ENACTING A PEDAGOGY OF MULTILITERACIES:
A STUDY OF SIX LITERACY TEACHER EDUCATORS

by

Cathy Marie Miyata

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Cathy Miyata 2017
ENACTING A PEDAGOGY OF MULTILITERACIES: 
A STUDY OF SIX LITERACY TEACHER EDUCATORS 
Doctor of Philosophy 2017 
Cathy Marie Miyata 
Graduate Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning 
University of Toronto 

Abstract 

This study examined the knowledge, dispositions, beliefs, experiences, and educational practices of six literacy teacher educators, from three countries, who enacted a multiliteracies approach to teaching. In this qualitative study, three semi-structured interviews were conducted of each participant over a three year period. Four significant findings emerged. First, these literacy teacher educators held a broad, holistic, and evolving conceptualization of literacy that was not limited to a notion of literacy as a set of autonomous skills (e.g., reading and writing). This conceptualization included a range of multimodal communications: print-based literacies, arts-based experiences, and digital practices. Second, all of the literacy teacher educators designed coherent courses that were driven by a single overarching purpose (e.g., developing a broad and inclusive understanding of literacy and literacy practices). The overarching purpose was realized through 17 specific goals and purposeful assignments. Third, all of the literacy teacher educators were challenged by government restrictions, particularly the participants from England and Australia. The final finding revealed these literacy teacher educators held a unique set of dispositional qualities: a positive and progressive attitude, persistence, and passion; and their attitudes, skills, and knowledge were developed over time and with assistance. Implications for literacy teacher educators include the need for incorporating multimodal forms of expression and communication; addressing issues of social justice; remaining connected to the local community and the practicum aspect of the program; and, creating coherent courses. Implications for preservice teacher education programs include universities creating opportunities for professional
development for teacher educators particularly in multiliteracies practices and providing mentors; developing hiring practices that include a multiliteracies interest; and, developing support against deleterious teacher education reforms.
Acknowledgements

This has been an enlightening journey and I have several people I would like to acknowledge as being significant in supporting me through this process. First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Clare Kosnik, for her tireless support and maintaining such a high standard of achievement. I learned so much. I am also deeply grateful to her for inviting me onto her SSHRC research team. The experience far surpassed any other experiences I could have possibly encountered while learning the intricacies of research, coding, and collaboration. In that vein I would like to thank the members of the team, Pooja, Lydia, and Yiola for their insights and hard work. Through Clare’s guidance, we accomplished so much; so many peer reviewed publications and conference presentations. Truly remarkable! Also, Dr. Kosnik, in partnership with Dr. Beck, provided a remarkable venue for learning by hosting the BTE group. At these meetings several grad students were invited to share their research, critique each other’s work, and generally grow together as researchers and teacher educators. This is a cherished experience.

I would like to thank my grad-student buddy, Pooja, for her friendship, positive influence, guidance, and support. It was wonderful to have you there for every turn: taking courses together; learning to critique academic writing; traveling to conferences; and workshopping our dissertations. You kept me going, Pooja, and for that I am deeply grateful.

I would like to thank my dear friend Karin for tirelessly encouraging and supporting me. Also, thank you to my friends Sylvia, Lynda, and Nicole for believing in me.

Finally, I would like to thank my wonderful family: my dear son Kellen, for consistently modelling patience and perseverance; my wise daughter, Sarah, for being my mentor, as she finished her doctorate years ago and kept perspective for me; my son-in-law, Zack for showing me how to maintain a high work ethic; and my precious granddaughter, Everley, for being such a
joyful distraction. In conclusion, and most importantly of all, I wish to thank my darling husband, Kaz. I would never have even begun this journey without your encouragement and support. This degree is as much yours as mine. You have been with me for every second and never wavered in your faith in me. Thank you for this. You make my dreams come true.
Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. ii
Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................... iv
List of Tables .................................................................................................................... xiii
List of Figures ................................................................................................................... xiv
List of Appendices ............................................................................................................ xv

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................. 1

Introduction to the Problem ............................................................................................... 1
Examining Literacy Teacher Educators ............................................................................. 5
Changing Literacy Practices ............................................................................................... 7
A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies ............................................................................................ 8
How I Came to This Research .......................................................................................... 10
  Early Influences ............................................................................................................. 10
  Becoming a Literacy Teacher Educator ......................................................................... 12
  Facing the Challenges of 21st-Century Teaching ......................................................... 13
Purpose and Description of this Study ............................................................................ 15
Research Questions ........................................................................................................... 15
Situating Myself as the Researcher .................................................................................. 16
Theoretical Framework ...................................................................................................... 16
Significance of the Study ................................................................................................. 17
  Advancement of My Own Teacher Education Practices ................................................. 17
  Development of Educational Pedagogy in Teacher Education for 21st-Century Learners .. 17
  Advancement of Teacher Education .............................................................................. 18
  The Role of the Literacy Teacher Educator .................................................................. 18
Definition of Terms .......................................................................................................... 19
  21st-Century Teaching and Learning ......................................................................... 19
  Student Teacher .......................................................................................................... 19
  Practice Teaching ......................................................................................................... 20
Organization of Dissertation ........................................................................................... 20
Chapter Summary ............................................................................................................. 21
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ........................................................................ 22

Introduction .................................................................................................................. 22
Evolving Notions of Literacy .......................................................................................... 22
Multiliteracies ................................................................................................................ 25
  Background of Multiliteracies ...................................................................................... 26
  The What of Multiliteracies ........................................................................................ 27
  The How of Multiliteracies ........................................................................................ 30
Interpretations of Multiliteracies ................................................................................... 33
  Multiliteracies Interpreted as Art Pedagogy .............................................................. 33
  Multiliteracies Interpreted as Literacy Pedagogy ...................................................... 36
  Multiliteracies Interpreted as Technology Pedagogy ............................................... 43
Teacher Education ........................................................................................................ 50
  The Importance of Teacher Education ...................................................................... 50
  The Role of Teacher Education ................................................................................ 51
    i. The complexity of teaching. .................................................................................. 51
    ii. Traditional preservice teacher preparation programs. ...................................... 52
    iii. Alternative teacher accreditation. .................................................................... 54
Teacher Educators ......................................................................................................... 56
  A Multidimensional Role ........................................................................................... 56
  Challenges in Developing the Role .......................................................................... 57
Literacy Teacher Educators ......................................................................................... 60
  Unique Responsibilities ............................................................................................. 60
  Literacy Teacher Educators’ Use of Multiliteracies .................................................. 62
Theoretical Framework ................................................................................................. 63
  Multiliteracies From a Teacher Education Perspective ........................................... 64
    i. Recognizing a diversity of language forms. ....................................................... 64
    ii Combining the old and the new in literacy pedagogy ....................................... 65
    iii Having a broad concept of literacy .................................................................. 65
    iv. Implementing an inclusive, critical approach to literacy. ............................... 65
    v. Balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives. ............................... 66
    vi. Using a constructivist, dialogical approach .................................................... 66
Chapter Summary ....................................................................................................... 67
CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS

Introduction ............................................................................................................................................. 130
Theme 1: Enacting a Comprehensive View of Literacy ................................................................. 131
   Conceptualizing Literacy in a Shifting Landscape ...................................................................... 131
   Employing a diversity of language forms ...................................................................................... 133
      i. Portraying literacy as a multimodal concept ........................................................................ 134
      ii. Implementing digital technology .......................................................................................... 134
      iii. Exploring arts-based experiences ....................................................................................... 137
   Integrating Old and New Literacy Practices into Teacher Education Courses ...................... 139
      i. Enhancing traditional literacy learning experiences ............................................................. 139
      ii. Modifying the use of traditional literacy texts .................................................................... 142
Theme 2: Enacting a Rich Pedagogy ................................................................................................. 144
   Balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives ............................................................... 145
      i. Building a classroom community .......................................................................................... 145
      ii. Honoring individual differences ......................................................................................... 147
   Using a constructivist, dialogical approach .................................................................................. 150
      i. Dialogical learning ................................................................................................................ 151
      ii. Modeling expert practice .................................................................................................... 152
      iii. Experiencing theory through practice .............................................................................. 154
Chapter Summary .............................................................................................................................. 160

CHAPTER 6 FINDINGS

Theme 3: Constructing Coherent Courses ......................................................................................... 161
   Setting Purposeful Course Goals ................................................................................................. 161
   Creating Meaningful Assignments ............................................................................................... 165
      i. Balancing the assignment load ............................................................................................ 165
      ii. Making assignments meaningful ....................................................................................... 168
      iii. Limiting Multimodal Options ........................................................................................... 173
Theme 4: Fostering Social Justice ...................................................................................................... 176
   Positioning Their Courses ............................................................................................................ 177
   Valuing Many Types of Literacy .................................................................................................. 179
   Modeling Anti-deficit Education ................................................................................................. 181
   Using Social Justice-oriented Literature ..................................................................................... 182
Chapter Summary .............................................................................................................................. 183
CHAPTER 7 FINDINGS .............................................................................................................. 185

Theme 5: Utilizing Research ........................................................................................................ 185
Expanding Research Specializations ......................................................................................... 185
Networking Nationally and Internationally .............................................................................. 188

Theme 6: Negotiating Challenges ................................................................................................. 190
Dealing with Constraints ........................................................................................................ 191
  i. Coping with governmental constraints ........................................................................ 191
Your Preparation: ..................................................................................................................... 192
  ii. Managing institutional change ......................................................................................... 195
Helping Student Teachers Unlearn ......................................................................................... 196

Theme 7: Internalizing Prior Influences and Experiences ............................................................... 199
Identifying Influential Childhood Experiences ......................................................................... 200
  i. Expressing an innate love of literacy ........................................................................... 200
  ii. Acknowledging the influence of childhood context .................................................... 201
Honoring Inspirational Mentors .............................................................................................. 202
Recognizing Turning Points ...................................................................................................... 205
Sharing Research with Student Teachers .................................................................................. 210

Theme 8: Embracing their Roles as LTEs ...................................................................................... 211
Aiming for High Standards ........................................................................................................ 212
Committing to their Role ........................................................................................................... 214
  i. Demonstrating passion ................................................................................................. 214
  ii. Being positive, persistent, and progressive ................................................................ 215

Chapter Summary .................................................................................................................... 217

CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION ........................................................................................................... 218

Introduction .............................................................................................................................. 218

Summary of the Main Findings ................................................................................................. 219
Literacy Conceptualization ........................................................................................................ 221
Course Coherency ..................................................................................................................... 222
Negotiating Challenges ............................................................................................................ 223
Influences on Practice ............................................................................................................... 224
  i. Early experiences with language ................................................................................. 225
  ii. Mentors ......................................................................................................................... 225
  iii. Significant events .......................................................................................................... 225
  iv. Dispositional qualities .................................................................................................. 226
Implications and Recommendations ................................................................. 227

Implications for literacy teacher educators ....................................................... 228
  i. Incorporate multimodalities. ........................................................................ 228
  ii. Address issues of social justice ................................................................. 228
  iii. Remain connected to the community and practicum ................................. 229
  iv. Create coherent courses. ........................................................................... 230
  v. Classroom teacher responsibility ............................................................. 230

Implications for preservice teacher education programs .................................... 231
  i. Opportunities for professional development ............................................. 232
  ii. Hiring practices ......................................................................................... 232
  iii. Maintaining realistic expectations ........................................................... 233
  iv. Support against deleterious teacher education reforms ............................ 234

Implications for further research ..................................................................... 235

My Personal Development .................................................................................. 236

REFERENCES .................................................................................................... 240
List of Tables

Table 1 Background of Participants (as of January, 2013) ................................................................. 102
Table 2 Multimodal Literacy Experiences .............................................................................................. 138
Table 3 Specific Course Goals and Examples ...................................................................................... 163
Table 4 Assignments at a Glance ........................................................................................................ 167
Table 5 Aligning Unit Assignments with Course Goals ................................................................. 169
Table 6 Influences on Practice ........................................................................................................... 209
List of Figures

Figure 1. Constructive Codes to Theory Model ................................................................. 94

Figure 2. Partial Cluster Map of Categories and Themes ................................................. 95

Figure 3. Interrelationship of the Four Main Findings ..................................................... 220
# List of Appendices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Interview #</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Problem

Education has reached a crisis point . . . the familiar territories of curriculum seem eerily irrelevant. The ‘basics’ appear to be vacuous now because the main ground has shifted from the old-fashioned, page-bound written texts and the dislocated ‘standards.’ What literacy teaching used to promise to do, we don’t seem to need any more; and even if it is of some use, some of the time, it’s certainly not enough . . . . The essence of what education does needs to change. (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 147)

Over the past 40 years, rapid changes in our society have altered the landscape of literacy education, and these dramatic changes will continue (Kosnik & Dharamshi, 2016; Kosnik, Menna, Dahramshi, & Miyata, in press; Kooy & Veen, 2012; Kress, 2003, 2010; Jewitt, 2008; Menna, 2016; Westby, 2010). During my 35 years as an elementary classroom teacher, international educational consultant, professional storyteller, educational writer, and teacher educator, I have observed several of these changes. Particularly, the past eight years as a literacy teacher educator (LTE) and practice teaching advisor have enabled me to witness this shifting literacy landscape: changes in the needs of my student teachers; changes in the usefulness of traditional instructional strategies and techniques; and, most importantly, changes in the attitudes and needs of the students attending the elementary schools in which my student teachers have their practice teaching sessions. These changes demand a different kind of teacher educator, using a different kind of pedagogy with significantly different goals for themselves and their student teachers. As Cope and Kalantzis (2000) point out in the opening quote, the traditional methods of teaching reading and writing are simply not enough.
Two factors are largely responsible for the recent changes in the attitudes and practices of our students: globalization and the advancement of technology (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, 2009; Freidman, 2007; Gee, 2007a; New London Group, 1996). Globalization, however, is not a new phenomenon. Gills and Thompson (2006) argue that globalization has existed since people have been aware of the interdependence between cultures and economies. What sets this era of globalization apart is the explosion of cultural and linguistic diversity in our schools (New London Group, 1996). Ladson-Billings (2005) suggests that schools today have been “called to serve a more ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse student population” (p. 229).

Rogers (2013) states:

Those of us who have the privilege and responsibility of teaching literacy teachers are charged with designing learning experiences that support their development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to work confidently with culturally and linguistically diverse children and families, especially those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This charge has never been more pressing. (p. 7)

As a result, the demands on teachers, and thus on LTEs, are much more complex than they were when I began my teaching career over four decades ago.

In a themed issue of the Journal of Teacher Education focusing on diversity in teacher education, Robinson and West (2012) state:

More than 90% of teachers in a recent major survey (MetLife, 2011) said supporting diverse learners with the highest needs should be a priority, and nearly 60% said it should be among the highest priorities. Preparing teachers who can successfully support the learning of every student requires that teacher educators remain open to new ideas and continue to develop preparation programs that respond to the nation’s diverse learning communities. (p. 291)

Research reveals that more teacher educators need to adopt the ideas and skills required to teach in diverse classrooms (Campano, 2007; Lewison, Flint, & Van Sluys, 2002; Luke, 2000; Pahl &
Rowsell, 2005). If teacher educators are not up to the task of preparing 21st-century teachers, researchers question whether 21st-century learners will be equipped to cope in our increasingly globalized society (Freidman, 2007; Gee, 2007a, 2007b). Therefore, studying the practices, attitudes, and visions of teacher educators who are teaching courses is imperative. Studying teacher educators will provide examples and direction for other LTEs.

The second factor contributing to the changes in our students’ needs is the “burgeoning variety of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies” (New London Group, 1996, p. 61). Students and student teachers alike are instant-messaging, photo sharing, video-streaming, multitasking on smart phones, and communicating across the world through social networking sites. Students increasingly arrive at school as practicing collaborative communicators who require a more varied approach to curriculum and pedagogy. Yet, research indicates that there is a vast chasm between what teachers teach in classrooms (using traditional reading and writing pedagogies) and what students independently accomplish outside of school using digital technologies (Gee, 2007b; Hutchison, 2007; Merchant, 2009). Similarly, these gaps are common in literacy teacher education classrooms as well. Digital communications continue to be implemented at a low level in pre-service programs, which are, therefore, not providing new teachers with the skills they need (Polly, Mims, & Persichitte, 2012).

According to Statistics Canada (2013):

Given the centrality of written communication . . . in virtually all areas of life, coupled with the rapid integration of information and communication technology, individuals must be able to understand, process, and respond to textual . . . information, in print and digital form, if they are to participate fully in society—whether as citizens, family members, consumers or employees. (p. 2)
In this age of information explosion, being able to make meaning from a variety of text forms is a necessity.

Spires (2008) argues that students of the 21st century, “commonly referred to as the N generation, millennials, or digital natives,” (p. 1) are hard wired differently from previous generations, thus require learning environments and pedagogies that engage and challenge using innovative and collaborative practices and methodologies. One might think that student teachers, as participating members of the N generation, would naturally implement the innovative pedagogies and collaborative practices that their pupils crave. However, I have observed that my 21st-century student teachers, who carry iPads, text regularly, and confess to being frequent users of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, rarely implement any of these new technologies during practice teaching.

These student teachers, if left to their own inclinations, often mimic how they were taught in school by assigning mundane tasks to the pupils in their classrooms, such as low-level thinking comprehension questions or writing out words to practice spelling. Essentially, they engage in practices that privilege the teacher’s view of reading and writing above any other forms of literacy (Street, 1995). In their practice teaching classrooms, these student teachers fail to use their digital devices as creative tools to enhance student learning or bridge the sociocultural gaps (Gee, 2007b; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003; Merchant, 2009). Despite my student teachers’ personal and frequent use of technology, changes in their pedagogical approaches are not apparent. This implies that LTEs need to be leaders and teachers of new pedagogical approaches in order to help student teachers capitalize on the new affordances available in schools and through the Internet.
Due to globalization and the advancement of technology, teacher educators are now responsible for preparing future teachers who can respond to dramatic changes in our students, our schools, and the world community (Cummins, 2006). LTEs have a heavy responsibility because they have the potential to influence the practices and beliefs of student teachers who can, in turn, affect many people.

**Examining Literacy Teacher Educators**

This study examines LTEs who are teaching in literacy teacher education programs. Teacher educators are a unique group with a unique set of responsibilities in higher education (Ducharme & Ducharme, 1996; Labaree, 2004). Kosnik, Dharamshi, Miyata, and Cleovoulou (2014) identify some of the demands placed on teacher educators: bridging theory and practice; attending to the requirements of a number of external bodies (e.g., college of teachers; government departments); being cognizant of new school district/government initiatives; connecting academic courses to practice teaching (over which they often have little control); developing a coherent course for student teachers (who come to the program with markedly different prior experiences); and, modeling effective teaching. The role of an LTE is further complicated by the shifting notions of literacy and new literacy practices. As an LTE, I acknowledge that keeping up with this complex set of expectations and evolving interpretations of literacy can be stressful and exhausting. Yet, little research has been conducted on this distinct group of educators to understand the overt and hidden challenges they face. Once identified, we can begin to provide better assistance and resources.

Given the numerous responsibilities of the LTE role, one might assume that a long list of qualifications is required. Yet, in some teacher education programs, one of the main qualifications for obtaining the position of an LTE is previous classroom experience (Loughran,
Dinkelman, Margolis, and Sikkenga (2006a, 2006b) point out that classroom teacher experience builds credibility between teacher educators and their student teachers and practicum teachers; however, it cannot be assumed that classroom teaching experience also provides the pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, and resources needed. In fact, a much broader knowledge base is required to teach in a teacher education program (Ball, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Kosnik & Beck, 2009). Goodwin and Kosnik (2013) identify five areas of knowledge in which teacher educators need to be competent:

1. personal knowledge/autobiography and philosophy of teaching;
2. contextual knowledge/understanding learners, schools, and society;
3. pedagogical knowledge/content, theories, teaching methods, and curriculum development;
4. sociological knowledge/diversity, cultural relevance, and social justice; and
5. social knowledge/cooperation, democratic group processes, and conflict resolution. (p. 338)

Classroom teaching experience is insufficient; therefore, the transition from classroom teacher to teacher educator may not be easy. This places new teacher educators in a vulnerable position. In their study of teacher educators, Murray and Male (2005) found that early-career teacher educators often experience feelings of uncertainty and inadequacy, describing themselves as “de-skilled” or “masquerading” as a teacher educator (p. 129). Overcoming this sense of inadequacy takes a number of years (Kosnik, Dharamshi, et al., 2014). Yet, little research has been conducted into how teacher educators acquire the knowledge necessary to being an effective teacher educator.

Kosnik, Menna, Dharamshi, Miyata, and Beck (2013) suggest one of the reasons why teacher educators are not the subject of study is that the intense focus on teacher education
programs “over-looks the teacher educators who ‘deliver’ these programs” (p. 525). Supporting the claim that there is a lack of research on teacher educators, Martinez (2008) states:

Little systematic research has been undertaken to inform us about fundamental characteristics of the professional lives of this occupational group—their qualifications, their recruitment, their career pathways into and through the academy, their teaching and research practices, the problems they encounter, or their professional needs and practices. (p. 36)

Cochran-Smith (2003) also suggests that we need to pay “more attention to what teachers of teachers themselves need to know, and what institutional supports need to be in place in order to meet the complex demands of preparing teachers for the 21st century” (p. 6). Clearly, studies for and about teacher educators, specifically the backgrounds, choices, and visions of literacy educators, are needed. By studying the early life experiences, pedagogical practices, qualities, research activities, course goals, and visions of LTEs, a better understanding of this unique group of educators will be attained. This study aims to contribute to the literature on LTEs and assist in developing this much-needed area of knowledge.

Changing Literacy Practices

Literacy practices are changing rapidly in contemporary society in response to broad social, economic and technological changes: in education, the workplace, the media, and in everyday life. (Barton, 2000, p. i)

As globalization and the advancement of technology continue to affect our society, our notions of literacy and literacy practices are also being influenced. Reder and Davila (2005) name Scribner and Cole as the first scholars to view literacy as a “socially organized set of practices,” rather than a set of “decontextualized information and processing skills” (p. 172). Fairclough (2003)
defines social practice as “a relatively stabilized form of social activity (examples would be classroom teaching, television news, family meals [and] medical consultations)” (p. 205).

