions that emerged for the participants (as explained in Chapters 4, 5, and 6).

Experienced critical ethnographers relate that it is not so much what is studied, but how it is studied that distinguishes critical research from non-critical research. It is
not that ethnographers select subject matter that is different from other perspectives, but rather the text is framed in a way that mines the field more deeply. Sound and interesting topics can be found quite literally in any area of education, and although the precise identification of the topic or problem will need to be recast and redrawn as the data unfolds, the researcher will need to be consciously analysing at deeper levels the information being gathered.

Gaining Access

For a critical ethnographic study to be successful, the researcher needs to access a setting where informative data can be uncovered and where participants are willing to engage and share in the critical study of their own practice. It is important that those involved will question the truth in the relationship between the imposed structures and their individual situations. They must be willing to openly share their views as they inquire into and unpack their own practices.

For significant data to be gathered, the researcher and participants need to develop an open and honest relationship free of inhibitions and constraints. It is the researcher's responsibility to develop and maintain an open and critical relationship throughout the study. At the beginning of the data gathering stages, it is likely that the participants will be involved in a more formal relationship which should become more open and genuine as the project progresses, and as all come to probe more deeply into the problem in seeking truth.

Critical ethnography is not a neutral enterprise. In critical ethnography, the researcher becomes consciously associated with the participants and the setting. Data
are primarily gathered through interviews and observations, but field notes, recordings, and written documentation are also included to a greater or lesser extent. Observations become participant observations in which the researcher frequently becomes involved in contextual activities beside the participants; interviews become discussions in which researcher and participants methodically and logically dig below surface issues through meaningful discussion. The purpose of such intrusive data gathering is to develop theory in practice where it is lived.

Britzman (1991) cites four reasons why collecting data in this type of research is integral to the critical study:

1. Images of theory as reflective practice can dissipate a view of theory as imposed from above and situate it as constructed rather than received.

2. In positioning theory as dialogic to lived experience, the traditional dualism of theory and practice can be reconceptualized as a problem of praxis. When this occurs practice can be understood theoretically.

3. An emphasis on personal practical knowledge values the activity of theorizing as a tenuous yet transformative activity. Teachers can experience themselves as authors and interpreters of their lived experience.

4. These research directions re-establish a qualitative understanding of the complexity of teachers' work. (p. 54)

This study is situated within the teacher education setting where I teach and where I have been engaged in other forms of educational research about the work of beginning teachers. Britzman (1991) suggests that “in positioning theory as dialogic to lived experience, the traditional dualism of theory and practice can be reconceptualized as a problem of practice” (p. 54) and can be understood theoretically. Thus, in this
setting. I hoped that I would be better able to engage in and perhaps reconceptualize the dualism of theory and practice.

Participants

As only one of several participants in an ethnography, the researcher is in a critical position and must have a thorough understanding of the methodology and its relationship to critical theory. S/he must have the ability to organize the environment of the study so that valuable and appropriate data is collected and s/he must be able to work with the participants and data so that issues of power are revealed and the relationships among knowledge, society, and political action are considered. Where and from whom the data are collected in the educational system are integral issues in such a study. It is important that the participants are willing to be involved and see themselves in a situation where the application of critical theory could be emancipatory to them and to their students.

I began the study by selecting two university teacher educators with whom I would work, named Cheryl and Susan. They were selected on the basis of their understanding of and current research using critical theory. I made the decision that if critical theory informed their practice as teacher educators in the preservice program, they would likely be helpful in providing critical data for the study. Once the two faculty members had read and signed the information and release forms, I asked if I could attend their classes to meet with their students and invite them to participate in

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8 The names, Cheryl and Susan, are pseudonyms.
the study. With the faculty members, it was decided that I would attend the first classes of the year to explain the research project and I would invite any interested students to contact me. I decided to work with one student from each group.

Since one of the faculty members, Cheryl, coordinated and taught the Early Years’ group, one of the student teacher participants would have a focus on learning to become a teacher of 4- to 7-year old pupils. The other teacher educator, Susan, taught Intermediate and Senior Science Education. Thus, the other participant would be concentrating on becoming a Science teacher in either senior elementary school (10- to 15-year old pupils) or in a secondary school (14- to 18-year old pupils). The cooperating teachers to be studied would be those with whom the student teachers were placed for practicum.

After meeting them in class and explaining the project, several students approached me to ask additional questions about the study. Following some deliberation and further conversation, I selected two student teachers who seemed motivated to invest their time and energy in the project. The early years’ student teacher, Tracy, had just graduated from a baccalaureate program in the eastern part of the province and was keen to participate because she hoped that her participation would assist her in becoming a better teacher; the other student teacher participant, Carlo, had a master’s degree in Biology, had a few years of previous teaching experience at the university level (as a graduate assistant) and as a faculty member at a community college, and was keenly interested in educational research.
Data Gathering

One of the advantages of using critical ethnography as a research method is the number of types of data that can be used in the process. Interviews, participant-observation, and written materials such as journals, topical outlines, course calendars, lesson plans and daybooks, and so on can be collected to inform the study. The types of data that we agreed to use prior to beginning the study were interviews (that were to be taped and transcribed), participant-observation in university and school classes, journal entries, and course outlines. The main source of information, however, came from planned interviews with each of the participants.

Interviews

Woods (1986) suggests that the interview requires three attributes to be successful in accumulating appropriate data—development of trust with the participants, curiosity, and naturalness—because it is only through meaningful discourse with the individuals and consistent probing that one can distinguish between useful and marginal data. Thomas (1993) alerts researchers to be mindful of the gaps between observations and accounts or contradictions given by participants, for it is in the gaps that the most useful information may be gleaned. Thus the interviewer must be adept at devising critical, follow-up comments and probing questions to gather significant data. Although the researcher may make field notes during meetings, it is useful to audiotape or videotape the meetings for later transcription. The transcripts of all meetings are shared with the participants for authenticity, revision, further discussion, and analysis.

Over the course of the preservice year, I held many interviews with each of the
two student teachers, Tracy (10) and Carlo (12), one interview with each of the six cooperating teachers (six in total), and two interviews each with Cheryl and Susan, the university teacher educators (four interviews in total). In all, I conducted 32 interviews with the participants.

The first interview with each participant was structured but the topics of subsequent interviews were drawn from previous information solicited from transcripts and from current events occurring in the student teachers' education program. The interviews ranged in length from 20 minutes to over an hour depending on the person being interviewed and the topics of discussion. All participants had access to the transcripts and some asked for corrections, clarifications, deletions of some information.

One aspect which troubled several of the participants was that, in writing up the study, I would use their words as transcribed directly from the interviews. Several participants, especially the two student teachers, were concerned that the grammatical structures and syntax that they used in our verbal exchanges would seem awkward in print. I agreed with each participant that I would edit each passage where necessary to ensure proper grammatical structure and syntax, but that I would not change the meaning. The participants had the opportunity to read their comments in print and to ask for rewording.

**Participant Observation**

Participant observation is the second most frequently used method for collecting data in critical ethnography (Woods, 1986). The central idea of participation is to try
to experience and understand the situation of the other within a group or institution as fully and realistically as possible. Through participation, one both acts on and is acted upon by the environment. As the researcher observes, s/he may take field notes (that describe what is happening in the researcher's viewpoint) and record the events for later transcription and shared analysis. In critical ethnography, it is crucial that the researcher becomes as immersed and involved in the situation as possible in order to share and inquire into the particular view of lived experience. Field notes are required and allow for clarification and analysis during and after participant observation. Recordings recapture the actual experience and allow for repeated viewing/hearing and intense discussion.

With the preceding comments in mind, I made arrangements to sit in on university classes and school classes where Tracy and Carlo were involved as both students and teachers. Both seemed enthusiastic about my presence when they were teaching in the school setting, and neither seemed worried about my presence in interviews prior to observations. During the observation of both university and school classes, I became involved in the ongoing discussion, and particularly in the field setting, I worked with groups of pupils in their activities to support Tracy's and Carlo's teaching. After the classroom observations, I met again with each of them to discuss their learnings and my field notes. The classroom observations were significant in that they provided me the opportunity to witness in action, the beliefs that each of the participants had professed in their interviews. As a result, I felt that I could better understand the lived experiences of the others in this study.
Written Materials

Critical ethnographers may use a variety of written materials that are useful to the study. Deciding what or what not to take and use is a difficult decision. Most researchers take more than is needed because one cannot predict in a critical study what material will be most relevant at a given point. As Thomas (1993) says, a method of collecting data is suitable if it is appropriate for the task, is within ethical guidelines, is used competently, and will refine the task at hand. Thus, "good ethnography requires flexibility. The collection of data may be the one area where flexibility is the most crucial because our study can be no better than the data we collect" (Thomas, 1993, p. 41). In this study, there were numerous materials to be accumulated that informed the study in important ways. Because both student teachers kept journals throughout their year of study, I was able to use these to support and triangulate other data that was being collected as the journals were written as personal accounts rather than focused on the questions that I was asking in this particular study.

Ethics and Anonymity

Standard ethical considerations apply to critical ethnography as in any form of research, such as confidentiality of data, pseudonyms in publications, opt-out clauses, and so on. One of the unique features of critical ethnography is that once the participants take part in the process of critical reflection, the issue of anonymity sometimes becomes irrelevant as they willingly use their own names with pride to publicly identify the growth process in which they were involved.

In this paper, pseudonyms are used for all participants except Tracy and Carlo,
the two student teachers. Throughout the project, Tracy and Carlo became heavily committed to the study. For example, they began to set up interviews with me as they felt the need to discuss their learning about teaching during the preservice program, they read their own transcripts and offered clarifications and additional information, and they read early drafts of the chapter that described their professional growth in detail, providing additional insights, corrections, and supplementary explanations. After each had a chance to read the first draft of Chapter 4, Tracy and Carlo asked independently if their own names could be used in the study as they believed that the words represented a realistic and factual account of their journey from student to teacher.

Besides following the normal channels of ethical approval from the teacher education institution in which this study was situated, two additional issues confronted me. The first concerned my role as an administrator and instructor in the program in which the student teachers were enrolled. Even though I was not directly involved in their evaluation in any way, I was concerned that their comments might be measured always with my position as a faculty member in mind. As a university instructor in the teacher education program, I was concerned about the unequal power relationship between the student teachers and me. To assist in alleviating the two concerns, I talked at length--outside of the formal interviews--with Tracy and Carlo to determine their level of concern and to allow them to voice their opinions. Both reassured me that they were not worried that I might have any interference in their program, and, Carlo subsequently offered to work with me in extending this study into his first years of
teaching. Toward the end of the study, both said that they found the study illuminative in helping them voice their tacit learnings about teaching, and both appreciated the fact that they thought they were having personal, professional instruction with a university member throughout the year.

Accuracy

Critical ethnographers must take care to ensure continuously that the data that they collect is accurately recorded. One of the advantages of working so closely with participants is that there is constant opportunity to review and revise the data with them to ensure as accurate an account as possible and to guard against the researcher's views tainting the interpretations and analyses. It is also vital that the researcher analyze her own style of questioning and responding so that her views are not influencing the informant's discourse. Thomas (1993) recommends paying scrupulous and constant attention to accuracy, using a variety of sources that are helpful in triangulation, such as asking informants to verify accounts at every stage, replicating the study where possible, and constantly reflecting on the material to pinpoint potential weaknesses. In this study, I tried to verify the findings by asking the participants to re-read the transcripts of the interviews and to alter, delete, or add to the information in any way. Indeed, no one asked for anything to be deleted, only for aspects to be added to clarify their comments. I also recorded my thoughts on a regular basis in a research log that I revisited on a regular basis throughout the study, especially before and after each interview. As themes emerged in my mind, I shared my thoughts with the participants and asked for their comments. Their comments were helpful as we reflected together
on the findings as they emerged.

**Data Analysis and Writing the Study**

In the ethnographic tradition, analysis actually begins to occur as the data is assembled and recorded. Ethnographers customarily make comprehensive field notes as they collect the information and these notes may form the preliminary interpretations. The notes generally include information on the context, methodologies, further questions, insights, theoretical issues, and so on, and provide one system of reflexivity for the researcher (Thomas, 1993; Woods, 1986). The researcher should remember that the information secured is important because it is self-generated and self-related. In other words what is critical to the participants is what will be shared, and although the researcher may be able to direct or re-direct the theme, she should attend to listening carefully to the respondents to allow them to direct the questions where they think it is significant to do so. As such, researchers in critical ethnography are constantly involved in probing into their findings to try to defamiliarize themselves in a critical sense (Thomas, 1993).

Defamiliarization is a way of distancing oneself from the taken-for-granted aspect of what we see and allowing us to view what we have seen more critically. We take the collection of observations, anecdotes, impressions, documents, and other symbolic representations of the culture we studied that seem depressingly mundane and common, and we reframe them into something new....The researcher decodes the ways that symbols of culture create asymmetrical power relations, constraining ideology, beliefs, norms and other forces that unequally distribute social rewards, keep some people disadvantaged to the advantage of others, and block fuller participation in or understanding of our social environment....The critical ethnographer also identifies ways by which alternative interpretations of cultural symbols can be displayed. (Thomas, 1993, p. 43)
In defamiliarizing and interpreting the data, the researcher will likely be involved in a speculative categorization process of putting the data into emergent critical themes. By involving the participants in this process, reflection occurs naturally that helps to maintain accuracy and extend the data into a critical realm.

Thomas (1993) notes that the specific language that the critical ethnographer uses throughout the study, and particularly in the analysis and writing up phases, is extremely important as language is a form of power that individuals use for inclusive and exclusive purposes. The essence of discourse, particularly in the sense of authorizing power, is an essential point in critical theory of which the researcher must always be cognizant. Thomas says that "the discourse in which we write our results is as important as the language of the texts of the field-notes that we analyze" (p. 45).

The discourse of the study must strive at all times to be critical, reflexive, reflective, and emancipatory, or revealing of those things taken-for-granted that oppress certain groups.

After the first series of interviews, I began to speculate on themes that I thought might be emerging and collected them in my research log. These notes were useful in planning my next set of interviews. I took the interviews and labelled them according to emergent themes or ideas and actually tacked them up on a wall chart to see what might materialize. As the study progressed some of the developing ideas were strengthened while others were found to be too weak to support further development. I also invited the student teachers and university teacher educators to review and discuss my preliminary wall analysis. Their insights provided valuable wisdom and impetus to
forge ahead.

**Emergence of Theory: What's to be Learned?**

Generally research studies produce findings that either substantiate an existing theory, revise a theory, or create a new theory. In the previous chapter, I spent some time discussing the nature of theory as contextually and language bound—a narrative that might be perceived as descriptive for a certain period in time and space. To determine a theory in a critical ethnography would preclude the inner sense of what critical study is about; rather, the critical ethnographer wants to expose and describe the social reality that was formally hidden so that those who are oppressed can emancipate themselves from the tyranny of the culture in which they find themselves. The conceptual interpretation should adhere closely to the data as the problems and critiques are exposed and the participants are better informed about the means of emancipation. The formulation of theory is of lesser importance in critical theory but there is a need to see the study in terms of grounded theory as described by Glaser & Strauss (1975). They explain that grounded theory is the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from participants in social research to confirm the basic position “that generating grounded theory is a way of arriving at theory suited to its supposed uses” (p. 3). By grounding this study in the social, lived context of student teachers, I hoped that several aspects might ultimately emerge:

- an openness by teacher educators, both in teacher education institutions and school communities, to new ways of thinking and seeing reality and truth, and ways to counteract hegemonic forces which may in fact inhibit student teachers in negotiating their identity as teachers
- substantiation for findings of other critical ethnographies in teacher education
an imaginative and creative way of changing the world of the informants to emancipate them from confining practices.

Summary

Critical ethnography is about liberation from social oppression in the pursuit of social justice. Its goal is to form a vision of a better society. Thomas (1993) cautions ethnographers:

Critical ethnographers challenge comfortable, but repressive, cultural definitions and offer an invitation to engage in social change. When done poorly, critical ethnography rarely rises beyond exhortation and political rhetoric. But when done with subtlety and adherence to the data, it becomes a powerful means both to understand other cultures and to think about our own in new ways (p. 71).

It was with Thomas’ comments in mind that I embarked on a critical ethnographic study involving my own professional community, that of teacher education, in order to gain a method of coming to a more intense understanding of the culture of teacher education as experienced by student teachers and their teacher educators. Such a study seems a significant thing to do at this point in time as educational critics cry for accountability and reform, especially in teacher education. Education seems to be teetering on the brink of exciting change and teacher education could lead the way. At this point and in my view, those new to the profession have a weak voice in their own professional and educational growth as they grow professionally from student to teacher, and in the ensuing chapters, we discuss teacher education and the potential for reform. In this study, I attempt to give them the power to use their own voices to speak in the name of reform.
CHAPTER FOUR

NEGOTIATING THE PATH FROM STUDENT TO TEACHER: PARADOX, POWER, AND PERSONAL MEANING

Introduction

I hate to sound so negative, but I’m frustrated and confused. I was told by so many teachers and friends that this would be a wasted year. And I remember telling you last fall that I would make the best of this year no matter what, because I am so motivated to become a good teacher. But there are no links between what I do in my student teaching and what I am studying here. It’s like I am taking two completely separate courses at the same time. I’m in two separate worlds and none of the people in either one really know or care about what happens to me as a student teacher in the other world. Here [at the Faculty] they say, “This will make sense when you have some experience under your belt.” In the schools they say, “This is where it really counts. This is where you become a teacher. In the Faculty, you just talk about teaching with a bunch of people who seem to be out of touch with reality.” [Tracy, 12/02/96]

A significant part of this investigation is to talk to the main participants in the preservice teacher education process (i.e., student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university teacher educators) to uncover the assumptions, beliefs, values, and ideologies being held by those working within the culture, to identify how those expectations are revealed to student teachers in their relationships as they move from student to teacher, and to look for sources of consonance and dissonance in comparing
and contrasting the beliefs, values, and ideologies of student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university faculty members. In Chapter 4, I discuss the path that the two student teachers, Tracy and Carlo, followed as they developed from student to teacher. Based on interviews over the course of the preservice program, I attempt to delineate the beliefs, values, and ideologies that they had as they proceeded through their preservice year. I present the student teachers' narratives and analysis in an attempt to understand the process of learning about teaching from their particular points of view.

Over the course of this study during the academic year, three descriptive terms emerged which seemed to frame the student teachers’ experiences in learning to teach and led to an articulation of their ideologies about teaching. The three emergent structures were: paradox, power, and personal meaning. As the student teachers searched for the personal meaning in learning to teach, they found themselves in the midst of several contradictory issues as they proceeded through their teacher education program, and they found that trying to sort out these contradictions or paradoxes left them feeling confused and without a sense of control or power over their learning.

The chapter begins by placing the study in context through a brief description of the teacher education program in which this project is situated. Then I introduce Carlo and Tracy and follow them through their teacher education program using interviews, participant observations, and journal entries to illustrate their learning and insights. Together Carlo, Tracy, and I present and analyse their comments and actions in light of paradoxes, power, and personal meaning in the process of learning to teach.

As Carlo and Tracy proceed through their preservice program, it is apparent
that they move from having vague notions about learning to teach by doing, to a clearer conception of how they are learning to teach, and how teacher education could instruct them in teaching.

The Setting

This study is situated in a one-year, post-baccalaureate, university-based teacher education program in Ontario. Approximately, 700 students are enrolled in the preservice teacher education course that prepares teachers to teach in the elementary and secondary schools of the province. In addition, 174 students are enrolled in full- and part-time graduate studies in education. There are 50 full-time faculty members, almost all of whom teach in the preservice program plus a few limited-term instructors; some 42 of the faculty members also teach in the graduate program. The preservice year is divided into 20 weeks of university course work and 10 weeks of field experiences with a pattern of five weeks in university, four weeks in practicum, 12 weeks in university, six weeks in practicum, and a final three week session in the university. The pattern is the same for both elementary and secondary preservice students.

This particular university attracts about five times the number of applicants required, and candidates are admitted based on their academic excellence and superior experience profiles. While all of the students require an undergraduate degree, some students hold a master's or doctoral degrees. The vast majority of candidates do extremely well academically and practically throughout the program, and the employment rate for graduates of this particular program is among the highest in the
province. The candidates in the program fit provincial norms of gender and age across the program, and upon observation, visible minorities compose roughly 9% of the total student population.9

The structure and content of the teacher education program at this institution seems typical of most other preservice, post-baccalaureate programs in the province of Ontario. All student take courses from a variety of instructors in curriculum studies, educational psychology, and educational foundations, and their course-work is interspersed with three- or four-week blocks of student teaching placements in local school boards throughout the academic year. All members of faculty have responsibilities with student teachers and schools during practicum, however, their work in the schools is as a liaison and not as an evaluator of the student teachers’ teaching.10

**Beginning the Study**

In the first week of the 1995 - 1996 preservice program, I attended several different classes in the Faculty of Education to immerse myself as much as possible in

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9 This information was gathered in interviews with several faculty members and administrators within the Faculty of Education and from statistics which I asked for from the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training for teacher candidates in Ontario, 1995-1996. The Ministry sent me a series of papers with statistics show that across all Ontario teacher education programs in 1995-1996, 72% of student teachers were female and 28% were male. According to the Ministry of Education and Training, there are no reports available on ethnicity or socio-economic background.

10 Traditionally, faculty members from teacher education institutions supervise student teachers in the practicum by observing their teaching and writing an evaluation based on their observations. In 1993, this teacher education institution changed the role of the faculty member in the schools from that of evaluator to liaison in the schools. In this new model, faculty members work with the cooperating teachers and principals in two or three schools to develop a school-based practicum that suits the needs of the student teachers and the school community.
the context of the student teachers and to situate the future participants in the context of their peers' actions and beliefs and the program as a whole. It seemed logical to begin by examining why the candidates of this particular class of 700 chose to enter a faculty of education. At the first class, each instructor asked the students to introduce themselves, to provide some personal background information, and to relate to the others how they came to be in a teacher education program. There was a conglomeration of responses. Many were entering teaching because they had dreamed of teaching throughout their lives, and as they spoke in awed tones about what they hoped to contribute to society at large as teachers, an intense and respectful hush pervaded the atmosphere. A harsher reality set in when several said they were in teacher education because teaching seemed like a viable avenue to follow after completing an undergraduate degree that could not lead them anywhere else. One student teacher responded that she had applied to this Faculty of Education because she had only one year of varsity eligibility on a team that would likely win the nationals during this academic year, and a number of other athletes were there in order to become coaches. Others were seeking second careers because they felt dissatisfied with their current careers, future prospects seemed dim, or they were facing redundancy, downsizing, and imminent job loss. Finally, the group included single and married mothers whose children were now independent enough to allow their primary caregiver to pursue her own professional career. All candidates (perhaps out of deference to the instructors in front of them and the thousands of applicants who did not receive offers of enrolment) expressed positive desires and confident expectations
of becoming good teachers. The age range of candidates in the classes spanned about 30 years, with the youngest at 23 to the oldest in the mid 50's. By far the majority of the student teachers in all classes that I attended were white, female, and reported being from a middle-class background. With this background in mind, I moved to the next stage of the project, that of finding participants and collecting data.

Introducing Tracy and Carlo

Selection of Student Teacher Participants

In the beginning stages of this study, I approached two university colleagues, Cheryl and Susan, about the possibility of working with me on this project because I knew from their research work that they used a critical perspective in both their research and their teaching.\textsuperscript{11} I proceeded on the premise that it might be difficult to find student teacher participants at the beginning of the program who understood the conceptual framework of critical theory so I began by choosing instructors who espoused that philosophy, knowing that the student teachers would encounter critical theory though their study in Cheryl's and Susan's classes. Both Cheryl and Susan agreed readily to participate and gave me permission to attend and observe their classes, to interview them about their values, beliefs, and ideologies of teacher education, and to seek student teacher volunteers in their classes whom I could follow throughout the preservice program. Thus I attended both of their initial classes where I introduced myself in turn to the 40 students, explained who I was and why I was there.

\textsuperscript{11} Cheryl's and Susan's beliefs about teaching and learning in relation to critical theory are described in Chapter 5.
Then I provided a brief explanation about my research and invited anyone who might be interested in participating to contact me. Four students came forward within a few days to speak with me, and after lengthy discussion about time commitments and format, I chose two students, one from each class who seemed to embrace the concept of looking at his/her own beliefs, the teacher education program, and their professional growth in an open and critical manner. Tracy was the volunteer from Cheryl’s early years class while Carlo was the participant from Susan’s intermediate science cohort.

In the early stages of the project it was impossible to know about Tracy’s and Carlo’s beliefs about student teaching and whether they would feel comfortable investigating their growth as teachers within a conceptual framework of critical theory. In the preliminary interview, they seemed representative of other student teachers I have taught over my career and they told me that they planned to use their involvement in this project to help them become better teachers. They were representative of other students in terms of gender for early years teaching and science teaching, and like most other student teachers, they showed enthusiasm for the preservice program and its role in helping them become good teachers. They were not representative of other students, however, when they volunteered to become part of this project.

**Reasons for Becoming Teachers**

At the outset of the study it became apparent that the two student teacher participants entered teaching for different reasons and had significantly disparate views

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12 Both faculty members and student teachers who participated in the study read my thesis proposal before signing a consent form.
of teaching. Prior beliefs and images of teaching have a significant influence on student teachers’ preconceptions of teachers and teaching (Britzman, 1991; Cole & Knowles, 1993; Feiman-Nemser & Featherstone, 1992; Knowles, 1992; Lortie, 1975), and student teachers’ views emanate logically from their role as pupils in classes for many years. However, as was noted in Chapter 2, these preconceived views are often idealized and unrelated to reality.13

Tracy is a 23-year-old single, university graduate who had always been a good student and had dreamed of being a teacher of young children for as long as she could remember. The older daughter of two teachers, she had pursued this goal without question throughout her life and was encouraged by her parents to follow their career paths.

I have always wanted to be a teacher... I think because I was around teachers all the time. All of my parents’ friends are teachers; almost every adult I knew growing up was a teacher so I haven’t experienced anything else. I was always what you would call a “good” student in school and in Grade 12, I had already started doing volunteer work in classrooms. I just love working with kids.... I have never really thought about doing anything else. I just cannot picture myself in any other profession. Once I thought about law school because I get really high marks but I decided against it because I don’t really like politics. [29/09/95]14

Tracy had never considered any other career and set her mind to making certain she had the high marks and a superior experience profile to get into a faculty of education.

Actually I applied in my first year of university to take a concurrent education

13 Carlo, in reading a draft of this chapter, circled this particular paragraph and wrote in the margin in red ink: SO TRUE!

14 The date of each interview is noted on the first entry and continues throughout until a new date appears which signifies another interview.
course but I didn't get in so I decided right then and there I had better make sure I had high marks and I began building my resume because I knew how hard it was to get in. So I started volunteering in classrooms again....Actually, in hindsight, I'm glad I didn't get in [after first year] because in first year I was in residence and so immature. I don't think I would have concentrated or valued courses like Philosophy [of Education] or [Child] Psychology, etc. as I do now being four years older.

Tracy entered teacher education with confidence and a number of powerful allies in the teaching profession to provide support if needed, and, using her reflections on her past teachers, sensed that she would be a good teacher. She was not anticipating any real difficulties in becoming a teacher.

Carlo, on the other hand, entered teacher education through a different route. The first of three sons of a working-class, first generation Italian family, Carlo considered how he came to be in teaching and reflected on his own days as a secondary school student:

I was one of the worst students you can imagine in high school. I was the dumb jock who hung out sitting in my car listening to music all day, skipping classes, smoking cigarettes, then played football after school. But I passed and the only reason I got into university was because I was a natural at Maths and Sciences and I didn’t even have to go to class really. So its lucky I was bright even if I was lazy. I remember that I had some really good Physics and Math teachers whom I liked a lot....I didn’t actually discover what it meant to be a student or what education was until I went to university. [26\09\95]

Carlo actually never planned on attending university, but his mother forced him to apply and when he was accepted,

...there was no question that I would not be going to university the next year, according to my mother, so I went....But it was like I had a fresh start there; no one knew me as the party jock who just hung out all the time with a bad attitude. I have to admit that I worked hard in university...but I still played really hard—socializing was a big priority. [26\09\95]
When he had completed his undergraduate degree, Carlo’s parents began to pressure him to find a job and to settle down. Carlo, not wanting to do that just yet, applied to and was accepted at graduate school. He worked on his own for three years developing his thesis and found that although the scientific work in the laboratory was interesting, he felt isolated. He was more satisfied with his work as a teaching assistant than as a researcher.

I was paid 10 hours per week to TA\textsuperscript{15} biology labs in the department and I really looked forward to those times. It was more than just the income, and I realized I was doing well because a lot of the students would come to my labs instead of going to others. They [undergraduate students] really liked me and said I made the subject matter clear for them.

About that time Carlo found a position teaching environmental science at a community college and he felt that he had found his niche.

I taught four classes at the college and it was fantastic. When I began I only had a two-sentence course description to go on, so I got to develop the curriculum for the courses by myself. I planned what I thought the students would need but I kept asking them for feedback so that I would know I was on track. I think I was a good teacher because I tried to be really open to their needs about learning. And there was no one else in the department who knew anything about Ecosystem Monitoring & Assessment, so I was completely on my own….I found that I didn’t miss the solitary life of a researcher at all.

Carlo loved his job at the community college and would have preferred to remain teaching there but because of budget cuts and lack of seniority, he lost his job. During the termination process, his students petitioned the dean of the institution to rehire him (without his knowledge), but to no avail. It was at this point that Carlo had to consider some options for the future—whether to go back to graduate school to pursue a

\textsuperscript{15} Carlo means that he was hired as a teaching assistant when he refers to himself as a TA.
doctorate, to seek a position in industry, or to consider teaching in the public system.