Basic literacy practices have changed. Training students to decode printed text and comprehend simple paragraphs is no longer sufficient. Interpreting, discerning, and critically analyzing through a multiplicity of digital modes (e.g., creating visual displays, locating, negotiating and interpreting sites, communicating through social media, designing graphics, movie making, and podcasting) are common place for most students and these skills need to be integrated into their classroom experiences. Further, making meaning through a variety of alternate communication modes or multimodes (e.g., painting, speaking, dramatizing, singing, and dancing) and being able to link, merge, or combine these modes with digital modes is also considered part of the new standard (Eisner, 2003; Harste & Kress, 2012; Kress, 2003).

However, adapting to these new literacy practices can be challenging for educators. Role models for and examples of current effective pedagogical approaches are needed to assist educators, and specifically LTEs, to respond to the broad social, economic, and technological changes identified by Barton (2000) in the opening quote of this section. In this study, the LTEs and their literacy practices are located within the pedagogy of the multiliteracies approach (New London Group, 1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies exemplifies the new literacy practices needed for 21st-century learners and could serve as a model for current and future LTEs.

A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies

This study examines how six LTEs enact a pedagogy of multiliteracies in their teaching. The New London Group (1996) uses the term “a pedagogy of multiliteracies” (p. 60) to refer to a set of pedagogical principles and practices. Rowsell, Kosnik, and Beck (2008) claim the multiliteracies framework embodies “basic sociocultural and linguistic theory” (p. 110). The
design elements and complex components of this pedagogy are described in detail in the literature review chapter of this dissertation; however, a brief introduction to this approach follows.

In 1994, a group of 10 scholars anxious about the current curriculum and goals of education met in the United States: New London, New Hampshire. This group came to be known simply as the New London Group (NLG). They were deeply concerned that despite all the money being invested into educational reform, the good intentions of reformers were not improving education for students. The NLG (1996) states in their “programmatic manifesto,” that the “multiplicity of communications channels and media” and the “increasing saliency of cultural and linguistic diversity” (p. 63) have altered society and therefore the educational system needs to change. It is on these two arguments that the NLG constructs a new theoretical approach to curriculum and pedagogy. The NLG (1996) identifies their new curriculum “design for social futures” (p. 73) as “multiliteracies” (p. 63).

According to Rowsell et al. (2008), academic writing often “uses the term pedagogy to refer to an educational position or approach that includes both theory and practice” (p. 110). Therefore, in this dissertation, the pedagogy of multiliteracies will be used to refer to both a theory and a pedagogy. Also, the NLG often refers to this literacy theory and set of pedagogical principles and practices simply as multiliteracies (NLG, 1996; Rowsell et al., 2008). I have adopted this term thus will henceforth refer to a pedagogy of multiliteracies simply as multiliteracies.
How I Came to This Research

According to Dewey (1938, as cited in Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, p. 154), “education, experience, and life are inextricably intertwined.” I recognize that my own experiences in education and specifically literacy have colored and shaped my views on education and ultimately my choices as a teacher, teacher educator, and researcher (Beattie, 2007; Loughran, 2004). In this section I share how my life experiences have influenced me and finally led to this study. This journey started with my educational experiences as a young girl in elementary school.

Early Influences

In my Grade 5 report card, my teacher described me as a “slow and plodding worker.” Outside of school I wrote stories, put on plays, sculpted and painted, engaged in any craft I could lay my hands on, danced, and read voraciously. Actually, I read voraciously in class as well. I propped my Nancy Drew book between my desk and my lap and read to escape the pages of worksheets piled up on my desk. I suspect this was why my teacher considered me a slow and plodding worker. My life outside of school had little relevance to my teacher. Completing worksheets was the only thing that mattered to her.

Elementary school, in general, was a monotonous stream of mindless busy-work that I dreaded. There were even times I feigned illness, hoping my mother would not make me go to school. That was why when my undergraduate mentor, Professor Martin, suggested to me that I become an elementary teacher, I was offended.

Then I remembered my Grade 6 teacher, Nancy Kramer. I never hid a book to read in Mrs. Kramer’s class because she read to us. She selected delightful books I had never heard of:
The Borrowers, The Wind in the Willows, and Beezus and Ramona. In Mrs. Kramer’s class we sat in groups so we could discuss our work. We were allowed to paint murals and write stories for our social studies lessons on James Cook. We learned measurement by following recipes and cooking real food in the staff room. On the morning after Governor General Vanier died, Mrs. Kramer asked me to write a play about him. By lunch time it was written and I was encouraged to pick my actors and direct the play. The next morning, the Grade 5 and 6 classes filed down to the auditorium to watch my play. Everyone learned about Governor General Vanier’s life and came to appreciate the work he did for Canada.

I vividly remember the diorama I created in Mrs. Kramer’s science class: a solar system suspended by string. The best part was my sun, a light bulb inserted through the wall of the box that I could plug in so that my solar system had real light and shadow. Sometimes Mrs. Kramer would get out her ukulele and we would sing even outside of music period. For the first and only time in my young life I experienced joy and stimulation in a classroom.

As a child I did not understand the pedagogical decisions made by my teacher, Mrs. Kramer. I only knew that I was happy. Many years later, when one of my professors suggested I pursue a career in teaching, I paused to reflect on what had happened in that remarkable classroom so many years before. Several months of deconstruction ensued. After pondering Nancy Kramer’s practice, I was less offended by the suggestion that I become a teacher and somewhat challenged. How could I make the classroom as an exciting place for children as Mrs. Kramer did? Stimulation, challenge, engagement, creativity, and knowing my students’ interests became my priorities when I entered teaching. These are the principles of practice that remain with me to this day.
When my first child was born, I left teaching to be a stay-at-home mom. My teaching principles never left me; they were simply transferred to how I raised my own children. Being a stay-at-home mom was a gift. It not only allowed me precious time with my children, it also created a space where my passion for literacy could bloom. I began writing and publishing children’s literature and books for teachers on literacy education. I experimented with digital technology and learned video gaming from experts, my children. I taught night courses in adult education thus expanding my knowledge of pedagogy into andragogy. I started writing and performing curriculum-related programs as a professional storyteller for schools. I was invited to speak and perform at various conferences and professional development events. My interests in literacy broadened to include a wider audience and were expressed through a variety of communication forms.

Eventually, when my children were older, I began working with an international arts-integration program as a mentor artist and educational consultant. This enabled me to work in schools with students and teachers, and deliver professional development in literacy all over the world. No matter what country I worked in, Germany, Portugal, Serbia, Japan, Malaysia, or Greece, my personal priorities (stimulation, challenge, engagement, creativity, and knowing my students’ interests) remained constant.

**Becoming a Literacy Teacher Educator**

In 2008, I was offered a sessional position as an LTE at a teaching-focused university. The department chair who offered me the position said she had seen my work, read my books, and felt I could contribute to teacher education. I accepted the job with enthusiasm. I assumed that my work as a classroom teacher, over a decade of working with curricula and educational policies worldwide, writing books, and having consultant and performance experience prepared
me to teach in higher education. I quickly learned, however, that this was not the case. While I had experience, I lacked theory. Hence, I began a new journey. While teaching, I enrolled in a Master’s of Education program specializing in literacies.

Through my graduate studies I examined my teaching priorities (stimulation, challenge, engagement, creativity and knowing my students’ interests) from a different perspective. The research and theories of Vygotsky, Brice, Street, Gee, Freire, and Luke, which we studied in depth, resonated with me on a personal level. The program helped me reframe my understanding of literacy education and reinforced my belief that the basic skills of reading and writing were simply not sufficient for literate 21st-century students. I also found that I loved learning about the development of literacy, curriculum, and learning, which led me to apply for doctoral studies.

**Facing the Challenges of 21st-Century Teaching**

Rip Van Winkle awakens in the 21st century after a hundred-year snooze and is, of course, utterly bewildered by what he sees. Men and women dash about, talking to small metal devices pinned to their ears. Young people sit at home on sofas, moving miniature athletes around on electronic screens. Older folk defy death and disability with metronomes in their chests and with hips made of metal and plastic. Airports, hospitals, shopping malls—every place Rip goes just baffles him. But when he finally walks into a schoolroom, the old man knows exactly where he is. ‘This is a school,’ he declares. ‘We used to have these back in 1906. Only now the blackboards are [white].’ (Wallis, 2006, p. 50)

This version of Rip Van Winkle’s story immediately resonated with me, partly because of my storytelling background, but also because it touched on a growing concern I had about teaching in higher education. This concern became very clear one afternoon when one of my students approached me and said, “You are the only instructor that uses the SMART board and I really
appreciate it. I mean, we should use it in our practice teaching, but honestly, I’m afraid of it.”

This statement took me aback. Was I the only instructor modeling the use of this tool?

This student also thanked me for implementing a variety of pedagogies in class that were experiential and collaborative. She complained that most of her education classes consisted of lectures and offered no interaction or engagement. I remember feeling discouraged after the conversation. She completely validated my concerns about teacher education. If pre-service instructors were not modeling relevant, engaging, and stimulating pedagogy, how would our student teachers develop these skills? The failure to use technology was only the tip of the iceberg. Were issues of diversity and inclusion being discussed and modeled? Were student teachers being challenged to solve problems, or express themselves through different literacy forms? How many student teachers were still sitting in desks just listening to an instructor talk or write on a white/black board? Images of Rip Van Winkle came to mind. If he walked into current university classrooms and lecture halls, would he feel right at home?

I began to investigate suitable pedagogical practices for the 21st century. What was needed? What was relevant? I began to question my own assumptions. Did my personal priorities (stimulation, challenge, engagement, creativity, and knowing my students’ interests) matter in this age of information technology? Seeking insight and guidance, I enrolled in doctoral studies where I focused on teacher education and 21st-century practices. Exploring a variety of curricular and pedagogical theories eventually led me to multiliteracies (NLG, 1996). This study is a direct result of my quest to examine exemplary literacy models in order to advance literacies practices for the 21st century.
Purpose and Description of this Study

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of how LTEs enact multiliteracies, which I consider a viable approach to 21st-century teaching and learning (NLG, 1996). To gain this understanding I investigated the knowledge, dispositions, beliefs, experiences, and educational practices of six LTEs from three different countries. All of these LTEs demonstrated a proclivity for multiliteracies in their practices.

I obtained my research sample through a grant study funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), in which I am a participating researcher. The primary researcher on this project is Dr. Clare Kosnik from the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. This SSHRC project, entitled *Literacy Teacher Educators: Their Backgrounds, Visions, and Practices*, is studying the beliefs and practices of 28 LTEs in four countries. Being involved in this work enabled me to listen to LTEs’ stories. Without prompting, some demonstrated a familiarity with and/or preference for multiliteracies concepts and practices, yet many did not. This observation supported my desire to investigate the choices of these LTEs. The six LTEs in my study are a subset of the participants in the larger study. I selected my six participants based on a set of criteria that is described in detail in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Research Questions

My overarching research question was: How do LTEs who demonstrate a multiliteracies approach conceptualize their role and actualize their visions of literacy education?

Four subquestions drove the inquiry:

1. How do these LTEs conceptualize literacy?
2. What purposes, goals, and pedagogical practices do these LTEs use in their literacy courses?

3. What challenges do these LTEs encounter while enacting a multiliteracies approach?

4. What influences led these LTEs to adopt a multiliteracies approach?

Using this set of questions as a guide, I constructed an in-depth inquiry into the professional lives and practices of the six LTEs to gain insight into their knowledge, dispositions, beliefs, experiences, and educational practices.

**Situating Myself as the Researcher**

My knowledge of the work of LTEs is first-hand. I also have a keen interest in implementing current 21st-century pedagogies into my practice. I am, therefore, personally interested in how and why my participants actualize multiliteracies. I fully acknowledge that as a practicing LTE, I have opinions about what constitutes an effective literacy course in teacher education. It was therefore necessary to present my own views of literacy teacher education before presenting my findings, as I do earlier in this chapter.

**Theoretical Framework**

My theoretical framework was based on a particular interpretation of multiliteracies theory (Rowsell et al., 2008). This interpretation was selected because of its detail, insight, and location in teacher education. In this interpretation, six key themes of multiliteracies are identified: recognizing a diversity of language forms; combining the old and the new in literacy pedagogy; having a broad concept of literacy; implementing an inclusive, critical approach to literacy; balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives; and using a constructivist, dialogical approach. These six themes are explained in detail in the literature review chapter of this dissertation.
Significance of the Study

The intent of this research was four-fold: to contribute to my own development as an LTE; the development of educational pedagogy in teacher education for 21st-century learners; the advancement of teacher education; and to deepen the understanding of the role of the LTE in the current educational climate.

Advancement of My Own Teacher Education Practices

As stated earlier, my knowledge of the work of LTEs is first-hand. I am an LTE with a keen interest in implementing multiliteracies teaching into my practice. I am therefore personally interested in how and why the participants in my sample interpret multiliteracies. The work of the LTEs in this study, as I had hoped, had a profound effect on my own practice as an LTE. The specifics of my transformation are discussed in the final chapter of this dissertation. It has become evident to me through my work in teacher education that LTEs need leadership, examples, and additional research to help them acquire 21st-century literacy practices. It is my goal to take on this leadership role and assist in as many ways as possible in the advancement of our knowledge of literacies education.

Development of Educational Pedagogy in Teacher Education for 21st-Century Learners

According to Yelland, Cope, and Kalantzis (2008), “curriculum is a consciously designed framework for learning specific bodies of knowledge” (p. 199). However, what bodies of knowledge are necessary in the 21st century? In his speech given at the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (2010), Sir Ken Robinson states:

Every country on earth, at the moment, is reforming public education . . . People are trying to work out, how do we educate our children to take their place in the
economies of the 21st century? How do we do that given we can’t anticipate what these economies will look like by the end of next week? (p. 2)

Unfortunately, Sir Robinson offers no solutions to this dilemma. This dissertation is offered as a partial solution for this problem. LTEs need examples of pedagogy, need to hear voices of other LTEs, need inspiration, and need the hope that reform and transformation are possible. This dissertation, in its modest fashion, hopes to go some way to meeting these needs.

**Advancement of Teacher Education**

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is highly critical of teacher education programs, stating:

> By almost any standard, many if not most, of the nation’s schools, colleges, and departments of education are doing a mediocre job of preparing teachers for the realities of the 21st century classroom[^sic]. America’s university-based teacher preparation programs need revolutionary change, not evolutionary tinkering. (2009, para. 3)

Duncan, like several other critics (Goodlad, 1990; Holmes Group, 1986; Labaree, 2004) blames the ills of education on the lack of preparation of teachers. Ducharme and Ducharme (1996) also acknowledge that teacher education programs and faculty are “the cause of all school problems,” yet they acknowledge these programs can also be the “source of many of its solutions” (p. 705).

Clearly, the conversations about teacher education are polarizing and messy. The controversy about teacher education may be partly due to it being an under-researched area. More studies are needed to understand this highly significant aspect of education.

**The Role of the Literacy Teacher Educator**

Kosnik, Rowsell, Williamson, Simon, and Beck (2013) report that despite the general criticisms of teacher education LTEs continue to work with integrity, commitment, and vision. Cochran-
Smith (2003) refers to teacher educators as “the linchpins in educational reforms” (p. 5). Understanding the contributions this unique group makes to education may be a source of inspiration for other teacher educators, teachers, and administrators. Many may benefit, in some small way, from this study of LTEs and the role they play in education.

**Definition of Terms**

Several terms are used in this study that have multiple or varied meanings depending on the background of the reader. The purpose of this section is to define terms that are frequently used throughout this dissertation.

**21st-Century Teaching and Learning**

*Twenty-first-century teaching and learning* is an educational term referring to the attitudes, skills, and knowledge needed by teachers and students to build a more equitable and ethical society while acknowledging the skills needed to succeed in a global and multimedia-based society.

**Student Teacher**

A student enrolled in a pre-service teacher education program is generally considered both a student in that program and a teacher in training. Hence the term *student teacher* is used.

**Literacy Teacher Educator**

A literacy teacher educator (LTE) is an instructor or professor who teaches literacy courses to student teachers in a university-based pre-service teacher education program. LTEs may teach many kinds of literacy courses: language arts; literacy; English; literacy methods; bilingual education; and/or writing composition. In addition to course delivery, most of the LTEs in this study supervise student teachers’ practice teaching placements.
Practice Teaching

As part of the pre-service teacher education program, a student teacher is generally sent into schools to apply the concepts and skills presented in the teacher education courses. These teaching blocks vary from three to seven weeks in duration. The time spent in the classroom as a practicing teacher is referred to as practice teaching.

Organization of Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters. In the first chapter, I introduce the problem to be researched, briefly describe the journey that led to this research, situate myself as the researcher, introduce the theoretical framework, provide a definition of frequently used terms, and outline the organization of the dissertation. Each chapter concludes with a chapter summary. Chapter 2 outlines the relevant research pertaining to literacy, multiliteracies, teacher education, and LTEs. Chapter 3 focuses on my methodology, the data collection methods, the application of NVivo analysis software, and other methods of analysis. Chapter 4 introduces my participants through detailed individual profiles and describes the contexts in which each of the participants live and work. Chapter 5 introduces the findings organized under eight themes, and explores theme 1, enacting a comprehensive view of literacy and theme 2, enacting a rich pedagogy. Themes 3 and 4, constructing coherent courses and fostering social justice, are explored in Chapter 6. In Chapter 7 I present theme 5, utilizing research; theme 6, negotiating challenges; theme 7, internalizing prior influences and experiences; and theme 8, embracing their roles as LTEs. Finally, in Chapter 8, I summarize the main four findings, and provide conclusions and suggestions for further research.
Chapter Summary

In this chapter I identified how the landscape of literacy has changed. I explained why a study of LTEs was necessary and introduced how literacy practices are changing. A pedagogy of multiliteracies was also introduced. I outlined the journey that brought me to this research and situated myself within the research as a practicing LTE with specific views and opinions. I identified my overarching research questions and four subquestions. I described how I came to the selection of my theoretical framework using the multiliteracies approach. I outlined how the final selection for the theoretical framework was determined. I also provided a definition of terms used frequently throughout the study. This chapter concluded with an outline of the how this dissertation is organized.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This study investigated how six LTEs enact multiliteracies in their teacher education courses. This required an in-depth understanding of the complex responsibilities, priorities, and personal development of literacy teacher educators. This study also required an in-depth knowledge of the theory and pedagogical principles of multiliteracies, how the multiliteracies framework has been interpreted by the academic community, and its role in literacy teacher education today. Therefore, two intersecting bodies of knowledge are the focus of this literature review: multiliteracies and teacher education.

In this chapter I introduce the evolving notions of literacy and how these relate to multiliteracies. This is followed by an examination of the why and how of multiliteracies. The third section provides an overview of scholarly interpretations of multiliteracies. The literature on teacher education and the role of literacy teacher educators is then discussed. This is followed by a description of the theoretical framework used to analyze data for this dissertation. The chapter concludes with a chapter summary.

Evolving Notions of Literacy

Current notions of what literacy is, and how literacy should be taught fall along a broad continuum. Traditionally literacy has been considered a cognitive skill by which an individual decodes written language (Donnelly, 2007; Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005). Atkins (2001) describes this as literacy viewed as a “fixed, individualistic and psychological ability” (p. 11). Consistent with this view is a pedagogy of literacy consisting of the teaching of a
decontextualized set of skills (Alcock & Ngorosho, 2007; Babayigit & Stainthorp, 2010; National Center for Family Literacy, 2008). This narrow interpretation of literacy may still be in practice, however, a growing body of research reveals that many developments are changing notions of literacy.

Globalization, the advancement of technology, and the proliferation of readily available information (Lankshear & Knobel, 2003; Lonsdale & McCurry, 2004; Luke, 1998; NLG, 1996; Pahl & Rowsell, 2005; Street, 1984; Tan & McWilliam, 2009) have led educational researchers to broaden their definition of literacy. For example, the United Nations (UN) now refers to literacy as “multiple literacies” (2008, as cited in Cole & Pullen, 2010, p. 191) as do several other scholars (Ghiso, Spencer, Ngo, & Campano, 2014; Lonsdale & McCurry, 2004; O’Rourke, 2005; Rodgers, 2013; Saudelli & Rowsell, 2013; Street, 2009; Unsworth, 2001). The UN uses this term to acknowledge the economic and technological changes mentioned earlier, but also to acknowledge the “many practices of literacy embedded in different cultural processes” (2008, as cited in Cole & Pullen, 2010, p. 191). For example, many Aboriginal cultures rely more heavily on visual representation than on written language to communicate and make meaning (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). Pahl and Rowsell (2005) define literacy as the ability of a learner to make meaning in a given context. According to Pahl and Rowsell’s (2005) understanding, using and interpreting Aboriginal visual representations, for example, is a form of literacy, as are many other practices in which learners might engage (e.g., listening to music). Cole and Pullen (2010) suggest literacy learners be presented with a “range of ways to make meaning through multiple forms of text that may include auditory, visual and spatial” (p. 192).

This broadened concept of literacy supports the notion that literacy is “multimodal,” as Kress (2003) states in his book Literacy in the New Media Age. In this work, Kress (2003)
suggests literacy is not only auditory, visual, and spatial, but also linguistic, gestural, and various combinations of some or all of these forms. School districts have integrated multiple notions of literacy into their curricula: information literacy (Farmer & Mech, 1992), technology literacy (Leu, 2000a, 2000b, 2002), media literacy (Hobbs & Moore, 2013; Kress & Van Leeuwn, 2001), financial literacy (Pinto & Coulson, 2011), health literacy (Nutbeam, 2008), science literacy (DeBoer, 2000), math literacy (Ozgen & Bindaka, 2011), and digital literacy (Tyner, 1998). I recognize that these various uses of the term literacy are questioned by some researchers, I merely mention them here to highlight the proliferation of different uses of the term.

Knobel and Lankshear (2007) propose that literacy is “socially recognized ways of generating, communicating and negotiating meaningful content through the medium of encoded texts within contexts of participation in Discourses” (p. 4). This is referred to as the social turn of literacy which focuses on the social and cultural aspects of the concept (Barton, 1994/2007; Gee, 2000; Mills, 2009; Street, 1995). According to Gee (2000), the social view of literacy (or literacies) suggests that reading and writing “only make sense when studied in the context of social and cultural . . . historical, political and economic practices, of which they are a part” (p. 180). Rowsell and Walsh (2011) describe the social turn as an opportunity for “viewing literacy as nested within social context and redressing an overemphasis on language and the written word” (p. 55). Halliday (1978) is generally credited with being the first scholar to explore literacy as a social phenomenon. Halliday argues that language cannot be separated from its social processes. Winters (2005) describes Halliday’s theory as a “social semiotic” (p. 65) approach to understanding language and communication practices. This theory recognizes the broad range of examples of literacy embedded in culture, like the symbols of a language or the meanings in gesture.
The foregoing illustrates how varied the definitions of literacy are. The 2007 report of the Canadian Council on Learning states:

Those looking for a simple definition of literacy will be disappointed. There is no single answer to the question, *What does literacy mean?* The reason is that the idea of literacy is not static but constantly changing. The result is that increasingly complex definitions of literacy have emerged [italics in original]. (p. 85)

Therefore, to effectively teach 21st-century students, a broader more encompassing interpretation of literacy is necessary.

**Multiliteracies**

As mentioned in Chapter 1, in 1994 a group of 10 scholars known as the NLG, met in New London, New Hampshire, U.S., to discuss the new demands on literacy education for 21st-century learners. The NLG produced a manifesto outlining a pedagogical framework or approach to learning that they identified as “multiliteracies” (NLG, 1996, p. 60).

The NLG sees literacies as multifaceted and broad. The NLG include the views and positions of a number of researchers: Halliday’s (1978) concept of literacy as a semiotic, socially embedded practice; Kress’s (1993) notion of literacies as multimodal; yet, they also acknowledge the more traditional view of literacy as reading and writing (NLG, 1996). The NLG aims to supplement the traditional view with “modes of representation much broader than language alone” (p. 5). Cultural, economic, historical, and political factors are recognized as major influences on the development of a literate citizen. The NLG expand our understanding of literacies a step further by adding, “curriculum now needs to mesh with different subjectivities, and with their attendant languages, discourses, and registers, and use these as a resource for learning” (1996, p. 72). Thus, multiliteracies recognizes students’ “lifeworlds” (NLG, 1996, p. 65) as a necessary part of their literacy development. The NLG (1996) regard their version of
literacy as “a basis for a new social contract” (p. 72) in which all members of a society are equal and valued. Unlike notions of literacy that identify literacy as “basic” (Smith, 1979, p. 103), “functional” (Canadian Council on Literacy, 2007, p. 86), or “pluralistic” (United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2004, p. 2), multiliteracies represents an all-encompassing notion that includes “mind, society and learning” (NLG, 1996, p. 83).

**Background of Multiliteracies**

Scholars and theorists from fields as varied as anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, semiotics, and education heavily influenced the members of the NLG (Rowsell & Walsh, 2011; Street, 2009). The 10 scholars who attended the 7-day meeting in New London are: Courtney Cazden, Bill Cope, Norman Fairclough, James Gee, Mary Kalantzis, Gunther Kress, Allan Luke, Carmen Luke, Sarah Michaels, and Martin Nakata. These scholars came from three English-speaking countries: United States, Australia, and England. Due to their different ethnicities, backgrounds, experiences, and research interests, each participant in the NLG brought different notions of literacy to the table (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). For example, Allen Luke is a notable scholar in critical literacy, Gunther Kress is well recognized for his work in social semiotics, visual literacy and multimodal theory, whereas, James Gee and Norman Fairclough are leading researchers and theorists in linguistics and discourse theory (NLG, 1996). This diversity is evident in the multiliteracies framework.

Initially, multiliteracies was a pedagogical approach created for teachers in elementary and secondary schools (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). The NLG (1996) defines pedagogy as “a teaching and learning relationship that creates the potential for learning conditions leading to a full and equitable social participation” (p. 60). The social aspect of the NLG’s definition was key to their coining of the term “multiliteracies” (p. 60). With this term the NLG intended to capture
two significant aspects of literacies. The first aspect was the need to address the “multiple modes” or “multimodalities” of meaning-making (Cloonan, 2004, p. 47). These modes allow for much broader possibilities of communicating than the limited affordances of writing and reading. The second aspect of literacies that the NLG hoped to capture was the concept of “social languages” (Cloonan, 2004, p. 48). Social languages are the multitude of different dialects and other sub-cultural differences within languages that signify membership in a particular group. The importance of both multimodal forms of expression and the diversity of social languages led the NLG to identify their concept of literacies as multiliteracies.

In the original multiliteracies manifesto, the pedagogical approach addressed two questions: “What do students need to learn?” and “How should students learn it?” (NLG, 1996, p. 73). The answers to these questions required a multidimensional pedagogical structure which in turn incorporated six design elements.

**The What of Multiliteracies**

At the heart of the multiliteracies framework is the NLG’s concept of design. The term design was very carefully selected so that it could represent both a noun, the designer, and a verb, the act of designing (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). Kumagai, López-Sánchez, and Wu (2016) suggest that the concept of design used in the multiliteracies framework encourages agency and creativity in the meaning-making process because students are recognized as both inheritors of conventions of meaning and active designers of meaning. Cope and Kalantzis (2009) report the NLG used this concept of design to replace “static conceptions of representation such as grammar and the literary cannon” (p. 175) and provide a much more malleable and expressive concept of representation. Further, Cope and Kalantzis (2009) state “all forms of representation, including language, should be regarded as dynamic processes of transformation rather than processes of
The multiliteracies concept of design sees students as producers of knowledge as opposed to mere consumers of knowledge (NLG, 1996).

The NLG (1966) identifies three conventions or forms of design: available designs, designing, and the redesigned. The available designs are the resources that an individual can access (e.g., beliefs, values, ideas) plus any of the resources available to them for making meaning (e.g., language, music, gesture, film; NLG, 1996). These resources are part of a learner’s culture, life world, or identity (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). An example of using available designs is described by Broderick (2014). A group of high-risk students (designers) in an alternative school setting were encouraged to use creative writing exercises, supported by various other art forms (e.g., singing, drawing, painting, poetry recitation), to express themselves in very personal and meaningful ways. In other words, the students used the available resources to design personally meaningful projects. Working in collaboration, the students published a book and CD of their work. One student, identified as KL, reported she always felt “out of place” (p. 202) in her home school, but in her present school, where she was encouraged to use her own lifeworld and subjectivities to express herself, she discovered her own creativity (Broderick, 2014). KL accessed her available designs, and shaped them into poetry and collage art that held deep personal meaning for her.

The final aspect, the redesigned, represents the results of the designing process, or the final product. The NLG (1996) contends that the learner is “transformed” (p. 76) by going through the designing process. Cope and Kalantzis (2009) suggest that educators “provide learning experiences through which the learners develop strategies for reading the new and unfamiliar, in whatever form these may manifest themselves” (p. 177). According to Broderick (2014), KL felt the redesigning indeed transformed her by “mov[ing] her in ways she never
thought possible” (p. 202). Cope and Kalantzis (2009) maintain that the “implications of this shift in underlying the conception of meaning-making are enormous,” and unlike the more traditional forms of expression, multiliteracies requires an “enormous role of agency” in the meaning-making process (p. 175). Cope and Kalantzis (2009) claim that through this process the NLG intended to create a more “productive, relevant, innovative, creative, and even perhaps emancipatory, pedagogy” (p. 175).

Within the concept of design, the NLG identifies six design elements that are key to the meaning-making process: linguistic, audio, gestural, spatial, visual, and multimodal (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). The linguistic is the making of meaning through language (e.g., words both spoken and written), while the audio is making meaning through sound (e.g., sound effects, music, singing). Gestural is making meaning through gesture (e.g., hand gesture, facial expression, movement, dance), spatial is making meaning spatially (e.g., 3-D constructions, sculptures, structures), and visual is making meaning through images (e.g., paintings, drawings, collages, photographs). A student, or designer, interacts with combinations of these design elements or modes of expression (NLG, 1996). The multimodal element is unique in that it represents the interconnectedness of all the modes (NLG, 1996). For example, a website might contain images (visual meaning), sound (audio meaning), and words (linguistic meaning) that a student would have to negotiate through and derive meaning from to understand the messages the website is intended to convey. As digital technology facilitates the use of multiple modes, it is often aligned with the multimodal design element (Eteokleous, Pavlou, & Tsolakidis, 2015; Lynch, 2015; Rabadán, 2015; Tan & McWilliam, 2009). Kress, a founding member of the NLG, identifies the six modes of meaning-making in his theory of multimodality (Hodge & Kress, 1993; Kress & Leeuwen, 2001).
Multimodality theory and the work of Kress heavily influenced the design concept that is central to the multiliteracies approach. Reviewing the multiliteracies literature revealed that the multimodal aspect of multiliteracies is the most well-known and well-documented aspect of the multiliteracies framework (Eteokleous, et al., 2015; Hill, 2004; Kist & Pytash, 2015; Leu, 2000a, 2000b; Lynch, 2015; McNabb, 2006; O'Byrne, Roberts, LaBonte, & Graham, 2015; Rabadán, 2015). This observation is further explored in the Interpretations of Multiliteracies section of this dissertation (see p. 33).

The How of Multiliteracies

Interconnections of the design elements or modes are accomplished through the four pedagogical components or the how of multiliteracies: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice. Gee (2000) refers to the original four components as pedagogical principles that act as a “Bill of Rights for all children, but especially for minority and poor children” (p. 67). The NLG is careful to point out that there is nothing radically new about the four components. In fact, each component represents a long-standing tradition in literacy teaching. The NLG stresses that the members attempted to “find ways to extend existing traditions and practices of literacy that people have so often done in the past” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 240). The following is a brief description of each component, and the traditional pedagogy from which that component was extracted.

The situated practice component suggests that pedagogy must consider “the affective and sociocultural needs and identities of all learners” (NLG, 1996, p. 85). Welcoming students’ lifeworlds (home lives and cultures) into the classroom creates an environment in which students feel secure and will take risks (NLG, 1996). The NLG acknowledges that this component “sits squarely in the tradition of many of the various educational ‘progressivisms,’ from Dewey to
whole language and process writing” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 239). This component is influenced by the writings and theoretical positions of NLG members Fairclough and Gee. Fairclough (2012) is well known for his order of discourse theory which he describes as “the way in which diverse genres and discourses and styles are networked together” (p. 2). Further, he states that our order of discourse represents our “way of being” in the world (p. 2). Gee’s interpretation of discourse with a big “D” is similar to Fairclough’s interpretation. Gee’s (2000) big “D” discourse is an “identity kit” (p. 142) that includes, “people, places, objects, technologies, and ways of speaking, listening, writing, reading, feeling, valuing [and] believing” (p. 128). The situated practice component recognizes and honors students’ ways of being in the world and their identity kits by encouraging teachers to welcome these in the classroom.

The overt instruction component is not, as the name implies, “direct transmission, drills, and rote memorization” (NLG, 1996, p. 86). Rather, it utilizes learning activities that build on what the learner already knows (NLG, 1996). It involves “processes of concept formation, generalization, and theory making” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 241). Its main feature is collaboration in which students are guided by either a teacher or another expert to accomplish a more complex task than they could accomplish on their own. This places the overt instruction component in a tradition of “teacher-centered pedagogies” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 239). The NLG (1996) explains that overt instruction also relates directly to the learning theories of Vygotsky (1978), who argued that certain forms of overt instruction were needed to assist a student when learning new material.

The third component is critical framing. This component emphasizes students’ conscious control and understanding of themselves in relation to “the historical, social cultural, political ideological, and value-centred relations of particular systems of knowledge and social practice”
This involves students “standing back from what they are studying and viewing it critically in relation to its context” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 247). Critical framing comes from the tradition of critical literacy (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). NLG member Luke (1994, 1998, 2000) is a strong advocate of critical literacy and his position is keenly evident in this component.

The final pedagogical component, transformed practice, is a process through which students reflect on the learning that has taken place, and transform it into a new design that is informed by their own goals and values (NLG, 1996). In this way, students are coming back to situated practice, but from a different vantage point because of transformation that occurred through the design process. The transformation is meant to take the learning into a “real world context” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 248). This transformation or act of meaning-making essentially changes the designers by enabling them to do something new (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). This pedagogical tradition is likened to “the transfer of learning from one context to another” or “turning theory into practice” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 239).

The four pedagogical components are not intended to stand alone, nor do they represent stages. Rather, they are related and are meant to overlap in complex ways, sometimes they occur simultaneously, and sometimes one component dominates the others (NLG, 1996). The NLG believe all four components are “necessary to good teaching,” but should not be used in a “rigid or sequential way” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 240). The four components should be put together in various combinations which will enhance, or transform each component (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000).

This detailed summary of the two major parts of multiliteracies, the design aspect and the pedagogical components, is a necessary foundation for understanding its complexities and
underlying theories. This is the foundation for my examination of how educational researchers have, over the past 20 years, selected from, extended, and contested this framework. The extensions, discussions, and even the disclaiming discourses, I believe, were the goal of the NLG. The conclusion of the original manifesto clearly states that it is a “tentative starting point” (NLG, 1996, p. 89). The NLG (1996) openly welcome “multiple and divergent collaborations” that would “make some sort of difference for real children in real classrooms” (p. 89). The manifesto and subsequent book, *Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures* (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000), inspired educational researchers worldwide to rethink, discuss, debate, explore, and implement a wide range of literacy theories and pedagogical strategies. The following section examines a sample of this range of responses.

**Interpretations of Multiliteracies**

This section examines how educational researchers worldwide have interpreted the tenets of multiliteracies and selected, extended, or reshaped all or parts of the framework to serve their own purposes (Mills, 2009). In this section, only three areas of the evolving research are examined: multiliteracies interpreted as art pedagogy; multiliteracies interpreted as literacy and English language arts pedagogy; and multiliteracies interpreted as digital technology pedagogy. There are other areas that could be discussed; however, for the purposes of this dissertation, these three will clearly reveal the range of interpretations that are relevant for the findings.

**Multiliteracies Interpreted as Art Pedagogy**

Although the NLG explicitly state that multiliteracies was originally framed around literacy pedagogy (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000) other pedagogies involving the use of multiliteracies have evolved. One of these is multiliteracies as a facilitator of art education. In his article “Art
Education for New Times” (1997), Duncum explores the need for a redesign of art education, stating: “For art education to have a healthy future, it must be remade. It requires a paradigm shift toward a socially levelled, semiotic conception of culture” (p. 77). Eight years after multiliteracies made its debut in education, Duncum (2004) declared: “To be relevant to contemporary social practice, art education must embrace interaction between communicative modes. The recent concepts of multiliteracy and multimodality are suggested for this purpose” (p. 252). This statement suggests that Duncum identifies both multiliteracies and multimodalities as tools for the paradigm shift he was seeking. Supported by multiliteracies and multimodalities, Duncum (2004) proposes to change “the focus of art education [to] visual culture rather than art” (p. 254). Interestingly, Duncum does not refer to the design aspect of multiliteracies to capture the idea of communicative modes. Instead, he uses the concept of multimodalities. As stated earlier in this chapter, multimodalities was constructed by Kress (1993) and this theory was incorporated into multiliteracies as the concept of design. However, Duncum views these two theories as separate but related. Also notable is the absence of any mention of the four pedagogical components of multiliteracies: situated practice, critical framing, transformed practice, and overt instruction. It is apparent then, that Duncum, for his purposes, identifies multiliteracies only as the six design elements or modes.

In his paper, “Multiliteracies: A New Direction for Arts Education,” Thwaites (1999) recommends the use of the design aspect of multiliteracies to advocate for arts education. Thwaites suggests it is necessary for students to embrace multiple modes of meaning-making to express themselves and a multiliteracies approach allows for many forms of expression. This, in turn, will lead to a needed “climate of cultural and sub-cultural pluralism” (Thwaites, 1999, p. 9). Thwaites, unlike Duncum, suggests that the four pedagogical components, critical framing,
situated practice, transformed practice, and overt instruction, are also necessary for deeper learning in arts education. Therefore, Thwaites views the entire multiliteracies framework as necessary for the development of arts education.

Rolling (2015) views the design aspect of multiliteracies as a collection of communicative tools to be used in the visual arts. Rolling (2015) acknowledges multiliteracies as a means to “interpret and serve as a catalyst for communication across multiple communicative modes and social contexts” (p. 5). Further to this, Rolling views art and literacy as companions, grouping them under the label “creative literacies” (p. 4). Rolling identifies the design aspect of multiliteracies as supportive of his art-in-education philosophy and pays less attention to the four pedagogical components.

Hong, a recognized dance educator and researcher, also sees multiliteracies as facilitating her art form. Hong (2015) states:

Reconceptualised as literacy, dance as a way of knowing and as a way thinking and making meaning, emerges out of the margins and into the lattice-like structure of curriculum and connects both intrinsically and instrumentally to student's lived-lives. (para. 22)

Hong suggests that art educators should develop their knowledge of multiliteracies because their forms of art are the representations that students need to make meaning. Hong also only sees the design aspect of multiliteracies as relevant to her cause.

Ntelioglou (2013) argues that multiliteracies are a means to enhance drama curriculum in her article, “‘But why do I have to take this class?’: The mandatory drama-ESL class and multiliteracies pedagogy.” In her 2013 study, Ntelioglou implemented two aspects of multiliteracies to enhance her drama curriculum: situated practice and multimodalities. Like Duncum, she uses the term multimodalities to refer to the design aspect of multiliteracies.
Ntelioglou implemented situated practice to “create opportunities for students to engage in meaningful experience, [while] making use of their own life experiences” (p. 567). Ntelioglou (2013) used multimodalities to engage the students in “synaesthesia” which involves “shifting between one mode and another” (p. 596). The students accomplished this by writing personal stories, embodying these as “identity texts” (Ntelioglou, 2013, p. 603), and then transforming the stories into theatre. The students felt that embodying or acting out their texts helped them understand and remember difficult vocabulary, and using their own stories made the theatre experience much more meaningful. The students also felt that shifting from one mode to another not only deepened the drama experience, but also assisted them in their writing and reading development. In this way, unlike the previously discussed arts-in-education researchers, Ntelioglou (2013) used her selections from the multiliteracies framework more for literacy development than arts advocacy even though she was teaching drama as a subject.

These examples illustrate how multiliteracies has been adopted and interpreted as pedagogy for three art forms; visual art, dance, and drama. The design aspect of the multiliteracies framework appears to be the most important for all five researchers. Also, the design aspect of multiliteracies emerged as identical to multimodalities. Implementation of the pedagogical components appears secondary, at least in these cases. Selecting only specific aspects of multiliteracies is not unique to arts teachers. The next section explores how English language arts and literacy researchers use aspects of multiliteracies.

**Multiliteracies Interpreted as Literacy Pedagogy**

According to Leander and Boldt (2012), “more than any other text, ‘A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies’ streams powerfully through doctoral programs, edited volumes, books, journal reviews, and calls for conference papers, as the central manifesto of the new literacies
movement” (p. 22). Doctoral programs, texts, and conference papers often focus on the notion of multiliteracies as a pedagogical literacy practice just as the NLG originally intended. Yet, as with the articles and studies that interpret multiliteracies as art pedagogy, the interpretations of multiliteracies as literacy (also known as English language arts and ELA) pedagogy varies enormously. Researchers acknowledge, extend, and select aspects of the original pedagogical principles in a variety of ways.

Hepple, Sockhill, Tan, and Alford (2014) view multiliteracies as a set of literacy practices that provide a creative, student-centered, active-learning approach to teaching and learning. In their study of a highly transient student population of immigrant and refugee children, a multimodal approach to English language learning was creatively explored through the blending of digital media and literacy. Producing claymations—a stop-action filming of clay action figures—the students molded action figures, wrote scripts, discussed the process orally, painted scenery, and made video recordings of their stories. Hepple et al. (2014) refer to this moving back and forth from one mode to another as mode shifting or a synesthetic approach. Notably the terms design and multimodal were used repeatedly in this study, as was term agency to refer to the students’ ownership of their projects. Multiliteracies is the umbrella term under which the multimodal and design approaches fall. The four pedagogical components are not mentioned, however, strategic assistance, a tenet of overt instruction (one of the four pedagogical components), is discussed.

Ntelioglou, Fannin, Montanera, and Cummins (2014) focus on the multimodalities aspect of multiliteracies in their study of English Language Learners (ELLs) from a variety of backgrounds (Cambodia, India, Mexico, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam). Ntelioglou et al. (2014) involved their students in creative writing, digital technology, and drama to develop their English
language skills. Ntelioglou et al. (2014) maintain that the students’ involvement in these multimodal practices increased their “literary investments, literacy engagement and learning” (p. 1). Ntelioglou et al. (2014), like Hepple et al. (2014), suggest student agency is a major development in student achievement that results from using a multiliteracies approach.

Unsworth and Bush (2010) also view multiliteracies as a vehicle to develop young children’s ability to speak English as a second language (ESL). They base their study of primary ESL students on “the articulated teaching of multimodal literacy and curriculum content in integrated programs of classroom learning activities” (Unsworth & Bush, 2010, p. 61). Unsworth and Bush (2010) stress the use of visual literacy “to provide discussion topics during modeled reading/viewing activities” (p. 61). They suggest that using visual texts (e.g., posters, picture books, or diagrams) and having the students develop a metalanguage around those texts (e.g., framing and/or labelling) is teaching through multiliteracies. Although visual text is a design element and metalanguage is a tenet of overt instruction, neither design nor any of the pedagogical components are explicitly mentioned.

Short, Kauffman, and Kahn (2000) maintain that students need “many ways of thinking and responding available to them” (p. 160). They suggest having students respond to a variety of texts using “multiple sign systems” (p. 160), the semiotic term for the six design elements found in multiliteracies. Music, drama, visual art, storytelling, and writing are the modes of expression suggested by these researchers.

Caughlan (2008) addresses the use of arts-based activities in literacy teaching and learning in her article, “Advocating for the Arts in an Age of Multiliteracies.” Caughlan (2008) states “multiliteracies advocates, technologists, engineers, and artists share the concept of design; it denotes experimentation, planning, and artful combination of elements to make something
new” (p. 124). Caughlan suggests that teachers should use the knowledge and expertise of artists and art teachers to enliven their literacy curricula. This would ensure a wider range of multimodal expressions for students.

Evident in the aforementioned studies and articles is a consistent development of the use of arts-based activities while implementing multiliteracies. The design process and the final products were creative and artistic (e.g., claymations, creative writing, visual literacy, drama exercises), yet these activities were not implemented in arts classrooms. There is also a consistent move towards using technology, but this is addressed under the section Multiliteracies Interpreted as Technology Pedagogy (see p. 43).