As he reflected on past experiences, Carlo realized that he felt most satisfied in his life when he was actually in the position of teacher—whether as a teaching assistant in undergraduate classes at the university, or in his teaching position at the college, or in tutoring struggling students. And being 27 years of age, he capitulated to the pressure from his parents and decided to find a stable job. He decided to apply to this particular Faculty of Education in the province to pursue teaching as a profession because he knew that admission to the program was based on high academic marks and superior experience profile, and he believed he stood a good chance of being accepted.

Carlo was confident that he would be a good teacher. He had evidence from his community college experience that he could take a few lines from a topical outline and plan lessons from which his students seemed to learn. He believed that he already knew a great deal about teaching, that he would have good rapport with his pupils because his students always liked him, and that he was beginning his professional education with a solid experiential base of competence. In fact, Carlo began his program with the confidence that he already knew how to teach.

Although their routes into teaching were significantly different, it was apparent from their interviews that Carlo and Tracy began their teacher education with a similar sense of enthusiastic motivation, confidence, and commitment. Both looked forward to becoming teachers; both expressed some (but minimal) anxiety about the process of learning to become a teacher and wondered what there might be to learn about teaching besides just doing it.
Question 1:  How do student teachers learn to teach?

Discussing the process of learning about teaching became the heart of the investigation. This question raised far more questions than answers and our discussions together were sparked and often controversial. During the preservice program, Carlo and Tracy encountered a number of frustrating contradictions in their preservice experiences about learning to teach as they sought to determine a personal identity as a teacher. For them, these problems became paradoxes with which they had to grapple as they tried to negotiate their identity as teachers. The paradoxes, in turn, created power struggles with which they had to contend. In some ways, the evolution of their personal identities as teachers was born out of six paradoxes that were identified as

i. Teaching as Doing vs. Learning about Teaching
ii. Identifying/Being Recognized as a Student vs. Identifying/Being Recognized as a Teacher
iii. The Practice of Theories vs. The Theories of Practice
iv. Teacher as Enforcer vs. Teacher as Pedagogue
v. Demonstrating Immediate Competence vs. Lifelong Learning as a Teacher
vi. Following Established Routines of Teaching vs. Experimentation with New Approaches

In the following pages, I discuss each paradox and the ensuing power struggles that Tracy and Carlo encountered as they negotiated the path from student to teacher.

Paradox # 1: Learning to Teach by Doing vs. Learning about Teaching

Tracy and Carlo were no exception to the common belief held by student teachers that one learns to teach by just doing it (Britzman, 1991; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Jacka, 1994). When asked at the start of the program how they thought they
might learn to become teachers, both said that it would likely occur when they would be allowed in classrooms to teach. Tracy said:

I'll learn about becoming a teacher, I think, mostly from the practicum where I will be in charge of the teaching. I'm not sure what I will do. I guess that I will just go on instinct. I have a feeling that I will be very successful at it. I'll learn to develop a sense of what to do and how to plan things according to how the kids are that day.

When asked a similar question, Carlo responded:

I think it will be easier for me to become a teacher than for some others because I want this more than anything and I have really positive experiences about doing it from my previous experiences at the college and TA'ing at university. After so many years of misdirection or without direction, I finally know where I am going, how I am going to get there, and I already know how to teach. But to learn to become a teacher [of adolescent pupils], I am going to over-prepare, over-teach...in the schools [during practicum]. At this point, teaching to me is both selfish and giving at the same time. I get considerable gratification when I see it click--when a pupil actually learns something. So they are getting the knowledge but I am actually feeling that I gave them that fact, or skill, or whatever.

Both display considerable narcissistic naivete about what teaching is and what is required to become a teacher; both think that they will learn to become teachers just by doing it--that becoming a teacher will happen fairly easily. And although they do not know what to do in teaching, both believe that they will just know what to do by instinct and that they will be successful when the time comes.

At this point, early in the program, neither has any other conception of how to become a teacher, and both seem most concerned about themselves as performers in the

16 The point is bolded to show the speaker's emphasis.
classroom. Both have doubts that the teacher education institution or others\(^\text{17}\) will play a significant role in their professional development; both seem self-centred and independent when thinking about how they will learn to teach. They perceive that the entire responsibility for becoming a teacher is totally on their shoulders, and they believe that it will be fairly easy to make the transition from student to teacher. Their comments confirm the body of research in which we find that most novice teachers feel that becoming a teacher is probably difficult for others but will not be that hard for them (Cole & Knowles, 1993; Jacka, 1994; Lortie, 1975; Veenman, 1984; Weinstein, 1988).

It seems naive for student teachers to have such simplistic views of what is required to become competent teachers and one wonders if they think that teaching is a profession or just a job in the labour force. Researchers (Eisner, 1992; Lortie, 1975) note that beginning teachers have already had the benefit of observing teachers at work in the past as pupils in their classrooms that may give them undue confidence and a sense that the job is easy. However, in thinking about preparation for other professions, it must be said that medical students have also had the opportunity to observe medical personnel at work as a result of their own health care; law students have likely had a few experiences participating in some legal aspects and it seems that they do not have such naive views of what it takes to become a professional in their respective fields.

\[^{17}\text{In this case, others refers to cooperating teachers, university instructors, school administrators, peers, or acquaintances.}\]
In meeting with some pre-med and law students, I asked what they would have to do to become practising professionals. Their responses were remarkably different from and seemed less naive than the teacher education candidates. From one pre-med student:

We'll study anatomy, physiology, diseases, chemical properties for pharmaceuticals, etc. in class, and also we will observe doctors at work with patients and discuss our observations. Then we will assist with clinical work and have the chance to study with a doctor, one-on-one. We'll practice diagnostic and assessment skills with constant supervision and then perhaps specialize...Then, after years and years of study, observation, and guided practice, I will work on my own but I’ll always have others to contact and refer to. Being a doctor requires constant study and consultation to ensure that you are keeping abreast of important things that are happening in medicine. [field notes; 14/02/96]

From a law student:

We have to study and learn all of the aspects of the law, litigation and legislation, current law and its history, in general, and then a find an area of concentration which we will have to study intensively. Then we study case law. And then we will observe and assist lawyers at work before we could ever practice on our own. Plus we’ll do all of the examination requirements to be sure we know what is necessary. At first, most of us will work as junior lawyers in law firms before moving into independent practice. There is a lot more to this than what you see lawyers doing in the courtrooms. [field notes; 20/02/96]

Although some naivete appears likely in their straightforward responses, there was no hesitation that to prepare for their professions, they would need to engage in lengthy and intensive study in other fields before they could hope to begin to practice. Although they may be anxious to begin practising, they know that they need to study hard in order to prepare for the demands of the professional. They know that their preparation will be lengthy, consuming, and difficult but they point out that much
preparatory work is vital if they are to become autonomous, decision-making professionals. At this point in their career, they note that at least four phases are critical in order to become a practising professional:

- to study the subject matter needed for the profession,
- to observe, discuss, and reflect before practising,
- to be supervised in the practice of the profession before practising alone, and finally,
- to continue studying after certification to keep abreast of changes.

Dreeben (1968), in a discussion of professional authority, says that organizations do not engage professional persons solely in staff capacities; in fact, certain organizations, such as hospitals, schools, law firms, universities, research institutes, and the like, are expressly built to provide professional services for clients and to create original knowledge. (pp. 119-120)

The pre-med and law students to whom I spoke seemed to have an understanding of Dreeben’s concepts of professionalism going into their study and appreciate that at some point they will be recognized for their independent exercise of judgement on behalf of their clients and the institution by which they are employed. They are preparing to become professionals in a practice where they will deal independently and autonomously with clients while generating new knowledge for the advancement of the profession. In order to do become professionals, they look forward to the rigorous study that is required.

On the other hand, to learn to teach, Carlo and Tracy entered the teacher education feeling that there was only one attribute that they needed to become teachers: the ability to teach by instinct in the practicum setting. Carlo questioned whether there was a body of knowledge in teaching, or even if teaching was a profession. He said,
“Student teachers enter teacher education believing that they already have the background content knowledge and now just want to practise teaching.” He asked, "Is there anything that is essential for me to know to practise teaching? I don’t think so. You just do it."

As opposed to the other professional students to whom I spoke, neither student teacher sought to question their beliefs that teaching can only be learned individually through direct and independent experience, and both seemed to exude a sense of confidence and pride that they would be successful in doing it by themselves in isolation. Neither one noted any real concern for the subject matter of teaching.

Why would novice teachers have such different and limited expectations about what it requires to learn to become professional in their field? Their comments seem to question: is it even possible to teach someone to teach? And "Is teaching a profession?"

Britzman (1991) discusses the myth that teachers are self-made (p. 230) and states that

More than any other myth [about teaching], the dominant belief that teachers “make” themselves functions to devalue any meaningful attempt to make relevant teacher education, educational theory, and the social process of acknowledging the values and interests one brings to and constructs because of the educational encounter....The circumstance of student teaching is thus viewed as a tortuous moment that tests the inner strength of the novice. A kind of social Darwinism is also sustained, where only the strong survive....While covering its own theoretical tracks, the myth that teachers are self-made structures a suspicion of theory, and encourages the stance of anti-intellectualism. A larger consequence concerns the rejection of any concept of theory and the valorization of an essential self as the sole source of knowledge. (p. 230-231)
When asked why they placed so much emphasis on the performance of teaching instead of other forms of study, Tracy and Carlo cited the importance of being seen immediately as successful teachers in the practicum classroom—which evoked a second paradox.

**Paradox # 2: Identifying/Being Recognized as a Student vs. Identifying/ Being Recognized as a Teacher**

Both Carlo and Tracy preferred to see themselves as teachers rather than students during the preservice program but found that it was only during their practicum assignments, that they felt like teachers. There were a number of forces outside their control that shaped their identity. When they began their preservice program, they expected to be taught how to teach and were content to be students. But when they reached the practicum, they expected to feel like teachers and then be treated like learning teachers throughout the remainder of the program. Both reported that they enjoyed their role as students during the first five weeks in the teacher education institution and both claimed to feel like teachers in the practicum setting. When asked how this transition occurred, Tracy said:

I honestly felt that I learned so much here [in the Faculty] before I went out on practicum. Then in the practicum I can't even begin to express how much I learned. I was suddenly a teacher and felt like a teacher. It was overwhelming and so energizing. And now that I'm back here, I just feel like I've been stopped. For example, last week in one of our large group classes, it took the instructor a whole hour to get across the point that theory and practice are related; obviously they are related or why would we do anything?

I just feel that I'm wasting my time here compared to what I did in the classroom and I'm powerless to get out of it...It felt so good to be a teacher and to go in every day with my lessons and assignments done. They felt so meaningful. I could put everything together, try it out on the pupils and then get feedback. That was the best learning for me...After my first lesson in the
practicum, I began to feel like a teacher—a learning one—and now I'm really a student again. In the school, I felt like I had control over my learning and my life. I had to plan for my kids the next day. Here I get to read four chapters a night, write in my reflection journal, whether I'm in the mood to reflect or not....I was respected in the school and the classroom by the teachers and pupils as a teacher. And here I'm just one of 700 students doing busy work.

[13/11/95]

Carlo expressed similar comments about the change in identity from student to teacher as the first practicum began. In the following passage, Carlo discloses how he began to feel powerless and transformed back into a student after the practicum was over. He found himself back in the Faculty of Education talking about teaching instead of doing it.

The first five weeks here before we went out were really great. We got what we would need for the practicum and I was impressed. But now that we are back here [in the Faculty] for three months, I'm not very happy with things anymore. I find that very few of the classes are helping me with the things I need to talk about and know...I don't know where these courses are going and I spend most of my time thinking, "What is the relevance of this?" and I'm not coming up with any answers. In most of my classes I cannot see the practical application of what we are doing. Compared to the practicum, I'm just listening, reading, and studying for tests and writing assignments and trying to learn what I think I need...

The first phase of the program was like wearing water wings in the kiddie pool to help us get ready for the classroom experience. Then we went off and swam in the deep end, still with lots of assistance. Now everything has been taken away. We got all wet in the deep end and you want to take us back in the kiddie pool. No! Now it's time to take off the water wings. Give us more and make it relevant and practical to classroom teaching. I'm disappointed. You [faculty] gave us the power to be teachers and now you have yanked it away and made us students again and I don't like it at all.

Back in the Faculty after student teaching, Carlo felt like a student and thought that he was recognized as a student. After being given some responsibilities as a teacher, he thought that he had no power as a student and he felt cheated by his instructors. He
thought that the content he was studying in the university had no relation to the learning that he had just encountered in the school setting, and as a student he felt powerless to challenge his instructors. He said:

I'm not going to be the one to say anything. We are only here for eight months and I can survive this. I want to be a teacher so badly that I have no intention of putting myself in jeopardy. It is only during these interviews and with my friends that I feel that I can speak my mind. [22/02/96]

Throughout the program, neither Carlo's nor Tracy's views of the university program changed. During the three months in the university between practicum sessions, their emotions changed from anger and frustration, to disappointment and apathy. They attended classes, they did the amount of work required, they complained loudly to their peers and to me about their loss of control and power over their learning, and while they both waited anxiously for the next opportunity to be in schools, neither spoke to Cheryl or Susan (or their other instructors) about their concerns. They did the university work, they said, because they hoped it would be beneficial at some point in their teaching careers.

Paradox # 3: The Practice of Theories vs. The Theories of Practice

Both Carlo and Tracy explained that it was not only they who were frustrated with the program; it was widespread through the Faculty. Each brought me a list of things the university could do to improve the situation. The first revolved around the fact that most students (so they said) thought that the university courses were too theoretical and did not make the transition from the theoretical to the practical obvious to the students. Tracy said, "I expect that what they are talking about is probably
really important but I have no idea why. Do the instructors here know what teaching in schools is really like?” Carlo described the problem thoughtfully this way:

We want to be taught how to teach here and it seems to me that to teach someone you have to start at the bottom of a progression. At the basic level, we need to be taught the what and how of teaching. Simple! Then, when we have had the chance to learn it, we have to try it, we need to discuss it and look at alternatives and try those alternatives. Then when we have some proficiency behind us, then we can reflect critically on what we have done and how to improve or alter it and the cycle starts over again. It’s practice, theory, more practice, advanced theory. It’s a continuous loop and it always comes back to the basics. Now I will admit that I have two instructors out of about twelve who follow that model and everyone loves their courses, and I have learned so much.

But the others [instructors] start at the reflective stage and we don’t know how the instructor got there or why, and it’s pointless. I’ll give an example. In one core class we spent an hour talking about metaphors of teaching and why they help us understand who we are as teachers. Now at first glance it seems like a reasonable topic, but we don’t have the basic skills or experience to have [personal] metaphors [of teaching] yet. The instructors teach as if we already know about ourselves as teachers and about pupils as learners. We don’t. Another example—we’re expected to do portfolios in two different classes and we are doing them. Sure they explained why but I don’t really understand why, other than for a job interview which does not show me how to teach—and I’m sorry. I know this is probably too simplistic but it’s how I see it. [08/02/96]

Although it was somewhat disappointing for me to hear Carlo’s negative comments about our teacher education program, at the same time, it was exciting to hear Carlo explain how teacher educators should teach because we could both see that, through his frustration with his courses, he was developing a concept of how he could learn to teach. He was thinking about the links between subject matter and pedagogy and how pupils learn. It was helpful that he was developing some concept of learning to teach through a learner’s perspective as it provided a sense of power and control for himself, the student learner, who thought that he had been disempowered by taking courses at
the university.

Tracy seemed to be making similar transitions as she discussed the relation of theory and practice and related why she perceived that one course in particular was valuable to her.

She [university instructor] gives us a solid balance between the theory of teaching and seeing it in practice. We get to talk about it, then observe it in action on videos or in peer-teaching situations. She gives us resources to go along with the theory and tells us, not only why we should use them, but how to set up the class and how to use them to make the theory work. It is so useful and even though it is specialized to [one specific area], I think that I can take the information and transfer it to another area and go through the process there. She has us write in-depth essays on the topic and I enjoy doing it in this course. This is only an elective and it’s the best course I’m taking. [12/02/96]

Tracy was actively thinking about using her instructor’s model as a model for learning to teach and for teaching, and that gave her a sense of control over her learning situation.

Tracy and Carlo show significant disregard and disappointment for their university instructors and the content of many of their courses. They are hampered by the power that the institution seems to hold over them as they progress as teachers. Although their comments may serve to reinforce the sense of anti-intellectualism in teaching (Britzman, 1991), I found that these comments serve to articulate and reinforce the values, beliefs, and ideologies with which student teachers enter preservice programs. According to Carlo and Tracy:

- student teachers know and respect that there is a relationship between theory and practice in teaching;
- student teachers come to faculties of education expecting to be taught both theoretical and practical means of learning to teach;
- the relationship between the teaching in the teacher education institution
(theories) and the teaching in schools (practice) needs to be made explicit and related; and,
- student teachers see themselves as students in faculties of education (not student teachers) and teachers in schools, and would like to see themselves as developing teachers in both settings.

Student teachers commonly note that the practicum is the most important component of their teacher education program (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). It is in the context of the school that student teachers can observe and practise the real work of teachers, and it is there that they can begin to see themselves emerge as real, developing teachers. Britzman (1991) theorizes that student teachers may not be aware of the historic tensions between conformity and social change, but these tensions are lived during the practice of teaching. In classroom performance, university course work is relegated to the world of rehearsal...Once student teachers actually begin teaching, the visions of practice with which they entered are continually being reworked and reinvented. Given this complex instability in a role that still requires authoritative certainty, what does student teaching do to those learning to teach? (pp. 59-60)

**Paradox # 4: Teacher as Enforcer vs. Teacher as Pedagogue**

It is a commonly held belief that public education exists to educate and liberate the masses from ignorance. Even though public education (as noted in Chapter 2) is actually about the assimilation and cultural reproduction of the values of the dominant culture, the professionals, known as teachers, who carry out the mandate of public education, are perceived as pedagogues--professionals who have “a systematic procedure for advancing learning” for empowering learners (Smyth, 1989, p. 2). Smyth elaborates:

Pedagogues ask questions while articulating their theories about teaching and learning--they verbalize why they do what they do in their teaching, interrogating their knowing so as to uncover why it is that they accept current
practices, and questioning the veracity of the social conditions that support and sustain them. (p. 2)

The underlying assumption in Smyth's work is that teachers carry out their task based on a body of developed knowledge, and that they constantly question and revise their practice based on thoughtful, personal, and published research. Smyth acknowledges that, currently, education faces a crisis in terms of the public's lack of confidence in the system, and at the same time

professionals...are being confronted by situations in which the tasks they are required to perform no longer bear any relation to the tasks for which they have been educated....Practitioners are, therefore, becoming increasingly engulfed in wrangles over conflicting and competing values and purposes. (Smyth, 1989, p. 3)

There is a marked similarity here for teacher education candidates according to Tracy and Carlo. In their university courses, they study and articulate theories of learning out of the context of school classrooms; they engage in discussions of teaching as developing pedagogues with experienced, critical pedagogues. In practicum classrooms, however, the study of teaching changes from engaging in discussion of theory and practice to engaging in the action and practice of theory with experienced classroom teachers, who, as Smyth (1989) states, have had many more tasks added to their list of responsibilities than just teaching. The immediacy of the classroom environment and the necessity to be perceived as successful teachers may be judged on assuming responsibilities other than those related to thinking deeply about pedagogy.

Student teachers tend to be judged on their ability to control pupils without any outside assistance and, in spite of all that has been written about variations in learning
environments, a quiet classroom is still often perceived as a learning classroom (Britzman, 1991). One of the first observations that cooperating teachers make to student teachers is how well the pupils behave during their classes (Britzman, 1991; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Zeichner, 1992). If the pupils behave well, the student teacher is able to present the assigned subject matter, and in contrast, if the student teacher is unable to manage the class, much of the lesson is spent disciplining pupils. The necessity for competence in single-handedly managing any and all classes contributes to the isolation that has plagued teachers in schools since the beginning of time.

Encouraged by the belief that the individual is solely responsible for what is in fact a product of complex social circumstances and forces, the discourse of blaming the victim ignores the ways history deposits its traces as antagonistic meanings. In the case of learning to teach, the cultural myths of self-made, autonomous, expert teacher supports the ideology of blaming the victim and ultimately promotes a simplistic understanding of the operation of power in educational life. (Britzman, 1991, p. 237)

The power of being the controller was something both Carlo and Tracy felt uncomfortable about but they realized that their perceived success in the practicum was first measured on their ability to be the teacher as controller. Carlo and Tracy were well aware that they would be evaluated on their ability to manage the pupils and to maintain a learning environment. They expected that knowing how to teach and engage the pupils in learning once they had a controlled learning environment would just occur naturally.

Prior to the first practicum, Carlo and Tracy perceived that they would have few problems managing the pupils. But as they met some pupils who were not so
eager to pay attention in their classes and as they learned that teaching is not just
telling, they began to doubt their prior conceptions of teaching and wondered what
teaching really was. Tracy said:

I was amazed at the kids in the Grade 6 class. I had no idea that there would be
so many different levels in that one class—all the way from kids who couldn’t
really read to those who could, but not at a Grade 6 level. We had to plan
activities for all of those abilities because they couldn’t all do the same thing at
the same time. And we had to make sure that everybody was busy so that
everybody could get some work done. I had to plan so many different activities.
It’s impossible to be that far ahead of each child and you end up planning
learning activities that don’t really help them learn but keep them occupied.
And there were three teachers in that class—the cooperating teacher, the other
student teacher, and me!

Tracy was encountering the frustration of recognizing the difficulties of trying
to accommodate several problems at once: planning for individual learning abilities,
maintaining awareness of each pupil’s achievement and learning, and preserving a
learning atmosphere so that all could learn. She acknowledged that it was difficult to
do everything even with three teachers in the classroom, and that keeping the pupils
busy and on some task required much of her energy and time.

Carlo was also worried about and frustrated by the relationship of classroom
management to teaching after his first practicum experience. He had been placed in a
practicum setting in which the pupils seemed more homogeneous in ability levels and
were well-behaved in class. In fact, he noted that he had never had to work as an
enforcer in this class and he wondered if he had really been teaching. He worried
about the good class with which he had worked, that it was an anomaly because of the
stories that his friends in the university told him after their practicum experiences. He
I was so anxious to meet with you today as I need to talk about a couple of things. My practicum went exceedingly well. I learned a lot and Gerald taught me so many things that I really feel that I learned how to teach but there was a major drawback in the placement. Getting back here to school [to the Faculty of Education], I found out that I may have learned how to teach but I haven’t learned about the important things that go along with teaching. I have talked to my friends here who said they spent every period predominantly on classroom discipline. In my class, I gave instructions and the kids performed those instructions. I didn’t teach any slower or faster kids; they were all average. Nor did I have any real management problems, so I didn’t learn the most important things that go along with teaching....But you should hear what the other student teachers had to deal with. Sixty minutes out of seventy minutes were spent on control issues. I haven’t had any experience with that and I suspect that’s closer to the real world I’ll see as a teacher. They said if you can’t do classroom management, you can’t be teaching. A friend of mine who was student teaching at a basic level school said that teaching there was just classroom management. But I feel so frustrated because she said that she learned how to control and everybody [experienced teachers, faculty members, student teachers, pupils] told her, “If you can teach there and be successful, you can teach anywhere.” Now teaching is going to be a piece of cake for her and now I’m way behind the others. [18/11/95]

After gaining some initial confidence and working through some of his preconceptions about teaching in his own mind, Carlo’s search for personal meaning in teaching was altered as he talked with his peers about the performance of teaching.

The student teachers were arguing about what it meant to teach and some were contending forcefully that the ability to discipline kids and manage classes was actually teaching. Carlo was easily swayed into this thinking because their stories were far more dramatic, and Carlo had no such experience in his student teaching to use as a basis for comparison. As we continued our conversations, we talked about “what is teaching/learning?” and how it relates to keeping a class quiet, and Carlo expressed more confidence in the insights he had gained in his practicum setting. But Carlo was
concerned enough to request a really tough practicum placement for the next session so that he could reassure himself that by being the teacher/enforcer, he could assure his evaluators that he was competent to manage a classroom.

In his next placement (that I arranged purposely, at his request, in a basic level secondary school with an experienced cooperating teacher and three unruly classes), Carlo encountered the problems of trying to teach a curriculum while attempting to control an inordinate amount of inappropriate behaviour in class. Although he admitted feeling somewhat inhibited by the forthcoming practicum, Carlo was excited by the challenge to be successful with these students. He still believed that if you could teach challenging pupils, you could teach anyone. In an interview during the practicum he said:

Last Tuesday, I wanted out, by Monday I was tolerating it, and today I'm enjoying it but it's really hard. I am getting along better now in the classroom. It took me a long time to realize that it wasn't just the kids I was having the real trouble with; it was me. I thought I could go in and just be a joker and they would like me. But unless I took a firm stand from the beginning I was in trouble. For the first time, I saw myself as wishy-washy and I became angry that I had to change my personality. I had no idea that I could get so angry and frustrated at teaching. But I changed my style and I feel out of character but it is working. I am having so many highs and lows which I have never experienced before. My cooperating teacher has already told me I am progressing well so just keep trying to learn how to get the information across to them but this is really hard. I have never been around kids like these before and yet they are really nice and I like them a lot. Let's just say that Raghav is retiring this spring and I won't be applying for his job. [29/02/96]

As he continued his growth as a teacher throughout this practicum, Carlo found himself wrestling critically with his earlier beliefs and confidence. In this case, he found that the pupils seemed to have the power and he was battling for control as the teacher.
Carlo worked through this setting with much difficulty and realized what it was like to have to develop a learning environment in the class before engaging in the subject matter.

While Tracy and Carlo worried about demonstrating that they could enforce discipline in their classes, another conflict materialized. They acknowledged a feeling of power (with some guilt) that they believed they had over the pupils as teachers in the classroom, and that they had to take in order to be effective teacher/enforcers. Upon reflecting on his experiences, Carlo said:

I felt natural as a teacher and very comfortable when I was teaching at the community college. I liked being at the front of the room and even though it sounds like a power high, I just loved it...being able to explain a complex idea and actually seeing it click with the students. It was excitement all the time for me....As a teacher, I like to think of myself as a supermarket and the kids can come in and take whatever they want off the shelves....I plan to be so effective that they will learn that greens aren’t so bad after all.

In a subsequent interview during his first practicum, he said:

I just love being in front of the class and teaching them. I keep them smiling and laughing and we have such a good time. But I’m loud and big and they just have to listen. I guess that I know that I have power over the situation but I’m not sure that’s what I really want. I don’t know how to teach any other way yet. I want to be in control; I want to be the teacher....I thought I would be this teaching powerhouse and now I’m not sure if I want to be that anymore. I don’t want to be perceived as a big clown; it doesn’t seem professional. [18/10/95]

Carlo spent a great deal of time in this interview during his practicum sessions wrestling with his persona as a teacher and trying to identify his own personal way of being. He enjoyed the sense of power and control in being the teacher in front of the pupils in the classroom, but he was slightly guilty about enjoying the feeling of power over the pupils and the classroom situation.
For Carlo, this earlier sense of power led to yet another paradox: he knew he could use his personality to take control of the situation that gave him the power to be the teacher, but his conceptions about becoming a control or power figure in the classroom created a sense of powerlessness for him as he reflected about the situation. Carlo attributed his concerns about his personality to the fact that his cooperating teacher, Gerald, was quite different from Carlo. Gerald was quiet and unassuming in the classroom, and not at all flashy or extroverted. Yet he maintained a learning environment that Carlo respected highly and Carlo's preconceptions of what a teacher had to be were challenged upon meeting and observing Gerald. Although Carlo realized that Gerald did not expect him to clone him, he still felt a sense of powerlessness as he realized that teaching was more than entertaining the pupils to keep them on task; he came to understand that it was only one style of many that he would need to master. As he began to consider his role as teacher, Carlo began to see the pupils as human beings on a more equal footing than he expected to even in the difficult placement, and this caused him to reconsider his earlier conceptions of teacher as controller.

The kids are a lot different than I thought they would be. They are like adults; they reason, they think, they have opinions. I saw learning take place at different times: while I was teaching and outside the classroom; when I was with the whole group, when they helped each other, and when I gave extra help. It wasn't just me [the teacher] who provided all of the learning.

As the program ended, Carlo was beginning to resist the idea of teacher as enforcer and was reconceptualizing his practice to integrate his various roles as teacher.
Paradox # 5: Demonstrating Immediate Competence vs. Lifelong Learning as a Teacher

One of the reasons that Carlo and Tracy emphasized the performance of teaching in their discussions revolved around the notion that they only had an eight-month course to prove their competence in teaching. Because the one-year teacher education program culminates in full teacher certification, the student teachers felt the pressure to show competence immediately rather than taking time to learn about teaching. Thus, another paradox developed. Both had to demonstrate their ability to manage and teach classes in one brief year, while instructors in their university classes talked to them in broader terms of reflective practice and learning about becoming a teacher over the span of 20 or 30 years.

At first glance, demonstrating immediate competence may not seem different than training for another profession—one always expects to learn as new knowledge and competencies are developed. But in teaching, there is a significant difference. Unlike any other profession, beginning teachers are expected to assume the same responsibility as any other professional in an isolated environment with little guidance or supervision (Jacka, 1994; Lortie, 1975). In fact beginning teachers are discouraged from seeking assistance in their beginning years as it can be seen as a sign of weakness (see Jacka, 1994).

Carlo and Tracy believed that much of what they were experiencing in the practicum was preparing them directly for their first year of teaching. However, they believed that much of what they were learning in the teacher education institution was
useless, even though it might be more useful in their long-term growth. Their priority was to survive the practicum and their first year of teaching before looking at what might be required in the long-term.