Olthouse (2013) also suggests using arts-based activities as multiliteracies but uses it to develop gifted students’ abilities. Olthouse utilizes all four of the pedagogical components and multimodalities (as design) in her study about engaging gifted students in an English language arts class. Of the four pedagogical components, Olthouse suggests that situated practice, interpreted as Lave and Wenger’s “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1996, as cited in Olthouse, 2013, p. 248) can have considerable influence on language arts development. Olthouse (2013) adds that the arts, technology, and English had been taught separately, but through multiliteracies these fields work “in concert” (p. 248) which allows her gifted students to be more creative. Olthouse (2013) suggests that multiliteracies holds “a variety of positive potentials for the intersection of language arts and gifted education” (p. 252). In her discussion, Olthouse cites a study by Tan and McWilliam (2009) that suggests that some gifted students could “not see how these open-ended projects would help them in their pursuit of college course credit and high standardized assessment scores, and thus, were more comfortable with a more competitive, sequenced, and traditional approach” (p. 252). However, Olthouse (2013) still concludes that
using multiliteracies in the gifted classroom creates “smart spaces where talent emerges on a daily basis” (p. 252). This is an interesting development in the application of multiliteracies considering the NLG (1996) specifically constructed multiliteracies in the hope of fostering more equitable classrooms. The National Center on Education and the Economy (2008) support the NLG’s notion of equitable creativity stating: “creativity, innovation, and flexibility will not be the special province of an elite. It will be demanded of virtually everyone who is making a decent living, from graphic artists to assembly line workers, from insurance brokers to home builders” (p. 25). The principles of multiliteracies may create “smart spaces where talent emerges,” but it is intended for all students regardless of “culture, language, and gender” (NLG, 1996, p. 61). Although not directly stated intellectual ability should not be a factor when implementing a multiliteracies approach.

Contributing to these evolving discussions on multiliteracies is Cole and Pullen’s (2010) exploration of multiliteracies as a sociocultural approach to literacy pedagogy. They state their presentation of multiliteracies “is distinctive in that it provides coverage of the ways in which multiliteracies permeates educational practice around the world” (Cole & Pullen, 2010, Preface). The authors in this edited volume describe research projects and studies on topics as varied as primary science curriculum, digital technology, assessment practices, and professional development. Cole and Pullen (2010) suggest that “the attribute that perhaps best suits multiliteracies to the contemporary educational scene is its ability to absorb and integrate with other theories of education” (p. 6). They identify “diversity studies” (p. 3), “organizational theory” (p. 3), “leadership theory” (p. 141), and “affect theory” (p. 5) as examples. The research projects described in the book vary in their application of the design aspect and the four pedagogical components, but most favor the use of the design elements.
Interestingly, Bull and Anstey’s chapter, “Using the Principles of Multiliteracies to Inform Pedagogical Change,” in Cole and Pullen’s text (2010) focuses on multiliteracies as the relationship between literacy and pedagogy that can be used as a professional development model. Bull and Anstey state that “while being passionate about teaching literacy is important, being critically reflective and knowledgeable about pedagogy and practice is essential” (p. 142). To accomplish this goal, these researchers implemented several professional development projects for teachers using multiliteracies principles as a vehicle for effecting pedagogical change. Using a 24-point matrix scale, teachers evaluated their knowledge and practice of key characteristics of multiliteracies (e.g., students use a variety of texts; students use and combine semiotic systems; and students use a metalanguage for exploring texts and semiotic systems). Based on the teachers’ responses to the questions, action plans were developed to assist the teachers to achieve their personal pedagogical goals. All participants took some action, some by reading and discussing professional literature, others by changing their practice and having the action validated by a colleague or by using a reflective tool. The goal of the projects was to initiate change in teacher behavior, not student behavior. The conclusion of the study indicates that a focus on pedagogical change using multiliteracies principles contributes to substantial changes in participants’ pedagogical practices.

Boyd and Brock (2015) contribute to the evolving discussion on multiliteracies in their book, Social Diversity Within Multiliteracies: Complexity in Teaching and Learning. In this work, the authors “recount powerful locally contextualized projects focused around literacy digs” (Boyd & Brock, 2015, p. viii). Projects include self-studies and studies of incarcerated youth, sexual orientation, and cultural identity. Although both the design aspect (identified as multimodalities) and the pedagogical components (particularly transformed practice) are
implemented by most of the authors, the overall purpose of the volume is to examine how “social, linguistic, cultural, and economic identities complicate as well as intersect with literacy teaching and learning” (Boyd & Brock, 2015, p. 5). Clearly, the authors see multiliteracies as a means to build on students’ diverse backgrounds and experiences and use these to enrich the classroom experience.

Other scholars also describe successful multiliteracies projects (Antsy & Bull, 2006, 2016; Black & Goebel, 2002; Healy & Honan, 2004; Lewis & Fabos, 2000; Unsworth, 2001). Yet there are also scholars who are quite skeptical about the far-reaching claims of its success. Auerbach (2001) for example, argues that the four pedagogical components are not explicit enough. Street (2009) claims multiliteracies is “too theoretical, and often presented in inaccessible language” (p. 142). Studies conducted by Cope and Kalantzis (2000) included interviews with participants that also gave rise to criticisms. In one such study, a participant stated:

> It is all very well to encourage teachers to become ‘transformative intellectuals’ (Giroux’s term) and urge them to locate and inhabit sufficient material conditions in order to operate efficiently, but the ‘how’ of this remains vague, even confusing. The terminology of ‘design’ related by the NLG typifies an obfuscating discourse, despite its pretensions to be helpful. (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 307)

These critiques, although valid, appear to be generally outweighed by the positive findings. Thus, it is likely multiliteracies will continue to stream through doctoral programs, texts, and journals.

The examples presented in this section demonstrate how varied the interpretations of multiliteracies are even within the literacy pedagogy domain. Whether the goal is to enhance literacy programs using arts-based activities, develop professional practice, or build a socially diverse classroom community, multiliteracies is, in these cases, the method of choice. Yet, there
is an ever-growing body of research that identifies multiliteracies strictly as technology pedagogy. The following section explores cases in which the term multiliteracies is used synonymously with digital technology pedagogy.

**Multiliteracies Interpreted as Technology Pedagogy**

There is a growing body of research that identifies multiliteracies as a pedagogy dependent on the affordances of digital technology (Eteokleous et al., 2015; Kist & Pytash, 2015; Leu, 2002; Lynch, 2015; McNabb, 2006; O'Byrne et al., 2015; Rabadán, 2015). In her chapter, “Multiliteracies: Literacy Learning and the Design of Social Futures,” in Cope & Kalantzis (2000), Carmen Luke addresses cyber-schooling, suggesting that technological change will continue to have “concrete implications for schooling as we know it” (p. 69). Luke reiterates a need to develop critical literacy skills (or critical framing) to enable students to address issues of power and politics; changing concepts of time and space; and market and governmental discourses. She does not, however, suggest that the term multiliteracies be aligned with the use of technology, forsaking the theory and principles behind the practice. Yet, Jacobs (2014) observes, “multiliteracies has become limited in how it describes multiple aspects of literacies and instead has become almost synonymous with digital technology use and the use of popular media” (p. 271). This technological interpretation is timely in that governments and education authorities emphasize the need for students to develop technological knowledge and skills (Ministry of Council on Education, Employment, Training, and Youth Affairs, 2008), but it is a very narrow view of the multiliteracies framework.

An example of how the term multiliteracies has been mistakenly aligned with the use of digital technology can be found in Al-hazza and Lucking (2012). Al-hazza and Lucking state, “dramatic changes in how people access information and communicate with others are often

Perplexed by misuses of this kind, Jacobs (2013) wrote an article addressing “how multiliteracies, multimodalities, digital literacy, and digital technology integration have been confused and conflated within the field of education” (p. 99). As an example of misuse of the terms, Jacob notes that the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the International Reading Association (IRA) uses the terms multimodal and digital interchangeably. Jacobs suggests that the conflation of these concepts by practitioners and researchers is easily understood when major organizations such as the NCTE and the IRA continue to use them interchangeably.

However, not all identifications of multiliteracies with technology are done mistakenly. According to Tan and McWilliam (2009), multiliteracies interpreted as digital technology is just part of the evolution of multiliteracies. Tan and McWilliam (2009) state, “while digitality did not feature prominently in the New London Group’s early work in 1996, more recent work has seen increasing engagement with this critical dimension of twenty-first century [sic] literacies” (p. 214). Further, Tan and McWilliam (2009) claim to contribute “fresh perspectives and more nuanced understandings of how diverse learners and their teachers negotiate opportunities and challenges of the New London Group’s vision of a multiliteracies approach to literacy and learning” (p. 214). Studies on video gaming and digital learning are cited in the work of Tan and
McWilliam (2009) as examples of the NLG’s more recent work\(^1\) (e.g., Gee, 2003, 2007, 2008; Kress, 2003). In the interest of developing this view of multiliteracies as technology, Tan and McWilliam (2009) conducted two multiliteracies initiatives in two high schools. The researchers, staff, and administration of these two schools felt that teaching could be made more relevant for their 21st-century learners if the students were allowed to embrace their “preferred modes of social engagement” (p. 215) in the classroom.

The first initiative involved a carefully selected group of 30 gifted/talented students (i.e., students who displayed creative inclinations towards activities such as creative writing, digital media or graphic design) in a highly affluent area. The second school was considered to be at “the other end of the spectrum of social advantage” (Tan & McWilliam, 2009, p. 215), its student body comprising many newly arrived, refugee students. In both schools, “multimodal social networking virtual learning platforms” (Tan & McWilliam, 2009, p. 221) were used to motivate student learning. Unfortunately, neither initiative was considered to be a success. In the case of the school deemed to have “significant cultural capital,” (Tan & McWilliam, 2009, p. 215), the students steered away from “engaging with this digital learning initiative when they perceived it as a distraction from the core business of test performance” (Tan and McWilliam, 2009, p. 216). Both the teachers and the students perceived their engagement with the multiliteracies project as an obstacle to achieving good grades.

In the school where teachers viewed their primary role as “prepar[ing] migrant students for mainstream schooling in the shortest possible time,” (Tan & McWilliam, 2009, p. 222), the teachers believed that students’ acquiring literacy basics was the priority. These teachers viewed alphabetic literacy as a necessary skill and felt that they had to see that the students had

---

\(^1\) Cope and Kalanzis obtained permission from the members of the NLG to update and revise the work of the NLG. (Cope & Kalanzis, 2009).
“pre-literacy skills before allowing [them] to engage productively with such digital affordances” (Tan & McWilliam, 2009, p. 216). Ironically, Tan and McWilliam (2009) noticed that during the teachers’ professional development session, these students “were observed to be using their iPods during an ICT lesson to download, transfer and share music in their first languages” (p. 221). Tan and McWilliam (2009) conclude that it is difficult to make pedagogical shifts in educational institutions that are “struggling to make sense of, much less come to terms with, the complex and often paradoxical transitions from an industrial age to a globalized conceptual age” (p. 224). They suggest more research needs to be done “in relation to school contexts” (Tan & McWilliam, 2009, p. 223). Notably, the only direct connection to multiliteracies made in this study is the reference to multimodal learning.

Rowsell and Burke’s (2009) study of digital learners, unlike most studies in this area, does not focus on classroom literacy practices. Instead, they focus on observing the affordances of digital technology for the learner outside of the classroom. Rowsell and Burke argue that digital texts have now “entered public debate” (p. 106) and more researchers (e.g., Alvermann, 2008; Buckingham, 2007; Cranny-Francis, 2005; Davis, 2006) are attending to digital literacy practices because “digital reading involves a different logic and set of practices governed by multimodality” (p. 106). In their study of two very different digital learners, Rowsell and Burke explore multimodality and design by observing and interviewing two digital learners as they negotiate their way through two online multimodal texts: the online video games Webkinz and Naruto. In this usage, design, although identified as multiliteracies, refers to four design points (discourse, design, production, and distribution) described by Kress (1993). It does not refer to the design elements that were presented by the NLG in 1996. Rowsell and Burke consistently refer to the multimodal work of Kress (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress 2003) throughout the study,
while stating they “focus on work by the New London Group” (p. 107) to help them interpret the digital interactions as literacy pedagogy. The findings indicate that “the reading skills used by students to bring meaning to their digital practices are much more intricate” than originally thought, as were “the comprehension of design, and a personal engagement with the sites” (Rowsell & Burke, 2009, p. 117).

Borsheim, Merritt, and Reed (2008) identify implementing multiliteracies pedagogy with the integration of technology into the classroom using databases, wikis, and film-editing software. They maintain:

> Literacy teachers must guide students to sophisticated engagement with a variety of technologies, literacies, and pedagogies. Searching, gathering, managing and evaluating online resources, composing multimodal texts for a variety of purposes and audiences, and developing critical consciousness about how we produce and consume texts highlight some of the pedagogical challenges that twenty-first century technologies can help us integrate into instruction. (p. 90)

By including the composing of text and the development of a critical consciousness, Borsheim et al. (2009) present a slightly broader view of the use of technology in a multiliteracies framework than Tan and McWilliam (2009) or Rowsell and Burke (2009). Borsheim et al. (2009) claim, “technology enhances writing more than any other practice” (p. 89) as their students revise more fully if their work is to be posted on a wiki site or in a social media interface. This is because their work will reach a much wider audience and be permanent once it is posted. In summary, Borsheim et al. (2009) suggest a “multiliteracies approach helps students learn to be savvier users and organizers of online resources, use technologies to facilitate revision and collaboration throughout the writing process, and use technologies to achieve authentic goals and reach real audiences for their research” (p. 88).
Building on the previously mentioned studies, Labbo and Place (2010) claim that technology-based literacies need to be embedded into teaching and learning, as do Cooper, Lockyer, and Brown (2013). Cooper et al. (2013) claim that “learners need to be competent both technologically and socially to address the reciprocity between these aspects of the digital world” (p. 94). Using a multiliteracies pedagogical framework, Cooper et al. (2013) brought together technology, information, visual, and media literacy in a program for senior high school students. Using a multiple case study design, the researchers observed and recorded the students analyzing news media (e.g., television, print, online), exploring the news-making process with a local television broadcaster, and producing digital video news stories on local topics. This project demonstrates multiple aspects of multiliteracies, although these were never explicitly identified by the researchers. The students developed critical viewing skills (critical framing), received guided learning from the local television broadcaster (overt instruction), highlighted their own local community (situated practice), and developed new work in a real-world context (transformative practice). These phases of the project also demonstrated synesthesia as the students moved from linguistic mode, to auditory mode, to gestural mode. This project incorporated many aspects of the original multiliteracies framework into the study.

The “Mapping Multiliteracies: Children of the New Millennium” project (Hill, 2004) used all four of the multiliteracies pedagogical components. This 2-year study involved 25 teacher-researchers at 16 sites in 2002 and 20 teacher-researchers at 11 sites in 2003. During the study, the teacher-researchers acknowledged that “children in early childhood have always used construction, drawing or illustrations, movement and sound to represent meaning” (Hill, 2004, p. viii). However, the teacher-researchers believed that, “the newer multimodal technologies would “add to [the] children’s choice of medium to represent ideas and to comprehend the meanings in
a range of texts” (Hill, 2004, p. viii). To make their students’ technology experiences more meaningful and purposeful, Luke and Freebody’s Four Resources Model\(^2\) (1999) was adapted for use with technology. The adapted model or “multiliteracies map” (Hill, 2004, p. 140) was made up of four interrelated quadrants: operate or make various technologies function; make meaning from the technology; critique it and understand its purpose; and take what has been learned and transform it into new learning. This is an example of a technology-focused project that integrates both the design aspect and the four pedagogical components of multiliteracies to achieve its goals.

In contrast with Hill’s (2004) project, Lenter (2016) reports that she originally intended to focus only on digital technology in her multiliteracies project with her Grade 4 students. However, she discovered she had to “make space for considerations of affect, for visceral engagement with the content, and a learning of self as a mind/brain/body in motion” (Lenter, 2016, p. 264). Her initial goal was to enable her Grade 4 students to become designers through digital scrapbooking, but eventually added meaning-making using many other modes: role play, movement, gesture, and writing. In the end, she admits she developed a much broader view of multiliteracies, and acknowledges that her students becoming digital designers was only the tip of the iceberg.

It is evident from the literature that within the view of multiliteracies as technology pedagogy, as with the other previously mentioned uses of multiliteracies, the range of possibilities is extensive. As the dialogue on multiliteracies continues and our notions of literacy

---

\(^2\) Four Resources Model:
1. Coding practices: Developing resources as a code breaker
2. Text-meaning practices: Developing resources as a text participant
3. Pragmatic practices: Developing resources as a text user
evolve, this range of interpretations will likely continue to expand. In the next section I examine the second intersecting part of the literature for this dissertation, teacher education.

**Teacher Education**

*The Importance of Teacher Education*

Darling-Hammond (2006) states that, “parents have long known, and researchers have recently confirmed, that a child’s teacher can make a bigger difference to his or her educational success than most school variables” (p. 19). These variables can include factors as significant as class size and class composition (Sanders & Horn, 1994; Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997). Sanders and Rivers (1996, as cited in Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 19) report:

Students who are assigned to a succession of highly effective teachers have significantly greater gains in achievement than those assigned to several ineffective teachers in sequence; the influence of a good or bad teacher affects a student’s learning not only in that year but also in later years.

Further, Ferguson’s (1991, as cited in Darling-Hammond, 2006) analysis of Texas school districts challenges the long-held presumption that students’ socioeconomic background determines educational success. Ferguson states that a “teacher’s expertise . . . accounted for more of the interdistrict [sic] variation in students’ reading and mathematics achievement in grades one through eleven than student socioeconomic status” (1991, as cited in Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 21). The aforementioned studies indicate effective teachers are one of the keys to student success. However, this research begs an answer to the all-important question, how does a teacher become effective?

According to Futrell (2010) “there is a direct link between teacher education programs, the quality of the teaching profession, and the viability of our education system” (p. 438).
Logically, teacher effectiveness and the subsequent quality of an education system should begin with the programs that train the teachers. Yet, Darling-Hammond (2006) reports that, “despite a growing consensus that teachers matter, the role of teacher education in teachers’ effectiveness is a matter of debate” (p. 19). The following three sections discuss the issues surrounding the role of teacher education, teacher educators, and specifically, literacy teacher educators.

**The Role of Teacher Education**

i. *The complexity of teaching.* Teaching is a complex and demanding profession, perhaps “even more complex than law, medicine or engineering” (Darling Hammond, 2006, p. 34). For example, unlike medicine or law, teachers work with groups of 25 to 30 students at once and must tend to a range of needs and subjectivities. Lampert (2001) suggests:

> One reason why teaching is a complex practice is that many of the problems a teacher must address to get students to learn occur simultaneously, not one after another. Because of this simultaneity, several problems must be addressed in a single action. (p. 2)

Schon (1983) refers to the ability to make decisions in the moment as reflection-in-action. To accomplish this, Darling-Hammond (2006) suggests teachers must be adaptive experts capable of sophisticated judgments, while Cappelo and Farnan (2006) refer to this necessary skill as “professional judgement” (p. 67). But more is required than the ability to make judgments.

Goodwin (2012) characterizes the deeply relational aspect of teaching as “a practical art” (p. 47) in which “human emotions, individuality, and values are at the heart” (p. 47), and this adds to its complexity. Then there are the basic components of teachers’ skills: lesson planning, classroom management, teaching, strategies, content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and a deep understanding of human development (Goodwin, 2012). As well, teachers must be able to manage the demands placed on them by administrators, parents, school districts, and colleagues.
(Liston, Whitcomb, & Borko, 2006). Further to this, Kooy and Veen (2012) declare “teachers are the portals through which any initiative for change and reform is realized” (p. xviii). Learning about and developing the skills needed to enact these multiple facets of teaching, reform, and change can be daunting for the prospective teacher and the teacher educator (Goodwin, 2012; Kosnik, Dharamshi, et al., 2014; Loughran, 2006, 2014). Complicating the process of teacher education are the many perspectives regarding who, what, and how a prospective teacher should be prepared (Goodwin, 2012).

Currently, there are many different kinds of teacher education. A substantial body of research suggests it matters which kind of teacher education a prospective teacher receives (Berry, 2007; Bullough & Gitlin, 1995; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Grossman & Schonenfeld, 2005; Hoban, 2005; Holt-Reynolds, 1999; Korthagen, Kessels, Koster, Langerwarf, & Wubbels, 2001; Loughran, 2006; National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 1996; Shulman, 1987). In the following two sections I discuss two approaches to teacher education and teacher accreditation: the traditional university preservice program and the alternative accreditation of teachers.

**ii. Traditional preservice teacher preparation programs.** In a traditional university preservice preparation program, “students of teaching seek to develop knowledge and skills of teaching and learn to completely apply these in practice” (Loughran, 2006, p. 4). According to Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012), “Finland, Singapore, and Canada have forged a clear purpose and direction for a universally strong teacher preparation enterprise” (p. 151). For example, in Canada a preservice program can vary between a 5-year educational degree; an 8-month to 2-year post-baccalaureate program; or a 2-year master’s level program which also follows a university undergraduate degree (Kosnik et al., 2011). Successful completion of any of
these programs certifies the student teacher to teach in an elementary or secondary school. These preservice programs offer such courses as classroom management, child development, educational law, and the arts in education, and usually include practicums (e.g., five- to seven-week primary classroom placements, four- to five-week senior school classroom placements) in which student teachers have the opportunity to teach with the aid and guidance of a mentor teacher.

Goodwin (2012) explains that the university preservice program is based on the assumption that “teaching is a complex endeavor that requires the acquisition of ‘scholarly understanding’” (p. 46). Schulman’s (2004, as cited in Goodwin, 2012, p. 46) seminal work in teacher education suggests that this scholarly understanding consists of “specialized knowledge and methods acquired through formal study and apprenticeship. Schulman (2004) identifies seven categories of knowledge: content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values. Schulman’s work inspired research into the specialized knowledge required for teaching. Kosnik and Beck (2009) identify seven key elements of preservice preparation: program planning, pupil assessment, classroom organization and community, inclusive education, subject content and pedagogy, professional identity, and a vision for teaching. These elements reach far beyond areas of knowledge, touching on the range of complex skills, attitudes, behaviors, and expectations a teacher education program should address to adequately prepare a prospective teacher to meet the needs of students in 21st-century classrooms.

However, Goodwin (2012) points out that even though proponents of this view of teacher education “highlight the work of numerous scholars who have carefully conceptualized what
teaching knowledge includes” (p. 46), critics of this approach to teacher education abound. As noted in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, like several other critics (e.g., Goodlad, 1990; Holmes Group, 1986; Labaree, 2004; US Department of Education, 2011; Zeichner, 2005), is highly critical of traditional teacher education programs. In Duncan’s (2009) online press release he refers to teacher education programs as “mediocre” and in need of “a clear standard of quality” (para 3). Goodwin and Kosnik (2013) report, “indeed, US public policy discourse is crowded with opinions about how teacher quality should be defined, what teacher preparation should include—or exclude—and if teacher preparation is even necessary [italics in original]” (p. 335). Critics argue that “selecting teachers who score high on tests of general ability would produce a more effective teaching force” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 28). One result of this extensive public criticism is the development of many alternative accreditation programs.

**iii. Alternative teacher accreditation.** In contrast to the university preservice program, Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012) report:

> England, the United States, the Netherlands, and Hong Kong have, to varying extents, developed a range of ‘market driven’ pathways into teaching . . . [Candidates] can participate in a range of different preservice preparation models or undertake a pathway that provides ‘on-the-job-training,’ generally through a graduate program. Some teachers can receive a permit to teach before receiving any training. (p. 153)

This alternative accreditation model of teacher accreditation often proposes that content knowledge is the sole necessary requirement for teacher preparation and teacher certification. The philosophical assumption underlying this view is the perception of teaching as an innate ability as opposed to a set of learned and refined skills (Ballou & Podgursky, 2001; Goodwin, 2012; Hess, 2002; Murray, 2016; U.S. Department of Education, 2002).
In the United States, for example, the 2001 *No Child Left Behind Act* identifies “a highly qualified teacher . . . as one who holds a bachelor’s degree, has full state certification and has demonstrated subject area competence in each subject area taught” (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, p. 5). This Act allowed each state to “create alternative routes” (U.S. Department of Education, 2002, p. 4) to teaching certification. According to Imig and Imig (2008), the NCLB Act “promoted greater access to teaching as a way to improve teacher quality, embracing both ‘competitive’ and ‘alternative’ certification policy tools” (pp. 899–900). As a result of the Act, 11 states developed certification-by-examination passports: by paying a fee, a candidate earned “a credential that deem[ed them] a highly qualified educator” (Goodwin, 2012, p. 49).

An example of an alternative teacher training program in the United States is Teach for America (TFA) which has attracted thousands of applicants (Goodwin, 2012). These recruits are from elite universities and are accepted based on their grade point averages. A candidate receives a few weeks of training or “boot camp” (Goodwin, 2012, p. 49) before being assigned to a school to assume the duties of a qualified teacher. These candidates are touted as proof that “bright, committed individuals can teach without formal teacher training” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 29). Raymond and Fletcher (2002) state:

> TFA corps members are an admittedly select group of college graduates, culled from the finest universities and often performing near the top of their class. . . . It’s possible that traditional certification programs and pedagogical training are less necessary for them than they are for the typical teacher. (p. 68)

Further, Hess (2002, as cited in Goodwin, 2012, p. 51) suggests these programs “fill critical teacher shortages and connect talented university graduates or career changers to students who would be otherwise be taught by an endless procession of weak teachers.” Yet, reports regarding
these candidates’ success in the classroom suggest, “general academic ability is helpful and important but insufficient by itself for knowing how to teach students who may struggle to learn” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 30). Further, in a school equity lawsuit in California, *Williams v. California*, the plaintiffs charged “many students were deprived of their basic right to an education by lack of expertise represented by the flood of underqualified teachers” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 25). One teacher who entered the profession on an emergency credential status, and who later attended a traditional teacher preparation program stated, “I believe that emergency-credentialed teachers, generally speaking, are not going into classrooms with enough tools, nor are they going in with appropriate lenses for looking at classrooms” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 27). Although the United States and other countries are proponents of alternative pathways to teacher credentialing, Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012) conclude, “those that bypass student teaching and offer little pre-service training . . . appear to have the least productive outcomes for their recruits and the students they teach” (p. 137).

Clearly, “developing teacher education that consistently and powerfully influences practice is not an easy matter” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 34) and controversy regarding approaches to teacher preparation will continue to rage. In the next section, I discuss the responsibilities and challenges of the educators who teach the teachers: the teacher educators.

**Teacher Educators**

*A Multidimensional Role*

The term teacher educator has carried varied meanings throughout the decades. Ducharme (1986) classifies teacher educators as “school persons, scholars, researchers, and methodologists” (p. 3), while Jackson (1975) uses the terms “professional disciplinists, generalists, and
pedagogists” (p. 78). Lanier and Little (1985) describe teacher educators as “those who provide college and university course work for prospective teachers” (p. 76). Dinkelman (2011) describes the teacher educator’s role as “multiple, fluid, always developing, shaped by a broad range of sociocultural power relationships, strongly influenced by any number of relevant contexts and relational” (p. 309). Loughran (2014) most closely captures the meaning of the term teacher educator as it is used in this dissertation with the definition, “those who work in tertiary institutions and are largely involved in the teaching of prospective teachers enrolled in a preservice teacher preparation program” (p. 272). Although the primary role of the teacher educator, as suggested by Loughran (2014), is to teach prospective teachers, the other definitions provide insight into the multiple dimensions of the role.

Teacher educators do have to be scholars, researchers, generalists, course designers, pedagogists, and experts in their discipline but in this current educational climate they also have to be: androgogists—capable of recognizing the needs of adult learners; contextual consultants—capable of interpreting current political trends and initiatives; reflective practitioners—capable of analyzing their own assumptions and biases in order to grow professionally; and, democratic leaders—capable of leading with and modeling the cooperation, fairness, and equity needed in a globalized world (Goodwin & Kosnik, 2013). Further to this list, Lunenberg, Dengerink, and Korthagen (2014) add five dimensions to the teacher education role: teacher of teachers, coach, curriculum developer, gatekeeper, and broker. Clearly, the demands, responsibilities, and complexities of the teacher educator’s role are extensive.

**Challenges in Developing the Role**

Considering the demands and complexities of the role, there is surprisingly little attention paid to the preparation and professional development of the teacher educator (Ducharme & Ducharme,
1996; Goodwin & Kosnik, 2013; Kosnik & Beck, 2009; Loughran & Berry, 2005; Margolin, 2011; Smith, 2005). Murray (2005) reports, “few studies have looked at the professional experiences and induction needs of new teacher educators . . . new teacher educators are in general an under-researched and poorly understood occupational group” (p. 68). From country to country, the one consistent primary qualification required of a teacher educator appears to be prior teaching experience (Berry, 2007; Dinkelman, Margolis, & Sikkenga, 2006a; Lunenberg & Hamilton, 2008; Zeichner, 2005). Goodwin and Kosnik (2013) ask if this is sufficient. Russell (1997) professes:

> Becoming a teacher educator (or teacher of teachers) has the potential (not always realized) to generate a second level of thought about teaching, one that focuses not on content but on how we teach . . . This new perspective constitutes making the ‘pedagogical turn’, thinking long and hard about how we teach and the messages conveyed by how we teach . . . I have come to believe that learning to teach is far more complex than we have ever acknowledged in teacher education or in society generally [italics in original]. (p. 44)

Loughran’s (2006) seminal work on developing a pedagogy of teacher education takes Russell’s suggestion that teacher educators need to make a pedagogical turn. Loughran (2006) proposes that teacher educators need to go “beyond the traditional notion of modeling” (p. 6) good teaching skills and instead operate on two levels for their student teachers: teaching about teaching (content) and learning about teaching (methodology). Unfortunately, most universities do not provide professional development for new teacher educators. As mentioned in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, overcoming the sense of inadequacy that often overwhelms new teacher educators as they try to teach themselves this new teaching approach can take years (Kosnik, Menna, et al., 2013; Murray & Male, 2005). Goodwin and Kosnik (2013) emphatically state:

> The question of how teacher educators should be prepared and supported to grow into their new role is one that cannot yet be answered. This question can only be addressed if the profession first agrees on a fundamental principle – that
teacher educators need formal preparation and induction [italics in original]. (p. 343)

The “Green Paper on Teacher Education in Europe” (Buchberger, Campos, Kallos, &. Stephenson, 2000) also emphasizes the importance of professional development for teacher educators. In this work, the authors argue there needs to be “coherent initial as well as a continuous in-service teacher education for teacher educators” (Buchberger et al., 2000, p. 58). Beyond the need for induction support, Kosnik et al. (2015) ask: “What kind of professional development is needed for teacher educators to survive, thrive and be effective in this challenging context?” (p. 55). This is answered, at least in part, by their study of 28 literacy teacher educators from four countries (Canada, the U.S., England, and Australia). This study found that professional development was so “important for both new and experienced faculty” (Kosnik et al., 2015, p. 69) that they constructed their own professional development programs. Three broad categories of professional development are identified in the study: informal (e.g., reflective practice, conversations with colleagues, team planning); formal (e.g., attending/presenting at an academic conference, editing a journal, conducting self-study research), and communities of practice. Although these activities were professionally satisfying for the teacher educators in the study, creating their own professional development “added yet another layer of responsibility” to an already long list of responsibilities (Kosnik et al., 2015, p. 70). Research indicates that the role of the teacher educator is significant and the responsibilities associated with that role continue to mount.

Due to the significant role a teacher educator plays in preparing teachers, the burden of dealing with reform falls to teacher educators. Goodwin and Kosnik (2013) suggest “given the critical role teacher educators can – and should – play in educational reform, attention to their
preparation, knowledge, and quality becomes more important than ever” (p. 336). Yet, Furtell (2010) states it is not enough that teacher educators play a role in reforming education. Instead she suggests they should be transforming education, a broader and much deeper task. Furtell (2010) boldly declares:

> It is time for those of us in teacher education programs not only to transform our programs but to be in the forefront effort to transform our educational system at every level, not for our sake but for the sake of today’s children, future generations, and the future of America. (p. 439)

This enormous burden of educational transformation is being placed squarely on the shoulders of teacher educators. And much of this responsibility will fall on the shoulders of literacy teacher educators. The reasons for this are explored in the next section.

**Literacy Teacher Educators**

**Unique Responsibilities**

Literacy teacher educators (LTEs) are a unique subgroup within teacher education, faced with distinct responsibilities and challenges (Kosnik, Menna, et al., 2013). For example, LTEs are primarily responsible for teaching prospective teachers the knowledge and skills needed to effectively implement language learning, which, according to the Toronto District School Board (2011), “is the most powerful tool learners have for developing ideas and insights, for giving shape to their experiences, and for making sense of their world and their possibilities in it” (p. 1). To teach the knowledge and skills needed, LTEs must cope with the currently shifting literacy landscape. Goodwin and Kosnik (2013) argue that literacy curriculum can no longer be:

> Delivered in the usual way: through discrete units, often topic-focused courses, arranged in a sequence that culminate[s] in some kind of field practice. Rather teaching [has] to be more sophisticated, conceptual and flexible, not tightly bound
by subject, instructional method, or technique, and . . . conceptualized as holistic and integrated. (p. 343)

This means LTEs must deliver literacy education in an entirely new way. It also means student teachers cannot rely on the perceptions of teaching they developed as elementary and secondary school students. Lortie (1975) suggests “education students have spent years assessing teachers and many enter training with strong perceptions based on firm identifications” (p. 66). Lortie refers to these strong perceptions as an “apprenticeship of observation” (p. 81) that affect student teachers’ “pedagogical decision-making” (p. 81). As a result, “many LTEs want their student teachers to ‘unlearn’ many of their present assumptions and adopt an enlightened, rich view of literacy” (Kosnik et al., 2014, p. 59). To help their students reshape their assumptions, LTEs must develop their own enlightened and rich view of literacy. Kosnik, Dharamshi, et al. (2014) report that LTEs need knowledge in four areas: research, a pedagogy of higher education, literacy and literacy teaching, and current school district and government initiatives. However, other researchers have published their own list of the knowledge and skills in which teacher educators should be proficient: problem-solving, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and innovation (Canadians for 21st Century Learning & Innovation, 2012; CISCO Systems, 2008; Fullan, 2011; Gee, 2007a; Grunwald, 2010; Spires, 2008). Evidently the list of demands on this unique group of teacher educators continues to grow. Given the influence of LTEs’ beliefs, understanding of knowledge, practice, and learning, Smith and Rhodes (2006) argue that it is imperative that more attention be given to their work. Understanding their work, and the changes they must adapt to, could lead to the transformation of education that many factions of society are demanding.
Literacy Teacher Educators’ Use of Multiliteracies

Recent literature indicates that there is a small group of literacy teacher educators exploring multiliteracies as a viable means of staying current and preparing future teachers to deal with 21st-century learners. In the book, *Literacy Teacher Educators: Preparing Teachers for a Changing World* (Kosnik, Rowsell, et al., 2013), 23 LTEs describe their practice and the current issues facing them. Many identify multiliteracies by name or describe some aspect of multiliteracies as part of their practice. For example, in their chapter, “Walking the Talk: Towards a Notion of Multiliteracies,” Saudelli and Rowsell (2013) describe their use of several multiliteracies components in their 3rd-year undergraduate course, Critical Literacies in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Saudelli and Rowsell (2013) state “it was a challenge, to say the least, for the two of us to devise ways of situating practice, teaching overtly, and critically framing texts with such a large group of students spread across a large space” (p. 49). They acknowledge the difficulties LTEs face in trying to implement a new pedagogy.

Similarly, Skerrett (2011) examines her implementation of multiliteracies in her adolescent literacy course and discusses the challenges that arose. Daunted by the complexity of the pedagogy and her student teachers’ resistance to new forms of education, Skerrett only implemented the situated practice component. She was then surprised to discover that by experiencing their own in- and out-of-school literacies, her students developed a positive attitude towards multiliteracies pedagogy.

Elsden-Clifton (2008) uses an action-research study to examine the tension created when she implemented a multiliteracies pedagogical framework in her 3rd-year course, A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies. She discovered that the alternative framework and alternative assessment generally caused her 127 preservice students “discomfort, frustration and unease about their
learning” (p. 40). But one year after the course, Elson-Clifton was delighted to receive the following email from one of her students:

I finally now get the course. It was about encouraging us to consider what our role as teachers is; how we can scaffold students’ learning, how we can effectively understand and respond to students’ concerns and feelings, how to provide students with helpful support, how to encourage students to learn and bounce their ideas and views off each other. . . . Not everything in life is clearly defined, and nor should the tasks we ask our students to engage in we want to encourage creative people who can think and make decisions for themselves. (p. 47)

Elson-Clifton (2008) felt she had to practice what she preached and, although she was taking a risk, she concluded that the multiliteracies framework, “enabled [her students] to look at themselves, their views about teaching and what a good teacher is” (p. 47).

Walsh and Durrant (2013) lament “it is puzzling to reflect that so little has been achieved in integrating multiliteracies” (p. 211). Eteokleous, et al. (2015) concur stating “there is a lack of pre- and in-service teachers’ training in developing multimodal material and designing learning environments where multiliteracies are achieved” (p. 66). Some literacy teacher educators are clearly trying to implement the framework, in whole or in part, but much more work needs to be done. Yet Kosnik, Rowsell et al. (2013) remain hopeful that literacy teacher education is, at least, heading in the right direction.

**Theoretical Framework**

Considering the various interpretations of multiliteracies discussed, and how these interpretations diverge from the original intentions of multiliteracies, it was important to me, for the purposes of this study, to remain as connected as possible to the principles and theory of multiliteracies as they were presented in the original manifesto (NLG, 1996). It must also be understood, however, that multiliteracies was created for educators in elementary and secondary schools (Cope &
This study focuses on teacher educators in departments of preservice teacher education. Teacher educators have different needs, different demands on their practice, and require different pedagogical knowledge than elementary and secondary school teachers (Loughran, 2006). It was therefore necessary to create a framework for this study locating multiliteracies within teacher education.

**Multiliteracies From a Teacher Education Perspective**

Rowsell et al. (2008) identified six key themes of multiliteracies for teacher education:

1. Recognizing a diversity of language forms;
2. Combining the old and the new in literacy pedagogy;
3. Having a broad concept of literacy;
4. Implementing an inclusive, critical approach to literacy;
5. Balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives;
6. Using a constructivist, dialogical approach.

These key themes, in my opinion, are closely connected to the multiliteracies framework set forth in the original multiliteracies manifesto (NLG, 1996). Rowsell et al. (2008) selected these key themes so that teacher educators would have “more familiar terms” to work with and to offer interpretations of multiliteracies “in areas of ambiguity” (p. 109). As these key themes represent the main messages of the original multiliteracies framework, yet highlight the distinctions that need to be made to enact multiliteracies within teacher education, I deemed these themes are suitable as a theoretical framework for this study. Therefore, I used these six themes to organize and analyze the data collected for my six participants. Following are descriptions of the features of each of the six central themes outlined by Rowsell et al. (2008):

1. **Recognizing a diversity of language forms.** This theme emphasizes that “one of the central ideas of multiliteracies pedagogy is that there are many types of literacy” (p. 110).
The authors also state that “many modes of communication” (p. 110) should be acknowledged and supported. I understand these modes to be those identified in multimodalities theory (Kress, 2003).

**ii Combining the old and the new in literacy pedagogy.** The wide range of literacies suggested above may lead to the fear that many literacy basics (e.g., phonics, grammar) will be lost or dropped. However, Rowsell et al. (2008) maintain, in support of the NLG’s intention to supplement what educationalists already do well, that teachers need to find ways to teach more than one form at a time (e.g., journal writing with blogging or paragraphing skills with emailing). Rowsell et al. (2008) recommend “enhancing of traditional literacy pedagogy” and also “modifying” or “refining” it (p. 111).

**iii Having a broad concept of literacy.** The third theme suggests that LTEs broaden their understanding of literacy to include a “multiplicity of discourses” (p. 111) that recognize the different literacies practiced by different students. For example, some students may be more inclined towards popular cultural or media literacies, or functional literacies as opposed to aesthetic literacies. All should be honored and included in classroom practice.

**iv. Implementing an inclusive, critical approach to literacy.** Rowsell et al. (2008) suggest this theme is perhaps the most fundamental to the multiliteracies pedagogy. This theme places an emphasis on “recognizing minority and marginalized voices” (p. 112). This is an inclusive
approach to literacy intended to make students more aware of the “ideological, political, and other forces that privilege certain literacies over others” (p. 112).

v. Balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives. Rowsell et al. (2008) maintain that the NLG emphasizes “sociocultural phenomena” (p. 113), specifically ideological, political and/or economic realities that advantage some groups over others. To deal with this phenomenon, Rowsell et al. (2008) suggest that LTEs be aware of “community lifeworlds” as well as “individual identity” (p. 113). The authors argue that the individual point of view, although mentioned by the NLG, is not well enough supported, and they offer this theme as an expansion to the NLG’s original work.

vi. Using a constructivist, dialogical approach. Rowsell et al. (2008) propose that the NLG clearly “support progressive educational approaches,” which they interpret as “constructivism” (p. 114). This is accomplished by building on students’ subjectivities and what they already know (Luke, 2000; NLG, 1996). Another aspect of constructivism stressed by Rowsell et al. is Friere’s (1970, 1972, 1994) “dialogical nature of learning” (Rowsell et al., 2008, p. 114). This co-construction of knowledge is basic to learning in the multiliteracies approach.

These six key themes represent not only Rowsell et al.’s (2008) interpretation of multiliteracies, but my own priorities in implementing an effective literacy teacher education program. My vision for education is inclusive and progressive. I believe that multiple forms of literacies and multiple modes of expression are necessary aspects of education for 21st-century teaching and learning.
Chapter Summary

I opened this chapter with an overview of current notions of literacy and literacy practices. Then I presented a review of the literature on two intersecting bodies of knowledge: multiliteracies and teacher education. I reviewed the background of multiliteracies, the what and how of multiliteracies, and various applications of multiliteracies: multiliteracies as art pedagogy; multiliteracies as literacy pedagogy; and multiliteracies as technology pedagogy. The second body of knowledge, teacher education, was then explored. Within the topic of teacher education, its importance, the role of the teacher educator, and different approaches to teacher education were examined. Following this, the role and challenges facing teacher educators were discussed, and an overview of the uniqueness of literacy teacher educators was given. The chapter concluded with a description of the theoretical framework for this study that situates the multiliteracies framework within teacher education.


CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how LTEs conceptualize their roles and actualize their visions of literacy education in the context of a multiliteracies approach. Six experienced LTEs agreed to participate in this study, which explored in depth: their perceptions and beliefs about literacy and literacy practices; challenges and successes in their role as an LTE; backgrounds and educational experiences; and the turning points that most influenced them as LTEs. This study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the nuances and complexities of this role.

Recent research into teacher education has touched on aspects of the role of the LTE; however, much more research is needed. For example, Kosnik et al. (2014) opened one line of inquiry with their large-scale study of mid-career and senior LTEs, which examined how LTEs handle the multiple challenges they face, their views on their work, and how they developed their role and pedagogy over time. Yet, further studies are needed to examine the factors that lead LTEs to create specialized practices, especially around current literacy trends. Further, there exists a body of research looking at the effects of early experiences on the professional lives of teachers (Benson, 2003; Bullough, 1997; Sunstein & Potts, 1998), yet, there has been very little research investigating the early childhood and educational experiences of teacher educators. Therefore, more extensive, holistic, and detailed accounts of the influences on LTEs are needed. Finally, more research is needed on the specialized practices, shifting identities, and influences on LTEs who use a multiliteracies approach. A systematic investigation into the lives and work
habits of LTEs using a sensitive yet thorough approach was needed. This study was designed to meet that need. To accomplish this a qualitative methodology was used.

According to Patton (2002), qualitative research can be “time-consuming, intimate, and intense” (p. 35), but it places “social interaction and social processes at the center” of inquiry (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 6). It was thought that the sensitive probing needed for this study would be best accomplished through personal interactions, that is, a social process. Hence, a qualitative methodology was deemed most appropriate. The qualitative methods implemented in this study enabled me to conduct an in-depth study of a unique subgroup of teacher educators.