Carlo said:

You will remember that I was originally worried that what my [cooperating] teachers would ask me to do would be against what I thought I wanted to do. And you will remember that I said I would just do whatever I had to do to be successful. Well, I found out that what they are doing in the classroom works and why should I be thinking up new things when they already have it worked out. Plus they are marking me on my ability right now and if I can do what they do in practice, both of us will be pleased. I need all of the ideas I can get to be ready for my own class in September.

Feeling the need to demonstrate immediate competence was impelled by two issues—the immediacy and power of the evaluation report from the cooperating teacher in the practicum and the need to gather as many ideas as possible for a fulltime teaching position within the next six months. Carlo and Tracy were frustrated by their university classes in which they realized that they were being asked to prepare for teaching as a long-term career and to study education in terms of its political nature and as lifelong learning. Both resolved this paradox by going to classes, completing readings and assignments, and hoping they would see the benefits in the longer term.

Tracy said:

The experience in the schools is where I have learned almost everything about teaching this year. I hate to complain about the program here [at the university] but I just don't see its usefulness now when I have to be ready to teach in September all by myself. I cannot afford to take time to be a student now, when I have so much to learn about being a teacher, and the schools are where it happens for me. [02/04/96]

Wrestling with this paradox led to yet another paradox in their search for a
personal identity and meaning in teaching.

Paradox # 6: Following Established Routines of Teaching vs. Experimentation with New Approaches

Carlo and Tracy said that it was important to follow the established routines of their cooperating teachers because they respected the competence of the experienced teachers. They believed that by following an effective model, they might be more readily recognized as successful teachers. Also, the student teachers knew that the cooperating teachers would be evaluating them and they believed that they should emulate what the cooperating teachers did because their models were effective in the eyes of those cooperating teachers who were also their primary supervisors.

Before the first practicum session, both student teachers worried that they might not find their cooperating teachers to be good teachers, but in each case as the year progressed, both student teachers respected and valued the methods used in their student teaching classrooms. They found that the methods in use became consonant with their own beliefs about teaching. Neither Carlo nor Tracy questioned to any extent what they observed and were satisfied to follow their cooperating teachers’ models.

In the meantime, Carlo and Tracy felt contradictions emanating from their teacher education institution courses. As novices, they were reminded by their university instructors to acknowledge their role as guests in the schools, but were actively encouraged to try to develop their own teaching style, to take risks with unconventional practices, and to try different teaching/learning activities while in a
guided situation (see Appendix A). To some extent, Carlo and Tracy understood the wisdom of this advice but thought that for all practical purposes it was inconsistent with the necessity to demonstrate immediate competence as teachers during the short, preservice program. Both believed that they could afford to wait until they had their own classes to experiment with other practices. The literature reminds us that beginning teachers are usually quite conservative in their approaches to teaching and learning as they try to survive their first years of teaching in isolation (see Jacka, 1994).

**Paradoxes, Power, and Personal Meaning**

As the paradoxes of the preservice program emerged and were identified, Carlo and Tracy reflected on their feelings of confusion, frustration, and disempowerment.

Near the end of the program, Carlo said:

> I was so motivated when I began this program because I wanted to be a teacher more than anything, and I was determined to do whatever I had to in order to become a teacher. Plus I was prepared to work day and night to learn as much as I could from whatever source possible. I had heard that I would be frustrated with the teacher education program from every teacher that I knew and I vowed that would not be my attitude. But it's happened. I'm frustrated, apathetic, and sometimes I feel that I have no power over my own learning. I learn so much in the schools and I have a one-on-one opportunity to discuss it with my cooperating teacher and with you in these conversations, but no one else at the university has any idea what I'm learning or how to relate it to the big picture. [03/04/96]

As we talked, Carlo recalled the roller coaster of emotions that he encountered during the preservice program: anticipation and enthusiasm upon entry into the program; anxiety and personal insecurity during the five weeks in the Faculty before the first practicum; challenge, excitement, and exhaustion during the four-week practicum;
anticipation, disappointment, anger, cynicism, and apathy during the twelve-week university component; renewed energy, challenge, control, and exhaustion during the six-week practicum placement; and finally, resignation and a search for personal identity as a teacher during the final three weeks of the preservice program in the university again.

Both Tracy and Carlo believed that they had completed the preservice program with a wiser sense of what it means to be a teacher and with confidence in themselves. And both knew that they had done very well in their preservice program because of the excellent student teaching reports and high course marks. Although both looked forward to their first teaching assignment, neither knew how to prepare or what to expect. Thus, although they had confidence in their ability to plan, teach, and evaluate single lessons or short units, to manage a classroom, and to relate to other teachers as staff members, neither was able to predict what their first teaching assignment might be like. Through the year of study, both Tracy and Carlo developed and confirmed images of themselves as student teachers but not as the solitary teacher in charge of a classroom. Both looked forward to assuming a teaching job with sole professional responsibility for a classroom but both sensed that they would have to learn on the job what teaching was really about. This uncertainty strengthened their feelings of insecurity and powerlessness in becoming teachers and in being identified as teachers. It also nourished their criticisms of their teacher education program. At the end of the preservice program, neither was able to articulate in any clearer terms answers to the questions we had been investigating all year: how does one learn to teach?
Carlo and Tracy's comments validate the learned opinion of many educational researchers who find that beginning teachers are not prepared properly to become teachers. Their comments contain the familiar images and examples of "shattered images and expectations" (Cole & Knowles, 1993; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Jacka, 1994; Zeichner, 1992). Many writers harshly criticize teacher education institutions and the initial employers for their failure to do their jobs adequately, yet they offer little hope through their criticism and creative suggestions. The identification of the six paradoxes in this study may help at least to identify the source of the criticism in this particular teacher education program, and in others more generally.

Is it possible that student teachers have unrealistic expectations of themselves and others during the preservice program that lead to the feelings of insecurity, frustration, and powerlessness? In our discussions, we focused on the primary question--how do student teachers learn to teach?--and also the subsequent problems: what expectations do student teachers have of themselves, their cooperating teachers, school administrators, and faculty members in the process of learning to teach during the preservice program?

Question 2: What expectations do student teachers have of themselves, their cooperating teachers, school administrators, and faculty members in the process of learning to teach during the preservice program?

As Tracy, Carlo, and I investigated their interpretations of how one becomes a teacher and the paradoxes in searching for personal meaning emerged, this question of expectations of self and others formed an integral part of the dialogue. Their answers
are significant because their knowledge and beliefs informed their responses to the central question of becoming a teacher.

**Expectations of Self**

I have only myself to count on in the classroom and I know that I can do it. That is the real confirmation as to whether one can teach or not, and although I feel confident that I can do that, I have only my own creativity—my ability to plan, to be creative, to keep the kids engaged. That’s how I survived as a student all these years by drawing on my own resources to study and to do assignments, and how I made it teaching at the community college where I had no support or instruction—by doing it myself. [Carlo, 29/02/96]

Tracy and Carlo had high expectations of themselves during their preservice program and they believed that they had to take responsibility for their own learning about teaching. Both attended classes at the university regularly, participated in class discussions, read what was assigned, wrote assignments, and studied for examinations. What was striking was the belief that they had been successful as pupils in classrooms mainly because of their own initiative, not because of the assistance of any teachers they had. Their perceptions as pupils in elementary and secondary school had been that the work in the classroom was done by the pupils not by the teacher; their perceptions as student teachers were no different—the work of learning to teach was in the hands of the student teachers. As they began the process of student teaching, their opinions remained that they had a lot of work to do but that teaching was fairly straightforward for their experienced cooperating teachers and their university instructors. Tracy said:

I am teaching Grade 6 and I am amazed at how much work this is—how much work goes into teaching. I have kids who aren’t at the Grade 6 level, a group that needs just a little extra help, some that are on track. If I take a lesson from
a curriculum document for this grade, I cannot do it without modifying it.... I have some [pupils] that aren't going to be ready for Grade 7 at the end of the year even though we have resource teachers helping and three of us at this point teaching....I have learned that you have to be able to adapt to 20 different kids at 20 different levels and that is the teachers' job. It's more work than I thought...Growing up with two teachers in the house, I knew there was stress but I didn't realize the intensive planning and study that was required. Even when I was volunteering I just did as I was told. Now I spend 3 or 4 hours planning for only a 15-minute class--and the day is 6 hours long. Teaching is a lot of work....It seems easier for [cooperating teacher] because she has the experience but now I know she does a lot of work too.

Carlo told of similar revelations about the amount of work in teaching and realized that the onus was really on the teacher and not on the pupils as he had originally thought.

I have learned that being a student is just too easy. It's very simple to sit there and be critical. You only have to attend and the teacher makes it look so easy for you. You [the pupil] can choose to take it in, you can choose to ignore it, you can choose to participate in the class or you giggle with your neighbour. As a teacher, you have to set the value of the material and you have to instill that into the pupils. My job, as the teacher, is to get the subject matter across to the pupils so that they learn. I have to make it interesting so they want to learn it and not just cancel out as I did in school. I've found that I'm weak at the follow-up. I'm terrified of writing on the board, of spelling words wrong; I'm continually thinking about my grammar and wish that I knew more. I have a lot to learn just speaking and writing for the pupils, and that's not even the subject matter that I'm teaching. So now I have a different perspective of what it means to teach.

Carlo and Tracy's expectations of self were high to begin with and increased as they progressed through the preservice program. They entered teacher education expecting that they would have to be quite independent in demonstrating their skill in teaching. When asked specifically about their expectations of their university instructors and their cooperating teachers in becoming teachers, Carlo and Tracy reported quite different expectations.
Student Teachers’ Expectations of Cooperating Teachers

Prior to the first practicum, both Carlo and Tracy were concerned about their relationship with their cooperating teachers. Both student teachers had expectations that they would be expected to jump through hoops. Tracy summed up Carlo’s comments when she said:

I know that I have to prove myself in the practicum to the cooperating teacher and that I will be marked on how effective I am. I will have to prove that I can manage the kids by myself. I don’t know how much help I can expect from her [my cooperating teacher] because if I can do this myself, I will have proven I am a teacher and I’ll get a good report. [05/10/85]

Their expectations changed dramatically as they met their cooperating teachers during the course of the preservice program. Both found their teachers to be supportive, helpful, positive, and encouraging. Carlo said:

When you asked me what I expected at the first of the year, I recall that I was somewhat negative. I thought that I was going to be told to do this, and then marked harshly. I was planning on a negative experience with my cooperating teacher because you hear so many horror stories outside the university. I got someone as a supervisor that I really respect and even though he’s 15 years older than I am, I think I’m going to walk away with a friendship out of this.

Tracy found the same about her cooperating teacher and changed her attitude from one of powerless compliance to working as a co-teacher with her cooperating teacher. Throughout all of their practicum sessions, both spoke highly of their respect for their cooperating teachers. Their hopes became expectations when Tracy said:

I can’t believe what I’m learning from her [cooperating teacher]. I can’t say enough. I’m not sure that I could teach this grade level but she has made it possible for me to be successful here and she has been so positive about everything I’ve done. She treats us [other student teacher and Tracy] like we are real teachers too. She talks to us about her pupils, her concerns for them, her subject matter, and she listens to our opinions. She makes us feel like
teachers. [06/03/96]

Their expectations for their cooperating teachers changed from negative expectations to positive expectations for ongoing assistance throughout the practicum.

A conflict consistently arose, however, as the student teachers worried about the powerful position that the cooperating teachers had and the relatively powerless position in which they might find themselves.

The Cooperating Teacher's Power

In the first weeks of teacher education, Carlo and Tracy told me independently that the evaluation reports from their practicum determined their future employment prospects—that meant impressing the cooperating teacher with one's competence in the classroom. Both anticipated that the real power of teacher education would be in the hands of the cooperating teacher. Before the first practicum, Carlo expressed his doubts about himself in becoming a teacher, but his main concerns centred around the power base that his cooperating teacher would hold over him.

I do have some doubts about being a good teacher. I worry that I will not be able to make the subject matter meaningful to the students but I can do something about that. What I really worry about is my cooperating teacher. He is the one evaluating everything I do and that evaluation means the difference between me being a teacher or not, or getting a job or not. So I am going to feel very restricted; I'm going to emulate him and do what he wants to see. I am not going to be 100% satisfied but I am prepared to do it because I want to be a teacher so badly that I'll jump as high as I have to, to prove myself.

Carlo's initial concern was for loss of power over the ability to be the teacher he wanted to be, subjective as that might be. But he was willing to give up his own beliefs, values, and ideologies to the cultural reproduction that his cooperating teacher,
Gerald, would demand, no matter what it would entail. Even after he met Gerald and was reassured that he would have the freedom to develop as a teacher in his own style, Carlo worried about the power of the evaluation report. Even though he trusted that Gerald was pleased with his work, he said that he would not know for sure until he actually had his hands on the report.

Tracy also began her preservice program worried about her lack of freedom to teach the way she would want to because of the power her cooperating teacher would hold.

I'm afraid that I'm going to get up and teach and I am going to be so different from her methods. I have already been over to observe her class and I would do things so different but I don't know if I can or not. Do you have a process for selecting cooperating teachers, or can just anyone do it?

Tracy's question was abrupt and pointed, and deserved a thoughtful answer.

Fortunately, I could tell her that in this particular teacher education institution, great care was taken by the university administration to work with the boards to determine a process to select the best cooperating teachers to work with the student teachers. But that process could not guarantee a negotiation of a balance of power between the particular teacher and student.

Carlo and Tracy were cognizant of the powerful position of their cooperating teachers during the program, and neither knew precisely what assumptions, values, and ideologies the cooperating teacher would hold. Nor, as the vulnerable persons within that relationship, did they know how to negotiate to ensure that their own beliefs, values, and ideologies could emerge to be safely tested in the classroom. So while they
were expected to teach in the host classroom, they expected that they would have to assume the ideologies of the cooperating teacher whether they were appropriate or not to their own.

**Student Teachers’ Expectations of University Teacher Educators**

Near the end of the preservice program, Carlo made a pointed comment about the role of university teacher educators.

What I expected the profs to do and what they did were entirely different. At the beginning of the program, I really expected them to teach us how to teach. I assumed that was their job—and to be fair, about two of twelve did. I couldn’t imagine there being another function for being at a faculty of education than to teach us how to teach. But it’s fair to say I was warned by others—and not just graduates of this institution, but by graduates of programs from all over Ontario. They told me it would be a waste of time. But I didn’t believe them. Now I know better what they mean. I have two theories about this. I don’t think the profs realize how to teach teaching either, so they talk about the study of education as if we already have a history or knowledge about teaching. Or they are so far ahead of us, that they cannot take time to break down the information into practical bits, so that we can understand. They seem to prefer talking to each other....When I’m in practicum, I have to admit that the university and my courses are right out of the loop—another world, another place. Really I have no relationship with the university other than an infrequent thought or to use the Curriculum Resource Centre and Library for help. [22/03/96]

Tracy had similar comments.

It’s not just me that feels many of the courses here are poorly taught. My friends say the same thing. And it’s not just this university either. I find that when I go home and talk to friends in the other institutions across Ontario, it’s just the same. It’s a year that you have to put in to get where you want. The practicum is what it is all about. You know we are tired of being students. We want to be treated like teachers and the only place that happens really is in the practicum.

The instructors who really help are those who relate everything back to school practice and that doesn’t seem so hard to do. The ones who really help give a model, explain it, demonstrate it through example, then we discuss it, modify it, and we begin to understand it. [15/03/96]
Even though they were frustrated with the university program, Tracy and Carlo attended and participated fully in classes. They did not offer any suggestions for improvement to their instructors; they found it easier to sit back and make disparaging comments. When asked why, both thought that it would be unwise to criticize openly; both wanted to pass and thought that there might be unknown penalties if they spoke up. Both worried that their university instructors in the institution had the power to block the progress and completion of their program. Both were well-schooled in the educational system in which students receive and comply with whatever information is given and do not ask questions.

In summary, Tracy and Carlo had great expectations for their university instructors and their courses. Naively, they entered the preservice program believing that the purpose of their university courses was to instruct them how to become teachers and expecting that they would learn the skills of teaching in their courses and then practise the skills in the school settings. Both were disappointed, then angered, by their courses and instructors.

**Question # 3:** What sources of conflict emerge for student teachers during the preservice program and how does the student teacher resolve them?

It almost seemed unnecessary to discuss conflicts because the notion of problems arose incessantly during our meetings. But I asked the question anyway and two additional issues emerged: the pressures of time in preservice teacher education and their involvement in this research project. Both are worthy of some discussion.
The Pressures of Time and the Appropriateness of Format

Tracy and Carlo were frustrated by the brief length of time in teacher education and the timing of the program. Both found the program truncated and believed that they were expected to learn everything in only eight months. They also felt thwarted by the interspersed blocks of time in schools and in the university. Both said that just when they began to feel comfortable in the school situation, they were yanked back to the university and enrolled in courses that bore no relationship to their school experiences at all. "Where are the links?" Tracy demanded. "How are we to make sense of teaching if instructors at the university carry on their course of study after a practicum block as if nothing ever happened and we just disappeared for four weeks?" Both thought that longer practicum times would be beneficial in helping them develop from student to teachers; and at various times throughout the program, both wondered if there was any real value in the university courses at all.

After the program was over, both Carlo and Tracy acknowledged that there was much to learn that was worthwhile in the university program, but they pointed out that it could have been organized and presented in a far more meaningful way for beginning teachers.

If they just ask us, we’ll tell them. But I suspect they [instructors] really feel that we don’t know anything, so why bother? And you know we are only here for one year and we, as students, don’t bother fighting to change anything. We just figure that it is so short and we lived through it. Let the next group worry about it. (Carlo)

Thoughts about Participating in the Research Project

A striking and coincidental finding of the study was the response of Carlo and
Tracy to their participation in this study. Both honestly admitted up front that they were participating for personal and selfish reasons—because they believed they would learn more about their own teaching by being involved and it might give them an advantage in their own learning and in seeking employment. They saw it as an opportunity to speak with a faculty member—one-on-one—about their personal, professional growth as teachers. But as the year progressed, they used the regular meetings to tell of their accomplishments and to voice their concerns. In one interview, Carlo said:

I feel much better now that you have really listened to me and my worries. I love these sessions....I feel that I can come in here and vent all my questions and ideas about teaching and its safe. You are very critical of me and you see things from an experienced point of view which is really different from mine and you seem to redirect my thoughts. I came in here thinking that I had missed so much because my assignment was too easy in the practicum but you have given me different things to consider like valuing learning and seeing what I did learn. I know now that I can teach (whatever that means), that my experience was positive for my learning, and that now I can put learning in relation to classroom management. This is my therapy session because there is no opportunity in this university program for me talk about these things with anyone in any depth. It’s not because no one cares. I guess it’s because there are hundreds of us and this cannot happen as part of learning to teach here. I wonder if kids feel that way in schools about us as teachers.

Carlo believed that his involvement in the research project was helping him learn more about teaching than he would have been able to without it and this helped him to feel in control of things. Although he acknowledged that his program included a variety of strategies that encouraged him to consider difficult issues in learning to become a teacher such as maintaining a regular response journal, creating a portfolio of his significant learnings, developing reflective essays, observing others teach (or being
observed), and giving (receiving) feedback, he thought that he was just not able to tie things together without the intense, one-on-one dialogue that his participation in the project provided. He said that he gained a renewed sense of motivation and power from his participation in the project.

It appeared to Carlo that the formal part of the teacher education program did not recognize where he was as a learner nor did it offer a substantial venue to connect his learning from the practicum to the university program. He believed he was taking two courses simultaneously: one about teaching in general [in university], and the other about his learning to teach [in schools]; the two seemed not to be intertwined in any way after the initial practicum.

In a quieter way, Tracy also admitted that she enjoyed the one-on-one interaction with an experienced teacher and faculty member. She seemed a little more cautious in her critique of things, but the intensity of her concerns could not be missed. Although she did not always come forth asking for extra times for meetings, as Carlo did, she was always ready when asked to talk about her growth as a teacher. She said:

Talking about my teaching helps me deal with things. Like, how do I know that I'm doing a good job as a teacher? How will I know? I may think I'm doing ok but it will be different from the teacher in the next room or in the next county. What does Grade 3 mean when you know that kids in different classes with different teachers will get an entirely different education? These are the questions that I am wrestling with. The curriculum here doesn't seem to be addressing it and I need to talk about that, even if it's not an important issue. I can raise those issues here in these meetings. [06/03/96]

Tracy and Carlo used the meetings with me to talk about their professional growth and their anxieties. It was a reciprocal situation. I could talk through critical
issues with them and point them in different directions according to what they needed; they could provide me with a clear awareness about their developing thought processes as they developed into teachers for this research project.

**Identifying the Beliefs, Values, and Ideologies of Student Teachers**

Through listening to and sharing Carlo and Tracy’s personal and impassioned stories of their development from student to teacher during the preservice program, we (Carlo, Tracy, and I) were able to begin to delineate the critical beliefs, values, and ideologies that they possessed as they entered the program, and we began to identify those which they relinquished, altered or gained in that time. Their ideologies and struggles to construct an identity were complicated and informed by the contradictions that they encountered in their study, and the ideologies changed as the program progressed. The paradoxes, on the one hand, caused them to think deeply and wrestle with their beliefs about teaching and the process of learning to teach; on the other hand, they felt much confusion and frustration with the teacher education program and criticized it harshly.

**Constructing an Identity as a Teacher**

Our sense of identity is both inclusive and exclusive. It is inclusive in the sense that it is formed by identification with influential social groups, e.g., family, peers, church, cultural groups. It is exclusive in the existential sense of discovering an authentic self that is separate from social constraints. (Wallace, 1996, p. 9)

Student teachers’ inclusive selves have been scripted by personal and cultural discourses and by common knowledge of and experience with the social institutions of schooling and politics. The crossing-over from student to teacher has been rendered
problematic by the identification of teacher within the discourse of the dominant society.

Russell and Korthagen (1995) note that an identity in teaching is hard to define because everyone knows teaching, and to the novice or uninitiated, teaching looks easy. This was true for Carlo and Tracy as they attempted to cross over from student to teacher. As they said--to carry the metaphor through--the crossing was not easy. They encountered slow-moving waters at some points but most of the time they found themselves struggling to swim against the current in deep and treacherous waters. Their prior conceptions of teaching were at times confirmed and at other times discounted, and the new learning they encountered did not often fit the context of their classes in schools or at the university.

In constructing their identities as emerging teachers throughout the preservice program, Carlo and Tracy passed through four overlapping phases. First, they began the program with rather solid initial representations of themselves as teachers. Then as new representations were presented, they showed resistance to considering different images of themselves as teachers. After some time and confusion they were willing to consider relinquishing and renegotiation of their earlier identification as teachers, and finally after the program was over but before they began teaching, they developed an openness for reconceptualizing new and alternative identities as teachers. I elaborate in the following paragraphs.

i. Initial Representations of Teaching

Student teachers beliefs and values are shaped by their prior background as
pupils in classrooms (Lortie, 1975) before they enter teacher education. Carlo and Tracy were no exception. Carlo had representations of a science teacher as someone who was an expert in the subject matter and who controlled the learning in the classroom through entertaining presentations and an engaging personality. Tracy, on the other hand, envisioned herself as a nurturer of young children who would have a happy, warm, and inviting classroom for the pupils. Subject matter did not figure into her conception as a teacher as much as her relationship with the pupils. Neither Carlo nor Tracy believed that teaching would be at all difficult and both believed that they were already good teachers prior to entering the preservice program. At the outset, both understood the power of their cooperating teachers in terms of the importance of their practical evaluation during the practicum and both worried that they might be forced into teaching methods that did not fit within the prototypes of their representations. Upon entering the program, neither anticipated learning anything of substance through their university courses. In fact, they had already been warned by others that they would learn nothing in their university courses.

As the program began, their representations of teaching were confirmed by their initial university courses in which they were presented with a number of practical orientations to help them prepare for the first practicum setting. In the practicum, both student teachers were assigned to fairly conservative cooperating teachers who modelled effective teaching/learning behaviours that fell within their representations of teaching. Tracy and Carlo immediately identified with and were highly successful in modelling their representations of teaching in this environment. Neither experienced
any real conflict in fitting into the identities established by their cooperating teachers in the practicum classroom.

Things changed, however, as Carlo and Tracy returned to the teacher education institution for an extended four-month session in university-based study.

ii. Resistance to Different Images of Themselves as Teachers

Tracy and Carlo believed they had proved themselves as successful teachers during the initial practicum and they had many questions to ask and stories to tell when they came back to the teacher education institution. They anticipated that they would spend their class time in the university in similar activities to those prior to the practicum and they looked forward to collecting more practical advice regarding how to survive as a teacher. They were disappointed, however, especially in Cheryl and Susan’s classes, when their instructors began to take a different path in their teaching. Cheryl and Susan (and some other instructors) began to ask their students to look at various theories of teaching and pedagogy, and to analyze carefully and critically the practice that was being favoured by certain theories.

As they became familiar with this new approach of critically reflecting on teaching rather than learning new and practical ideas, Carlo and Tracy became agitated and concerned. They had enjoyed the activity of teaching in the classroom and they found the activities in the university courses irrelevant to what they thought they needed. The new learning was challenging their ideologies and their personal images and identities as teachers. Carlo and Tracy had their own critical perspectives; they resisted and rejected most of their new learning as it seemed not to fit with their prior
representations of teaching and learning—representations that had been confirmed in their practicum setting.

Carlo and Tracy spent the next four months actively wrestling with the curriculum of their classes and complaining about the content. Carlo and Tracy, however, were good students and had been well-trained in their own schooling. They knew better than to complain to or question their instructors or to challenge the system. As good students, they continued to attend classes, to read, and to complete assignments as required. They talked at length with their student colleagues about their dissatisfaction and found that discontent was prevalent. They talked more about their feelings of discontent with their colleagues than about the concerns of the specific curriculum that was being offered. Tracy and Carlo bided their time and responded as obedient students do, but not as critical students would.

As they experienced disappointment in their learning, then anger, frustration, and apathy, Carlo and Tracy actively resisted the new learning. But eventually they found themselves thinking about their identity as teachers in spite of their disquiet as they were influenced somewhat by the different concepts that were being presented, and they were willing to acknowledge that perhaps some ideas might have some merit.

iii. Renegotiating Former Representations of Teaching

Initially, Tracy and Carlo began to use the time during interviews for this study to think about, question, and renegotiate their ideologies about teaching. And later on, it became apparent that they continued thinking about our conversations between interviews, and they began to set the schedule for our talks. Although I did not judge
them in any way during the interviews, I encouraged them to question themselves as I
challenged their beliefs and offered alternative viewpoints. For example, when Carlo
began to worry about his competence as a teacher because he had not had any
experience yet with a disruptive class, we discussed the nature of learning and its
relation to the classroom environment. We talked about and negotiated various views
of learning environments in classrooms in relation to his own practice, his readings,
and his course work, and discussed the ideologies that were prevalent in his view of
teaching. He acknowledged that there were other ways to view certain learning
situations that would require him to be a different kind of teacher and to expect other
forms of learning from the pupils. In beginning to relinquish his original beliefs, he
began to consider his identity as teacher in an alternative light using other frameworks
and forms of analysis.

iv. Reconceptualizations of Identity

Reconceptualizing their teaching identity was more easily discussed after the
preservice program was over—when both Tracy and Carlo said that they had time to
think back on their study over the past year. As they began to consider themselves
fully-qualified teachers, they began to consider very carefully what ideologies and
beliefs they would carry into their first year of teaching.\(^\text{18}\) It seems apparent that their
ongoing conversations with me during this research project may have caused Tracy and

\(^{18}\) What is frustrating for Tracy and Carlo and their student colleagues is the lack of employment
opportunities at this point. Both know that it is highly unlikely that they will find fulltime teaching
employment in this region in the near future, and both are considering looking internationally for teaching
positions.
Carlo to reach this fourth phase of reconceptualizing teaching; it may also be true, especially from their comments about the benefits of the dialogue in which we engaged over the course of the program, that other student teachers might not mature in this way.

In considering alternative frameworks for teaching and learning, Carlo and Tracy acknowledged that they could see teaching and learning in a different light than they had earlier imagined. And they could see themselves fitting into alternative identities such as creating a classroom environment where political issues came to the fore in their curriculum and pedagogical strategies, or developing the curriculum to ensure representation, inclusion, and equity for every member of the class at all times.

When she had completed the teacher education program, Tracy became concerned enough about the curriculum that she had observed in practicum classrooms to question the ideologies behind it. She wondered how effective it would be for her to offer a different curriculum based on alternative belief systems to her class when she reasoned that there should be some sort of consistency across the Ontario educational system for children in certain grades. And, she admitted, she had no idea how to develop a whole year's worth of curriculum and strategies.

Another example of their reconsiderations of their original beliefs about teaching came again at the end of the program when both asked if teaching was really a profession. Tracy and Carlo questioned whether there was a body of professional knowledge that they required in order to teach, and even though they previously themselves to be good teachers already, by the end of the program, they recognized
that they had learned much in both school and university situations to help them become better teachers. Nonetheless, by the end of the preservice program neither was able to articulate what that body of professional knowledge was that they had gained. Both saw their knowledge as something they had learned primarily in their student teaching independently of their teacher educators in the teacher education institution; both perceived that they alone would be responsible for future learning about teaching and this would occur through experience but in isolation.

**Summary**

Tracy and Carlo entered their teacher education program with conservative and confident beliefs about teaching. The construction of their teaching identity changed moderately in the teacher education program as they changed their identity from student to teacher but, in many ways, they remain cautious and conservative in their views.