In this chapter I discuss the methodology used in this study. First, I explore the features of qualitative research methodology and describe the qualitative methods that were selected for this study. This is followed by a discussion of the data collection and data analysis strategies used. Limitations of the study and the ethical considerations are also examined.

**Qualitative Research Methodology**

The province of qualitative research, accordingly, is the world of lived experience, for this is where the individual belief and action intersect with culture. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 2)

Although qualitative research has made enormous contributions to our understanding of society and “lived experience” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 2), the evolution of qualitative research has not occurred without a struggle (Denzin, 2009; Denzin & Giardina, 2006; Hatch, 2002). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) report that positivists have, over the years, referred to qualitative researchers as “‘soft’ scientists” and “journalists [who] write fiction, not science, [and] have no way of verifying their truth statements” (p. 2). Yet, social scientists persisted in challenging the status quo, maintaining that positivist approaches were far too limited for a full exploration of human
problems and issues (Della Porta & Keating, 2008; Webb, 2001). Cannella and Lincoln (2004) argue for qualitative research in education:

The experimental quantitative model is ill-suited to examining the complex and dynamic contexts of public education in its many forms, sites, and variations, especially considering the subtle social difference produced by gender, race, ethnicity, linguistic status, or class. (p. 7)

Further, Creswell (2007) states:

Quantitative measures and statistical analyses simply do not fit the problem[s] . . . To level all individuals to a statistical mean overlooks the uniqueness of individuals in our studies. Qualitative approaches are simply a better fit for our research problem[s] [italics in original]. (p. 40)

Exploring human problems and issues demands methods that are more inclusive, flexible, and interpretive (Creswell, 2007). As the so called soft scientists continued to tackle the most complex of issues, recognition that there was a need for a postmodernist paradigm grew. Eventually, the paradigm debate subsided, and qualitative methodology took its place in the world of research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

With the general acceptance of qualitative research advocates for this methodology have continued to deepen and refine our understanding of how and when it is to be used. Although the practices of qualitative researchers vary, some standard features have emerged. For example, Creswell (2005), Lecompte and Schensul (2010), Marshall and Rossman (2006), and Hatch (2002) all identify the central characteristics of effective qualitative research. Creswell’s (2007) list, presented here in no particular order, includes all the characteristics noted by the previously mentioned scholars:

1. Occurs in natural or field setting;

2. Researcher is the key instrument of data collection;
3. Multiple data sources are used;
4. Analysis is inductive;
5. Focus is on participants’ perspectives and meanings;
6. Design is emergent rather than tightly prefigured;
7. Acknowledges a theoretical lens;
8. Fundamentally an interpretive inquiry through the understandings of the researcher;
   and
9. Develops a holistic or complex picture of social phenomena.

These characteristics represent a basic overview of what is required in a qualitative study. Examination of this list in relation to this dissertation revealed that all of the basics were present. However, the examination also revealed characteristics that were not included in this list. Merriam (1998) also lists key aspects of qualitative research. Although the list is shorter than Crestwell’s (2007) list it contains unique features that were particularly relevant to this study:

1. Often chosen as a methodology when there is a lack of theory about a phenomenon;
2. Richly descriptive;
3. Assumes that reality is constructed by individuals as they interact with their social worlds.

Merriam’s (1998) first point identifies a significant reason why this dissertation needed to be qualitative in nature. As noted in Chapter 2, little research exists regarding the use of multiliteracies by LTEs; hence, no theory could be located that specifically examined this phenomenon. Therefore, a theory had to be developed for this study. For this reason, a grounded theory approach was used, which is an approach often used in qualitative research. This inductive strategy is further explored in the Grounded Theory section of this chapter.
Merriam’s (1998) characteristic “richly descriptive” also describes a key component of this dissertation. As a researcher I was interested in detailed accounts of my participants’ lives. I hoped to develop a holistic picture of how and why they developed the way they did. Therefore rich descriptions were a necessity in this study.

Finally, the assumption that reality is constructed by individuals as they interact with their social worlds was perhaps the most significant characteristic in relation to this dissertation. This aspect touches on my own belief system. Recognizing how my philosophical paradigm, world view, affected my decision to use a qualitative methodology is explored in the next section.

**Why I selected a qualitative methodology**

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) propose, “qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality . . .” (p. 14). As this study was a social inquiry, a qualitative methodology was the most logical choice for collecting, organizing, and analyzing the data. However, this choice was also supported by two key factors: how well this methodology fit with my research intentions and with my own philosophical paradigm.

Denzin and Lincoln’s (2005) broad definition of qualitative research recognizes the interpretive and contextual characteristics I required for this study:

> Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible . . . This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

It was my intention to make the lives of my literacy teacher educators visible so that others might learn from their experiences. It was also my intention to interpret my participants’ past and
present experiences, make connections among these experiences, and draw conclusions from my analysis of them. Punch (2009) states, “method and data used (qualitative, quantitative, or both) should follow from, and fit in with questions being asked” (p.4). Beyond understanding the pedagogical practices of my participants, my research questions sought to explore deeply their perceptions, views, and knowledge. This required a methodology that enabled me to ask not only questions about their professional lives, but also about their childhood experiences and key turning points in their lives. Some latitude was required so that I could gently probe their initial responses for deeper, more revealing answers. To accomplish this, qualitative methods were imperative.

The second factor that influenced my decision to use a qualitative methodology was how well this approach aligned with my philosophical paradigm. Guba and Lincoln (1994) note that qualitative research reflects the values of the researcher and is always influenced by his or her beliefs. Further, Guba and Lincoln (1994) argue that “questions of method are secondary to questions of paradigm, which we define as the basic belief system or world view that guides the investigation, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways” (p. 105). As a researcher, being aware of my belief system and being able to reflect this in the research design was integral to the success of this study.

I view reality as a subjective representation of multiple views (Creswell, 2007). This reflects my relativist ontology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). For example, I valued and hence encouraged the use of the participants’ own words to provide evidence of different perspectives on the same topic. Plus, I recognized that the political context of each participant deeply influenced his or her actions in the classroom, structures of courses, and methods of handling challenges.
My epistemological view also supports my use of qualitative methodology. As a subjectivist, the me as the knower responded to and co-created meanings with the participants, as part of the research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). My knowledge of the work of literacy teacher educators was first-hand. I was personally invested in how and why my participants implemented multiliteracies theory or components thereof.

My philosophical assumptions, both ontological and epistemological, indicate my worldview is that of a social constructivist (Creswell, 2007). Fundamentally, I believe that individuals are socially, culturally, and historically constructed beings. As a social constructivist researcher, I maintain that through sensitive probing and careful analysis, deep meaning can be obtained from the LTEs’ accounts of their lives, especially in relation to their specific context. Merriam (2009) suggests that qualitative research is often described as interpretive research, which assumes that reality is “socially constructed” and “[holds] multiple perspectives” (p. 8). Patton (2002) also describes qualitative research as being grounded in a social constructivist framework. Hence, qualitative methods are compatible with my social constructivist worldview.

Using three in-depth interviews, I was able to collect extensive data from my participants that provided rich descriptions of their lives, opinions, intentions, and actions. Through these descriptions I was also able to recognize myself as the researcher responding to their accounts of their lives. This could only be done using a qualitative approach, confirming that this approach was the best fit for my research goals.

Research Questions

Agee (2009) indicated that qualitative research questions should reflect “what a researcher wants to know about the intentions and perspectives of those involved in social interactions” (p. 432).
My research questions were developed to support my interest to examine the intentions and perspectives of the LTEs in this study. My overarching research question was: How do LTEs, who use a multiliteracies approach conceptualize their role and actualize their vision of literacy education? The following four subquestions guided my inquiry:

1. How do these LTEs conceptualize literacy?
2. What purposes, goals, and pedagogical practices do these LTEs use in their literacy courses?
3. What challenges do these LTEs encounter while enacting a multiliteracies approach?
4. What influences led these LTEs to adopt a multiliteracies approach?

Three semi-structured interviews of approximately 60-90 minutes were conducted with each participant to collect data pertaining to these questions. The purpose of each of the three interviews is discussed later in this chapter.

**Participant Selection**

   *Participant selection for the larger study.* As previously mentioned in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, the six participants in this study were selected from a group of 28 LTEs who participated in a larger study entitled, *Literacy Teacher Educators: Their Backgrounds, Visions, and Practices*. As a member of the research team for the larger study, I was involved in the coding of these participants and became deeply interested in the findings. Eventually I expressed an interest in studying a select group of participants from this study for this dissertation.

The 28 LTEs in the larger study were full-time faculty at universities in four countries: Australia, Canada, England, and the United States. All participants had a Ph.D. and were teaching literacy courses in teacher education programs. Not all of the participants were tenure-stream, some were contract lecturers. The 28 participants had a range of backgrounds including:
classroom teachers, consultants, ministry officers, and literacy teacher educators. The gender ratio of the participants (M=9; F=21) reflected that of the profession as a whole (Ducharme & Ducharme, 1996).

ii. Participant selection for the present study. The six participants selected for my research, LTEs who use a multiliteracies approach, were selected from the larger study using a “purposeful sampling strategy” (Creswell, 2007, p. 76). Creswell (2007) suggests that purposeful sampling be used to select “individuals and sites for the study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (p. 125). The participants in this case were selected because they would best help me, as the researcher, “form the theory” (Creswell, 2007, p. 64).

Drawing on my own experiences as an LTE and my knowledge of multiliteracies, developed three indicators to guide my purposeful sampling. The first indicator was based on the LTE’s use of specific terminology in reference to multiliteracies pedagogy and names of scholars in the field of multiliteracies during their interviews. Terms and phrases such as “multimodality,” “cultural contexts and different settings,” and “multiliteracies” are some of the terms used by participants that identified them as suitable for my study. Names of prominent scholars in the field of multiliteracies, such as Kress, Peabody, Street, Luke, and Cope and Kalanzis are examples of names mentioned during the interviews that I considered an indication of their approach to literacy.

The second indicator used to select my participants from within the larger study was evidence that the participants used a multiliteracies approach in their teaching as defined by Rowsell et al. (2008; i.e., recognizing a diversity of language forms; combining the old and the new in literacy pedagogy; having a broad concept of literacy; implementing an inclusive, critical
approach to literacy; balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives; and using a constructivist, dialogical approach). Some of the questions that were helpful in determining if the participant was suitable were: What are the particular goals for this course? and Tell me about your teaching style.

The third and final indicator used for the selection was based on a variety of documents. Some information regarding these documents was obtained through questions about the participant’s experience with research. Examples of the participants’ current research and publications, biographies, and curriculum vitae, as these were accessible online or in research libraries, were considered. As a result of the multiple data sources, an in-depth profile was compiled for each individual. These were used to verify whether the individual understood and used multiliteracies practices and theory and thus could “contribute to the development of the theory” (Creswell, 2007, p. 128) of this study. The result of using these three indicators was a solid purposeful sample.

Eight LTEs in the larger study fit the selection criteria. However, because of the amount of detail I hoped to capture in this qualitative study, a sample of eight was too large. I intended to use both case study analysis and a grounded theory approach. Creswell (2007) recommends four participants for case studies in a dissertation but many more for a grounded theory approach (20-30). As I wished to keep the number of participants for this dissertation manageable, I compromised at six participants and limited the scope of the context to three countries instead of the four used in the larger study. One of the countries I chose was my own, Canada, because I was already familiar with this context. I explore the political contexts of teacher education for each participant in this study in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.
Grounded Theory

Grounded theory approach was the “research strategy” used for this dissertation (Punch, 2009, p. 130). This approach profoundly affected the collection, organization, and analysis of the data I collected from my participants. Grounded theory is widely considered to be one of the most powerful approaches for interpreting multiple perspectives on a given phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Over the years, scholars have generally agreed that the primary purpose of grounded methodology is to generate theory from data rather than using data to confirm a previously conceived hypothesis (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Creswell, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Punch, 2009; Strauss & Corbin, 2000). Charmaz (2011) identifies the grounded theory approach as a qualitative inquiry in which “analysis reciprocally inform and shape each other through an emergent iterative process” (p. 360). Charmaz (2006) describes the process:

Grounded theory involves taking comparisons from data and reaching up to construct abstractions and simultaneously reaching down to tie these abstractions to data. It means learning about the specific and the general and seeing what is new in them then exploring their links to larger issues or creating larger unrecognized issues in entirety. (p. 181)

The grounded theory approach is most often used, as it was in this study, when theory on a given topic is limited or simply does not exist.

Glaser and Strauss (1967), the sociologists who first wrote about the grounded theory approach in their seminal work, The Discovery of Grounded Theory, suggest a highly rigorous structure to follow using open coding, prescriptive axial coding, selective coding (which includes identification of causal conditions), and summarizing the conditional matrix. Even though the grounded theory approach was intended for qualitative inquiry, the underpinnings of the original approach were positivist in nature, according to Charmaz (2006), due to Glaser's rigorous
training in quantitative methods while at Columbia University. However, the work of Charmaz (2000, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2016) has more recently situated grounded theory approach within a social constructivist paradigm. For example, in Glaser and Strauss’s approach, researchers are expected to remain objective towards the participants and the data (Straus & Glaser, 1967) while Charmaz (2000) suggests the researcher needs to develop a relationship with the respondents. Further, Glaser and Strauss (1967) maintain that a theory is to be discovered in the data, whereas Charmaz (2000) suggests that data be constructed between the researcher and the participant through an “interactive process and its temporal, cultural and structural contexts” (p. 524). Finally, the constructivist strategies (e.g., initial coding, focused coding, theoretical coding) that Charmaz (2000) suggests are much more flexible and responsive to the participants than Glaser and Strauss’s (1967) prescriptive coding techniques and conditional matrix strategies. As this study was approached through a constructivist world view, Charmaz’s (2000, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2016) constructivist interpretation of a grounded theory approach was the most suitable view for this study.

**Grounded Theory Approach in this Study**

Generally, in a grounded theory approach, the researcher relies on the data to construct a theory. However, one of the criticisms of grounded theory is that it can rely “too heavily on the empirical data expecting an explanation to exist within the accumulated data” (Denscombe, 2003, p. 128). Denscombe (2003) suggests modifying grounded theory to allow researchers to incorporate existing theories into their analysis. Therefore, using Denscombe’s (2003) advice, my use of the grounded theory approach was modified by Rowsell et al.’s (2008) six key multiliteracies themes, which I used as my theoretical framework. This enabled me to more specifically locate
my understanding of multiliteracies in teacher education and it provided a more structured framework for the analysis of the data.

It should also be noted that Glaser (1978, 1992, 1998, 2003, 2005,) and Glaser and Strauss (1967/2009) suggest that the development of the literature review in grounded theory research should be delayed in order to avoid bringing preconceptions to the data analysis. However, Denscombe (2003) maintains, “researchers cannot be entirely free from the influence of social conditioning and previous theorizing when it comes to analysis of their data” (p. 124).

Further, Charmaz (2006) states:

Do we begin coding as a tabula rasa, encased in theoretical innocence and substantive ignorance? Not a chance. Karen Henwood and Nick Pidgeon’s (2003) stance of theoretical agnosticism makes more sense. They argue that grounded theorists should subject prior theories to rigorous critical analysis rather than ignoring or denying them. I have long advocated acknowledging and grappling with our starting points and standpoints and the shifting positions we make and take as our studies proceed [italics in original]. (p. 4)

In accordance with Denscombe (2003), Charmaz (2006), and other constructivist scholars (Barbour, 2003; Bryant, 2003; Dey, 1999; Layder, 1998), I conducted my literature review early in the data collection process. I therefore recognized, from the onset, the influences the relevant literature had on me, particularly in regard to multiliteracies. This also enabled me to be acutely aware of which interpretation of multiliteracies my participants subscribed to during the data collection and analysis process.

Data Collection

Data Collection Sources

The data collection strategies for this study were selected in accordance with a grounded theory approach. Creswell (2007) suggests “interviews play a central role in the data collection in a
grounded theory study” (p. 131). Moreover, Charmaz (2006) states “intensive qualitative interviewing fits grounded theory methods particularly well” (p. 28). Accordingly, interviews were the primary data source for this study. Secondary sources were also used including: participants’ course syllabi; institutional web sites; and articles and books published by the participants.

Glaser (2003) suggests that “all is data” (p. 1). Therefore, every piece of information I obtained regarding my participants was data for this study. However, Charmaz (2006) refines Glaser’s statement by suggesting it is up to the researcher to discern which data are useful and purposeful. Further, Charmaz (2006) proposes, “a study based on rich, substantial and relevant data, stands out” (p. 18). To determine if my data was rich, substantial, and relevant, I considered the following questions posed by Charmaz (2006, pp. 18-19):

- Have I collected enough background data to understand and portray a full range of contexts?
- Have I gained detailed descriptions of my participants’ views and actions?
- Do the data reveal what is beneath the surface?
- Are the data sufficient to reveal changes over time?
- Have I gained multiple views of my participants’ range of actions?
- Have I gathered enough data to enable me to develop analytic categories?
- What kinds of comparisons can I make within the data and how does this data inform my ideas?

Affirmative answers to these questions made it clear to me that my data was indeed rich, substantial, and relevant. The data collected through the primary and secondary sources provided
very detailed and complex information that were as varied as each participant’s context. The data were extensive, including examples from participants’ early childhood experiences to present day teaching, which enabled the creation of many analytic categories. Finally, the richness of the data allowed many comparisons to be made among the participants which informed my coding, category-building, and theory-construction.

**Interviewing**

The body of rich data collected was largely due to the three in-depth interviews conducted for this study. Charmaz (2006) describes such interviews as ones that permit “an in-depth exploration of a particular topic with a person who has had the relevant experiences” (p. 25). Through the three interviews I sought to deeply understand my participants interpretations of their life stories and professional practices. Moreover, Patton (2002) suggests the purpose of interviewing is to “enter into the other person’s perspective” (p. 341). Merriam (1998) notes that interviews provide researchers with information about behaviors, feelings, and events that they often cannot observe, particularly regarding past events. The interviews in this study provided me with such information due to two factors: the number of interviews and the length of time spent on each interview. First, three interviews, as opposed to one or two interviews, enabled the participants to add to the details of their past experiences as they occurred to them over the whole period of data collection. For example, one participant added more details about her past influences with each interview. Secondly, these interviews were conducted over a three year period from April 2012 to February 2015. This length of time enabled me to view changes in my participants’ circumstances and collect their views about the changes. As a result I was able to establish general patterns of behavior, and their fundamental attitudes towards their life work.
Charmaz (2006) states “an interview is contextual and negotiated. Whether participants recount their concerns without interruption, or researchers request specific information, the result is a construction – or reconstruction – of reality” (p. 27). Through the three intensive interviews I was able to reconstruct the reality of my participants by listening to, reviewing, interpreting, and analyzing their stories. I also recognized that my negotiations and interpretations during and after the interviews related to my own experiences as an LTE, which influenced how I made sense of the data.

**Overview of the Interviews**

As previously mentioned, the six LTEs in this study were recruited from the participants in a larger study entitled, *Literacy Teacher Educators: Their Backgrounds, Visions, and Practices*. The data collection process in this study was drawn from the larger study, therefore the same interviews were used with some adaptations. Some of the interviews were conducted face-to-face, but most were conducted using video conferencing tools (e.g., Skype, Zoom, Face Time). Each interview was audio-taped, transcribed, and member checked. The length of each interview varied, but they generally lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. The interviews explored the research questions outlined earlier in this chapter. The format for each interview was semi-structured and most of the questions were open-ended in that they sought more than a yes or no response or simple factual answer. Merriam (1998) astutely describes semi-structured interview questions as “open-ended but directed, shaped yet emergent, and paced yet flexible” (p. 28). The questions for these interviews were the same for each participant which made similarities and differences clear, but probe questions were also used. The probe questions enabled the interviewers on the research team to respond to unexpected or interesting participant responses as needed. Following every interview, data were recorded in an Excel spreadsheet to capture
quantifiable data (e.g., years as a classroom teacher) and qualitative data (e.g., Ph.D. research topics).

**Adaptation of Interviews for this Study**

Generally, the participants in the larger study were asked the same questions as my participants were for this study; however, probe questions were added when participants made reference to multiliteracies practices. The six participants for this study were identified (through purposeful sampling) by the end of the second round of interviews in the larger study. During the third round of interviews in the larger study, the six participants identified for this study were asked an additional set of questions that related specifically to their interpretation of, interest in, and use of multiliteracies.

**Focus of the First Interview**

The main purpose of the first interview was to explore the personal history of the participants. The questions were divided into six sections: educational and professional experiences; qualities (in their view) of an effective literacy educator; identity (e.g., their academic community); turning points in their career (personal and professional); research activities; and general questions designed to allow participants to elaborate on the themes touched on in the first five parts of the interview. The first section explored participants’ educational background and early experiences with literacy. Questions included: Tell me about your work experience at the university. What jobs/positions did you have prior to joining the university? Thinking about your previous educational experiences and work experiences which do you see as being most useful in your current work as a literacy teacher educator? Can you tell us about your own early school experiences with literacy?
The second section of the interview examined participants’ perceptions of the qualities of effective LTEs. An example of a question from this section is: What background/work experiences do you think are important for a teacher educator? The third section consisted of questions about the participants’ academic community, and their identity as literacy teacher educators. Questions from this section included: What conferences do you go to? When you are asked by someone outside of the university what you do, how do you describe your job/profession? How comfortable are you being labeled a teacher educator?"

The fourth set of questions were designed to elicit the participants’ perceptions of the turning points in their professional and personal lives: Were there any turning points in your career? The fifth section pertained to the participants’ experiences with research. Participants were asked about the emphasis of their Ph.D. as well as their current research activities. Questions from this section included: Had you always planned to get a Ph.D.? If not, when did you decide to pursue a Ph.D.? To what extent is your Ph.D. research connected to your current work as a teacher educator? Do you think it is important for teacher educators to do research?

The questions in the last section were used as an opportunity for the participants to add to or clarify any information shared during the interview. This enabled participants to broaden and/or deepen the information they had just shared. Some of the questions posed at this time included: Tell me about any other education-related experiences that you have had (e.g., writing literacy textbooks for students, acting as an external consultant for an organization). To what extent have these experiences influenced your practice as a teacher educator? This section also served as a way to wrap up the interview. The final question posed allowed the participants to briefly reflect on the interview and add any personal comments they may have not had a chance
to say: Any other comments you want to make about being a literacy teacher educator are welcome.

**Focus of the Second Interview**

The second set of interviews took place approximately 10 to 12 months after the first interviews. While the first interview focused primarily on the participants’ backgrounds and identities, the second interview focused more on their pedagogies and practices. This interview was highly significant in revealing the participants’ attitudes towards multiliteracies. The interview questions were divided into four sections: framework and goals of their literacy courses; pedagogies used and examples of enactment; assignments and readings; and shifting views and practices of literacy education. The participants were asked to consider one literacy course they were currently teaching or had recently taught as they responded to the questions, (e.g., assignments, course structure); however, at times, the LTEs reflected on other courses they had taught. Questions posed in this section included: How many hours are in this course? Generally, how many students are in this course? Do you have a Teaching Assistant? Answers to these questions provided a clearer picture of their teaching context. Next, participants were asked about the goals of their course. Questions from this section included: Is this a survey course or do you go in depth with topics? What do you think student teachers need to know? To what extent are you able to connect your course with fieldwork/practice teaching?

The next sections of the interview were designed to explore the participants’ pedagogies, practices, assignments, course readings, and changes in practice. During this interview participants were also asked to provide a course syllabus. Although the course syllabus provided an outline of assignments and readings, the interview created a space for participants to describe their courses in detail. Through our discussions, participants’ motivations for incorporating the
particular assignments and readings they had were made clear. Sample questions from these sections included: Is there something you hold dearly to your heart that you want to be part of your teaching? To what extent do you use children’s literature and/or adolescent literature in your teaching? How do you use it? Looking back over the years how has your practice as a literacy teacher educator changed? Why has it changed?

Initially, the second interview also included a set of questions about digital technology practices; however, for two reasons these questions were held over for the third interview. First, the participants spoke extensively about their practices and pedagogies, so asking questions about digital technology would have caused the interview to be overly long, risking the onset of participant fatigue. Second, throughout the second interview many participants mentioned examples of their use of digital technology revealing differences in their attitudes and familiarity. As a result the initial interview questions about digital technologies had to be reworked taking this new information into account. The revised set of questions was used in the third set of interviews.

**Focus of the Third Interview**

In the third and final interview, all participants from the larger study were asked four sets of interview questions; however, the participants selected for my study were asked an additional set of questions specifically focusing on their interpretation and use of multiliteracies. The third interview opened with questions encouraging participants to update the interviewers on their literacy activities. This section included questions such as: What have been some highlights of your work this past year? On the flip side, have there been any challenges you want to tell me about? The questions on multiliteracies followed: Are you comfortable referring to yourself as a multiliteracies instructor? Tell me more about your understanding and use of multiliteracies? The
third section included questions regarding the participants’ views of their current teacher education program: What would you consider to be poor practices in teacher education? What would you like to see in your teacher education program that is currently not part of it?

The fourth section of this interview included the questions on digital technology originally intended for the second interview. Extensive questions on the participants’ views and uses of digital technology were asked. For example, participants were asked to consider the advantages and challenges of digital technology and to describe uses of digital technology they have observed. Additionally, there was a set of questions that asked the participants to rank their views on different aspects of digital technology using a Likert scale from one to five, with one being the lowest and five being the highest. Participants were asked: How comfortable are you using digital technology in your teaching? How important is it for literacy teacher educators to use digital technology in their teaching? The interview wrapped up with a final set of questions about the participants’ future professional plans: Where would you like to be in five years, personally and/or professionally? What advice would you give new LTEs? For the final section, participants were asked to provide a metaphor representing their view of what it is like to be an LTE in this current climate: Being a literacy/English teacher educator in the 21st century is _______. The interview questions for all three interviews are included as an appendix to this dissertation.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began soon after the first few interviews were transcribed. This was in accord with the principles of grounded theory inquiry. In this kind of research, data collection and the analysis are viewed as an “inductive and iterative process of going back and forth” (Charmaz, 2008, p. 168). Creswell (2007) describes this process as a “zig zag” in which the researcher goes
“out to the field to gather information, into the office to analyze the data, back to the field to
gather more information, into the office, and so forth” (p. 64).

Although many scholars who subscribe to grounded theory use different terms and
described a variety of pathways to achieve a grounded theory, all concur that “qualitative
coding” (Charmaz, 2006, p.43) is the process to be used to analyze the data (Bryant & Charmaz,
2007; Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Glaser & Strauss, 1967/2009; Strauss & Corbin,
2000). In fact, Strauss (1987) insists “any researcher who wishes to become proficient at doing
qualitative analysis must learn to code well and easily. The excellence of the research rests in
large part on the excellence of the coding” (p. 27). Different levels of coding have been
suggested by grounded theory scholars to facilitate the analytic process; however, due to the
constructivist paradigm in which this study was situated, the grounded theory interpretations
primary view. In the next section, I identify each coding level, describe the purpose of each level,
and explain how these levels pertained to the larger study and this particular study.

Coding

i. Initial coding. Charmaz (2006, p. 2) describes qualitative coding as “a comparative,
iterative, and interactive method,” that involves “asking analytic questions” about the data that
has been gathered (Charmaz, 2006, p. 42). Charmaz identifies the first level of coding as “initial
coding” and considers initial coding the “bones” or “working skeleton” of an analysis (Charmaz,
2006, p. 45). Through the coding process the researcher defines what is happening in the data
and begins “to grapple with what it means” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 46). This is accomplished by
“categorizing segments of data with a short name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts
for each piece of data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 43). The purpose of initial coding is to “fracture the
data into separate pieces” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 60). Further, Creswell and Miller (2000) describe the act of initial coding as identifying salient words and phrases that are related to the research questions and any other category or theme that emerges.

Merriam (1998) suggests that, ideally, the first transcripts analyzed should be “clear” in that they be “richly descriptive” and have few disruptions (e.g., phrases transcribed as “XXX” because transcriber could not hear what was being said (p. 7). Therefore, three clear transcripts were selected to begin the process. As suggested by Saldana (2015) these were coded by hand on hard copies, before using electronic means to develop a feel for the coding process. Each transcribed interview was read several times, line by line, and important words, phrases and sometimes entire sentences were “coded” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 49) The significant words or phrases were identified with a label that succinctly described the meaning or action behind what was said (e.g., collaboration with other LTEs). Each collection of data was then referred to as a “code” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 49). Corbin and Strauss (2008) succinctly explain the difference between codes and coding stating, “coding is the verb and codes are the names given to the concepts derived through coding” (p. 67). It should be noted that, at this level, although the data was technically being “categorized” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 43), theoretical categories were not yet being formed.

After the initial coding of the first three transcripts, the transcripts were imported into NVivo 9 software and all subsequent transcripts were coded directly in NVivo. NVivo 9 software allowed “rigorous interrogation of the data” (Crowley, Harre, & Tagg, 2002) and could easily accommodate the enormous amount of data being generated through the coding. As new codes were formed (e.g., early childhood experiences, educational background, qualities of teacher educators) categories began to emerge across the transcripts. Subcodes were also
developed for several of the codes (Saldana, 2015). For instance, the code, qualities of a teacher educator, had four subcodes: relational qualities; qualities-knowledge; qualities-dispositions; and qualities-own strengths and talents. The code identity also had four subcodes: academic community; conferences and journals; labels; and validation.

Throughout the iterative analysis process of all three interviews, new codes were constantly being formed. Eventually, 110 codes were developed after merging and collapsing codes and subcodes. For example, the code, time spent, was merged with the code, work activities, as the content was similar. The first set of interviews gave rise to approximately 43 codes and subcodes; the second approximately 40 codes and subcodes; and the third approximately 27 codes and subcodes. Sometimes a code developed from one interview set would also be used for a subsequent interview set. For example, the codes, bridging theory and practice, and, influence of context, were developed in the first interviews and were also used as codes in the second and third interviews. Additionally, NVivo9 allowed for double- and triple-coding of content. This allowed for more nuanced coding because the same data often related to more than one code.

**ii. Focused coding.** Through the making of constant comparison while coding the properties of the data, relationships between the emerging categories became more and more evident. This indicated the coding had entered into the “focused coding” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 46) level of analysis. In this level of coding, as more selective and conceptual connections were made between the categories “focused codes” and “conceptual categories” were developed (Charmaz, 2006, p. 91). Corbin and Strauss (2008) recognize that the first two levels of coding go “hand in hand” and “distinctions made between the two [levels] of coding could be interpreted as artificial” (p. 198). This was why it was often difficult to determine when initial
coding ended and focused coding began. Annotations and memos (which were made directly in NVivo9 software) were also created and analyzed in this level. Additionally, with the use of NVivo9, queries were conducted to understand relationships between biographical data and other data. For example, matrix queries were run to explore the connection between years in service at university and goals for the literacy course.

iii. Theoretical coding. The third or final level of analysis is identified by Charmaz (2006) as “theoretical coding” (p. 63) even though she does not view the researcher as coding per se. Charmaz (2006) describes this level of analysis as “integrative” and suggests this final level “not only conceptualize[s] how your substantive codes are related, but also move[s] your analytic story in a theoretical direction” (p. 63). Corbin and Strauss (2008) describe this final level as “probably the most difficult part of doing analysis because it requires sifting and sorting through all the memos and looking for cues on how all the categories might fit together” (p. 275). At this level the research team was able to identify relationships between the categories. This integrated the categories on a theoretical level and produced a “conceptual infrastructure” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 65).

Once the three levels of analysis were completed in the larger study, I extracted the codes that pertained to my six participants from NVivo 9 to apply my theoretical framework. Hence, the codes and focused codes were re-analyzed, according to the LTEs’ interpretations and use of multiliteracies as outlined in Rowsell et al. (2008; e.g., recognizing a diversity of language forms; combining the old and the new in literacy pedagogy; having a broad concept of literacy; implementing an inclusive, critical approach to literacy; balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives, and; using a constructivist, dialogical approach). Using the framework as a tool to view the data through a multiliteracies lens, I gained further insights as new categories and broad
themes emerged. For example the code, changing definitions of literacy was analyzed to understand how participants enacted, having a broad concept of literacy, is a key theme from the Rowsell et al.’s (2008) framework. In this way the initial and focused coding conducted for the larger study contributed significantly to the coding conducted using the framework.

**Figure 1. Constructivist Codes to Theory Model**

**Memo-Writing, Clustering, and Theoretical Sampling**

Specifically for this study, during the third level of analysis investigative memo-writing, clustering, and theoretical sampling strategies were used to raise the focused codes to “theoretical categories” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 4). Charmaz (2006) describes memo-writing as a “pivotal grounded theory strategy” that helps the researcher “delineate and develop the properties” of the category (p. 101). Detailed descriptive memos about what a category meant were developed and
rewritten throughout the process. For example, while comparing the codes, being an LTE, background, culture, & family, and, holds dearly, I developed a memo interrogating a possible conceptual category regarding the emotional commitment of the LTEs to their role:

Memo Example: Emotional Commitment of LTEs

These LTEs use very strong words, emotionally charged words, while discussing literacy teaching and learning. They use much stronger words than I would expect of an academic:

enjoy the business of teaching; love the first assignment; love when the students...; loved teaching; loved my school; love sharing student work; I love my research; I love my teaching.; loved working with the preservice teachers; loved creating things; I’ve got a passion for rural education; I have a passion for teacher education; I have to be very careful because I can get so passionate and so excited about something [in my job]; I love poetry; I really enjoyed English; intellectually stimulating; demanding; fun; interesting; challenging; impossible, but still very satisfying; being a versatile and creative human being

This emotional connection appears to reach beyond their passion for literacy. They are emotionally invested in their research, their teaching, their students, and their subject area. These LTEs are deeply emotional people and as a result they are deeply emotionally invested in/committed to their roles as LTEs. This passion ranges back, in some cases, for many, many years, even before they were classroom teachers. For some of the LTEs this was evident in their depiction of their childhood.

This deep emotional commitment may be what sustains them in their role as LTEs, especially under the constraints that some of them face politically. I wonder if this is a character trait of teacher educators who enact a multiliteracies approach. Further, is their interest in creativity and innovation connected to this emotional/passionate outlook or commitment to their role?

This particular memo helped me to explicate my intuitive grasp of the emotional expressions of my LTEs and contributed to the development of the theoretical category, embracing their role.

Clustering was used in this phase to define essential characteristics of the data. Similar to conceptual or situational mapping (Clarke, 2005; Soulliere, Britt, & Maines, 2003), clustering creates a visual image that makes data “explicit and orders your topic[s]” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 87). Further, Saldana (2015) suggests a researcher must be able to think creatively, which includes the ability to “think visually, to think in metaphors, and to think of as many ways
possible to approach a problem” (p. 29). Both memo-writing and clustering encouraged rigorous, yet creative, approaches to this analysis. Clustering revealed connections between the key multiliteracies themes (Rowsell et al., 2008) and prominent focused codes. The key multiliteracies themes and focused codes clustered into 13 conceptual categories. Some of the conceptual categories were labeled using the same titles originally identified by Rowsell et al. (2008; e.g., diversity of language forms; implementing an inclusive critical approach; balancing social, cultural and individual perspectives). The number of focused codes contained within each conceptual category varied: one of the conceptual categories contained seven focused codes (e.g., balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives), while others contained only one (e.g., fostering social justice). The 13 conceptual categories clustered together to form seven “theoretical categories” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 43), which are identified in the findings chapter of this dissertation as themes (e.g., Comprehensive view of literacy; Negotiating challenges).

![Figure 2. Partial Cluster Map of Categories and Themes](image)
During this final phase I also applied “theoretical sampling,” which is a strategy Charmaz (2006, p. 3) describes as the most misunderstood of all of the grounded theory strategies. In theoretical sampling the researcher “gather[s] data to fill out the properties of a tentative category” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 11). For example, in the theme, enacting a comprehensive view of literacy, a category developed that I later labeled, employing a diversity of language forms. There was very little data in this category from the interviews for one of the participants, so I sought out new data in other documents (e.g., books and articles written by participant) to saturate the properties of my category. This enabled me to verify the data in the category so that it could be applied to the resulting theory.

Through the coding and recoding of the data, memo-writing, clustering, theoretical sampling, and making constant comparisons between my conceptual categories, saturation of the data was successfully reached and clearly defined theoretical findings were identified. Further, it was during this final level of analysis that I developed my “core category” (Punch, 2009, p. 188). The core category is the main category that is developed through the coding and connects all of the categories and themes. It is used primarily to develop theory (Punch, 2009). The theme, enacting a comprehensive view of literacy, emerged as major finding for this study and is discussed in detail in Chapter 5 of this dissertation and again in Chapter 8 as the core category.

**Working with Data Analysis Software NVivo 9**

As a member of the research team for the large-scale SSHRC grant, I attended three Nvivo9 workshops. These workshops were extensive (sometimes three hours long) and tailored to meet the needs of our research team. Some workshops were videotaped for review purposes as some processes were quite complex. Additionally, I engaged in a number of tutorials available on the NVivo website. As a team we explored advanced features of Nvivo9 weekly, over a period of
several months (e.g., running matrix queries; linking external documents). This sophisticated software offered several advantages. The most significant, as mentioned earlier, was the containment and management of all of documents (e.g., transcripts, nodes, queries, spreadsheets) in one place. The software also facilitated:

- import and export of analyzed data;
- coding throughout all of the coding levels;
- organization of raw data;
- use of text analysis tools to examine unstructured data like words with similar meanings;
- execution of queries to reveal multiple complex relationships across themes and categories;
- collaborative team coding;
- modification within and between codes.

Further, Saldana (2015) describes several advantages for using data analysis software for qualitative research:

[Electronic coding] permits the researcher to shift quickly back and forth between multiple analytic tasks, such as coding, analytic memo writing, and exploring patterns in progress. Add to this the software’s ability to recode, uncomment, rename, delete, move, merge, group, and assign different codes to shorter and longer passages of text with a few mouse clicks and keystrokes during Second Cycle Coding, and the advantages of [electronic coding] over paper and pencil soon become apparent. (p. 26)

In conclusion, Nvivo proved to be a highly useful tool, particularly while using a grounded theory approach.
Limitations of this Study

This section outlines a number of limitations inherent in this study as a result of the research design and instruments used. The first limitation is the sample size for this study. Because there were only six participants in the study, the findings cannot be generalized to the broader field of teacher education. Additionally, the participants had several things in common, which further reduces the generalizability of the findings. For example, all of the participants were mid-career faculty (5-10 years) or senior-career faculty (11+ years). None were early-career faculty (1-4 years). Moreover, all had completed their Ph.D. and were active researchers.

The second limitation is the lack of observational data. Due to the geographical distance between the participants and me, first-hand observations of their teaching was not feasible. The geographical distance between me and the participants also demanded alternate forms of communication for conducting the interviews. Attempts were made to have face-to-face interviews either through scheduled trips or while attending conferences; however, video conferencing was the primary method of communication. Unfortunately, the video conferencing sometimes entailed technical challenges (e.g., loss of connection, loss of audio, time change challenges, recordings that were inadequate for transcriber).

My role as an LTE could also be considered a limitation. My insider perspective may have influenced my views of what the participants identified as significant and purposeful when enacting multiliteracies. My own goals, priorities, and beliefs regarding their practices might have differed from one or more of my participants and that may have colored my interpretations of the findings.

Additionally, it should be noted that, as Rubin and Rubin (2011) suggest, grounded theory research involves a great deal of work. The heavy task of sorting through the large
volume of data and maintaining the energy and focus needed for the detailed line-by-line coding that is demanded in a grounded theory approach may have fatigued me to the point of missing some nuanced coding. This may also have influenced the findings.

**Ethical Considerations**

As previously mentioned, this research study was situated within a larger study entitled, *Literacy Teacher Educators: Their Backgrounds, Visions, and Practices*. The principal investigator of that study is Dr. Clare Kosnik, of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. The larger study was granted approval by University of Toronto Research Ethics Board. I was a graduate student under the supervision of Dr. Kosnik and an invited member of the research team with approved access to the data.

All prospective participants received a letter of invitation to the study informing them of its purpose and a description of their role if they chose to participate. The letter outlined the research objectives of this study and the data collection process. Participants were also notified that all interviews would be recorded and transcribed. Their right to refuse to participate at any time was clearly stated in the letter. Those who agreed to take part in the study signed a consent form that acknowledged they had read the letter of invitation and the consent form, and agreed to participate in the study. Once the interviews began, the interviews were transcribed and emailed to participants for their perusal. Further, copies of any publications (e.g., book chapters, peer-reviewed journal articles) derived from the study were promised to the participants.

**Chapter Summary**

In this chapter I described, in depth, the research methodology used to guide my research for this qualitative study. I outlined the main features of qualitative research methodology and provided
a rationale for its use in this study. The research questions were outlined and a detailed explanation of the participant selection was provided. The purpose and particularities of using a grounded theory approach were outlined. The data collection and data analysis strategies were described and justified. Finally, the limitations of the study and ethical considerations were discussed.
CHAPTER 4

PARTICIPANT CASE STUDIES AND TEACHING ContextS

Introduction

In this chapter I present individual case studies of the LTEs in this study: Carolina, Justin, Martha Ann, Sara, Stella, and Beatrice. (Names for participants and institutions are pseudonyms.) Furthermore, a detailed overview of the contexts in which these LTEs live and work is also provided. The purposeful sample was selected from the 28 participants in the large-scale research project, Literacy Teacher Educators: Their Goals, Visions, and Practices. The selection criteria used for the sample were described in the Chapter 3. Three semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant over a three year period in order to capture their backgrounds, ideologies, and pedagogical practices. Participants’ published works and websites of the institutions where they worked at the time of the study were also consulted.

The resulting case studies include an overview of the participants’ personal, educational and teaching backgrounds, teaching context at the time of the third interview, and involvement in research and professional organizations. Analysis revealed the teaching practices of all of the participants were profoundly affected by their early childhood experiences, mentors, and significant turning points in their lives. Rather than present these experiences in the case studies these data are examined in detail in Chapter 7 of this dissertation under theme 5: Incorporating prior influences. Additionally, analysis revealed that the participants’ research practices were intricately connected to their enactment of multiliteracies. Their research practices, while mentioned in the case studies, are discussed in more depth in Chapter 7 under theme 5: Utilizing research.
The details of the political contexts of each LTE were obtained through a study of the current literature on educational reform. This information was corroborated through the interviews. The corroborations obtained through the interviews are discussed in detail in Chapter 7 under theme 6: Negotiating challenges.

**Participant Case Studies**

The participants chosen for this study were from Canada, England, and Australia. All of the participants were tenured/permanent. The participants from Australia and England were senior lecturers; the participant from Canada was a full professor. At the time of the first interview, two of the participants were mid-career (between 5-10 years) and four were senior-career (10+ years; Kosnik et al., 2014). All taught literacy methods courses, two held administrative positions as well. Prior to obtaining their positions as teacher educators, all had been classroom teachers (Grades K-12): three had also been educational consultants. Table 1 summarizes the participants’ backgrounds, years of service as classroom teachers and consultants, grade levels taught, stage of careers, faculty positions, and Ph.D. research topics.

**Table 1**

*Background of Participants (as of January, 2013)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years as a classroom teacher (and consultant)</th>
<th>Position prior to HE:</th>
<th>Years in teacher education</th>
<th>Career stage</th>
<th>Faculty position</th>
<th>Ph.D. research topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carolina</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Primary Consultant</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer; Associate Head of Teacher Education</td>
<td>Action research on interaction patterns related to educational theory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Names and Background Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Years as a classroom teacher (and consultant)</th>
<th>Position prior to HE:</th>
<th>Years in teacher education</th>
<th>Career stage</th>
<th>Faculty position</th>
<th>Ph.D. research topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Justin</td>
<td>20+</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer; Subject Leader</td>
<td>Theorizing the social nature of reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Intermediate Senior</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>Identifying types of English teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stella</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td>Case studies examining the teaching of poetry in secondary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martha Ann</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Intermediate Senior</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Full Professor</td>
<td>Change process in language arts teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sara</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Primary Consultant</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Senior Lecturer; Associate Dean Head of School of Education</td>
<td>Ethnographic and narrative study on models of teacher education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Case Study One: Carolina**

_i. Introduction._ Carolina’s interviews revealed a highly committed and hard-working teacher educator, administrator, and researcher who valued social justice and believed that understanding children’s interests and backgrounds were at the heart of teaching. Her interviews also revealed a strong commitment to education in rural contexts, which she fondly ascribed to her rural upbringing. Her work as a classroom teacher and consultant contributed to her vision of

---

3 How each participant interprets and enacts issues of social justice are explored in detail in Chapter 6.
literacy as broad and multimodal. Both her personal and professional experiences significantly informed her work as a literacy teacher educator.

ii. Background. Carolina was raised in a working class family in a rural community in Australia. Although she loved to read, her passions in elementary and secondary school were mathematics and science. She left her rural community to attend a large multicultural university, which she found an enormous change from her “mono-cultural” life at home. She completed her undergraduate degree in teacher education. Afterwards, she married and returned to rural living, taking a job as a primary school teacher. She soon started her own family and, while her children were young, she taught part-time and trained as a Reading Recovery teacher.