Teacher education candidates, such as Carlo and Tracy, seem to adopt readily the values of their cooperating teachers in the intensive, one-on-one experience of the practicum setting, but find the values of their teacher education classes more disparate. Some may argue that the socializing forces in the school setting are so powerful that student teachers have no choice but to accept the status quo. I would respond that the values and beliefs of teachers in schools are closer to the values of student teachers and therefore, student teachers take the path of least resistance, especially when their work is being reinforced by someone who has the authority to write the summative evaluation that leads to future employment. The ideas being discussed in the university
setting seem incongruous to the student teachers; they are different, somewhat radical, thought-provoking, and contentious, and out of context of the school setting. Yet, they are offered in the same, conservative, traditional classroom setting and format in which the student teachers have always studied. Thus, the relationship in learning about teaching is vague and ambiguous in the courses in the university setting.

Tracy and Carlo entered the program believing that they would be *finished products* at the end of the academic program and were somewhat frustrated to complete the program realizing that they still had much to learn. However, they seemed frustrated by the fact that they did not know what they needed to learn yet. Both looked forward to proving themselves as competent teachers in a classroom; both left teacher training ready to learn for the rest of their lives about teaching, but both thought that this ongoing learning would occur simultaneously with experience in the classroom.

The information gathered in this chapter is critical in that it provides a view from the student teacher's perspective about the process of teacher education that may help to clarify and demystify the process of becoming a teacher. I have focused on their concerns about contradictions, power, and a search for personal meaning because they were the issues that kept bubbling underneath and erupting through the surface of our conversations on a regular basis. They were the points that provided the most concern, anxiety, self-doubt, and learning in our collective estimation as they were negotiating and changing their personal belief systems about becoming a teacher. They were also points that seemed not to be covered by the curriculum, in either university
courses or practicum, yet led us as educational co-researchers to new insights about
learning to teach from their perspective, that of student teacher.

Even though one student teacher was studying to become a teacher of young
children and the other, a teacher of adolescent science pupils, I was struck by the
similarities in Carlo’s and Tracy’s concerns and frustrations as they developed through
the program. They both believed that they would just know how to teach and that they
would learn by doing it in the classroom. Both began the preservice program with
egocentric confidence but developed self-doubts as they came up against contradictions
within the program and as they gained more experience; both worried about the power
that others had over them as they began to develop as teachers; they worried about
their own sense of power over pupils and the resulting equity issues; and while they
complained loudly about their teacher education program, neither was willing to take
any responsibility to demand changes other than through participating in this project.
Both experienced a roller coaster of emotions as they lived through their preservice
program. Their feelings ran the gamut from enthusiastic motivation at the beginning of
their program, to anxiety, self-doubt, frustration, anger then disappointment, to apathy,
and finally acceptance that this is the reality of the situation. In one interview, Carlo
was particularly agitated.

I remember the first couple of weeks at this Faculty and everything was very
open and conversational. I felt comfortable and motivated. Then, in my
classroom during the practicum, I had the authority as teacher. I was planning
learning activities, taking responsibility for learning, and then all of a sudden I
ended up back here again. And I have no better words than to say, “the rug
was pulled out from under my feet,” and I was being treated like a student
again. Well, at first I was really surprised and then I got angry about it. But
for the last three weeks I have just given up. I surrender! I am tired of fighting, of trying to find relationships between the content here and the act of teaching. I am frustrated with questioning the value of so many things I am learning. Why should we have to do that? [15/12/95]

Even though they were critical, they learned to deal with the obvious and to be compliant of those aspects that they resented, instead of taking action to change things for the better. Both said, "When we are on our own, we’ll be the teachers we want to be. But we cannot really do it here," reinforcing the enduring images of the teacher as isolated and individualistic.

There were marked differences in several aspects of Carlo and Tracy’s beliefs about how they would become teachers. Carlo noted that he was counting on his dominating personality and earlier experience to prove his competence as a teacher; Tracy saw herself more as a nurturer of young children than as a teacher. Carlo wanted to be able to teach in such a way that his pupils would understand and enjoy science; Tracy worried if her teaching would be consistent with other teachers at that level; Carlo looked to his pupils to give him feedback and Tracy wondered what sources she would use to know that she was doing a good job. Tracy shared her concerns openly and asked some very difficult questions that she believed had not been answered in her teacher education program.

I’m a little bit nervous about having my own class, especially if I haven’t had a [practicum] placement there because I have no resources really. How do I know what to teach and when to teach it? If I have a Grade 3 in Toronto, how do I know that other Grade 3 classes even in the same board are studying the same things? What if some of my kids move to another school across the province and I haven’t taught them what they need to know? [23/04/96]

In fact it seemed to be the personal differences about teaching that drew the two student
teachers to participate in the project. They required a venue where they could talk openly about their personal concerns about the process of becoming a teacher.

Through analysis of their narratives over the preservice program, a prototype of four phases emerged as Carlo and Tracy negotiated their identities as teachers. They came into the program with clear representations of teaching. However, their views were challenged and they resisted the alternative, critical approaches about teaching that were presented in their university courses as the teacher education program progressed. Finally they began to reconsider and relinquish some of their earlier beliefs. Tracy and Carlo graduated from the program with more questions than answers, with beliefs and ideologies threatened. Their minds were opened and they may choose to follow some of the alternative ideas as they become independent teachers in their own classrooms.

Student teachers have important things to say about the teacher education process, aspects that teacher educators seem to overlook as they plan for appropriate preservice courses, they say. But usually student teachers have little or no opportunity to talk to teacher educators candidly about preservice teacher education. Although their comments may be perceived as naive, their comments paint an actual picture of where they are on the path from student to teacher. Their lived experience recounts the way in which they are becoming teachers and should not be discounted.

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19 A description of the critical and alternative ideas that Carlo and Tracy experienced in their university courses is presented in more detail in the next chapter.
Limitations to the Findings

Carlo and Tracy expressed their beliefs and values about teacher education openly and eloquently through the sharing of their preservice experiences. Although their stories are reminiscent and somewhat representative of others about which we have read in the literature, it is important to remember that they represent only two voices of many. And although they say that their feelings are similar to those of their peers, it is only a perception and the accuracy cannot be truly verified in this particular study. However, what they have said is significant because we, as teacher educators, must have knowledge of beginning teachers’ beliefs, values, and ideologies in order to understand how they learn to teach.
CHAPTER FIVE

INSIGHTS FROM THE TEACHERS WHO TEACH THE TEACHERS: EXPLORING THE BELIEFS OF UNIVERSITY TEACHER EDUCATORS

Introduction

We believe that becoming a teacher or teacher educator is a lifelong process of continuing growth rooted in the personal. Who we are and come to be as teachers and teacher educators is a reflection of a complex ongoing process of interaction and interpretation of factors, conditions, opportunities, relationships, and events that take place throughout our lives in all realms of our existence—in intellectual, physical, psychological, spiritual, political, and social. (Cole & Knowles, 1995, p. 130)

In Chapter 5, two university teacher educators and colleagues, Cheryl and Susan, enthusiastically talk about who they are as teachers and teacher educators and how their beliefs, values, and ideologies of education came to be. They discuss how their beliefs and values inform their practice as teacher educators. Their discussion is analysed in relation to the six paradoxes that were described in Chapter 4.

In researching the data for this chapter there was an added component of interest because it involved the issue of researching teacher educators who are at the same time actively involved in teacher education research. A number of questions were raised as we engaged in discourse about our practice and we shared insights that normally we might not have taken time to do. The process became somewhat of a
reflexive process for the three of us. Cole and Knowles (1995), on this topic, note that

reflexive inquiry facilitates understanding and articulation of the links between initial and formal teacher education and the career-long professional development of classroom teachers and university teacher educators. It also provides a vehicle for discussion of professional practice and the ongoing improvement of teacher education. With self-understanding, which is contextually defined within careers as well as institutional and societal milieu, comes an understanding of the teacher education professoriate...[which] can provide insights into the future of teacher education. (p. 148)

There were many issues raised in the interactions with Cheryl and Susan that led to further clarification in this study of how students learn to teach. The analysis of the discussion led to a clearer understanding of our roles as teacher educators in the university setting and to a better perception of our roles as they relate to the emerging identities of students as beginning teachers.

Learning about Teaching from the University Members’ Perspective

I chose to work with Cheryl and Susan because I knew that both of them adopt a critical perspective in their approach to research and teaching in the preservice program. By this, I mean that Susan and Cheryl have adopted a critical view of the norms and values of the educational system and their curriculum reflects their views.20 Both are aware of student teachers’ chronic complaints about the teacher education programs, and both are involved in university committee work to study and change the current program. Cheryl is an instructor in the early years program and is Tracy’s
general curriculum instructor and faculty liaison person in the schools; Susan teaches

20 Cheryl’s and Susan’s views should not be considered representative of the philosophy of this particular teacher education institution. While several other faculty members ground their courses in critical theory, most do not. In fact, within the institution, various faculty members espouse a variety of beliefs and teach their courses according to their own professional philosophies of teaching.
intermediate science and is Carlo's science methodology instructor for teaching science
in senior elementary/junior secondary classrooms.

In compiling the data for this study, I attended some of their classes, audio
taped interviews with Cheryl and Susan, and engaged in numerous discussions about
preservice teacher education. Both were interested in the development of the research
project and willingly talked to me. Their stories were both fascinating and troubling;
their stories were informed by their own experiences in teacher education, their work
as classroom teachers, their graduate work in education, and their current research into
the teaching/learning process.

Cheryl's and Susan's words were interesting to examine as I listened
simultaneously to the worries and complaints of their student teachers, and
disconcerting because they had developed their curriculum based on a set of
professional beliefs, values, and ideologies based on their own student teaching and
teaching experience, as well as the knowledge gained through their academic study.
They had developed their courses in spite of and with a conscious awareness of their
students' chronic criticism but with the powerful conviction that their students needed a
course based in a critical perspective. Based on their own life histories as educators
and students, Cheryl and Susan were able to describe their courses and provide a sound
rationale for the way in which their courses were developed and modelled.

**Cheryl: Early Years Teacher Educator**

Cheryl taught elementary school for several years before becoming a consultant
in Language Arts for a medium-sized, urban board of education. During that time, she
completed her master's degree in education and began her doctoral studies. As a consultant, Cheryl found that her attention was diverted from direct instruction of pupils to teacher education as she worked with classroom teachers to implement methods of language instruction for children. Her research involved the examination of language principles, teaching methodologies, and the development of inservice methods for educating teachers about recent theoretical developments in children's learning about speaking, reading, and writing. Cheryl said that she believed that she had a greater impact on pupil learning through her role as a consultant than she did as a classroom teacher.

I never thought that I would end up in teacher education. I decided to do my master's degree because I was interested in helping kids in my classroom learn to read more effectively. At the time I was teaching Grade 8 and I discovered that there were kids who weren't able to read. My master's courses raised all kinds of issues for me about my preliminary teacher education training. (And I do refer to it as training because I think that's what it was.) I came back to work within a school system and thought with what I know and the questions I'm ready to ask I would serve students far better if I was able to impact more on teachers. That is where all of it started. [12/10/95]

Cheryl found her work with the teachers to be interesting and productive. However, rather than doing the normal inservice workshops for teachers in the system, which seemed to be unhelpful to the teachers with whom she was working, she helped the teachers develop support groups to study the new language methodologies together. Cheryl said that she encouraged her teachers to study the new approaches through a reading of the texts that would provide insight into the values and ideologies that were encouraged through the methodology.

I sensed that a phenomenon was beginning to develop in the system. A number
of teachers had decided that everything that was available in terms of inservice
teacher education wasn't working for them [and] so we developed support
groups and met regularly to talk about our teaching and learning....It seemed to
work very well because I think teachers probably know better than anybody else
about how to ask the questions that are important for them with regard to their
own professional development....What is inside teachers' heads is probably the
best thing for them in terms of their own development and my job is to help
them figure out what they know and where to go from there.

Cheryl’s findings about the success of support groups as an important form of
inservice for teachers led her to do a doctorate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in
Education in order to study the phenomenon of support groups more fully. In the
midst of the doctoral program (1987), she was seconded to the teacher education
institution to teach a core curriculum methodology course to elementary preservice
teachers. In 1991, Cheryl applied for and won a tenure-track appointment in
curriculum studies, and in 1994, she was granted tenure and promotion to associate
professor in teacher education at the university. As a teacher educator, Cheryl began
to develop a program for early years’ teachers in the university with an emphasis on
the instruction of language arts. Tracy was a student teacher in Cheryl’s early years
cohort during this study.

In developing a philosophy as a preservice teacher educator, Cheryl was
influenced by her own preservice training and first years of teaching, her studies in
graduate school, her experiences as a system consultant, and her concerns about the
traditional and conservative practices of the monolithic, educational system on pupils
from minority positions in the classrooms. Her concern for the values of the
educational system and the links of theory and practice began in her own preservice
education program.

I remember my year at the Teacher's College so vividly. I had a language arts class in which we were talking about language arts instruction but we never talked about theory. Language experience was supposedly a great thing but then she [the instructor] gave us cards with words on them and we were to dramatize how these words might be introduced to young children. Somebody got the card with "Jump," somebody got the card with "candlestick." I had the card with "the." I thought there was a problem here because I didn't know how to dramatize "the" so I thought there has to be something wrong with this approach where here is a method but the method seems to have no theoretical framework behind it....And in physical education I remember going out onto the yard next door with hula hoops and throwing the hula hoops on the grass and being told to count the weeds. Well this is really exciting stuff, I was told, and I was also integrating science....At the time I was one of the only students in Teachers College with a degree and I resented the way I was treated--sort of like a high school student: pay attention, do as you're told, and don't ask questions. I'd never been treated like that in my life before, not even in high school.

I think part of what's informed everything that I've done here is when I watch student teachers in the gym having to run around and chase balls thinking, "Now I know about chasing balls." I don't teach that way. And it's not a case of not practising what I preach because I think you do learn by doing. But I don't think as adults we have to skip and jump and roll around to know how to teach those things.

There is a remarkable similarity here--Cheryl's remembered opinions of her own teacher education program in 1970 seem to mirror those of the student teachers of 1996--dissatisfaction, anger, criticism, and ridicule.

As a classroom teacher and consultant, Cheryl's concerns about the inadequacies of practice in the educational system grew and her academic work took her in the direction of critical theory and pedagogy. Based on her reflections and study, Cheryl has learned a great deal about teaching while in the university setting and has altered her curriculum to reflect her revised learning about teaching. She tries to offer an alternative, critical program to her preservice students--a different approach to
teacher education than that in which she was involved.

My first year of teaching here [at the Faculty of Education] was based on a lot of erroneous assumptions. I knew that our students have been in school for years and years and they know this, this, and this...But they don't know the way in which they know it...The first few years here were very difficult for me from the perspective of sorting out what it was that I needed to give them so that they could go out and function. But I wanted them to begin to ask questions—important questions about teaching and learning. I began to ask them a lot of questions and I found that they're not ready for the difficult questions yet. I've been teaching here for eight years and I'm still trying to develop the best model for helping novices learn how to teach.

Cheryl developed her teacher education philosophy and courses based on her beliefs that student teachers already know a lot about teaching when they enter the program and, as adult learners, they should be allowed to learn in support groups using their own knowledge of themselves to learn about teaching.

What I have tried to do here [in preservice teacher education] is to set up teacher support groups for my student teachers. What that means is I try to feed in just enough information to help students ask the critical questions without turning them off; I try to give them enough to survive but also enough to ask questions. Student teachers have a sense inside of what they need to know and I trust their judgement. I've always been oriented in that direction, even as a teacher of young children....What kids know, what kids bring to school is important....I have to say also that there were some things there [in my teacher education] that although I look back and I make fun of, they were important in shaping the kind of teacher that I am now.

Cheryl was taking time to think reflectively about the best way to set up the teacher education program for her students based on her own values and beliefs gained though her experience and research.

The compromise I have worked out for myself and for my students is that in September and October, I give my student teachers something to hang on to, to meet their demands for something practical to survive their first clinical experience in the schools. And then when they come back I'll say, "Now you have experienced this and tried this. What about this?"...So I try to balance the
contradictions. I agree that they need some survival skills so they can feel relatively secure, walk out there, and be successful. Now that I think back on my early teacher education, maybe that's what she was trying to do—"You hold up a flash card and you do this and this." That was something to hang onto and it worked for me. But what wasn't there was the follow up after trying something with a critical perspective of what are the weaknesses in this method. What kind of assumptions does this kind of teaching make about the ways pupils learn? No one ever asked those questions of me and I do want my student teachers to think about these critical things.

As she talks about her commitment to providing the best possible course to her preservice students, Cheryl was consciously and continually wrestling with issues of course content and approach with her own teaching in the hope that her students would find value in their teacher education program.

Cheryl’s colleague, Susan talks in her interviews about similar struggles with her entry into teaching, her own formative experiences in preservice teacher education, and how the curriculum for her courses came to be influenced by critical theory.

Susan: Intermediate Science Teacher Educator

Susan became a secondary school science teacher after completing an undergraduate and master’s degree in biology and after first working as a government researcher.

It was not my original choice to be a teacher. I really wanted to be a field biologist but it was 1964 and they did not put women in the fields in those days and so I was looking around for alternatives. I found a position as a government researcher for awhile but I really felt stifled by the requirements of the government posting. I had considered teaching originally and one of the things that put me off was at that time people had to be trained to teach from Grades 1 through to 12 at the university where I was. And so people who were planning to teach high school, and had no interest in teaching anything but high school, were still required to do primary methods. My friends told me that they seemed to spend their whole life doing cut-outs during practicum. I decided that I was not interested in that so I put off the thought of teaching. When I did go back
to school, it was because the city where I was living had a new secondary teacher education program which was subject oriented so I was able to go and take part. [26/10/95]

It was obvious that, like Carlo and Tracy, Susan had preconceived ideas of what preservice teacher education would be like before she entered her teacher education program. She had strong beliefs about what and how she wanted to learn and had her ideologies and goals for secondary science teaching established firmly in her mind. After completing the program, she had vivid recollections of her year as a student teacher, and recalled aspects of value and those that were not at all valuable.

When I went into teacher education I thought it would be simply jumping through hoops in order to be certified to do something I could do already. I had a masters degree in science and felt that I knew enough to be a good teacher. We took three different science education courses. One was a curriculum content course which was taught by a local teacher, so in that course we basically did the curriculum—which was no challenge. But the other two courses were theoretical courses about teaching and pedagogy and they were taught by a woman who seemed to me to be a solid academic. She provided a role model for me and from her I began to learn about the pedagogy of the subject matter and making science accessible to the pupils. She was the person who really opened up that world for me.

My student teaching was only for a total of three and a half weeks and was really just practice teaching. The person I was with was an outstanding teacher and I learned a lot from watching him but I recall only one conversation that we had and that was after my very first lesson. My lesson was a disaster and we talked about that but I don’t remember having any discussions afterward. We may have but they did not have any impact on me at all. So I came out of that believing that I would be a good science teacher. I was going to do things differently...and change the world.

Susan found that the teacher education program involved a certain amount of hoop-jumping but she was also affected by the pedagogical content instruction that she learned in the one class that altered her original views of teaching.

Susan began her teaching career with the enthusiasm and confidence of most
novices even though she had major complaints about the contradictions in her preservice program. As a beginning teacher, she found that she was the only woman in her science department and she set about to model her work after her female university instructor and to make science education relevant to the pupils in her classes.

The first year I was teaching, extra kids in the school started visiting my class....Some of the students were taking the same course from another teacher but were having problems and since they had spares, they came to my classes for extra help....I was the only woman teaching science in the whole city and...I think that I made the biology classes real for the students. The biology classes were about 80% female and by the time I left there were equal number of boys and girls taking biology so I feel that I had some impact on that change.

As the only female teacher in the department, Susan believed that she brought alternative viewpoints to the teaching of science and this opened up different possibilities for both female and male pupils in her classes. It was at this point that she became frustrated with the bureaucracy of the educational system that seemed to stifle the significant things she wanted to accomplish in science teaching and she began consciously to question the practices of the educational system. Although she felt some satisfaction in her role as a classroom teacher, she found that she had further questions about teaching and learning, and the underlying ideologies of the system for which she sought answers.

I taught field biology and it got harder every year to arrange the field trips which were necessary to make the content of my course relevant. I became frustrated with administrators and irrelevant policies dictating what to do and how to do it. I just felt that I was not being allowed to teach the way I wanted to teach. I needed flexibility in terms of "them" believing in my professional judgement to teach in ways that would make my subject relevant. I just lost my patience with the hassle over the paperwork and constant justification with which I had to contend for field trips. I couldn't let the students out in the hall three seconds before the bell even if we had finished the day's work; in the
labs, if there was too much noise, somebody would come to the class and ask what was going on or tell us we were disturbing others with our noise. It just dragged me down. I felt that I was not treated like a professional who was allowed to make professional decisions.

Actually when I left the classroom I had only planned to take a year out for a break and to do a master's in education but I think now it was actually a trial period to see whether I could handle being a graduate student and single parent. I had missed the challenge of my academic life as a classroom teacher and I was really looking for something else.

Rather than feeling empowered to be a professional in her job, Susan believed that she was treated by the administration as someone who had no authority to make professional decisions. Frustrated by the bureaucracy, she left teaching. Upon entering graduate school again, this time to study science education, Susan left teaching in the public system permanently. After completing her master's degree in education, she was accepted into a doctoral program in science education at the University of British Columbia where she thrived on the academic study of teaching and learning. As a graduate assistant in the program, she became a lecturer in preservice education and so began her own career development as a teacher educator.

Upon graduation with her PhD in science and teacher education, Susan found a teaching position at another university in western Canada in preservice science education, and in 1989, she applied for and won a tenure-track position at the university of this study. In 1994, she was granted tenure as an associate professor.

I stayed in the field of education because of my commitment to the teaching and learning process, and my commitment to teachers and schools. I feel that I have something to contribute to the education system through my research. I have a priority to find ways to help teachers think about what they are doing and how they can do it more effectively through being reflective. I want my student teachers to be able to make decisions about what is appropriate and important for pupils to learn. I want them to question current practice in the schools.
That's what important to me in developing teachers as professionals.

As a novice teacher educator, Susan developed the curriculum for her courses from a perspective based in critical pedagogy and she expected her students to engage in the study of teaching and learning from that perspective. She became disillusioned, however, by their lack of commitment and effort to an academic and critical study of education.

I was amazed and disappointed at first in my preservice students. I found that I could expect more from Grade 11 Biology pupils than I could from student teachers. I had also taught Anatomy to pre-med students as a TA when I did my masters in Biology and I found them always begging for more. They felt that they needed to know the content before they could hope to study medicine and I just spent hours and hours with them, helping them learn. They said that the more they could learn in pre-med, the easier they thought it would be in medicine. And that's what I expected of my students when I came into teacher education. I have to admit that I was shocked when I began teaching preservice students. And those experiences have been similar in all three universities across Canada where I have taught. They [preservice students] think they know everything already and they seem not to want to put any real effort into their study. They just want practical ideas and curriculum units and then time to practise in schools. I have found that most of them don't really want to "think" about the nature of teaching; they want to be spoon-fed the how-to's.

Susan found that her intended curriculum was in conflict with the expectations of her students in class, and although she tried to impress upon them that becoming a teacher is a lifelong endeavour and they are only starting to learn how to be a teacher in this preservice program, her students were interested in different, more practical issues.

I try to show them that there are no right answers and that when you are working with people you have to be always evaluating the situation and making judgements of what's best and most appropriate at that time. There really is no "survival kit" that works in every situation. If I give them only one set of ideas that work, they will only have those ideas to draw upon. But if I show them
how to develop their own ideas through a better understanding of the learning process, then they can develop an unlimited number of their own theoretically-grounded, practical kits. I expect them to learn how to take what they have learned in university and put it into a format that is appropriate for an intermediate level student or a transition years class. And I expect them to learn from their teaching through constant reflection. In reality, I think only about 5 to 10% of them come to realize what teaching is all about and they believe what I am telling them. Those few are taking the responsibility to make those connections and begin to see learning to teach as hard work and a lifelong commitment. The rest probably find much of what I teach irrelevant.

In trying to bring her students to a better understanding of the teaching and learning process, Susan adopts a course outline in which she consciously balances and blends the academic and practical aspects of teaching science. Adopting a constructivist viewpoint, the students share in the teaching of the course, and both instructor and students engage in learning from each other about a varied number of specific topics of transition and specialization years science curricula. In studying the curriculum, class sessions are divided into a critical discussion of theoretical perspectives behind the curriculum and methodologies, and then the students plan and model teaching practices appropriate to the theoretical perspectives that drive the curriculum. As part of their class participation, all students take part in the planning and modelling process for each class throughout the program.

Susan also makes a concerted effort to link the students’ practical experiences in schools to her university courses. During the first practicum session, each student teacher is required to videotape a lesson and to review that lesson with a student teaching partner after the practicum is over. Using the principles of peer coaching, the students teachers are required to view the lesson together and write up a series of
comments about their perceptions of each other's lessons. Susan commented that

...quite a few of the student teachers commented about the difference in their perception and the peer's perception of the lesson when they reviewed it. They said how helpful it was to get another person's point of view and another person's opinion on things. In some cases they were shocked because the peer's comments were so different from their own perceptions, and for the first time they saw how helpful it can be to review their teaching. Their emphasis for learning to teach had been on "doing the teaching." They found that they learned a lot from their peer's perspective and it took a great deal of time, but it was amazing what they learned about themselves and their teaching. It helped to put their teaching and the pupils' learning into perspective by listening to someone else talk about it....I see a discrepancy in the student teachers when they talk to me and they realize it's important to reflect on their lessons. In actual fact I don't think most ever take the time to really reflect to that level again even though they said it was so useful and educational. Another interesting thing is--of the 36 students that I teach, only one, in his discussion of his lesson, related the lesson specifically to the theories of learning that we discussed in class. And he was the only student who made the connection, who very explicitly drew on the theory that we've covered even though I did ask them to discuss the lesson in light of what we had done in class. [20/03/96]

Like Cheryl, Susan was cognizant of the fact that her expectations of her preservice students could be perceived to be in conflict with the expectations of her students of her. However, she had deliberately set her teaching on a course that would raise critical questions in her students' minds about the teaching/learning process and that would help them to understand that teaching is far more complicated than just developing a set of practical how to ideas for every occasion in the classroom. Susan believed that student teacher unrest and disquiet were necessary tensions to encourage them to probe more deeply into issues revolving around teaching, such as curriculum topics, teaching disadvantaged pupils, evaluating the status quo in the bureaucracy and hierarchy of the school system, and so on. Susan did not want them to be satisfied by becoming teachers who merely cloned another in the system without understanding the
theoretical issues behind that particular form of teaching.

**Resolving the Paradoxes of Teacher Education from a University Perspective**

Both Susan and Cheryl seem to have developed clear and articulate views not only about their roles as teacher educators but also about the roles of the student teachers and the cooperating teachers with whom they work. They work in a constant state of transition as they learn more, read, carry out further research, reflect more deeply on their role as teacher educators, and continue to develop the curriculum for their courses. They also recognize that their views of critical pedagogy may not only seem foreign to their students, but also are not necessarily shared by their students, by their university colleagues, or by the cooperating teachers with whom they work.

Cheryl and Susan are committed to ensuring that their student teachers engage in conflict in their teacher education programs, just as they did, because they believe that it is important in shaping who they become as teachers. In fact, Susan and Cheryl purposefully contribute to the student teachers' six contradictions that were identified in Chapter 4.

**Paradox # 1: Teaching as Doing vs. Learning about Teaching**

Cheryl and Susan know that most student teachers initially believe that teaching is simply performance. They realize, that although most students have observed their own teachers throughout public schooling and university for at least 17 years, they have neither any idea of what is involved in planning learning activities, nor any concept of evaluating the learning or teaching. Thus, as Cheryl described earlier, both begin their courses by providing specific information for the student teachers that will
help them in planning, teaching, and evaluating their lessons during their first practicum session. However, after the initial practicum experience, Cheryl and Susan take their courses in a different direction: that of learning to analyse all aspects of teaching and learning and to question the educational system. Cheryl and Susan believe that if their students can learn how to analyse and critique practice, they will have the skills to begin teaching well and to constantly question their own practice as well as that of the system.

Both Carlo and Tracy noted that the five weeks of university instruction prior to their first practicum had been useful in helping them to become prepared for their first experiences in student teaching. The first session in the university seemed consistent with the representations of teaching that they, as novice teachers, brought to the initial studies in teacher education. During the practicum, they had effectively used the information from their introductory university classes, they had learned to replicate (and appreciate) the practice of their cooperating teachers, and they said that they felt like teachers. As they gained comfort and confidence in this new role, Carlo and Tracy were upset when they were asked, upon returning to the teacher education institution, to critique what they saw in the schools. It seemed to them both discourteous and unnecessary because their cooperating teachers had gone out of their way to help them feel competent in their classes and because they valued what they had observed and experienced. It was at this point, after the first practicum experience, that the contradictions began to surface and Tracy and Carlo began to resist what they were studying in their university courses.
It was also at this point, after the first practicum experience, that Cheryl and Susan began to take their courses in a different, more critical direction. Cheryl acknowledged that her courses were based on her beliefs and critical ideologies about learning and teaching and understood that her student teachers might not see the immediate relevance of her classes.

I remember my first round of teacher evaluations and they said I was very cynical about what happens in schools. I know students have a problem with my descriptions of school reality because they are so idealistic at this point. But I don't think they understand my own inner idealism and that I appreciate them as individual learners. I really believe that it is our job here to make them deal with the hard questions in teaching—not just to give them a bag of survival tricks.

Cheryl was determined that her students should have a solid theoretical framework that would encourage them to take a critical stance and question the various methodologies and their inherent value. Did she expect her student teachers to accept and understand the premises behind her courses?

I know what I want them to take away and I know some of them will take it away. I want them to realize above all else that there is much more to learn—that this is only the beginning. I know that I will inevitably frustrate them because I will not give them the simple answers. They need to know there are no hard and fast answers, and if they find some, they should quit teaching. I will raise issues about language education which is a hot topic in the elementary schools. I will put them in conflict with their cooperating teachers because we’re talking about one thing in terms of language education and they may go into a J-K classroom and there is no evidence of literacy whatsoever. I know that they have no power to complain or make suggestions but I want them to see further than that one classroom and that one teacher.

Cheryl was realistic in understanding that her students would have varied perceptions of her course and would likely resist the direction her course was taking.

Cheryl and Susan intentionally disrupted their students’ views of social practice
in teaching. For Cheryl and Susan, it was imperative that their students realize that teaching is more than that which can be learned and replicated in a few short weeks. They believed that their students could only learn to teach both by observation and practise and also by analysing their practice in relation to new information about teaching/learning that they would experience in their university courses. Cheryl and Susan may have complicated their curriculum by basing their work in a critical perspective with a different form of discourse that Tracy and Carlo had not encountered before.

Paradox # 2: Being Recognized as a Student vs. Being Recognized as a Teacher

It was critical to Carlo and Tracy that they feel like and be perceived as teachers during their teacher education program. They said that they felt like teachers in the school setting but that they were treated as students in their university courses. It was apparent that being classified as a student intimidated both a negative and static identity for them. Cheryl and Susan, on the other hand, were convinced from their experience and research that teachers must always consider themselves learners, and that one can only become a teacher through critically thinking and learning about practice. Carlo and Tracy could not equate the concept of student with that of learner.

The dissonance that occurs in this second paradox revolves around the discourse related to the words student and learner. The word, student, had a negative connotation in Carlo and Tracy’s minds, whereas the word, learner, was a significant factor in their university instructors’ concepts of learning to teach. This is a major concern when one realizes that as beginning teachers, by the nature of their positions
and as professionals, Tracy and Carlo will be paid to work with and for their students at all times during their careers. It appears that Tracy and Carlo see, appreciate, and are motivated by a hierarchical difference between teacher and student, and it is a difference that they will seek to find at least at the beginning of their career.

**Paradox # 3: The Practice of Theories vs. The Theories of Practice**

...Teachers often criticize the teacher education course work that was offered to them as “too theoretical”—not merely unhelpful, but unrelated to issues in classrooms. Teacher education programs constantly attempt to overcome the barrier of practice; the debate about the relationship of practice to theory and theory to practice continues. (Pinnegar, 1995, p. 56)

Cheryl and Susan are cognizant of the fact that their students perceive that the classes that they take in the university setting are too theoretical and not relevant to their work in schools during practicum or in their future work as teachers. Both talked about the option of providing the students with what they think the students want but neither was willing to do so. Cheryl said:

They will complain to me in their journals about it [too much theory] and they'll talk about this as the ivory tower—as in, “The ivory tower says this but the real world does this. Why aren't we learning about how to do what they do in schools?”—but I want them to come away with thinking that there is a lot more to learn and you can't do it all in this short period of time. Some of them will go out thinking this was a waste of time. I know that. I went away thinking it had been a waste of time and it wasn't until I was away from it for a while that I had begun to see that there were some significant issues there. There were a lot of things that weren't there that I wish had been there, but then I think any education is what you make of it. I want them to, or I hope they come away with a sense that education is very complex that it's not just go in a teach a class Monday morning—that there are questions that a classroom teacher can ask. They need to know that it's alright to ask the difficult questions. In fact, in my mind, it's a requirement.

Hearing similar complaints from her students, Susan responded:
If I only provide the student teachers with a bag of tricks, they'll probably be satisfied at first. But they can only survive the first few weeks or months until that bag of tricks dries up or a new situation arises for which there is no trick.

Susan and Cheryl insist that their students understand the theoretical assumptions behind their practice. For Susan and Cheryl, good teaching can only emanate from the understanding that comes from the knowledge behind the teaching practice.

Susan acknowledges with some discomfort that a number of her student teachers are likely disappointed in the theoretical courses she offers. But she responds to this discomfort by stating:

I know the student teachers are disappointed with their program here and with my classes too. Perhaps disappointment is the wrong word but the experience they have is not what they expect. They don't see where I'm trying to take them as teachers. I have problems coping with that feeling that I really let them down and I don't think that I deal with it very well at all. I know that I want to present a very different view of teaching to them than they experienced as pupils. I want them, probably for the first time, to consider teaching and learning in an alternative or critical light, to learn to question what is going on in the system. And they don't feel comfortable at all doing that or maybe it's just too soon. I keep questioning this in my own mind...I try to talk with them about different views and conceptions of seeing the system, of looking at the real "game" of teaching, but if they don't buy into it, then what's next?...But this is a university and it raises the issue of what our role really is: Are we creating teachers who will fit the existing system? Or are we creating teachers who will go out there and make the system a better place for all pupils and for our society if they don't get beaten down in the process? [26/10/95]

Through this last comment, Susan alludes critically to the problems of the educational system as a monolithic structure that has a mandate to reward certain pupils and to disempower others. She talks with passion about helping her students think about teaching from a critical point of view rather than allowing her students to become socialized into normative teacher behaviour.
Susan acknowledges that many of her students enter teaching because they enjoyed the cultural capital of the existing system, and she valiantly tries to make them examine and question the teaching practices they observe and employ. As she questions the educational system herself, she struggles with ways of making her student teachers aware of the potential problems of the system and in finding some means to help them learn to work critically within the system. She worries that even though she may be successful in opening their minds to new possibilities, her students may not be allowed to teach in the new forms, or they may be forced into submitting to the dominant culture of the schools.

A major theme in negotiating the identity of teacher for new teachers as outlined by Tracy, Carlo, and their instructors seems to be the inability of new teachers in the system to alter the dominant beliefs and practices of the system, especially when they have alternative ideologies. While “new” or critical representations may be offered to student teachers and even perceived as relevant by them during their teacher education courses, student teachers seem unable to practise their new learning in existing classrooms during the practicum situation or even in their own classroom as they become practising teachers. Susan and Cheryl believe that their students are more likely to be able to make changes in the system if they understand their practice theoretically and can articulate clearly what they are about in their practice.

Paradox # 4: Teacher as Enforcer vs. Teacher as Pedagogue

In Chapter 4, Carlo and Tracy talked about how they feel their practicum evaluations are based in large part on their ability to immediately develop and maintain
a learning environment in the classroom. They seemed satisfied in knowing that they had to meet those criteria but they were disconcerted to find that they were not studying more about classroom management in the university setting since that was what was deemed to be important in being judged a successful teacher.

Although Cheryl and Susan build classroom management as an important component into their courses, the fit of the topic is critical in the curriculum. It must match the course philosophically and rationally. Classroom management is not offered as an individual topic outside of the context of the curriculum or the classroom. Cheryl and Susan note that classroom management is an integral, underlying part of everything they cover and they require their students to question the assumptions behind their methods. As a result, class discussions are open-ended and student teachers are required to make their own decisions about suitable methods based on their developing philosophies of teaching. Susan and Cheryl recognize that this is unsettling for those students who want "crystal-clear solutions" to their problems, not further discussion which seems too theoretical in nature.

Paradox # 5: Demonstrating Immediate Competence vs. Lifelong Learning

Susan and Cheryl are critical of many of the students who want to become teachers. Most students teachers, they believe, enter the program assuming that learning to teach is like learning a trade and that the route to becoming a teacher is like that of an apprentice. The novice is told what to do, observes what is done, and then practices the method under supervision until it is perfected. Then, as a novice, the beginning teacher replicates that practice in the classroom. But university teacher
educators like Cheryl and Susan have learned that teaching is not a trade; they believe that it is a profession in which novice teachers must first study the process of learning and its relationship to teaching and then begin to practice it under the guidance of experienced professionals who can help student teachers unravel the learning process that emerges in the classroom. Thus, the discourse that Cheryl and Susan use in their course to talk about learning about teaching as a profession is quite different than the discourse that the student teachers are expecting as they want the specifics on how to do it. Cheryl states

I have to give my student teachers the means to become professionals, to think and analyse consciously on an ongoing basis what is going on in their classes. That’s part of what it means to be a professional and as a taxpayer, I’m not prepared to pay a person $65 000 per year to do a copycat, mechanical job. The status of being a professional, the autonomy of making professional decisions, and the financial incentive go along with a professional view of the teaching/learning process….I think that many of our students are lazy when they come here and they want teaching to be just doing what you are told to do. As students, they are used to being told what to do, how to do it and when to do it. They have never really had to think. Even though they have observed teaching for years and years, they have never really thought about it beyond what they see directly in front of them. And when I insist that they think about teaching and learning in different ways, they argue or resist because it’s hard work, and that’s too bad. But to understand teaching and learning, and the bureaucratic, hierarchical procedures in and around education, the nature of learning for pupils from all standpoints, including socio-economic and cultural background, for example, student teachers have to take time to step back and “study” education, and that’s not what they want to do. I know that. They want to get right in there and get actively involved. But I cannot sanction action without understanding, and that’s where a large part of the problem arises. [18/04/96]

This concern for demonstrating immediate competence is exacerbated by the fact that student teachers’ summative practicum evaluations are the most influential components in helping student teachers secure future employment as teachers. At this
particular institution, the evaluations are written by the students' cooperating teachers after two or three weeks of student teaching. Thus, Tracy and Carlo were compelled to show their competence immediately as teachers in their practicum classrooms in order to obtain excellent summative reports.

On the other hand, Cheryl and Susan approached their courses as a theoretical study of teaching and curriculum. Their courses last an entire year, and the evaluation is based on the student teachers' abilities to read, discuss, synthesize, analyse, and write coherent papers. Thus, there is not such a sense of immediacy to the university-based course work and to the evaluation. Instructors and students can take some time to talk about topics in opened-ended ways and explore alternative options. In fact, Susan and Cheryl require their students to be critical, to question current structures, even though they knew that their students prefer to be given methods that work in the classroom. Although this causes some concern among their students, Cheryl and Susan believe strongly that critical thinking and looking at education in general have to be critical components of their curriculum.

Tracy and Carlo talked openly about their resistance to the critical component of their courses, and in fact, had they not been involved in the dialogic approach in this particular project it is possible that they may not have thought about learning about teaching from this particular perspective. They would likely have completed their teacher education with more resentment and less understanding about what they had studied in the university-based component of their program. As a result of their involvement in this study, there is some hope that Carlo and Tracy will begin to think
about teaching in a more critical way.

Paradox # 6: Following Established Routines vs. Experimentation

Susan and Cheryl both talked about how little opportunity and time there is for student teachers to analyse the practices they observe or try during their student teaching sessions. They do not believe that their student teachers think about school practice in relation to the curriculum of their university-based courses.

Susan said:

Our student teachers work in two different and busy worlds. In the one, they are immersed in the day-to-day activities of the classroom, the teacher, and the children. In the other world, they talk about teaching and analyze it, removed from the school classroom. They have little opportunity to try to bring both worlds together.

Although they acknowledge that student teachers, as learning teachers, must observe and try to replicate the experienced teacher’s practice in order to maintain pupil learning as well as to demonstrate their own skill development, both university teacher educators experience frustration with the inconsistency of what they teach in their classes with what the student teachers experience in school classrooms. Both believe that this lack of connection is the fundamental weakness of the practicum in teacher education.

Susan and Cheryl believe that cooperating teachers can, at times, be more of a hindrance than a help in assisting student teachers in learning to teach because their representations of teaching fit into the norms of the traditional system, not into helping student teachers find their own ways to question the methods. Susan said:

You know, I just want the teachers in the schools to have some respect for our
programs here and our teaching, and to consider that some of the alternative methods we suggest to our students just might be useful and educational. I find that my students are so immersed in copying everything the supervising teacher does, that they have little opportunity to learn or to practice any different techniques that might just make a difference in the system.

These sentiments confirm Britzman’s (1991) findings.

They [university teacher educators] believe that teachers have forgotten their own process of learning to teach and hence lack the patience to work with student teachers. They have observed practitioners’ resistances to the student teachers’ attempts at pedagogic experimentation. They point to the regime of the practical as a force that refuses to admit theory. Consequently, for some teacher educators, the university must undo what student teachers learn in school contexts. (p. 191)

Conversely, we shall see in the next chapter how the cooperating teachers with whom Susan and Cheryl’s students work react to this paradox. They frequently think that they have to undo, or at least rework, the unproductive information that the student teachers have learned in the university setting.

**Conflict and Tension in Preservice Teacher Education**

Cheryl and Susan are certainly cognizant of the contradictions that their students encounter in preservice education and they are aware of the tension that is produced for both the student teachers and themselves. Although they believe that some tension is healthy for both faculty members and students because it forces them, as learners, to consider and reconsider alternative views, there are some forms of tension that weaken the program unnecessarily.

Susan and Cheryl introduced other sources of conflict that they encounter in their role as university teacher educators that they believe have an impact on and complicate their work with students, colleagues, and school personnel. The other
tensions that they revealed are the isolation that they experience in their teaching and research in the teacher education institution, the lack of consistent philosophy across the teacher education institution, the complications involved in being a faculty member in a university-based professional school, the concern for evaluating student teachers in course work, and the frustrations with the constraints of time.

**Isolation**

A sense of a feeling of "aloneness" emerged from the interviews with Cheryl and Susan, a fact that may seem surprising considering that university professors have opportunities to attend conferences, read journals, and so on. But, within this particular faculty, Cheryl is the only person dealing with early years' education and there are few colleagues with whom she can share her ideas or experiences about the professional education of teachers of very young children. On the other hand, Susan would like to participate in some collaborative research projects with other colleagues and graduate students that might lead to more consistency within the university program. She finds that everyone is involved in pursuing his/her own particular research interests and few have time to talk about their interests and findings on a regular basis.

**Lack of Consistent Philosophy**

Although both Susan and Cheryl think that it is healthy to work with colleagues who espouse differing and contradictory views of preservice education in collegial discussion, they think that it might be more confusing to student teachers than illuminating. Susan explains
I am frustrated that we don’t have...a consistent philosophy in this place. I also understand that if it didn’t reflect mine, I might be the first one to complain and break away. But the students are trying to make sense of what teaching is about and there is a wide range of beliefs among our colleagues about how teachers learn to teach. Some espouse the belief that teachers are born and not made and that preservice education is not even required. Others have a survival kit mentality and just give their students lists of things to do as a teacher...and if you follow this recipe, you’ll be successful. Others provide completely theoretical and dense descriptions of what teaching is about and the students do not have a clue what they are talking about. Still others say that teaching is whatever you want it to be which requires an exploration of our inner selves. No wonder our students become very frustrated and no wonder our cooperating teachers do not know what we are about. [26/10/95]

Susan’s comments articulate the complexities in developing a preservice program in a professional school in a university setting and allude to a leadership role for educational administrators in preservice education to help faculty members in developing a coherent foundation for the program.

Academic Life in a Professional School

Susan and Cheryl feel tension in terms of balancing their position of teacher educator in a professional school and the role of academic in the university setting. Although both faculty members in this study are tenured professors, who have been rewarded for their publishing record and teaching competence, they experience some conflict in trying to carry out “professional” research and “academic” research, as well as trying to work with their students in the university setting and finding time to work with them in the school setting. Both are trying hard to balance their professional work in terms of commitment to scholarly research as they continue to work directly with student teachers in schools while negotiating significant personal responsibilities as single mothers with young families. Cheryl commented:
I find it difficult to meet the needs of my preservice students, their [cooperating] teachers in the schools, my graduate students, and still find time to keep up my research work. The teachers in the schools and the preservice students don't always understand what our jobs entail.

The roles, responsibilities, and contributions of professional schools seem not always understood by those outside the Faculty of Education. University members in professional schools have the demands of three sets of personnel to meet—the students, the professional community, and the university community—and Cheryl and Susan tell how difficult it is for university teacher educators to meet the demands of all three constituents. They speak of their disappointment in not meeting the needs of their student teachers or the expectations of the cooperating teachers with whom their students work in practicum.

Evaluating Student Work in University-Based Courses

Another significant tension that surfaced concerns the nature of university-based course work and the evaluation of students in teacher education courses. It seems incongruous that professors are trying to encourage student teachers to consider alternative ways of conceptualizing teaching as they remain tied to the inflexible and structured format of the traditional university classroom.

In developing courses that focus on pedagogy and methodology, Susan tries to encourage her students to study and to take risks with new thoughts and ideas; she encourages them to read, discuss, experiment with new ideas and activities, and share their new learning collegially. But she believes that her efforts are stymied by having to work within the traditional frames of teaching, such as assigning grades to her
students within the standard university norms.

I think that giving grades to our students is a real problem because as long as I’m giving grades, their primary incentive is marks, rather than learning. They have been students for so long and have achieved success—even admittance to university and our program is based on grades—that what they worry about is getting a high grade, not thinking about an issue. With a pass/fail, I could separate out those students who don’t do the job as I can now and we could focus on the learning. The grades from this university are useless to them and I tell them that. No graduate school, including graduate schools in education, ever looks at their preservice marks, only their undergrad grades. (And that devalues our work here, although that is another story!) They do so well when they come here, that I find there is little variance in their grades anyway. One of the values of our practicum is that it is not based on grades. [20/03/96]

Susan believes that giving grades to teacher education students undermines the education program that she is trying to provide. Because all educational systems are dominated by the grading system, her students have become adept at being successful in “meeting the grade.” She believes that as a result of using the traditional grading system in the teacher education institution, her students will not experience or need to understand any alternative forms of evaluating their pupils in schools. Because grades ultimately determine who progresses through the system and because traditionally the highest grades have gone to those who demonstrate conformation to the dominant values and ideologies in society, Susan thinks that by having to conform to traditional grading for her students, she is contributing actively to maintaining the status quo in the dominant system by having to adhere to the traditional grading system. Giving grades, she contends, is one way of ensuring the non-development of critical intellectuals and is contradictory to the foundations of her practice.
Constraints of Time

The final tension that surfaced repeatedly was the issue of time. Issues of isolation and busyness are compounded by the lack of time and the pressure to get everything done.

Cheryl and Susan specifically pointed out another issue about time: the brief, one-year program of 20 weeks in classes and 10 weeks in schools prior to full certification. Both found that much was either omitted or crammed together so hurriedly in the curriculum that it was not surprising that student teachers might not see the relevance of various issues. Both wrestled with the notion of either covering less material in more detail or covering more topics and just providing introductory comments. Both Cheryl and Susan found that as they gained experience, they covered fewer topics in more detail. Cheryl said:

...time is a real issue. It's not only that it is just the one year, but it is so short a time period and we have so much to work through. It's over before they know it and then they are totally on their own. I believe that we could restructure what we do in a better way but we need to loosen the constraints on the time period as well to spend more time on significant issues and more time in schools.

Susan was concerned about the issues of time in relation to her role as a university professor.

It's not only the time constraints of a one-year program, but it's the demands on us too and they are increasing every year. More and more [colleagues] are retiring and not being replaced and there are more classes to teach and larger classes too. Research and productivity? Those requirements remain the same. It's difficult to meet all of the demands which are required. I can see how some people just give up doing any committee work or anything extra.

Dealing with the stress of the job and time management skills are competencies
with which both Cheryl and Susan constantly struggle and try to control and which mitigate against the development of a critical perspective.

Investigating the Beliefs, Values, and Ideologies of the University Teacher Educators

Cheryl and Susan articulated their beliefs and values about preservice teacher education quite clearly through their comments. As a result of their own research, experience, and observations, they castigate the current educational system and believe that significant change is needed. They understand that new teachers in the system are not usually capable of creating change but they do encourage their students to take a critical perspective. They believe strongly that the teacher education program is not only a professional time of teacher training, but a period of academic study about education and schooling.

Although they acknowledge that student teachers can learn much about teaching in school classrooms, they require their students to step back from school practice to question the underlying beliefs, values, and ideologies that guide the teaching/learning activities in which they are engaged. It is only through a careful analysis and questioning of current practice that Susan and Cheryl believe student teachers can grow to understand teaching. The act of teaching is important, but the performance of it is not enough unless the student teachers assume a critical perspective in their practice.

Cheryl and Susan emphasize that their own practice is influenced and informed by their study, research, and reflections upon their own experience as teachers in schools. They believe that all practice in schools must be considered within an analytic
and reflective framework that challenges the assumptions of learning and schooling. They believe that learning about teaching is best accomplished through the adoption of a critical perspective and the tension that develops from this inquiry stimulates deeper thought into teaching and learning practices.

Cheryl and Susan are enthusiastic, hard-working individuals who seem to be highly respected by their teacher education colleagues and their students. Although they welcome some tension and see it as a healthy component of their role for their own professional management and growth, they experience significant pressure through larger classes, heavier teaching loads, and more graduate supervision.

I feel that the demands on us as faculty members are increasing every year as more people retire and they aren’t replaced, and as budgets are cut further. The numbers of students in our program remains the same year after year and the demands for research and productivity stay the same. But this year I have more classes with larger numbers of students. I feel a lot of pressure to cover a lot of in my courses because the students only have one year, or actually about 20 weeks, to study teaching from an academic perspective. [Susan, 20/03/96]

The position of teacher educator is multifaceted and interesting, and Cheryl and Susan seem to be coping reasonably well within the constraints of the structures. Both see room for change in the teacher education program and are working actively toward that end.

I asked both of them to describe what they thought an ideal teacher education program might look like. Cheryl said:

...this may sound odd [after all that I have said] but I would have a group of about thirty students for two years to work with. I would identify the right principal with a critical perspective of schooling who would in turn identify a staff with whom a group of student teachers and small group of faculty members could work together. We would develop the program together based
on the needs of the student teachers and the pupils in the school. This would be a staff that constantly asks questions about the school, the system, and of themselves. They are open and articulate about their planning and their practice, and we as student teachers and faculty members would work together in that setting. I think that we could accomplish a lot of interesting and educational things for the new teachers and blend practice and theoretical foundations.... Then for their first teaching position, new teachers need to be paired with an experienced, intelligent teacher who would work with them in the school in a flexible sort of way. The new teacher might work in one classroom or in primary for a few months, junior for a few months, and maybe even in a course or do some individual research somewhere for part of the year. The essential criteria is that nothing is taken for granted. There are always alternatives for looking at teaching in different ways. The selection of the school site and the kinds of personnel where we develop our program, however, would be the critical issue.

Cheryl envisions a teacher education program that is almost totally field-based in a critical school environment in which university personnel, teachers, student teachers, and school administrators work together, not only to develop a teacher education program, but the educational program for the pupils in the school. Student teachers have the opportunity to practise in a setting where questions are constantly asked and, as Cheryl says, "nothing is taken for granted."

I asked Susan to describe her ideal teacher education program and although she had no idea what her colleague would have said in her interview, Susan’s notions of a better program rooted the student teachers in the schools.

Now this is dreaming. But I think my ideal program would be longer and would involve the student teachers working more in schools. The program would combine preservice and an induction year and student teachers would be paired with experienced teachers who were not only recognized as being very competent and creative teachers, but teachers who could also articulate their philosophy and their practice to the student teachers. I would be a part of the group in the school(s) and we would have time to talk about the important issues of teaching and learning, educational policy and so on. But the key would be the school personnel with whom our student teachers work and they
would have to have time out of class to really become teacher educators. I really think that we need different approaches for different students and our job as university personnel would be to work closely with the student teachers and the teachers in schools to develop a sound program for each student teacher, almost one-on-one in many cases. A student teacher's role would encompass moving into educational research, observing, practising and taking risks, reflecting, and conferencing.

Both Cheryl and Susan emphasized that they would like to develop a linked structure with practising teachers in schools who share a critical perspective of education for their ideal vision of a teacher education program. In recalling Tracy's and Carlo's comments, it is interesting to note that the university teacher educators' views of the ideal program were similar to the requirements identified by the preservice students in the study.

When asked why we should not move forward in this direction, Cheryl and Susan listed the overwhelming administrative impediments: finding enough ideal school settings for the 700 students in the program, covering the expenses to release experienced teachers to work with the student teachers and faculty members, negotiating the amount of time to have faculty members in schools while fulfilling their other university roles, defining the role of a professional school in a university setting, to name a few of the major problems.

A significant component of both Cheryl and Susan's belief systems of teacher education include paying attention to what their own students are saying and thinking about their faculty classes. Both are aware that student teachers criticize the teacher education program in general and their courses specifically, and both independently note that they need to take some responsibility for not making their classes explicit
... I am always trying to lead my students to the understanding of some theory about learning and I try to be very clear in my instruction by using specific examples from their school observations about how things are done there. For example, safety is a very practical and important issue that we have to cover in science education and I ask several people to recall what they have observed, what kind of overt safety procedures were in place, how are mishaps handled, etc. I try to start with what they have seen in the schools and then I lead them to an understanding of what the ideal should be. I encourage them to question what they have experienced and through this we deal with everything from specific strategies for safety of pupils to noting how safety features impact on the type of teaching and instruction which can occur in the classroom.

But, she went on to say, some of her students only listen to what their peers tell about their school experiences and do not see the need to talk about what an ideal situation might be that might promote an alternative learning environment for pupils. Instead, she said, that her students simply write down the handy ideas to use and only politely pay attention to a more critical examination of practice.

In one interview, Cheryl was obviously thinking about her student teachers’ criticisms and trying to think of ways to improve her own practice to make her lectures clearer to her students. She said:

...you know I think I could be more precise and specific about what I am covering in my classes with my students. I think perhaps that I have fallen into the habit of expecting them to glean the important nuggets through listening and reading, especially in my large group classes. In teaching the general methodology course, I think that I will try giving them an outline of my learning outcomes for the class and show them how I plan and structure things for their learning—so that it’s so explicit that it hits them in the face—and perhaps they will understand what I’m teaching better. You know I used to do that when I first began to teach here because I was so new at this and needed to look overtly at every step. I think perhaps learning to teach here for me was like learning to drive a car. When I began driving I was so conscious of putting my foot on the break, turning my head to check the blind spot, and so on. Every action was calculated and evaluated before and after it occurred. Now
driving is totally automatic and I drive to work and sometimes I get here and honestly cannot remember how I got here. I wonder if my teaching here has become so automatic that I’ve forgotten to make explicit what the students need. Yes, that does require more thought and I think that I’ll try some different things next week to make my work clearer to the students.

Both Cheryl and Susan are trying to develop courses that help their students become competent teachers. It was obvious to me, however, that neither teacher is willing to let their students learn to teach without much critical thought and both are committed to providing a thoughtful course for their students’ learning. At the same time, both are willing to question their own practice and make changes as needed.

The role of the faculty member in learning to teach is complex. Yarger and Smith (1990) point out that

...educators themselves know very little about any rules and constructs of professional education that might exist [but]...educators of educators should be able to provide leadership and guidance in professional education. (p. 25)

By openly sharing their values, beliefs, and ideologies about being preservice teacher educators, Cheryl and Susan seem to demonstrate that they have learned a great deal from reflections on their own experience, the experiences of their student teachers, their academic study, and their research.

Learning to Teach: Same Words, Different Meanings

Cheryl and Susan know that their student teachers want to hear about learning to teach in the university setting in the ways to which they have become accustomed as pupils in schools and as mainstream, adult members of a conservative society. They know that their student teachers want answers and techniques to make them competent teachers after their one year of preservice education. Cheryl and Susan deliberately do
not give their students simplistic strategies. Rather they ask their students difficult questions and thus, they contribute to the sense of powerlessness and frustration that their students feel. Their discourse is different from that of their student teachers and that which cooperating teachers and administrators usually use in schools. Susan and Cheryl purposely use and model a different, critical discourse to shape and enlighten their students, and to require them to think differently about schooling. They do so not only to help their students realize that learning about teaching is a slow, arduous, and thoughtful process that takes many years to accomplish, but also to make their students examine the system from a critical perspective.

Corson's (1995b) work helps to reveal the tensions that arise between the discourse of the teacher educator and the expectations of the student teachers. In discussing the rules and norms that provide the backdrop to discursive practice, he notes

Mental activity is not tied to some internal set of processes; it is a range of moves against a background of human activity governed by informal conventions or rules, especially rules to do with the ways in which words and other symbols are used within the structures of a language. Since the meaning of a word is its "use" in a language, people have to adopt normative attitudes to their own responses when they try to use a word to structure mental activity. (p. 12)

Student teachers are disconcerted to find that the words they are hearing in their preservice program have different underlying meanings from the ones they have experienced during their prior experiences as pupils in schools. For example, in this chapter, the term "learning to teach" has an entirely different meaning for student teachers and for their university-based teacher educators. For student teachers, the
preconceived meaning of learning to teach means providing them with the tools and
skills to be competent technicians in front of a class of pupils, parents, and school
administrators after their year of study; for their university instructors, learning to
teach means analysing educational practices and the assumptions and ideologies behind
the educational system that legitimizes such practices.

Corson (1995b) explains that

...words have meaning depending on their "fit" within the context and the
meaning system of the utterance. This fit in turn depends upon conventions,
rules, and agreements arbitrarily reached at some stage. It is not important
philosophically when this stage was reached. These enable the word user to
communicate "sense" to other people. By replying, the others acknowledge
that they are party to the conventions, rules, and agreements that determine the
fit of word meanings. Patterns of use determine meaning.... (p. 25)

Cheryl and Susan are two university teacher educators who pattern their use of
teacher education discourse to ensure that their student teachers get inside the structures
of schooling in order to question "the forms, the life, the norms, the conventions, and
rules" (Corson, 1995b, p. 13) of the educational system and to see the structures
through a different set of lenses than the ones they have commonly used. They
understand that at first their students will not understand their critical meaning of the
words "learning to teach" nor will they see the norms and values in the different
meaning that they, as critical pedagogues, bring to the discourse. They even anticipate
the resistance and resentment that will be forthcoming from their students as they
engage them in investigating the educational system from an entirely different,
dissonant perspective.

What is important here is not to seek some sort of middle ground to ease the
tensions for student teachers and their instructors, but to recognize that dissonance is a necessary step in learning to teach, to accept that the meanings of educational words are critically significant, and to find optimal means of helping student teachers find opportunities to begin their professional growth from a critical viewpoint.

Summary

In this chapter, the university teacher educators have described how their beliefs and values of education (that have been informed by their academic study and research) have influenced their ideologies and practices in teacher education. Cheryl and Susan suggest that their student teachers may be the casualties of conservative structural forces during their own schooling; they understand that their student teachers’ predetermined and limited views of traditional teaching and learning may be perceived as the only roles available. Susan and Cheryl suggest that, without realizing it, their student teachers have become disempowered because of the overpowering but limited experiences that they have encountered. Although they understand the frustrations of their students, Cheryl and Susan actively contribute to the development of contradictions and paradoxes in their student teachers’ minds in order to force them to engage in alternative conceptions of teaching practice.
CHAPTER SIX

INSIGHTS FROM THE TEACHERS WHO TEACH THE TEACHERS: EXPLORING THE BELIEFS OF COOPERATING TEACHERS

Introduction

Given the apparent esteem accorded student teaching, one might assume that it is grounded in a sound theoretical foundation, with general agreement concerning its structure and activities....[It] has not developed a sound theoretical basis, and has no uniform standard or structure....The fragmentation and lack of articulation within student teaching mirrors a similar dilemma throughout [the content of] most teacher education programs. (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990, pp. 514-515)

The practicum component is consistently valued and rated as the most important component of preservice education by preservice teachers (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; McIntyre & Byrd, 1996; Pinnegar, 1995). According to both the student teachers in this study and the literature on teacher education, there are not obvious links between the curriculum provided by the university instructors in university courses and the practicum assignments that the cooperating teachers design (Britzman, 1991; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990).

As teacher educators, we recognize student teaching as the most salient experience in the education of teachers. We are often frustrated that material taught in university courses does not appear to survive student teaching and seldom seems to become part of the practice of the teachers we educate. (Pinnegar, 1995, p. 56)
All professionals realize the nature of the dependence—between student teachers and those who seek to influence them—as riddled with contradictions because there is no simple correspondence between what any professional thinks should happen during student teaching, what exactly the student teacher should do to realize these ideas, and what actually occurs. (Britzman, 1991, p. 175)

The practicum in preservice teacher education is highly-contested terrain. It is in the practicum that student teachers say they learn the most about teaching, and it is in the practicum that university teacher educators worry that their students will become merely socialized into practice without analysing the underlying assumptions of their practice (Britzman, 1991; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987).

Metcalf and Kahlich (1996) discuss the negative effects that student teaching placements have on student teachers’ attitudes, knowledge, and classroom practice, and, they state, the longer the field experience, the worse it is for student teachers’ attitudes. They also note that there are too few exemplary sites where student teachers can be placed to rectify the negative effects of the practicum experience.

The student teacher practicum is supervised almost exclusively by cooperating teachers who receive the student teachers into their classes for a period of time ranging from a few days to several months. The purpose of the experience is literally to *practise teaching*. Cooperating teachers volunteer for the task, take on this responsibility in addition to their fulltime teaching duties, have little or no professional preparation for becoming a teacher-supervisor, and assume the role for a variety of reasons ranging from the altruistic to the selfish (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). Research shows that cooperating teachers generally have little understanding or knowledge of the expectations of the teacher education institution and conceptualize their role in isolation

However, at the same time, they are influential teacher educators who have a dramatic effect on the future practice of student teachers (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Lortie, 1975).

In speaking about the power of the practicum experience and the role of the cooperating teacher, The Holmes Group (1986) in its report, *Tomorrow's Teachers*, describes the relationship between student teacher and cooperating teacher as one that seeks conformity and replication.

Most student teachers quickly conform to the practices of their supervising teacher and rarely put into practice a novel technique or risk failure....The emphasis is on imitation of and subservience to the supervising teacher, not upon investigation, reflection, and solving novel problems. (p. 55)

With this perspective from the literature about the role of the cooperating teacher in mind, I continue this study by interviewing the cooperating teachers, with whom Carlo and Tracy were placed, in an attempt to ferret out their values, beliefs, and ideologies about teaching, learning, and learning to teach. I compare the cooperating teachers' belief systems to those of their student teachers and university teacher educators, to see the impact that their beliefs and practices as school-based teacher educators have on their student teachers' development of a teaching identity in the preservice program. I begin this component of the study from the premise that the cooperating teachers, through their intensive one-on-one contact and direct instruction with the student teachers during the practicum sessions, have a great impact on student teachers' representations of teaching and their ideologies of teaching and learning.
The majority of the data for this chapter was gathered through interviews with each of the six cooperating teachers with whom Carlo and Tracy were placed.\textsuperscript{21} During each practicum session, I visited the classrooms where Carlo and Tracy were assigned and had the opportunity to observe their teaching as well as to interview each of their cooperating teachers. Thus, the data also consisted of field notes from classroom observations, practicum reports, and observations of interactions between the cooperating teacher and student teachers during the practicum sessions.

**Meeting the Cooperating Teachers**

All of the six cooperating teachers work for the same medium-sized urban board of education\textsuperscript{22} in six different elementary and secondary schools. Their teaching experience ranges from six to thirty years. Coincidentally, all three of Carlo’s cooperating teachers were males, and all of Tracy’s were female.\textsuperscript{23} Although five of the six were experienced cooperating teachers, one, Helen, had Tracy as her first student teacher during the first practicum of the year. Five of the six completed their

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\textsuperscript{21} Although I could have had some input into Tracy’s and Carlo’s specific practicum placements, I did not interfere. Rather the Administrative Assistant in Practicum Services worked with Cheryl and Susan in determining Tracy and Carlo’s placements (as is normal practice in this teacher education institution). There was one exception for which I made a request regarding Carlo’s second experience that was discussed in Chapter 4. I asked that Carlo be placed in a basic-level, secondary school to teach Science so that he could be in a situation where classroom management would play a significant role in the teaching/learning process.

\textsuperscript{22} The board of education and the university are located in the same community.

\textsuperscript{23} The Faculty of Education works with about 1 200 cooperating teachers in seven urban and rural boards of education. Cooperating teachers are nominated by principals or area superintendents and/or volunteer to work in this capacity. They are paid a stipend of $8.00 per day and may be assigned one or two student teachers at a time. About 90% of the early years’ teachers with whom we work are female whereas 90% of the science teachers are male.
preservice teacher education at the teacher education institution of this study, and all seemed to me to be representative of the cooperating teachers who choose to work with student teachers.

Cooperating teachers have a significant amount of independence in choosing whether they will act as cooperating teachers and how they will handle that responsibility at this particular teacher education institution. Although all cooperating teachers are encouraged to take an 80-hour, additional qualifications course for cooperating teachers (that the university offers for a nominal fee of $50.00), only about 10% of the current group of 1200 cooperating teachers have taken it. Only one of the six cooperating teachers in this study had completed the course.

The parameters of the role of the cooperating teacher are laid out in the teacher education institution’s handbook for cooperating teachers to use as a guideline, and each cooperating teacher receives a copy of The Practicum Handbook prior to the first term of the academic year.

The data gathered from the six cooperating teachers were interesting and informative. In spite of their gender difference, contrasting school settings, the ages of pupils they taught, and their range of experience and varying subject matter, several themes emerged from their conversations that characterized their values, beliefs, and ideologies about the role of the cooperating teacher as an important teacher educator in learning to teach. Areas of consonance and dissonance became apparent in comparison

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24 See Appendix A.
to the value systems of the student teachers and university faculty members involved in this study.

How Do Student Teachers Learn to Teach?

The question--How do student teachers learn to teach?--provided a focal point for the interviews with the cooperating teachers. It was interesting and surprising to note that almost all of the cooperating teachers were taken aback by the question and admitted that they had few ideas about how novices learn to teach. When pressed, they tended to use their own experience as a guide in answering the question and described an apprenticeship as the best way to learn to teach. Their responses about learning to teach could be summarized into the following three points that differentiate subtly between learning to teach and learning about teaching.

- Desire and motivation to be a teacher are paramount to become a teacher.
- A teacher personality is required.
- Real learning about teaching occurs only after years of experience in teaching.

These few points are used to introduce and then illustrate the role that cooperating teachers play in helping student teachers negotiate their identity in learning to teach.

The Importance of Desire in Learning to Teach

Raghav, the cooperating teacher with whom Carlo was placed in his second practicum assignment, had 30 years of teaching experience. Raghav spoke earnestly about the need for student teachers to have a passion for teaching.

How do people learn to teach? It starts with a natural desire that they indicate to become a teacher...They see teaching as something they "have" to do in their lives. It may almost be instinct too. I mean that there are lots of people who
want to teach, but can't... There's no potential there, no deep desire and unless that comes to the surface, I believe that they can't be successful teachers. [29/02/96]

This concept of desire and instinct was acknowledged by Laura, Tracy's second cooperating teacher, who noted that it is so important for student teachers "to get inspired, to keep yourself motivated because this is what it is all about" [06\03\96].

The issue raised here is about the relationship between self-motivation to be a teacher and success as a teacher. The cooperating teachers were convinced that passion was a prerequisite to be a teacher, and that if passion to do the job was clearly evident, then success in being a teacher was probable. It was assumed that student teachers who had passion for teaching had the necessary background and belief systems to be a teacher. With passion, they were expected to have the competence to be able to plan appropriate learning activities, to carry them out successfully, and to evaluate the learning effectively.

In Chapter 4, Carlo and Tracy talked about their dreams and desires to become good teachers. They could see themselves fitting into their own perceived traditional role as teachers that they remembered from their own schooling and they looked forward to carrying out the same kinds of practices they had experienced as pupils. Their representations of teaching were based on their recollections as pupils, and their passion would be consonant with the "natural instinct" sought by their cooperating teachers. What was emphasized in this category was that passion for teaching would likely emanate from student teachers' past recollections of schools and images of teachers and pupils—a recalled infatuation with schooling from the past that would be
representative of student teachers’ actions in classrooms in the present and future. Student teachers would be expected to carry past practice into the future that would, in fact, emulate and maintain the assumptions of the dominant society’s vision of education.

The value of passion in becoming a teacher, on the other hand, would certainly not be the first criterion that university teacher educators would identify as a necessity for becoming a teacher. In fact, from my conversations with my university colleagues, the concept was not raised as a high-priority concern. Instead, the university teacher educators spoke of different (and developing) representations of teaching that challenge past and current norms. From their comments, Cheryl and Susan realize that although many of their students come to teacher education with instinct and desire, they would prefer their students to be open to new and different ways of looking at teaching—methods that would subvert the norms of traditional forms of practice and view learning in a different form that would empower all pupils in their classes to engage in suitable learning activities.

However, a difference was noted between desire to be a teacher and a natural teaching personality. Although passion is perceived to be important in becoming a teacher, it, alone, is not enough. A teaching personality is required.

ii. **The Importance of the “Teacher Personality” in Becoming a Teacher**

I had many discussions with cooperating teachers, student teachers, and faculty members about the necessity for a natural teaching personality. The familiar question—are teachers born or made?—kept creeping through several layers of the conversation
throughout the year.

All of the cooperating teachers spoke about working with the "naturals" in the profession and related that they found it much easier to work with a student teacher who possessed a natural enthusiasm for teaching and pupils and an eagerness for learning. The development of the teaching personality was seen as a natural, spontaneous, and required trait in order to become a teacher. One who is identified by the cooperating teacher as having "sparkle" is assumed to be able to plan effective lessons and to engage pupils' minds. Laura, Tracy's second cooperating teacher believes that the sparkling personality is inborn and cannot be taught in the process of learning to teach.

Right now, I have a secondary school co-op student who is a natural with the children. She just knows how to interact with them and that's something that you cannot teach someone to do or how to like children. **She is a good teacher already.** We can teach the mechanics of teaching, like lesson planning, punctuality, rules and regulations, to see what children are doing, but you cannot teach the natural things like personality. What we [cooperating teachers] are teaching is how to bring that natural personality out. And if it's not there, it's not there. [06/03/96]

Laura talked about the competence of the student teachers she had this year and described them as *naturals*. She said, "I wondered if they need to be in the teacher education program at all because they were already so good. It certainly made my job a lot easier. It was like I had two extra teachers in the classroom." Laura was questioning the need for and the relevance of professional education for beginning teachers because it seems that she believes that all that is necessary is for student teachers to develop a teaching personality to be successful teachers. The rest of the
details of learning about teaching can be taught in the classroom setting.

We recall from Chapter 4 that both Carlo and Tracy were relying on their personalities to help them be successful teachers. Carlo was prepared to use his enthusiasm, youth, and energy to make his classroom an active and motivating place; Tracy, on the other hand, planned to use her nurturing personality to relate to the young children and to provide for them a warm and safe learning environment. From the professional school perspective, both Cheryl and Susan noted that it is much easier for some student teachers to be successful as teachers in the classroom, and that having a natural spontaneity with pupils made it less difficult to feel successful as a teacher.

The difference for the various participants was in the fact that Carlo, Tracy, and their cooperating teachers believe that a teaching personality is an important prerequisite to teaching; on the other hand, Cheryl and Susan believe that an enthusiastic personality is helpful to a beginning teacher in the initial stages, but that a teaching persona can be acquired through obtaining the necessary understanding about the teaching/learning process.

What is significant in this discussion is the reliance on the personality to play the dominant role in evaluating teaching potential. It seems that if the student teacher can engage the pupils, then they are deemed successful, natural teachers. For one thing, classroom management problems seem minimized. What was lacking from this discussion, however, was further discourse on what was taught, how it was taught, and what was learned and by whom. There was no analysis of the nature of the curriculum or its pedagogy in determining the effectiveness of the teaching and learning of the
pupils. It seems that student teachers who have a naturally engaging manner with pupils may not be evaluated on their abilities to plan effectively or be required to teach in such a way that pupils are engaged specifically in learning. They may be rewarded for only being an entertainer. The sparkle of the teaching personality seems to mask the critical components of teaching through the assumption that if one is able to engage pupils, the content must be relevant and important—confirming Carlo’s and Tracy’s belief that learning to teach is little more than just being successful in front of a class of pupils.

iii. **Real learning about teaching occurs only after years of experience in teaching**

Although the cooperating teachers valued the student teaching experience as the critical and preliminary step in learning to teach, they noted that learning about teaching takes time to develop. Years of practical and reflective experience in the classroom are essential, they said. Because teachers work mainly in isolated situations, learning to teach is largely a self-taught process, they said.

Warren, Carlo’s cooperating teacher in his final placement, noted that he had gained preliminary understanding and confidence about teaching during his preservice year from talking to his cooperating teachers, his peers, and faculty members about his experiences as a student teacher. At that point, he valued and enjoyed his university courses, but it was only after a few years that he realized the importance of the university courses to his teaching and he understood how to blend the theoretical overviews he had gained with his practice in the classroom.
The school setting is where everything comes together. You have to keep reforming and refining your ideas. You need to have a place where you can look at different theories of curriculum delivery and I think the most efficient place to do that is right in the classroom setting. The student teachers have to be able to hear it, see it and try it out for themselves in a guided setting so that they can carry on in their class... That's how I learned about teaching.... Everything about teaching is frightening the first time through... Terror is a good teacher, if you think about it. It somehow puts everything into focus for you when you realize that you have to do this or you fail the pupils in the classroom and as a teacher. That's when the observation and discussion in the practicum classroom is so critical, but the deeper knowledge only comes after years of teaching. [02/04/96]

Warren and the others were explicit that their representations of teaching were unsophisticatedly formed in their own teacher education program and in their early years of experience. It was only after a few years of experience that they began to feel like teachers and began to understand their beliefs and practices.

These three points regarding passion, personality, and experience in teaching underscored the conversation with the six cooperating teachers and affected the relationship of the cooperating teacher in contributing and relating to the paradoxes that emerged for their student teachers.

Paradox #1: Teaching as Doing vs. Learning about Teaching

Learning about teaching through performance has been a familiar and recurring theme in this study. All of the participants—student teachers, university teacher educators, and cooperating teachers alike—talked at length about the importance of learning to teach through practice. There is, however, a qualitative difference in the interpretation by the participants in the act of doing. For the student teachers, teaching means standing up in front of pupils and feeling successful in maintaining control of the
situation; for the university teacher educators, the act of teaching includes opportunities for student teachers to observe, discuss, practise, reflect, and evaluate— in short, work alongside exemplary practising teachers who have a critical perspective of their own practice in relation to the educational system. The cooperating teachers interpreted the doing of teaching as something different that contributed to the paradox for their student teachers. They seemed to mean that initially one needs to learn to use one’s personal desire and personality to gain confidence, and that competence only comes after some years of experience in the classroom.

Warren, Carlo’s last cooperating teacher of the year, had seven years of teaching experience and he had obviously spent some time reflecting on the question of learning about teaching. He emphasized that he had learned to teach only after years of thoughtful experience and that he was learning much about teaching still, but on a deeper level. He said that would be how he assumed that others would learn to teach.

It was just by doing that I’ve learned to teach, I’m afraid. Because I think that you learn by either seeing it or doing it... and by your own trial-and-error.... I mean, how you feel like a baseball player is by playing baseball. It’s not by sitting in a classroom and learning about the mechanics of it. You don’t feel like a baseball player until you’ve played ball, and you don’t feel like a teacher unless you are actually teaching.... Teaching seems to me to be one of those things that you have to learn by doing it, by watching it done, and doing it some more.

Warren’s comments about the importance of continuous practice mirrored those of the other cooperating teachers with whom I spoke. They saw learning about teaching as something for which one requires a natural instinct and many years of experience.
Student teachers, however, do not have the perspective of the future in their minds as they learn about teaching in preservice education. They have no idea where they will be teaching nor what age of pupils or subject matter they will be responsible for in the coming years; they have only their present experiences as student teachers and their past recollections as pupils to rely upon to help them feel competent as teachers. They do receive regular summative evaluations of their teaching that provide them with a sense of their ability, and they know that they will be fully certificated to become teachers after eight months of preparation with no requirement for further study. So, because of the ambiguous nature of what it means to learn to teach, student teachers are forced to live out the paradox for the present until they have some experience and can look back at their professional growth over a longer period of time than one preservice year.

**Paradox # 2: Being Recognized as a Student vs. Being Recognized as a Teacher**

In this study, the cooperating teachers acknowledge that they see and treat their student teachers as teachers not as students. Two reasons were identified. The cooperating teachers appreciate having another adult to provide additional instructional help in the classroom; and, having another adult in the class eases the isolation that comes with teaching.

Warren spoke about having another set of capable ears, eyes, and hands in the classroom:

I enjoy having someone else to work with in the classroom. My classes are very busy and having an extra set of hands around is very helpful to make sure that as many of the kids are getting one-on-one instruction where possible. It's
helpful for marking, assessing pupils. With a good student teacher, I just get more things accomplished with my curriculum and with the pupils.

With only one teacher normally in the classroom trying to monitor the learning and activities of approximately 30 or so pupils, trying to cover the curriculum effectively with all of the pupils, and doing all of the marking, the extra help of a competent student teacher is appreciated. Carlo and Tracy were both perceived as excellent student teachers by all of their cooperating teachers and the cooperating teachers found that they were useful in relieving the day-to-day pressures for their cooperating teachers.

Gerald enjoyed having another adult in his classroom to talk about teaching.

I find it so interesting to talk directly about teaching and my experiences in my classes with another adult. I rarely have an opportunity to do that. Teaching tends to be very isolated, I find, and by having another adult in the classroom I can talk about what I do and why. Teachers do not often get a chance to really talk about their work except in very general terms and this helps me to review a sense of how I do things and why. [16/10/95]

The isolation of teaching is a concept that has been discussed in the literature (see for example Lortie, 1975) and it appears that having student teachers eases it somewhat.

Carlo and Tracy were given many opportunities to teach and they found that when they discussed their experiences with their cooperating teachers, they felt like teachers. They said that their cooperating teachers asked them for their assessment of certain aspects of the program, advised them regarding important information for their pupils, and observed attentively when Tracy or Carlo tried different techniques in the classroom. When I observed in their classrooms, I watched as the student teachers and cooperating teachers took time to talk one-on-one about pupil learning. The
cooperating teachers provided much personal, positive feedback about their teaching that made Carlo and Tracy feel important.

I am really enjoying this placement and I'm learning so much. I really like the way Gerald teaches and the quiet manner he has with the class. He takes time every day, even though it is really busy, to go ever things with me, to talk about my teaching that day and our teaching activities for the next day, and to ask my opinion about how certain kids are getting along. (Carlo, 18/10/95)

Feeling such respect and recognition as a teacher in the school classroom made the return to being a student that much more difficult for Carlo and Tracy when university classes began again. They found themselves in classes of 30 or more with one instructor talking about more general topics in education. They sensed a loss over the personalized, one-to-one instruction they had engaged in during the practicum.

**Paradox # 3: The Practice of Theories vs. The Theories of Practice**

That knowledge has the capacity to appear both meaningless and meaningful is a dilemma that underscores the structure of teacher education and the lived experience of those who work there. The trivialization of knowledge becomes most evident when prospective teachers leave their university course work and attempt, through classroom teaching, to render this knowledge pedagogical and relevant. It is here that student teachers must not only make sense of theory but attempt to experience practice theoretically. The last form of fragmentation--between theory and practice--is most apparent when prospective teachers live the dramatic shift from learning about teaching in university settings to teaching in actual classrooms. (Britzman, 1991, p. 46)

Warren's earlier comments about learning to teach after years of experience reflect Britzman's (1991) arguments about the link between theory and practice. For Warren the link is concrete and dramatic and happens for teachers only after years of experience in teaching. He says that the link between theory and practice is reciprocal--it is not necessarily just practice that is generated by theory, but, he believes, theory
should be informed by good practice.

Laura’s philosophy about the links between theory and practice were consonant with Warren’s as she pointed out that she develops theory out of her own practice. Her work, like Warren’s, is based on a sound understanding of the relation of practice and theory that comes after several years of experience. The cooperating teachers reminded me that classrooms should not be perceived as atheoretical venues for learning about teaching because the practice that occurs there is interrelated with theoretical constructs in a significant way. Laura said:

Our teaching practice is not just mindless practice. You know, as teachers we constantly develop our practice out of theory, but we also have to develop theory out of practice as we evaluate our own work on a daily basis.

Pearson (1989) acknowledges that the theory of practice is an alternative approach in thinking about the chronic problem of theory and practice in education. He explains that in order for the concept to be effective it must be both predictive and provide understanding.

I will argue that this conception of a theory of practice does not meet the requirements held for it, but that it does provide a major step in understanding the relation of theory and practice (p. 53).

Pearson recognizes that considering theory of practice helps practitioners to make links in their practice and the underlying assumptions but he adds a significant point.

It is the conceptual analysis of the practice to determine its necessary features that provides the means for understanding the practice. It is not the description of the practice or the evaluation of actions within the practice that provides for understanding. (Pearson, 1989, p. 62)

The issue of theory and practice needs to be paramount in education and teacher
education as teacher educators try to help student teachers gain knowledge and understanding (or theories) about the process of teaching and learning. But the links are not always obvious to student teachers nor to the cooperating teachers. The cooperating teachers in this study recalled some of the content that they had studied during their teacher education programs and still wondered, after years of experience, what the relationship of some of the learning was to teaching in the classroom. On the other hand, they recalled studying very interesting content that seemed useless at the time but became important after they had gained some experience in teaching.

Warren remembered that one course, called School and Society, was his most interesting course to take.

I find the School and Society course so valuable now a few years later. There were things I learned about in that course that I have kept in the back of my mind. It [the course] has had a definite impact on my teaching and I am using what I learned even now.

Warren went on to note that he would like to pursue issues raised in that course, perhaps by taking graduate courses in a few years.

Helen said that she thought that what she learned in the teacher education program was overwhelming at the time, and she wished she could take the course again now that she has some experience as a teacher behind her. "The curriculum would certainly be a lot more meaningful and useful to me now," she said.

Although all of the cooperating teachers acknowledge that some learning about

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25 The School and Society course of which Warren speaks is the compulsory Educational Policies preservice course in which student teachers study the political and legal ramifications of teaching. For several years, the course has been structured around critical issues in education which relate to such aspects as policy and regulations, case law, role of the teachers' federations, legislation, gender issues, and so on.
teaching did occur in the university setting, all believed that it was in the classroom context where authentic learning about teaching occurred for student teachers. Most rejected Britzman’s (1991) notion that the university was the home of theory and the school the base of practice. Rather these cooperating teachers believed that theory and practice were interwoven in a significant way in their classroom practice, and the practicum provided an ideal setting where student teachers could observe both, try both, and reform and refine their ideas.

**Paradox #4: Teacher as Enforcer vs. Teacher as Pedagogue**

The cooperating teachers are required by the teacher education institution to complete and submit regular evaluation reports on their student teachers throughout the practicum. The reports are usually written after a three-week assignment in the classroom, and one of the first things that cooperating teachers look for in evaluating student teachers, according to Raghav, is their ability to engage the pupils in the classroom and to be able to maintain a learning environment. Laura spoke of looking for a natural, comfortable teaching manner with the children in her classroom. Both were observing their student teachers to ensure that they could develop and maintain an effective learning environment.

Demonstrating the ability to get pupils’ interest and to keep them on task requires not only an enthusiastic presence but also the ability to organize and present activities to the pupils that keep them engaged and on task. So, the cooperating teachers reasoned, if the pupils were engaged, they were likely involved in learning. As Helen said, “You cannot teach them [her pupils] anything unless you can make
them pay attention. So classroom management is really important to me.”

Tracy and Carlo sensed immediately that a quiet, mannerly classroom of pupils was necessary to succeed as teachers and they used their personalities to get their pupils’ interest and their creative abilities to keep their pupils on task. Both felt successful as enforcers and hoped that their pupils were learning what was required. Both received positive comments on their teaching evaluations regarding their classroom management practices.

Tracy and Carlo spent much time in conferences with their cooperating teachers about specific aspects of the curriculum in use and about the pupils in the class. Most of their discussion time, however, was spent discussing specific follow-up plans for the next lesson rather than identifying and analysing the theories which provided the foundation for the teaching, or talking about alternative ways they might have tried in their teaching. Tracy and Carlo found that their cooperating teachers, who were consumed by the demands of their fulltime teaching jobs and extracurricular activities, did not have much time to discuss teaching with them in any depth.

**Paradox # 5: Demonstrating Immediate Competence vs. Lifelong Learning**

As noted previously, student teachers feel the pressure to demonstrate teaching competence as quickly as possible in the practicum session because it is the observing, cooperating teacher who makes the important evaluative judgement and writes the critical comments that will help the candidate find a job. Demonstrating competence for the student teachers and cooperating teachers means having well-behaved and attentive classes.
Because there is no long-term opportunity for professional growth in a three or four-week practicum session, everything which is to be accomplished or improved must be done immediately for the next class. Not only is the student teacher required to accommodate to change quickly, but the cooperating teacher must think of techniques and solutions that can be explained, transferred, learned, and adapted immediately.

Student teachers have little experience in observation and often speak of being overwhelmed in the busy school setting. For example, after the first day of the practicum, Tracy was not sure what she was observing and asked whether she should be observing the pupils or the teacher. In the meantime, student teachers know that they will be required to begin teaching small portions of lessons the next day in the class. It is no wonder that the practicum seems so busy and so immediate to them. There is little time to think, let alone reflect.

It does not escape the student teachers that their cooperating teachers endure and cope with the same level of activity day after day. As Helen pointed out, “Everything is so immediate in the classroom that student teachers have to become accustomed to doing everything quickly.” And, in Tracy’s and Carlo’s cases, they felt overwhelmed but exhilarated with their ability to be able to do everything at once.

On the other hand, the cooperating teachers remembered the busyness of the practicum and the brevity of the teacher education program. They acknowledged their role in perpetuating the view that their student teachers need to demonstrate immediate competence. They constantly feel the pressure and responsibility to ensure that their own pupils cover the curriculum, and they provide their student teachers with the
techniques and means to teach competently.

As I gain experience as a cooperating teacher, my expectations are changing. My intent is to have my student teachers involved in a lot more activities, and I know it is really busy, but they have so little time and few school placements. So even though is the first session, I like them to be more involved in pupil evaluation. It's easy for them to teach stuff, and hand out papers for the kids to work away on, but the evaluation of that work is crucial and they need to do more of that. I try to have them teach in as many different curriculum areas as possible in a short time, just to give them the experience. And I try to remember to talk to them about the professional aspects of teaching, theory and practice, etc. (Gerald)

The cooperating teachers in this study also remembered feeling pressured during the practicum to show their competence, and they recalled what it was like to return to the university after a practicum session. They said that they went back to enjoy a rest after surviving the busyness of three or four weeks in the classroom and they enjoyed sharing their stories of teaching with their friends. Their memories of the practicum during their teacher education program remained vivid, although their recall of the content of their university classes was hazy. In fact, most had difficulty remembering what it was they had studied in the university courses. However, upon reflection and in retrospect, the cooperating teachers remarked that the content was likely quite important and would have been useful in their professional growth over the long term.

**Paradox # 6: Following Established Routines vs. Experimentation**

Kate pointed out that following the established routines of cooperating teachers is in fact experimentation for student teachers. She notes:

Most student teachers haven't had much experience in teaching and so trying anything is new for them. The routines in my primary class are important to follow because the children need the stability and consistency to feel comfortable and to be able to work. Yet the routines are new to my student
teacher and she still makes small adjustments to what I normally do which is just fine. [09/04/96]

Carlo and Tracy acknowledged that they respected the methods their cooperating teachers used and thought that they should try to emulate them because they could see that they were effective. On the other hand, their university instructors reminded them that the practicum offered the perfect opportunity to try different techniques while they were under the guidance of an experienced teacher.

For the most part, Carlo and Tracy resolved this paradox by copying their supervising teachers and trying small innovative things when they felt comfortable. Their supervisors thought that they encouraged their student teachers to take risks by responding positively to the small innovations they tried.

Each cooperating teacher expected the student teachers to bring new practices to the classroom from their study at the university. Several of the cooperating teachers noted the new "ideas" and talked with their student teachers about them and then experimented with them in their own practice. Helen, the novice cooperating teacher with 13 years of teaching experience, said:

I am amazed at how much I learned from my two student teachers. What they talk about in their observation and planning is like a review of teacher training for me--using concrete materials, pacing, searching for creative ways to do things to motivate the pupils and to help them learn. But then they also bring new ideas from the Faculty that I hadn't thought about before and this causes me to consider my own teaching in a different way.

Laura also noted how receptive she is to new ideas which the student teachers bring from their university courses. She referred to the learning during student teaching as a "two-way street" in which both she and her student teachers learn about
teaching from each other. Laura noted that she has incorporated several of the student teachers' ideas into her own teaching practice.

Raghav, one of Carlo's cooperating teachers, noted

Not only do they bring new ideas to me that I can use but I often change my own practice through my observations of the ways in which the student teachers do things. I find it going through my mind, "Now that student has taught that in a particular way that I have never thought of or heard about before. But it works well. Maybe it would be appropriate if I were to discuss that with him/her and to try that myself."

It seems that the student teachers, in following established routines and in trying out a few new ideas, are experimenting but with the traditional methods of their supervising teachers which are new to them because they are novices. It is the cooperating teachers who are looking for innovative ideas and who are willing to experiment with them in their classes during the practicum.

Like their university colleagues, I found that the cooperating teachers contribute to the paradoxes which the student teachers encounter in their preservice program.

**Identifying the Ideologies of the Cooperating Teachers**

Luke (1995) explains that "schools are charged with the problematic task of introducing children to the texts and discourses of official knowledge and practice" (p. 37). So too are cooperating teachers in their role with student teachers. In becoming cooperating teachers, experienced teachers assume the role of providing preliminary school-based preparation of the next generation of teachers through a learning method which is largely based on an apprenticeship model. Laura told me that, in the practicum, student teachers are expected to observe and replicate the work of their
supervising teachers, to discuss the practice in relation to the activities of the classroom, and to appreciate the significance of that practice.

Student teachers learn so much in the classroom that they cannot learn in the Faculty, like being with the kids, and planning and teaching for a whole day. I try to be very explicit about what I am doing so that I can explain to them what I am doing and why I am doing it. I expect them to follow my advice. But the ones [student teachers] I have had this year were just excellent and they fit right into my program. It was more like team-teaching at times. [06/03/96]

Because the practicum has such a profound, long-term effect on student teachers’ practices as beginning teachers, the question arises as to what kind of practice it is that student teachers observe and emulate in their cooperating teachers’ classrooms.

The traditional school system has been described earlier in this study as one that acts in the best interests of the dominant, middle class, and values the cultural capital of that class (see Chapter 2). Teachers implicitly contribute to the maintenance of those values through their curriculum and teaching methods and by collectively viewing their pupils as a generic, genderless mass in their speech and practice.

Schools tend to render legitimate or illegitimate certain elements in the student’s cultural capital. Since by tradition schools act in the interests of the dominant classes, then it is the cultural capital of ruling groups that is legitimised by schools...The dominant sociocultural groups’ cultural capital is an “academic” one, when compared with the culture of working class people and many minority groups. (Corson, 1995b, pp. 148-149)

Student teachers are rewarded for complying with and adopting similar teaching behaviour to their cooperating teachers. For example, student teachers develop preconceived representations of teaching as pupils in schools that are generally traditional, generic, conservative, and value-laden (Lortie, 1975), and are likely
consistent with the practice that they observe in their practicum classroom (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). These representations become the academic cultural capital of teaching and student teachers' replications become legitimated by their cooperating teachers in a very powerful way. Even though more critical views of education may be introduced and discussed during university preservice classes, the activity and impact of the individualized practicum overshadows other learning.

Five of the six cooperating teachers in this study were raised, schooled, and prepared as teachers in traditional school settings in Southwestern Ontario. Only one teacher had a different background; he was a first-generation immigrant to Canada from India but was trained as a teacher in Ontario 30 years before. In his interview, he enthusiastically espoused the same values and beliefs as those of his five colleagues.

In observing the classes of these cooperating teachers, I found all of the teachers to be dedicated, conservative professionals who practice using traditional methods. All were recognized as highly successful and competent teachers and all were quite articulate about their practice and their beliefs. They understood the importance of their roles as cooperating teachers and approached the task with enthusiasm and commitment. They seemed confident in their personal, professional competence and talked to me about the accomplishments of their student teachers with some pride. In the constant busyness of their jobs with pupils, in curriculum development, and in the evaluation of student progress, as teacher educators and persons who have a personal life, no one mentioned a concern for looking at different ways of doing things. Perhaps teachers are trapped in their own discourse and there is too little time, need, or
incentive for them teachers to look at practice from an alternative framework of critical theory. They express their beliefs about teaching practice with confidence, authority, and satisfaction, and they seem to remain largely uncritical.

That cooperating teachers are satisfied with their practice comes as no surprise. They have been recognized for their beliefs, values, and practices by school administrators (who select them to be cooperating teachers), parents, pupils, and the community; they have been raised and found success in the structures of their social and educational environment; they have experienced narratives throughout their lives that reward their work as teachers. They work in the roles that are created for them within a limited range of narratives that they hear, see, and experience, and these roles seem to be the only future roles available to them (Corson, 1995b). In developing intensive, professional relationships with their student teachers during the practicum, they pass on the traditional and accepted narratives.

The student teachers, also from limited backgrounds, seem to readily accept, participate, find success in, and value the traditional narratives of teaching that they experience in the schools. It is not surprising that Tracy and Carlo found themselves embroiled in contradiction as they consider the active and busy but comfortable world of their assigned classrooms and the distant, more obscure world of education at the university. In developing a teacher identity, it was easiest for them to reproduce what they observed in their cooperating teachers because it related to what they remembered as pupils in schools.

The clearest indication of teacher reproduction was evident in Carlo’s comment
about how, at first, he found the personality and teaching style of his first cooperating teacher, Gerald so different from his own. However, once he had spent some time observing Gerald in the classroom, Carlo began to appreciate Gerald's quiet manner and teaching methods, and he began to try to become unquestioningly like Gerald as a teacher. As a strong, confident young man entering teaching, Carlo originally had a different identity of himself as a teacher. However, the clarity of his own identity dulled when he encountered his cooperating teacher's classroom and he began not only to emulate his supervisor's practice but he did so willingly. Gerald's ideologies of teaching and the culture in that classroom became Carlo's identity of teaching and became part of his personal identity as a teacher.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I have examined and analysed the beliefs, values, and ideologies of the six teacher educators in the schools with whom Carlo and Tracy observed, practised, and discussed teaching and education during the practicum. Through discussions and observations, I have briefly identified the cooperating teachers' beliefs about teacher education and tried to place them in the context of the teacher education program. In analysing the cooperating teachers' comments and practices as classroom teachers and teacher educators, I have presented their views about how novices learn to teach, and in doing so, have related their beliefs and values to the paradoxes that the student teachers encountered in their teacher education program.

As one peels away the layers in learning to teach during the preservice program, one readily sees that the process of learning to teach becomes complicated by
the varying and sometimes conflicting beliefs of the triumvirate of the critical persons. Learning to teach is affected by the student teacher’s recollections of teaching, their preconceptions of teaching, and their current beliefs; by the university teacher educator’s research into teaching, their emergent beliefs and the way in which they develop their curriculum; and, finally, but most importantly, by the cooperating teacher’s beliefs and practices, as well as the pervasive ideologies of the educational system.

It seems apparent from this study that student teachers and cooperating teachers have similar, entrenched beliefs and practices about teaching and learning and these practices tend to be reinforced and legitimated in the practicum setting. On the other hand, the university teacher educators have strong beliefs about learning to teach which are incongruent with those of their cooperating teachers and student teachers. Nonetheless, it appears that the cooperating teachers’ value systems outweigh and influence the developing values and concomitant emerging identities of student teachers as teachers. From the information provided by Carlo and Tracy, and the cooperating teachers themselves, it appears that the cooperating teachers have a great deal of influence or power over the practices of their student teachers and in reinforcing the beliefs that their student teachers bring to learning about teaching.

The information gathered for this chapter has not only allowed me to examine the six cooperating teachers’ discursive practices and relations with student teachers in the process of preservice teacher education, but has helped to show how the texts of schooling are constructed and passed on through the relationship between experienced
teacher and learning teacher.
CHAPTER SEVEN

LEARNING TO TEACH FROM A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE:
IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Introduction

The purpose of critical ethnography is to critically describe the "what is" in a situation in the public domain, and more importantly, to suggest "what should be." The final chapter in this critical ethnography is divided into two parts. In the first section, I describe the current context of preservice teacher education by revisiting the premises, questions, and methodology established in the early chapters of this study and by briefly re-examining the data as analysed in Chapters 4 through 6. In the second section, I discuss "what should be" by outlining some implications for teacher education programs that may support student teachers in the process of learning to teach from a critical perspective.

Reviewing the Context and Current Process of Teacher Education

At the outset of this study, the context of teacher education was described as one which exists in a state of chaos, uncertainty, and differing expectations on the part of the student teachers, cooperating teachers, university teacher educators, school
administrators, and the public. In spite of many research studies and ensuing suggestions to improve teacher education, such as lengthening the preservice program or promoting a more collaborative environment between universities and schools (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1995), teacher education continues to be the subject of criticism in the public and professional eye (Byrd & McIntyre, 1996). As indicated at the beginning of this study, no one yet knows how to prepare the best teachers or how to develop a teacher education program that helps students develop into teachers who are able to improve the educational system (Britzman, 1991; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). Indeed, when the 10 participants were asked the primary question of this study—How do student teachers learn to teach?—the responses were narrow and limited, and seemed to define teaching as existing only within the confines of the classroom. The role of the teacher was seen to reflect mainly on the direct interaction between teacher and pupil.

Reflections on the Methodology of Critical Ethnography

The study was set up to investigate the assumed meanings and practices of learning to teach in preservice teacher education, and to identify possibilities for improvement. Critical ethnography was selected as the most appropriate methodology for this study. In Chapter 2, the concept of “critical” was described as both an ideology and an activity. As an ideology, the term “critical” implies a shared set of principles related to knowledge, truth, and the ideologies in social organizations. It challenges the foundation of norms and reality. As an activity, critical consideration of an issue implies a thorough questioning and critique of some aspect of the public
domain. It challenges assumed meanings of current public policies and knowledge, and assumes that members of marginal groups in the social situation are being repressed. The purpose behind critical work is to provide a call to action to find ways to emancipate those who are being systematically repressed (Thomas, 1993).

This study begins from the ideological premise that the current educational institution is influenced by the relationship of historical, social, political, and cultural forces. In that light, education is perceived as a reproductive, hierarchical, socializing agency whose function is to educate and reinforce the status and culture of the dominant, mainly white, middle-class society, thus keeping members of minority sociocultural groups in subordinate positions in society (Apple, 1982; Corson, 1995b). Substantive change is required to free the system from the inequities of certain policies and teacher practices. These occur in routine yet subtle and accepted ways.

Houston et al. (1990) and Pearson (1989) point out that the educational system can only be improved through the education of its teachers and that preservice teacher education is actually the place to begin to correct the situation. If change is to emanate from the beginning teachers in the system, however, then preservice teacher education programs must be developed which provide student teachers with the knowledge, experiences, and power to begin to bring about such change.

Student teachers, however, enter their preservice programs with conservative ways of thinking about their identity as teachers because of their past experiences as successful pupils in traditional classrooms, because of their middle-class background and value systems, and because of the enduring, traditional images of competent
teachers and good pupils which they continue to observe and replicate in their preservice program (McIntyre & Byrd, 1996). They come to teaching, for the most part, with uncritical and naive views of the system due to their past successes in the system. This rather homogeneous group of middle-class students who enter teacher education rarely have had the opportunity to consider society and bureaucratic structures from a critical point of view. That being the case, beginning teachers may be the least likely to promote transformative or emancipatory change in the educational system for the reasons noted above and because, as novices to the system, they have little opportunity to create change when hired to new positions in established school programs.

With the aforementioned premises in mind, I was able to carry out a study of lived experience with those who are directly involved in the public process of teacher education and to examine how we come to construct and organize what is being experienced in teacher education. I used the methodology to uncover and challenge beliefs, practices, and values of the participants in the teacher education process in order to identify how student teachers and their teacher educators have come to construct and organize what is being experienced. Critical ethnography provided an opportunity not only to hear the voices of those involved, but to respond in a meaningful way to them and to other practitioners in teacher education. The knowledge gained is used to outline what should be to provide suggestions for change in preservice teacher education which may lead to developments that will provide student teachers and beginning teachers with the required knowledge, self-confidence,
and control to promote change in the educational system from a critical perspective.

As a critical ethnographer, I was able to interact on an almost daily basis with the student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university-based teacher educators over the course of an academic year in order to learn about, to experience, and to describe the process of learning to teach in their words and from their point of view.

My observations of the student teachers' interactions with their cooperating teachers and university teacher educators and the ensuing interviews with each of the participants provided the main source of data for this critical ethnographic study. However, sitting in on their classes, when it seemed appropriate, provided another important source of information. In acting as a participant-observer in school and university classrooms, I had the opportunity to discuss the role of each of the main participants in the teacher education process in a very specific way and then to discuss my observations and to probe deeply into their comments about teaching, learning, and learning to become a teacher. Through the development of a close relationship throughout the program, we seemed to become comfortable enough with each other so that we could challenge each other, at least as far as I could discern, about various aspects related to their practice and we were able to debate our various assumptions and beliefs in lively theoretical discussion.

The study became a reflective, reflexive, collaborative, and personalized process for all of us as we dug below surface descriptions to reveal the underlying beliefs and assumptions. For example, the student teachers took the interviews as opportunities to complain about their experiences quite openly, while I had the
opportunity to sit in on their practicum classes and some of their university classes to question their comments further. Together we discussed their initial interpretations of what they were learning about in becoming teachers, and we related their practices and beliefs to current structures, policies, and actions. From the discussion, the six paradoxes, described in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, arose and we began to confront the normative positions which the student teachers were experiencing as beginning teachers, and to consider the positions which their teacher educators unconsciously and consciously took in their dealings with student teachers and their curriculum.

As was explained in Chapter 4, Tracy and Carlo entered their teacher education program with naive expectations about the nature of teaching and learning, and it was only by the end of the year, largely as a result of their participation in this critical ethnography, they said, that they began to consider some critical views of the teacher education process and of the educational system.

**Limitations of the Study**

The number of participants in the study was limited to involve two student teachers and their teacher educators in one preservice program. Although the sample is narrow and generalizability is restricted, the data collected from these participants provided an abundant amount of detailed, descriptive information that presents a comprehensive, holistic, and genuine overview of the views, values, and beliefs of these particular participants. The advantage of only having 10 participants meant that I was able to develop a comfortable relationship with each person and I was able to spend much time with each person, especially the student teachers. We became co-
researchers in this project, and throughout this study the voices of the practitioners, as well as the researcher’s, are heard.

**Reviewing the Findings - Chapter 4**

In Chapter 4, I discuss the path which student teachers, such as Carlo and Tracy, follow during their preservice program as they travel from student to teacher, and as they begin to negotiate their identity as teachers. Through an analysis of their narratives, three terms--paradox, power, and personal meaning--emerge, and these notions influence the student teachers’ interactions with their cooperating teachers and university educators in many ways and their understandings of the teaching process.

Carlo and Tracy state frequently that they were continually bombarded by contradictions as their teacher education year progressed and that they were totally unprepared for these conflicts. They had expected their educational experiences during the year to be smooth, straightforward, and fairly simple as they made the transition from student to teacher, and they were surprised and angered to find that their perceptions had been incorrect. The six paradoxes outlined and discussed from the student teachers’ perspective in Chapter 4 seemed to create such instability that it compromised their sense of control in becoming teachers.

Carlo and Tracy talk frequently in this study about how much respect they have for the classroom teachers with whom they were placed in the system and they say that they relate closely and fit well into the status quo of the current system. In contrast to their perceptions of the university-based component of the program, this feeling of congruence with their cooperating teacher educators provides them with a sense of
comfort and control as they learn to teach in the practicum.

The student teachers find themselves in conflict with their university professors with regard to the development of their sense of personal identity and meaning in becoming a teacher. Carlo and Tracy experienced quite different views of the educational system in their university courses because their key university professors were raising critical questions and issues in class that Carlo and Tracy had not expected. At first, they dismissed their professors' critical perspective as useless and irrelevant. But as the year progressed, Tracy and Carlo were forced to consider the alternative ideologies as they read more widely, engaged in discussion, wrote papers about critical issues, and questioned what they were studying through their participation in this study.

It was only after the program was over and they had some time away from both the school and the university setting, that Carlo and Tracy acknowledged, during later interviews, the impact of the diverse views of education on their developing identities. Instead of only being naively critical of the program at this point, they began to think about what it was that they had learned in both settings and tried to make some sense of their learning. Our discussions became dialogic interactions and forced them to reconsider their knowledge, practices and beliefs, they said.

The pressure seemed to mount for the student teachers when they became certificated teachers seeking employment, and when they began to reflect carefully on what they had studied. It was at this point that they began to demonstrate some predisposition to viewing the educational system from a more critical perspective than
the one they had at the beginning of the program. As Britzman (1991) notes, the student teachers' views of teaching were altered, stretched, and questioned as they progressed through the preservice program.

Learning to teach, like teaching itself, is a time when desires are rehearsed, refashioned, and refused. The construction of the real, the necessary, and the imaginary are constantly shifting as student teachers set about to accentuate the identities of their teaching selves in contexts that are already overpopulated with the identities and discursive practices of others. Theirs is a vulnerable position; the borders of borrowing and owning are not easily discernible, and the advice, support, and guidance of others expresses an odd combination of authoritative and internally persuasive discourses. (p. 220)

Student teachers find themselves in two contested worlds as they study teaching. They find themselves not only impressed and overwhelmed by the intensive practices and discourses of the various school classrooms which they visit, but they also find themselves confused by the equally as intensive yet disparate practices and discourses of their university classrooms. Carlo and Tracy became embroiled in the dilemma of developing not just one teacher identity during their preservice program, but of being forced to develop two distinct personalities, or authorships, in order to understand classroom life, on the one hand, and to understand the academic discipline of teaching and learning, on the other. Britzman (1991) discusses the "fragmented experience" in which students teachers engage as they begin to establish an identity as teachers and says

Continuity, as a criterion for experience, refers to the connectedness we feel toward our social practice and activities, and whether we see ourselves as authors of, rather than authored by, our experience. (p. 34)

It became apparent that Carlo and Tracy became authored by others in different settings
as they talked about their fragmented lived experience as developing teachers. Their identities continually changed and conflicted with each other as their teacher education year progressed. Britzman adds that the reality of one’s identity as an emergent teacher becomes increasingly complex as student teachers engage in more experiences and educational dialogue.

The continuous reconsideration of their identities as teachers may be seen as a positive dimension of teacher education, but instead of becoming authors of their own texts as teachers, Carlo and Tracy found themselves recreating the authorship of their teacher educators’ beliefs throughout the year. For example, in the practicum setting, they unhesitatingly emulated their cooperating teachers’ practices. Although this occurred three different times in three separate placements with varying grade levels, Carlo and Tracy found it relatively easy to mould to the quite different identities of their cooperating teachers. When they were in faculty classes, they reluctantly and cynically thought that they had to take as their authorship the content delivered by their university-based instructors through their discussion, reading, and writing of assignments. In the university setting, they were forced to engage in practices which seemed totally unrelated to their “other” developing identity as teacher. In addition, they explained that they had 12 different university instructors who taught using a variety of philosophies of what it meant to become a teacher. Yet Tracy and Carlo acquiesced in both teacher education settings and developed accommodating authorships for each specific situation. At no point did they confront their teacher educators with their questions and concerns about their fragmented experiences or
shattered images. Rather they said they used our regular interview sessions for such discourse. Carlo said:

I really appreciated these chances to talk with you this year about my professional growth and learning. I had a frustrating year in many ways but now I realize that I learned so much and these sessions helped to me to put everything into perspective. I felt that I could really talk to you about these issues and that I couldn’t talk about with others, like my cooperating teachers or instructors. [15/05/96]

The preceding summary of the context for student teachers in preservice teacher education cannot possibly lead to the development of beginning teachers who are prepared to begin their teaching career with the skills, critical ideologies, and a sense of control or motivation to change the educational system. Rather, we see beginning teachers who leave their teacher education programs with some bitterness, frustration, confusion, and with little sense of their own identity as teachers. As student teachers, they have successfully completed their programs and been involved in multiple, contested views of teaching and learning. At this point, they seek a teaching position in some unknown community or grade with false confidence and little certainty of their role in the educational system.

One month after completing her teacher education program, Tracy summarized her experience in this way.

I feel like I am floating around. I needed to talk to you and that’s why I drove all the way here to talk with you for an hour or so. I feel lost and I’m depressed. I feel that I don’t have any direction anymore and I don’t feel like a teacher. Everyone reminds me that I’m done school and I say, “Yes, I am officially a teacher.” But I don’t know what that means in a practical sense. There are no jobs; I may not even get supply work and I feel so confused and unrooted....I don’t think that I would be so worried if someone said to me, “Here is your classroom. It’s yours for September.” I wouldn’t be nearly as
stressed out as I am picturing myself shuffling from school to school here and there filling in for who knows what...

But on the other hand, I am looking back on everything and I think that I learned more than I let myself believe I learned at the time. I find myself being able to participate in discussions with people who are not teachers about controversial topics like child-centred learning, destreaming, and things like that, and I feel that I am able to hold my own. I draw a lot on the things that I learned in the Faculty this year and then I look back on my experiences in the schools, and I see some relationships now that I didn’t see before...

I never thought that I would say this, but the [teacher education] program is too short. You can’t become a teacher in only eight months. You just can’t relate theory and practice or the course work to the practicum. It all happens too quickly....It was great that I had you to talk with about my worries and I feel that I have a better handle on things because I had someone with an overview of the system to talk about everything. I feel that was a real advantage for me that the others didn’t have. [28/05/96]

Although Tracy’s final comments confirm her frustration and uncertainty about learning to teach, she tells of the need she felt to engage in dialogic conversation about her experiences in preservice teacher education.

Reviewing the Findings - Chapter 5

The description and analysis of the narratives of two university-based teacher educators with whom Tracy and Carlo studied are the subject of Chapter 5. Chapter 5 focused on who Cheryl and Susan are as teachers and how their beliefs, values, and ideologies as teacher educators developed. Cheryl and Susan develop their teacher education curriculum from the critical perspective that the educational system is influenced by cultural, political, and historical practices and beliefs. It seeks to designate pupils through certain types of legitimate knowledge and interests into culturally acceptable educational paths. Susan and Cheryl acknowledge the power of teachers’ and administrators’ roles in the educational system and, through their
curriculum, they seek to sway their student teachers’ belief systems away from the norms of the traditional system—the system in which they know their student teachers have been educated successfully—to views and practices which undermine the hegemonic values of the system.

Susan and Cheryl are aware of the contradictions which their students experience and they actively contribute to the confusion. As Cheryl said:

But I want them [student teachers] to begin to ask questions about the system—important and critical questions—about the nature of teaching and learning. [2/10/95].

Cheryl and Susan are also aware of the criticism that many of their students have of their faculty curriculum in that they know that their student teachers say that they want to be taught a series of techniques to use in their classrooms in order to be successful teachers rather than to be asked to question the ideologies and practices of the current system.

Chapter 5 demonstrates further the dissonance which occurs in learning to teach. A layer of complexity is added to the original paradoxes as the university-based teacher educators discuss how and why they actively contribute to the contradictions which the student teachers face.

About the university-based component of teacher education, Britzman (1991) echoes Tracy’s earlier sentiments of the relationship between course work and practicum assignments.

Course work may seem intellectually rich but application becomes an individual dilemma. The professors profess values that make sense in the university classroom, but seem an impossibility in school contexts. Those methodologies
encountered during university course work are foreign to [the school classroom], and the grand plan of making a difference becomes subsumed by the everyday. In such a scenario, what hopes for experimentation can be realized? (p. 213)

Earlier, we heard Carlo’s and Tracy’s cynical talk about their university course work. Although they admired their instructors’ knowledge and research, they could not see the applicability to their own professional growth. Similarly, Cheryl and Susan acknowledged their desire to provide their student teachers with a critical framework to consider in their professional growth in teaching, yet they were certainly aware of their students’ criticism of their practice and the program as a whole. Cheryl and Susan contend that there seems to be little opportunity for their students to take the ideologies studied in the university setting into their practicum experience.

In their roles within the university community, Susan and Cheryl are not simply teachers of preservice students. Their jobs are multifaceted and complex. For example, they teach both preservice and graduate students, they work on research projects, they write and publish, they work on school-based, faculty-based, and community-based committees on a variety of activities, and both have administrative responsibilities. Daily, Cheryl and Susan encounter problems of their own in developing a dual identity as a university professor and as a teacher educator.

In Chapter 5, they assume some of the responsibility for the confusion and frustration which their students experience by referring to their own set of frustrations—the lack of consistent philosophy about learning to teach across their own institution, the paradox of being an instructor in both an academic unit and a professional school in
the university milieu that seems to value academic productivity more highly than professional responsibility, the brevity of the teacher education program, the traditionalism of university practices and evaluation of students, and the feeling of isolation in their research work within the university setting.

The tensions are significant and interrelated. Cheryl and Susan are in the somewhat contradictory throes of establishing their own identity as both academics and teachers. They perceive that the university currently rewards their research productivity far more substantially than either their teaching or community service, and both think that working directly in schools with teachers and/or student teachers is not recognized as having any real significance in the merit system. Although their research in teacher support groups and science teacher education, respectively, informs their teaching practice in some ways, their research extends far beyond what they can cover in their preservice classes given the constraints of the short time for preservice education, the structure of the university schedule, and the expectations of professors with regard to student evaluation. Given the reality of the bureaucratic system of the university and the merit system which permeates that setting, Susan and Cheryl feel compelled to spend more time on direct research activities interests and they are rewarded for doing so.

The constraints of the university classroom with its required topical outlines and the necessity for a formal, standardized evaluation system provide a significant source of tension as university instructors contemplate teaching with and about alternative practices. The topic of evaluation provides an example which Susan discussed in
Chapter 5. Susan believes that current evaluative practices in schools contribute to the hegemonic practices in the educational system and contends that her student teachers must consider alternative evaluation practices in the public schools if the traditional, repressive forces of the system are to be broken. Thus, she says that a significant part of her curriculum focuses on alternative assessment and evaluative strategies. Yet, she is required to evaluate her own students by traditional means. Susan thinks that if, as an instructor, she cannot demonstrate to her students what she is teaching, then she is unwillingly contributing to maintaining the status quo in the system. Also, she is concerned that as long as everything she gives them to do gets a graded mark, they are doing assignments for the sake of grades instead of the learning (interview, 26/10/95). Although she has talked to colleagues and administration about the problem, there appears to be no quick solution. As she was told in one meeting

We [the teacher education faculty] have enough problems being recognized as an important, academic unit on the campus as it is, and if we drop the university grading system, we will be perceived as a weaker unit. [field notes, 17/09/95]

Not only do teacher educators in the university setting purposely contribute to their student teachers' dilemmas in learning to teach in order to force them into reconsidering the status quo in education, they also contribute to the numerous contradictions because of the constraints of their role in the Faculty of Education. Although placing teacher education in the academic setting of the university has its advantages from a professional and academic sense as teachers are prepared and not merely trained, it also has significant disadvantages for the professoriate.

Susan summarized her contribution as a university-based teacher educator in the
process of learning to teach with this comment:

I find this job both rewarding and frustrating. I am a teacher at heart and I’m here because I think that I have something to contribute to the educational system. I want to help my students become the best possible teachers they can be, but not in a traditional sense. I want to make a difference and I want them to make a difference in the system. And that’s what I keep working toward. [26/10/95]

Reviewing the Findings - Chapter 6

In Chapter 6, the narratives of six cooperating teachers as teacher educators are outlined and examined, and the impact of their practices and beliefs are described in relation to the views of the student teachers and their university professors. Two conclusions become apparent in talking with the cooperating teachers--the process of learning to teach is complicated by the diverse perspectives and authorships that the student teachers experience in the practicum and in the university, and they, as practitioners, have somewhat limited and narrow views of teaching as existing within the confines of the classroom and school. The schools and the university represent two very distinct and disparate worlds. Nevertheless, the beliefs, ideologies, and practices of the cooperating teacher in the limited setting of the classroom are overwhelming. We recall Carlo’s words in Chapter 4 when he worried that he would not be able to become the teacher he wanted to be, because of his cooperating teachers’ control over him during the practicum, and because of the power which his cooperating teachers held in writing reports on his teaching. However, two weeks into his first practicum, Carlo found that he admired his cooperating teacher’s practices and wanted to emulate them all because they worked so well. The student teachers, like their
cooperating teachers, perceive that it is the cooperating classroom teacher who has the more significant and relevant perspective of teaching and learning.

Cooperating teachers are selected by the school and system administration to serve as school-based teacher educators for the university. Although there is little financial incentive to take on this role in addition to their fulltime teaching responsibilities, the cooperating teachers in this study espoused a number of reasons for becoming cooperating teachers. The reasons were varied and ranged from repaying the system for one’s own teacher education in the schools, to handing on the beliefs and practices of the current system to new teachers, to seeking new teaching techniques through student teacher practices. Although the cooperating teachers in this study seemed aware of the power they held over their student teachers and future practice in teacher education, they tended not to discuss this particular issue in any detail. Gerald said:

I know that the summative evaluation carries an awful lot of clout but I don’t talk about that issue in my discussion with my student teachers. [16/10/95]

None of the cooperating teachers seemed to think about teaching and learning from a critical perspective, nor had they given much thought about how student teachers might learn to teach other than through an apprenticeship model. They saw the world of teaching and learning through the lenses of the immediacy of their current classrooms. Most, but not all, considered their own preservice teacher education experiences as inadequate training grounds for learning to teach, and most did not have much hope that the current program would be all that different.
Although I expected the cooperating teachers to complain about the responsibility foisted upon them by the teacher education institution, I was not prepared for their candid views of their role as teacher educators. I was surprised by their articulation of the relationship between theory and practice in their own practice as teachers and teacher educators, and by their explanation of how they work through their own classroom-based research studies to identify the theoretical constructs in use in their classes. Although they fit the norms of teachers who approach schooling as a means of imparting and maintaining the social and cultural values of the dominant class in society to their pupils, they are articulate in explaining what they do as teachers and why they do it that way.

Student teachers are cognizant of their cooperating teachers’ power, and Carlo and Tracy talked about it quite openly. However, they never discussed the issue with their cooperating teachers. They enjoy the personal attention of the cooperating teachers who observe and comment continuously on their practice and growth. Such individualized attention is a powerful instructional tool and it seems that student teachers crave the opportunity to engage in ongoing, one-on-one, personalized discussion about teaching.

The cooperating teachers also appreciated having the chance to talk at length with someone from the teacher education institution about their practice as cooperating teachers. And without fail, at the end of each interview, I was thanked for taking the time to come to the school and to listen to the cooperating teachers voice their opinions and beliefs about learning to teach. In each case, it was pointed out that this was the
first time they had engaged in such conversation. Gerald summed up his colleagues’ sentiments at the end of our one meeting when he thanked me for coming to his class to interview him. He said that no one had ever asked him about his practice as a cooperating teacher before, and he found that talking through the issues was both illuminative and interesting.

It seems obvious why student teachers so readily accept and adopt their cooperating teachers’ views of teaching. The student teachers are working in active classrooms with dynamic, experienced teachers who have been recognized for their competence. Thus the cooperating teachers’ actions and discourse became a powerful instructional tool to the student teachers in this study and in fact, become the beliefs of the student teachers. As Luke (1995) so clearly states

Learning to engage with texts and discourses...involves the development and articulation of common sense, of hegemonic “truths” about social life, political values, and cultural practices. (p. 37)

The personal, intense environment of the school setting encourages the student teachers to absorb and articulate the practices of their cooperating teachers as hegemonic truths.

The information collected in Chapter 6 is important for three reasons. It acknowledges the power of the cooperating teacher in the teacher education process and shows how influential the cooperating teacher’s practice is on the student teacher’s emerging identity as a teacher. It also demonstrates how the texts of schooling are constructed and passed on through the intense, one-on-one relationship between experienced practising teacher and learning teacher within the classroom setting. In the practicum, the student teacher becomes positioned to take up the sociopolitical texts of
the existing educational system.

**Summarizing the Findings**

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 illustrate and provide an initial analysis of the lived experience of student teachers and teachers educators in preservice teacher education while demonstrating the impact that inconsistent practices in school classrooms and university-based study have on student teachers as they negotiate their identity as teachers. The current context of teacher preservice teacher education seems to be quite a different place for each of the participants in this study. Each acknowledges and has some awareness of the tensions which the others face but each seems most concerned with his/her own situation.

The school classroom and the university classroom represent two very different worlds for student teachers, and the conflict between the worlds became obvious in this study as they struggled to gain control of their identity as teachers. Similarly, there are also two worlds faced by the university-based teacher educators as they seem forced to differentiate between their roles as academics in the university milieu and as teacher educators in a professional school. The cooperating teachers live in the immediate reality of the busyness of their classrooms and only need to consider preservice teacher education during the times when student teachers are assigned to their classes. Even then the reality of learning about teaching is directly linked to the practice of the student teacher in relation to that particular classroom.

Repeatedly, I was reminded by the participants of the value of our discussions. Although at first I think it may have been somewhat flattering to them to have someone
audiotape their words and write about their ideas, the novelty, especially for the student teachers, wore off as they became embroiled in the fragmented program with its contradictions and multiple complexities, and as they realized that learning to teach was more complicated than they had ever imagined. Tracy and Carlo began to set the appointments about every three or four weeks in order to work through their concerns.

I am satisfied that the student teachers, in particular, used the project to their advantage. The discourse in which we engaged was much more than just talk; it became dialogic discourse and was a critical component for Carlo and Tracy as they learned to teach.

A concern with the dialogic allows us to move beyond the conversation itself to attend to the conditions of its production: the words we choose, the way we reinflect them with past and personal meanings, the style used to position meanings, and the mix of intentions that are inevitable when speakers interact....We can move away from the normative view that language is merely neutral and descriptive to the dialogical view of language as ideological and conscriptive...

A dialogic understanding, then, acknowledges this multiplicity: the ways talk, practice, and understanding are mediated by difference, history, point of view, and the polyphony of voices possessed by those immediately involved and borrowed from those who become present through language. (Britzman, 1991, p. 238-239)

The dialogic experience, which Tracy, Carlo, and I shared, allowed us to move the discussion of learning to teach beyond the practices in the limited confines of their school and university classroom, into a critical sphere in which the images of teacher and teaching could become more critical in nature.

A Call for Dialogic Practice in Teacher Education

Student teachers need opportunities to engage in dialogic practice in order to
make explicit the complexity and multiplicity of their experiences. A mediator, with
the knowledge of the complexity and an understanding of the historical, social and
educational implications, is needed to engage prospective teachers in important
conversations throughout and beyond the preservice program.

The student teachers who come to faculties of education were educated as pupils
in traditional ways throughout public schooling and university, and they are
accustomed to attending, listening, and reacting to what they read, hear, and learn, and
to acting in a manner which satisfies their instructors without serious question. Carlo
and Tracy were no exception to this norm. During their teacher education program,
Carlo and Tracy adopted one identity as a learning teacher in their university classes,
acted appropriately according to their instructors' demands, and received high marks
even though they were highly critical in private of the course content; they adopted an
entirely different identity as a learning teacher during their practicum assignments,
acted in an entirely different manner in their teaching during their practicum
assignments, and received excellent teaching reports from their cooperating teachers.
Neither could find the consistency between the two very different worlds of learning to
teach, but both succeeded "on paper" in each world. Neither were very confident
about their accomplishments. Through this study, however, Tracy and Carlo talked
openly about the contradictions they were experiencing and they used our interviews
together and my observations in their classes to talk about their concerns.

Carlo and Tracy said that they found the meetings important in their
professional growth. I was amazed at the need that this study filled in their personal
preparation as teachers, and the number of times that Carlo and Tracy came by my office to ask for another interview because they had problems to work through and needed an experienced ear. I became a neutral\textsuperscript{26} translator for them—one who lived outside their practicum schools and outside their university classes, but one who had intimate knowledge of their experiences because of my position in the Faculty of Education. We developed an intense professional relationship from a more critical perspective as I became involved in their growth process. In the interviews, they stepped back from worrying about putting on a positive, schooled show for me and talked about the issues which satisfied, angered or frustrated them. I, in turn, questioned them further from a critical stance, and offered my opinions freely about the educational system. At the end of the program, Carlo and I were talking about the project and how valuable it was to him and about my participation in the discussion.

You know our discussions were truly interesting. But did you know that every time I made a point you would almost always respond, "Yes, but..." And then you would ask me if I had thought about that from this perspective which I think you would call a critical perspective. It got so that I started trying to think what your response would be before I spoke. You made me really rethink things through and it has helped me consider how I approach teaching in a different way. [Carlo, 16/05/96]

These student teachers had not been accustomed to having any instructor listen

\textsuperscript{26} By using the term "neutral," I do not infer that I was an impartial person who suspended my own belief systems in order to hear the participants voices in an aloof, sterile way. Neutrality is impossible to achieve even if one were to try. The point of the study was to engage in uncovering the real texts of what was being said and observed, and interactive discourse was a vital component to the study. By claiming to be neutral, I mean that I was an experienced teacher and teacher educator with critical views of the teaching and learning process who was able to listen to, talk with, and debate with Carlo and Tracy in a non-evaluative and non-judgemental way about aspects of their learning to teach. We seemed to develop an open and trusting relationship over the course of the academic year and felt that we could talk about many problematic issues quite comfortably.
to them in a non-evaluative way at any point in their school career, and even though I was critical of their comments and challenged them to rethink certain aspects, they responded enthusiastically. Their participation in this study seemed to fill a vital role for them in becoming teachers. I believe that Tracy and Carlo left the one-year program as deeper thinkers about teaching. However, their concept of self as teacher is still fragile and unformed. I worry that without opportunities to continue the critical conversation about their professional growth, they will succumb to the pressures of the school environment in which they find themselves as beginning teachers and they will become enculturated to the norms of that system.

Dialogic practice moves away from an informative dual conversation about topics in teaching to a discussion of the ideological conditions surrounding the topic. It draws on a multiple set of powerful influences which interact, challenge, and revise original ideas and seems to assist student teachers in negotiating the transformation from student to teacher. Student teachers, such as Tracy and Carlo, tell of the need for dialogical experiences during the teacher education program and beyond. Further investigation might show that the use of such practice may help beginning teachers to lay claim to new or alternative practices when they begin teaching and allow them to become change agents in the educational system.

**What Should Preservice Teacher Education be Like?**

This study has examined the discourse and texts of the three major participants in preservice teacher education—the student teachers, their cooperating teachers, and their university teacher educators. Designed to allow access to more than just their
language and their texts about learning to teach, the purpose was to listen very carefully to the voices of these people in determining how student teachers learn to teach. It was constructed to hear their articulation of the “truth” in relation to the political values, hegemonic practices, and ideologies of the educational system and their respective roles in the process of teacher education.

As a result of participating in this study, I believe that some aspects of the “truth” in preservice teacher education have been articulated and described in relation to the values, practices, and ideologies of the current system—at least to the extent that was known by these particular participants at this given point in time.

Change in teacher education is required. However, what has been described and analysed is complicated by the fact that this study involves not only teacher education institutions, but also the bureaucracies of the provincial public education and this particular university system. Faculties of education are not encapsulated entities and there are implications for all three bureaucracies. What this study shows, is that if change is to occur in preservice teacher education, then change must occur in all three areas because each as a significant impact on the other.

In this final section, I outline potential changes in philosophy, structure, curriculum, and pedagogy for faculties of education in some detail, and provide a brief description of changes needed in university bureaucracies and school systems. I include a section which concerns implications for future research in teacher education.

I. Implications for Faculties of Education

As noted above, the recommendations suggested in this section for faculties of
education will only be useful if complementary recommendations and changes occur within both the educational system, in which students do their student teaching and are subsequently hired, and within the university community, in which faculties of education are housed.

I begin with the implications for faculties for two reasons. First, faculties are perceived to carry the direct, front-line responsibility for the development and implementation of preservice education programs for beginning teachers (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1995), and secondly, because it appears that in contrast to the other bureaucracies, faculty of education personnel—at least in this study—are engaging in critical work and seek change in the current educational system.

With the following recommendations in mind, it is anticipated that faculties of education may be able to assume an active role in destabilizing the current educational system rather than continuing to support the traditional structures and ideologies.

I cover four areas in my discussion of implications for teacher education institutions—the philosophical assumptions, the structure, the curriculum, and the pedagogy of the program.

**Philosophical Assumptions**

Susan explained in Chapter 5 that one of the crucial problems for her was a lack of consistent philosophy across the teacher education institution about the ideologies of schooling and about how student teachers learn to teach. She pointed out that student teachers and cooperating teachers received mixed messages from various faculty members in different courses as well as in their practicum setting, which she found
problematic. Susan worried that the contradictions must be confusing to the students. Developing a unified, critical philosophy within the program and having congruent school placements where the critical assumptions being covered in university classes could be observed, discussed, and practised seem to make sense. With a critical philosophy in both the university and the selected school settings, it is possible that divergent views could be entertained and talked through.

The development of a consistent philosophy based in critical pedagogy should become the responsibility of faculty leaders and should begin with administrators in teacher education institutions who can demonstrate a critical perspective through their own discourse, writing, and teaching. They need to take a role in ensuring that opportunities for faculty members to engage in discourse about preservice teacher education occur on a regular basis so that faculty members can negotiate a position. Administrators should acknowledge the importance and the contribution of their faculty members’ work in this aspect in the institution and should assume a role alongside his/her colleagues in developing the philosophical guideline. Resources, such as literature, travel opportunities to talk with other colleagues, study periods, and time should be made available to all faculty if such an important step is to happen. The discourse will be tedious and will require a significant time commitment. The dialogic involvement of practising teachers, university colleagues from other disciplines, central university administrators, beginning teachers, and prospective teachers will be a necessity if one expects the philosophic thread underlying the program which is eventually developed, to be understood and ultimately accepted in the other
bureaucracies.

Administrators in faculties need to be able to conceptualize, visualize, and facilitate the implementation and remodification of the philosophy as it develops. They need to think beyond surface issues, such as the notion, which will be made by some faculty members, that student teachers are better served by being exposed to differing views on education. The term, exposure, as opposed to knowledge and understanding is the key element in this argument and it is critical that such concerns be discussed and that all views be heard and debated.

Concurrently, teacher education leaders need to be working with school personnel in communities where a congruent philosophy is being introduced collaboratively so that there are school settings being developed simultaneously where student teachers and teacher educators can work together to see critical pedagogy in practice.

Once a philosophy based in critical theory is in place, then consideration of how it will look in practice must be discussed. It is critical that the structure of the preservice program be dramatically altered to suit the underlying philosophical assumptions, or change in practice is unlikely even if a radically different philosophy is in place.

Structure of Teacher Education

Who is selected into the program to become teachers, how the time is organized, what is taught, and what roles the participants are allowed to play must complement the philosophy and define the structure of the program. Setting up the
program so that all, especially student teachers, have the time and resources to gain
knowledge and understanding about the underlying philosophy of the program is
critical. The structure, in fact, may need to be flexible because it will take some
student teachers longer than others to grasp the essence of the program and how
learning about teaching relates to teaching practice. At this point in time, it is probable
that few if any teacher education candidates have had experience in examining the
educational system from a critical perspective, and this should be taken into account
when planning the structure.

At the outset, it certainly appears that the length of the one-year program\textsuperscript{27} is
not long enough, unless replication of current practice is all that is required. Student
teachers need time to think about the new concepts being introduced, time to consider
them in practice, and opportunities to practice in supportive environments. They
require opportunities for dialogic interaction with someone who will take the time
during their preservice program and beyond to help them actually become proficient
teacher-leaders.

The organization of time, the way it is allotted, and the physical space of the
traditional classroom or lecture theatre must also be altered so that teaching spaces
correspond with the philosophy. It is suggested that both faculty members and students
need to discuss how time might be optimally organized for learning about teaching to

\textsuperscript{27} I am not recommending a four or five-year concurrent program after graduation from secondary school
as an alternative for extending the time in teacher education. Such programs have their own inherent
advantages, disadvantages, and tensions and are not part of the topic of discussion in this study.
occur and that alternative, flexible frameworks be adopted which could allow for varying needs and practices.

Susan and Cheryl both envisioned an ideal teacher education program which was housed largely in the selected schools in which practitioners share similar beliefs and practices of education. They see themselves playing a dominant role alongside practitioners in developing individualized, school-based teacher education programs for student teachers and educational programs for pupils.

The roles which individuals play is critical and should be altered. Traditional hierarchical structures will have to be flattened, and relationships between experienced teacher and learning teacher must become consistent with the philosophy. In addition, most educational terms will need to be abandoned and replaced with other words that do not carry the traditionally-bound, hierarchical implications and hegemonic values of the current system. Although massive change in views and ideologies may seem difficult to visualize, much persistence will be required to alter the organizational structures if a new philosophy is to be put into practice.

**The Curriculum of Teacher Education**

In the review of the literature in Chapter 2, the curriculum of preservice teacher education was criticized as being set up in such a way as to further the current ideologies and traditions of the school system rather than altering or even destabilizing it. Using Freire’s (1985) banking analogy, student teachers are seen as empty vessels waiting for the deposits of the codified knowledge to become teachers.

For the first few years of the new teacher education program, I suspect that
student teachers would expect and wait for that body of codified knowledge or the mechanics that would make them competent teachers in the traditional system. After all, Freire (1985) reminds us, those who have been repressed for a long time have developed their own way of seeing and understanding the world according to the cultural, social, and political patterns that they have experienced for all of their lives. Student teachers have been conditioned to ways of thinking about and seeing the world of education. They will need direct assistance in developing a different set of lenses and forms of discourse to view education more critically. They will need to be offered alternative ways of thinking and seeing reality in order to counter the hegemonic forces which might inhibit their professional growth as independent thinkers in teaching. Their curriculum will need to be set up in such a way as to be congruent with practices they will observe and replicate in school classrooms so that they can see themselves fitting into the new system.

Thus, the curriculum of teacher education will have to be dramatically revised in order to be congruent with the underlying philosophy. Entirely new practices in curriculum development will need to be developed as faculty members, student teachers, practitioners, and community members take on the responsibility for designing the curriculum. It is likely that, in such a setting, student teachers will take ownership of their learning and play a dominant role in the development of their curriculum as well as in their evaluation as teachers.

**Pedagogy and Evaluation in Preservice Education**

Pedagogical practices and evaluation have to be considered together as one
informs and verifies the other through the curriculum which is selected. It would be useless to follow the same forms of pedagogy and evaluation which are used in practice in the university setting today and expect student teachers to come to different learnings. The forms of pedagogy and evaluation must be consistent with the philosophy, the structure, and the curriculum. It is assumed that, in a program based conceptually in critical theory, student teachers would play a major role in developing the pedagogical practices and concomitant forms of evaluation in teacher education. The responsibility for learning about teaching is on their shoulders—as it really always has been—and the flexibility of programming allows each student teacher to learn in ways that are appropriate for them. For example, for some student teachers learning about teaching may involve study in the university setting whereas for others it may occur in the classroom. The teacher education program may last two full years or more for some, and eight or even 10 years for others on a part-time basis. In fact, there may be no future distinction between preservice and continuing teacher education; rather teacher education may be seen as a seamless and ongoing continuum. Responsibility and opportunity need to be granted to teacher education candidates and practising teachers to follow the philosophic thread of learning to teach as it becomes defined individually through their own sense of professionalism and contribution to others in the community.

Summary

The general comments above represent tremendous changes for preservice education while providing advance notice to the traditional education system of a
dramatic shift in philosophy. The description, in many ways, is hampered by the limitations of the traditional, conservative, and delimiting "educational" vocabulary—terms like curriculum, evaluation, and so on—and as innovations are developed and tried, new descriptives will emerge to explain more clearly the foundation and the course of action. But a final point must be emphasized: faculties of education are not encapsulated institutions. If attempted, the change cannot be accomplished quickly, easily, or in isolation without the involvement of the other two constituents.

II. Implications for the University Community

Most faculties in the university, including schools of education, continue to engage in the historical, cultural, and societal norms of education through teaching by lecture, evaluating by written examination, and grading by traditional standards. It is common knowledge that students are accepted into university programs based solely on their secondary school marks and most come from middle or upper-class backgrounds. The reality is that change from current traditional beliefs to forms of critical practice in the university community is likely to be a hard won but a necessary step if change is to occur.

It becomes apparent from speaking with Cheryl and Susan, and from my own experience as a teacher educator, that the role of the professional school of education is not clearly understood or respected in the academic setting which makes the task even more daunting. Russell and Korthagen (1995) write

Most of us [university-based teacher educators] try very hard to teach well, yet the realities of 'publish or perish,' the 'ivory tower syndrome,' and teaching loads that are often higher than elsewhere in the university work against many
Currently, a commitment to involvement in the practical reality of schools is time-consuming and is neither recognized as important work or rewarded in the university system. Yet, both Cheryl and Susan, in their discussion in Chapter 5, envision reformed teacher education programs where most of the time is spent in specially-selected schools where the practice of education mirrors the philosophy of the Faculty of Education, and where university personnel, experienced school practitioners, and prospective teachers become both key teacher educators and classroom teachers. Much internal work will be required on the part of faculties of education with the rest of the campus to make such massive changes viable.

III. Implications for the Public Educational System

Change needs to occur almost simultaneously in school settings so that teacher education candidates and teacher educators can observe, discuss, and practice in a setting which has a philosophy that is congruent with the concepts that they are discussing with each other. School practitioners, university professors, and beginning teachers must talk together to study existing programs and then develop educational practices in schools in which they can do further study.

Change will be slow and time-consuming but it cannot be merely mandated. Eisner (1992) says that “one thing is clear. It is much easier to change educational policy than to change the ways in which schools function. Schools are robust institutions whose very robustness provides a source of social stability” (p. 610). What makes such change even more difficult is that this particular business of reform is more
complicated and controversial than traditional forms of change. It will take the
commitment of the entire province and the lobbying of whole schools and communities
to overcome society’s rigid beliefs about the conservative expectations of teachers and
schooling, the predetermined concrete and internalized images of teachers’ roles, and
the rigid norms of accepted social behaviour by teachers and pupils.

Summary

All teachers, whether administrators or classroom teachers, whether university
professors or student teachers, must recognize their role as teacher educators. Thus the
concept of a reconceptualized university-school partnership, in which teacher
educators, practitioners, and students communicate and move back and forth on regular
basis, becomes paramount. Current reward systems (or lack thereof) will need to be changed as teacher educators in both the schools and the university accept different forms of recognition for their important work. Perhaps in a new system, the education of the community will be seen as a significant component of every person’s responsibility.

Implications for Future Research

Although there are some pockets of change involving critical theory and pedagogy occurring in educational systems throughout the world (see, for example, May, 1994), much of what has been discussed in this section has been an imaginative and reasonable description in terms of developing an accessible public education and teacher education system that functions for the equalized benefit of all members of society. There are a number of teacher education institutions where smaller, insular
aspects of change are being experimented with, but at this point, some faculties of education need to attempt a program of reform which includes a complete and total overhaul of the program. Their experiences and progress needs to be documented carefully in future research studies.

Conclusion: Choosing One’s Identity as Teacher

In the complex situation of learning to become a teacher, student teachers become confused about the development of their professional identity. As Britzman (1991) eloquently says, “learning to teach is always a process of becoming...of formation and transformation” (p. 8). Student teachers’ views and ideologies have been strongly influenced and informed by their personal and societal environment as well as their professional experiences in schools and professional studies. As developing teachers, they continue to live in a transformative process of becoming even after certification.

The reality is that student teachers have been especially influenced by their successful experiences in public schooling as students, their comfortable middle-class background, their ongoing relationships with other white, middle-class people, and in their practicum placements in middle-class school classrooms where they learn about teaching one-on-one with cooperating teachers who display the values and ideologies of the dominant society. When critical theory becomes the framework for the curriculum in teacher education courses, student teachers’ deeply-rooted values are challenged. The type of thinking that student teachers are required to do in the university seems to be in conflict with their past reflections on schooling and their present experiences in
their practicum schools. This was a clearly-stated position during my interviews with the student teachers and they found that they would have preferred to dismiss their university instructors’ discourse as useless and irrelevant. However, their participation in this project caused them to think differently, they said. They were forced into thinking about education in a different light. This different thinking about teaching and learning causes them to consider alternative views of themselves as teachers and to decide what kind of teacher they will be.

Currently, new teachers have two paths to consider. The traditionally accepted path to negotiating one’s identity as a teacher, and the one with the least resistance, takes one toward emulation of the traditional school culture. It reinforces socialization into the norms and traditions of schooling in order to carry out the conventions of the system. This route was the one which Carlo and Tracy knew and sought, and it was reinforced for them in this study through their practicum experiences.

An alternative route in becoming a teacher, based in critical pedagogy, challenges the norms and culture of traditional schooling and may even be perceived as counter-cultural and subversive. Taking the less-travelled, alternate path is dangerous for beginning teachers as it upsets the status quo of education. To follow this path, student teachers as beginning teachers must take on the role of teacher-leaders—a difficult role to assume (Bascia, 1996), and an almost impossible path to follow when their alternative practices are still largely undeveloped.

Each path is conceptually different, requires a different set of ideologies, and leads to different identities in teaching. At this point in time, student teachers have
choices to make as they consider their teaching identities. Most choose the traditional path, the path of least resistance, because of their past experiences, their desire for confidence and acceptance, and because it is the path they know the best traditionally, historically, politically, and culturally. This path is the smoothest. They will not be the ones to change the existing educational system with innovative practices or beliefs; they will not be the ones who question current practices. But they will be the teachers and future leaders who will promote and maintain the status quo in our society, and they will likely be satisfied with their identity.

A few, who have had the benefit of studying alternative views and values through dialogic experience, or who are rebelling against the minimizing experiences which they themselves have experienced, will choose the less-travelled and radical path. They will take what Thomas (1993) has called, a walk on the wild side, as they begin to develop their identity as teachers from a revolutionary and defensive stance, as they engage in practices and discourse which may be seen as subversive and questionable by members of the dominant culture. These new teachers will require support and assistance if they are to feel successful in their new positions. Yet, without support in the current system, one must acknowledge that they may eventually get beaten down or be forced to leave the system.

This study can be used as a basis on which to plan for the future of teacher education policies and practices. How teacher education develops depends in large part on how serious teacher educators and powerful bureaucrats become about recognizing the “truth” in the current educational system and confronting the realities. They will
need to extend their vision to seeing the need to transform the educational system into one which provides a sound, liberal education and equal access to all. At this point, the numbers who view the system through critical lenses are few in number, but at least the revolution seems to be starting.

Student teachers need access to critical views in learning and practice so that they can begin to engage in discursive and active practices which will emancipate them as teachers in order to emancipate their pupils. With their enthusiasm, youth, vitality, intelligence, and new knowledge, beginning teachers will indeed be able to challenge and ultimately change our modern, nineteenth century school system.
REFERENCES


Appendix A

Duties of Cooperating Teachers
(excerpt from the Practicum Handbook, 1995-1996)

4.1 COOPERATING TEACHERS:
The role of the cooperating teacher is critical in the practicum. It is the cooperating teacher who helps create conditions of trust, security, acceptance and respect so that the student teacher can meet her/his responsibilities.

The Cooperating Teacher
- meets with the faculty liaison person and student teachers as negotiated in pre-practicum meetings.
- provides a brief overview of the curriculum to be taught in each subject area for the entire session.
- consults with the student teacher(s) to determine the most appropriate organization of observation and teaching responsibilities for their professional growth. (See Expectations for the Practicum)
- arranges opportunities for student teachers to observe a variety of teaching/learning situations. This observation is particularly important on the first and second days of each practicum session and should occur frequently throughout the practicum.
- demonstrates a variety of teaching/learning strategies for the student teacher throughout each practicum session. Cooperating teachers should demonstrate the teaching/learning strategies that student teachers are expected to try.
- assigns teaching opportunities that require a variety of teaching/learning strategies.
- provides ongoing supervision through daily feedback (preferably oral and written).
- reports names of student teachers in need of special assistance to the faculty liaison person in the earliest stages of concern.
- completes and discusses the Cooperating Teacher's Report at the end of each session. The report should reflect and summarize the continuous feedback given to the student teacher throughout the practicum period, and should contain no surprises.
recognizes that individual differences exist among student teachers. The faculty recognizes that the cooperating teacher's first responsibility is to the pupils in the classroom. If the quality of the student teacher's work is of concern, the cooperating teacher should resume teaching responsibilities and instruct the student teacher to observe the specific techniques and strategies necessary for improvement. The cooperating teacher should decide when the student is able to resume teaching. If problems still persist, the cooperating teacher is requested to call for assistance as early as possible in the session. If the student teacher's work is assessed as unsatisfactory, the cooperating teacher should describe the student teacher's strengths and weaknesses and provide suggestions for improvement.
Appendix B
Letter of Consent

September 15, 1995

Dear _____________

RE: Images and Expectations of Beginning Teachers: A Critical Ethnography

The purpose of this project is to critically investigate the images and expectations which student teachers, cooperating teachers, and teacher educators have of beginning teachers. I have every expectation that involvement in this project will be a rewarding professional experience for all participants, and that at the same time it will help document the development of learning about teaching in novice teachers. Data collection will consist of interviews with student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university educators, field notes and tape recordings of classroom teaching, and the collection of other printed materials which the participants believe are pertinent. Interviews will focus on the developing images of yourself or your students as beginning teachers, and the nature of teaching and learning.

Involvement in this project is completely voluntary. There will be approximately 8-10 interviews with each student teacher, two with each cooperating teacher, and 3 or 4 with the university educators. Interviews should be about 40-50 minutes long. You should feel free at any point, or with regard to any aspect of the project, to decline to participate or to ask that records referring to you be destroyed. It is fully understood that any such withdrawal will involve no repercussions for you.

In reporting on the project, pseudonyms will be employed for participants, schools, and communities. Any references in the case study that might reveal the identity of participants will be removed or altered. All participants will have an opportunity to review their own data and analysis before it is released.

I hope that you will agree to become involved in this promising and exciting project. If you have any questions at any point in the study, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Carol Beynon
IMAGES AND EXPECTATIONS OF BEGINNING TEACHERS:
A CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY

I have read the Letter of Information relating to the Images and Expectations of Beginning Teachers: A Critical Ethnography Project. I understand the proposed research and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without incurring a penalty of any kind, that I may decline to answer any specific questions should I choose to do so, and that the information collected is for research purposes only.

I do consent to participate in this study.

__________________________________________
NAME (please print)

__________________________________________
SIGNATURE  DATE
IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (QA-3)