Initially, Carolina’s interest in literacy teaching and learning was driven by her intense desire to help her young students. While teaching primary school she favored math and science because she found those subjects “easy to teach.” Literacy, on the other hand, was “very challenging.” She remembered having beginning learners in her classroom and “not being sure where to start in the area of teaching literacy.” Committed to assisting her students, she enrolled in a two-year, part-time diploma program in educational studies in literacy. This prompted a dramatic change in her teaching focus and resulted in her enrolling in a Master in Education program focused on literacy.

Carolina continued to teach primary school while working towards her Master in Education. While enrolled in the program, Carolina studied with a renowned scholar of multiliteracies who eventually became her doctoral supervisor. After completing her doctorate, Carolina worked for 8 years with the school board as a full-time literacy consultant. During this time she also advised for the Literacy Educators’ Association, had articles published in a number
of journals, and “generally did a lot of work in literacy in the broad Australian field.” This phase of Carolina’s career contributed significantly to her development as a literacy specialist:

I worked with different classrooms and different schools where we were focusing on action research, and action learning as a way to develop [the teachers’] practices. … I think having the opportunity to reach beyond my region, and also be involved in professional development, enabled me to see a lot of different classrooms and know how they run. I think that’s been a really important experience [to have].

Carolina viewed these experiences as opportunities to keep her tuned in to the needs of teachers and students, and to remain current. Carolina stated, “for me, it’s always been about actively seeking out what’s current.”

iii. Current Context. At the time of the third interview, Carolina had been a faculty member at Rural Town University for 7 years. She was a senior lecturer and associate head of teacher education in a large teaching-focused university and taught courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. She described the main focus of her role as associate head as “support[ing] the staff in learning and teaching,” but added she also played a role in assessment.

iv. Involvement in Research and Professional Organizations. Carolina’s scholarly interests included: literacy, dialogic pedagogies, and theories of practice. She maintained, “the rubber hits the road,” in the classroom, so much of her research focused on the complex work of teachers, the frontline workers in education. As mentioned earlier, this focus began with her research for her Master of Education, which she conducted while teaching primary school on a part-time basis. She had not intended to pursue a Ph.D., but was encouraged to do so by a multiliteracies scholar with whom she had studied. He not only urged her to begin a doctorate, he helped her with her application for the doctoral program. For her doctoral thesis she conducted
an action research project that focused on the relationship between teachers’ actual teaching practices and their theories of practice.

Carolina valued her membership on an international research team as well as her networking with “literacy experts” across Australia. When asked about her future research plans, she stated she planned to research and write another book about literacy, “not to have the publication, but I have something to say from my research, from my teaching,” as she hopes to continue to give back to the educational community she is so passionate about.

**Case Study Two: Justin**

i. Introduction. Justin’s interviews revealed a dedicated, empathic, and hard-working teacher educator and researcher. Over the three interviews, three pervading themes surfaced that represented Justin’s priorities in education: critical perspective; social justice; and multimodal learning. Of these three themes, Justin identified critical perspective as the most significant, stating it was “absolutely vital to my perception of what's involved in teacher education.” This commitment to critical perspective could be traced back to his undergraduate studies, and his career as a secondary school teacher. His experiences as a graduate student and professional experiences as a classroom teacher significantly informed his work as a literacy teacher educator.

ii. Background. When queried about his earlier experiences in education, Justin focused on graduate school, emphasizing that those experiences had enormous impact on his current role as a teacher educator. Initially, Justin was not inclined towards education as a profession; however, his interest was piqued while teaching undergraduates during his graduate studies at a prominent university. Only three courses away from completing his first doctoral thesis in which he was investigating “theatre as a political space,” he suddenly realized he “really liked the
teaching, but wanted to learn how to do it properly.” Hence, he withdrew from graduate school, and entered the Post-Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) teacher education program. He good naturedly remembered himself as a “kind of a clever young man who knew a thing or two about English” but didn’t know, “how much they would teach me” in PGCE.

Following PGCE, Justin obtained a position in an urban school as a secondary school teacher of English. Eventually, Justin moved to another school and became head of the English department. He taught there for many years and “loved” teaching. He became involved in the local union and devoted himself to issues of social justice. Unfortunately, while teaching at this school, the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspectors declared his school a “failure” and it was shut down. This was a devastating experience for Justin and as a result he concluded his 20-year teaching career and entered higher education. While teaching in higher education, he completed his doctorate in education.

iii. Current Context. At the time of the third interview, Justin had been a senior lecturer in English studies education at Queen City University, England, for nine years. He taught in three programs: the Masters of Teaching program, which he described as “cross-phase and cross-disciplinary;” the English M.A. program; and, the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), which is a nine month initial teaching education program. In the PGCE program he acted as the subject leader for the secondary English and English with drama courses.

iv. Involvement in Research and Professional Organizations. Justin’s scholarly interests included: how literature is read in urban English classrooms; the development of teacher identities; and multimodalities. He had recently completed his doctorate which focused on reading as a social event. He preferred to conduct action research projects in local schools with teachers and children, but also collaborated with educators around the world. He was a widely
published academic with numerous books and articles to his credit. He described one book he co-edited as a “productive continuing professional intellectual dialogue,” because it included educators from many disciplines (e.g., music, geography, and English). Justin was also the main editor for a prominent journal, and an active member of his subject association, and the National Association for Teaching of English. He stated these roles kept him “in dialogue with English teacher educators” across the country. Justin viewed remaining active in social justice as “part of my academic identity,” so he continued to write for a social justice journal and remained active in the union. Justin believed, “my work as a teacher educator is continuing my political interest in the most effective manner available to me,” and through this work, he would continue to work for social change.

**Case Study Three: Martha Ann**

*i. Introduction.* Martha Ann’s interviews revealed a deep passion for literacy, language, and learning. These passions could be traced back to her early childhood, and educational career as a teacher, consultant, and officer with the Ministry of Education. Both her personal and professional experiences significantly informed her work as a literacy teacher educator.

*ii. Background.* Martha Ann was raised in Quebec, Canada. She developed her passion for literature and the arts as a child in both elementary and secondary school. After Grade 11 she obtained a two-year degree at a teacher’s college and by the age of 19 she was a practicing teacher. As an elementary and middle school teacher, Martha Ann taught a range of grades (Grades 4 to 10) and subjects (math, science, language, and special needs). Even though she started teaching quite young, she recalled that at the age of 19 she knew that “literacy was my thing.”
While teaching, she began taking courses at night, which prompted her to leave her position to pursue an undergraduate degree at a prominent Canadian university. She acknowledged that attending university was “a huge turning point in [her] life.” After completing her undergraduate degree, she worked again as a teacher, but soon returned to higher education to complete a Master of Education degree focusing on “the diagnosis and treatment of reading disabilities.” At the conclusion of her Master of Education, she worked for 16 years in many educational roles: elementary and middle school teacher; secondary school special needs teacher; and two years as a language arts consultant. She was seconded to the Ministry of Education as a Supervisory Officer. After two years of experience in this position, she enrolled in a doctoral program in the United States and obtained a dual specialization in curriculum studies and language education. Degree in hand, she returned to Quebec where she spent the next two years teaching Grades 4 and 5 during the day, night courses at general and vocational colleges, and reading clinic courses at a local university. This phase of her career ended when she took a job at Far North University.

**iii. Current Context.** At the time of her third interview, Martha Ann had taught at the Canadian university, Far North, for 27 years. At the university, she had taught students from undergraduate to graduate levels in the field of education. She reported that she drew extensively on her experiences as a classroom teacher while working in teacher education.

**iv. Involvement in Research and Professional Organizations.** Martha Ann’s research interests were extensive. They included young adolescent readers’ response to literary texts as mediated by multiple sign systems; language arts teachers' practices; teacher education and literacy teaching; and how collaborative inquiry groups support literacy teachers’ and their students' understanding of the potential of Canadian literature to promote social justice.
Martha Ann had not planned to obtain her doctorate. She was inspired to pursue a Ph.D. by a course instructor she encountered in her Master of Education program. Her doctoral study entailed conducting “around 50 interviews . . . to find out what changes [the teachers] had made in their Language Arts program.”

Throughout her early years as a researcher, Martha Ann continued to be “very interested in professional development and change processes.” She reported maintaining an interest in change processes over the years, however, her current research was “quite different,” as she was focused on “how collaborative inquiry groups promote teachers’ understanding of social justice.” Martha Ann preferred to conduct her research in the local community and reported this was key to her teaching. She recognized that “what I learn in the research then I also bring to my classes.” Martha Ann reported, “every year I do research. I think about how I want to set some things up: I keep things that are working, and I change things that aren’t.” She regarded herself as a “life-long learner.”

**Case Study Four: Sara**

*i. Introduction.* Sara’s three interviews revealed a deep passion for literacy and teacher education that were clearly evident in her performance of multiple roles as teacher educator, researcher, and administrator. Beyond her passion, Sara also demonstrated a strong determination and deep belief in social justice, which drove her to bring equity to all classrooms. All of these qualities could be traced back through her early childhood and her career as a primary educator and educational consultant. Sara’s personal and professional experiences significantly informed her work as a literacy teacher educator.
ii. Background. Sara was raised and schooled in a small rural community in Australia. She reported loving literature and the creative arts through primary and secondary school. Her grandparents, particularly her grandfather encouraged her love of literature and quest for knowledge. While Sara was still in early adolescence both of her parents decided to go back to school, eventually becoming teachers. Recognizing her own passion to become a teacher, after high school she attended the local university and obtained a Diploma of Teaching. Immediately after graduation, she accepted a primary teaching position in another small rural town with a very high Aboriginal population. Her experiences with racism in this town profoundly affected her attitude towards social justice.

Shortly after her first year of teaching, Sara married and moved to a large city where she taught in a variety of schools with highly diverse student populations. Determined to grow as an educator, she moved between schools, learning to manage large, diverse student bodies. While teaching in a school with a “large Asian population,” she was offered her first literacy leadership role. Through this experience she recognized that she needed to “get more theory behind [her],” so upon completing her undergraduate degree, she immediately enrolled in a Master of Education, specializing in literacy. During the last six months of the program, while teaching primary school and consulting, Sara also began teaching literacy classes at night for a local university preservice program. She quickly discovered she “loved working with the preservice teachers.” Her colleagues in the program advised her to pursue a doctorate so that she could continue in teacher education.

As she worked on her doctorate, she taught classes at two universities, continued her consultancy work, and became pregnant with her second child. During this busy time, her husband was offered a new position in another city, and so the family made the move. Sara
shared that her change in circumstances was a great opportunity. For the first time in her adult life she was not working and she had “time with her son” and “time to do her doctoral work.”

After one year, when she had nearly completed her doctorate, she applied to teach at a local university. To her delight, she secured a full-time position teaching literacy in a teacher education program. Sara worked at that university for just under 10 years, taking on many leadership positions. She recalled, “although I [began at that university] as a lecturer, when I left, I was an associate professor.”

iii. Current Context. At the time of her third interview, Sara had been the associate dean and head of the School of Education for the Faculty of Education in a rural regional campus of Big Rock University for 3 years. Also a senior lecturer, she had taught undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral students. She continued to actively integrate a multiliteracies approach to literacy with new models in teacher education with her faculty, local communities, and student teachers.

iv. Involvement in Research and Professional Organizations. Sara’s research interests included: teacher education; rural and regional education; the nexus of theory and practice; and literacy education. Sara was initially encouraged to enroll in a Ph.D. program by her fellow teacher educators while she was instructing part-time in a teacher education program. Not having developed a research background during her Master of Education program, she enrolled in a doctorate of education program. At that time, she was focused on literacy, and assumed she would eventually conduct her Ph.D. study in that area; however, she eventually combined her love for literacy and teacher education. She developed a doctoral study comparing the methods she experienced in teacher education as a student teacher to a newer model. Her interest in different models of teacher education continued throughout her career.
A committed researcher and writer, Sara had several books, articles, and research projects to her credit. At the time of the first interview, Sara had just published a text for preservice teachers connecting theory and practice. She was also “developing a school-university model working with the preservice teachers and the teachers in the school using iPads and technology.” Sara said she was very comfortable “writing for practitioners,” as most of her work was with teachers, but she was endeavoring to write more for an academic audience as well.

Case Study Five: Stella

i. Introduction. Stella’s interviews portrayed a dedicated teacher educator and administrator with a deep abiding passion for literacy, particularly expressive language. This passion could be traced back as far as her early childhood and persisted throughout her career as a classroom teacher. It was evident that both her personal and professional experiences significantly informed her work as a literacy teacher educator.

ii. Background. Stella embraced her love of language, particularly poetry, and the creative arts at an early age. She reported this passion was encouraged by supportive teachers throughout her elementary and secondary schooling. She attended a local university and, not surprisingly, her undergraduate specialization was English. She reported much of her university experience was a “bit disappointing” because she found it a “very old-fashioned style of being taught.”

Eventually, Stella became a secondary school English teacher and enjoyed that role for 17 years. During this time Stella continued to write poetry and taught her students to write as well. For 8 of those years she acted as department head. During her term as department head, a local academic recognized the exciting work she was accomplishing in her school, and asked her
to “write about [her] experience working with writers in [her] school, and what impact it was having.” Her vivid descriptions evolved into a chapter in a book he was writing. Impressed with her writing skills, he encouraged her to pursue a doctorate and eventually he became her Ph.D. supervisor. Stella reported, in the “last year of my Ph.D., I took paid leave from my post and began [contractual] university work.” This contractual work marked a significant turn in Stella’s career as it eventually led to full-time employment in teacher education.

**iii. Current Context.** At the time of the third interview, Stella had been a senior lecturer in the School of Education at Lake View University, England, for 9 years. She was course lead for the English Post-Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) and Master’s in Teaching and Learning (MTL) programs. She also supervised doctoral students and reported she enjoyed her work with university students at all levels of very much.

**iv. Involvement in Research and Professional Organizations.** Stella’s scholarly interests included: teaching poetry in secondary schools (writing poetry, spoken word poetry, poetic forms, and poetry from different cultures and traditions; and the place of poetry both in and outside of curriculum); assessment frameworks; arts-based curriculum construction and pedagogy; multiliteracies; and e-learning in initial teacher education. Stella’s doctoral dissertation examined, “teachers who expressed an interest in using poetry in their classroom.” This passion for poetry and her interest in classroom teachers’ use of poetry has remained a constant in her research.

At the time of the final interview, Stella was involved in a research project comparing the teaching of poetry in two countries. She was also in the early stages of a project “looking at actual poetry and websites for the teaching of poetry.” Stella intended to continue to write and publish poetry, and write books on using poetry for teacher educators and high school teachers.
Outside of her poetic interests, Stella was the editor for a major literacy journal. She was also extensively involved in her subject association as the publications officer. Stella felt this role helped her “to look critically at what [was] available for teachers to use in terms of resources.” This role also enabled her to see who was “involved in literacy teaching around the world.” She felt this helped her maintain an awareness of the kinds of research that were going on in the field. She reported being both excited and astonished by the “different kinds of perspectives literacy [specialists] have.” Although this international perspective helped to keep her current, she admitted the enormous time commitment was a “constant struggle;” however, for the sake of her student teachers, she persevered.

Case Study Six: Beatrice

i. Introduction. Beatrice’s interviews revealed a highly experienced, dedicated teacher educator, and knowledgeable researcher. Although she had many teaching responsibilities, she maintained an enthusiastic and progressive attitude towards her position and teacher education in general. Her enthusiasm for her subject area could be traced back to her early educational experiences and her classroom teaching experiences.

ii. Background. Beatrice was raised and educated in the UK. As a child, she said, she loved reading and had a passion for literature. She completed a joint honors degree in American and English literature, and described the experience as “really fantastic.” Upon completion of her teacher training in a Post-Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) program, Beatrice taught secondary English for nine years, in three different London schools.

While on maternity leave from her third secondary school position, Beatrice assumed a part-time position in a teacher education program. At the end of her maternity leave, she
continued her work as a teacher educator, but also obtained another part-time position as an advisory teacher for secondary school teachers. After five years of maintaining two part-time positions, she accepted an offer to pursue a full-time position as a lecturer in the PGCE program.

iii. Current Context. At the time of the third interview, Beatrice had been a senior lecturer at Williams University in the Department of Education and Professional Studies in London, England, for over 22 years. Her university is rated as a tier one, research-focused institution. Her extensive teaching load included undergraduates, master’s level, and Ph.D. students; however, she considered her “main job” to be teaching in the PGCE program, “educating people who want to be English teachers.” She felt a great responsibility for the student teachers enrolled in the English subject component of her PGCE program.

iv. Involvement in Research and Professional Organizations. Beatrice’s research interests reflected her progressive views about English and teacher education: competing philosophies or models of English; English subject policy; assessment and learning; and developing literacies in film and media. Beatrice had not planned on pursuing her Ph.D., but her desire to continue in her role as a teacher educator prompted her to enroll. She began her Ph.D. while she was still teaching part-time in the teacher education program. Her Ph.D. research examined how teacher’s views of assessment were affected by the type of teacher they were. She continued to conduct research on assessment throughout her career, but also examined “multi-modality in literacy and English teaching.” Her experience in research was so extensive, she said, “when I’m teaching…I draw a lot on the research that I’ve done,” which is mostly “classroom-based.” At the time of the final interview she was managing a number of large research projects and was in the developmental stages of yet another focused on arts-based research.
**Contexts of Participants**

When collecting data on experience, perspectives and behavior, we need to have context-intelligence, because contextualization is critical for understanding the reality of the participants. (Belk, Devinney, & Eckhardt, 2005, p. 275)

This section provides the “context-intelligence” mentioned by Belk, Devinney, et al. (2005) in the opening quote for this section. The context-intelligence for this dissertation consists of in-depth examinations of teacher education for each country in which the participants reside and work. The LTEs were situated in three English-speaking countries: England, Australia, and Canada. Teacher education in each country is discussed individually, and the significant similarities and differences between them are highlighted. Further, some of the participants had been working in teacher education for over 20 years, so their context-intelligence spanned a few decades. This broad overview offers a deeper understanding of the ongoing challenges the participants had faced and the attitudes they had developed while immersed in the ever-changing landscape of teacher education.

*Teacher Education in England, Australia, and Canada*

There may be agreement internationally that the quality of the teaching is a critical element in 21st century [sic] learning, but there is a wide range of views about how to develop it. (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012, p. 151)

Investigating teacher education during this period was important because the dramatic changes, challenges, and contentions in education across the globe have never been greater. Kosnik, Beck and Goodwin (2016) report “in some countries so-called ‘reforms’ are doing a great deal of harm to teacher education and need to be opposed” (p. 267). Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012) suggest the goal of teacher education in many countries may be the same, quality education for
students, but the views on how to achieve this goal and the pathways selected can be quite
different and fraught with difficulties. All three countries in this study have seen significant
transformations in their teacher education programs over the past few decades, and these
transformations significantly affect the teacher educators in each context.

**The Context of Teacher Education in England**

The future of teacher education in England is grim.  
(Kosnik, Beck, et al., 2016, p. 279)

Darling-Hammond and Lieberman (2012) report that teacher educators have been struggling
with governmentally enforced educational reforms in England for three decades. Furlong (2013)
adds that during this process, “those in higher education who traditionally might have been
expected to lead such debate have been marginalized or silenced” (p. 23). Kosnik, Beck, et al.
(2016) suggest “ostensible reforms led by the government, driven by an open market approach,
with little consultation with teacher educators and indeed a distrust of teacher educators, are
dismantling university-based teacher education” (p. 275). As a result, Ellis, McNicholl, Blake,
and McNally (2014) report teacher educators’ “expertise is unacknowledged and devalued—
uncapitalised within the political economy of Education as a discipline—and underexploited in
the education of teachers [capitalization in original]” (p. 41). Indeed, as Kosnik, Beck, et al.
(2016) stated in the opening to this section, the prospects for teacher education in England are
“grim” (p. 279).

Prior to the 1980s, teacher education in England was essentially governed by the
departments of education in universities. Teacher educators had the mandate to decide content,
curriculum, and policies that would best serve the needs of new teachers, and did so in response
to current research and trends. However, in the early 1980s, under a Conservative government,
many new educational reforms were implemented that profoundly affected teacher education: curriculum was set by the government; new agencies to determine the teacher training curriculum were created; and the government took control of school budgets (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012).

As mentioned earlier, Furlong (2013) argues that these reforms silenced knowledgeable teacher educators, and gave policy-makers and politicians the power to make decisions about curriculum and practice in schools and teacher education classrooms. Among the new agencies created to oversee education was the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted). It was the role of Ofsted to oversee the implementation of the new National Curriculum, not only its content, but also its predetermined mode of delivery (U.K. Government, 2015). Ofsted teams were assigned to make frequent inspections in schools and teacher education programs, and had the power to shut down a school or remove a teacher educator if Ofsted expectations were not being met. The results of these inspections were made public and ratings were announced (Yandel, 2000). This led to a campaign of “naming and shaming schools” that overtook the country, damaging teacher and teacher educator morale (Bangs, Galton, & MacBeath, 2010, p. 72). The anti-teacher rhetoric was spearheaded by the chief inspector of schools, Chris Woolhead, who argued that “shock, and shaking up, were the catalyst needed to tackle the deep-seated problems of failing schools and failing teachers” (MacBeath, 2012, p. 73). The reputations of teachers and teacher educators as capable, knowledgeable scholars of education were questioned.

The implications of this control of teacher education were far-reaching (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012). In order to meet Ofsted requirements, MacBeath (2012) reports, there was suddenly, “a focus on governmental strategies, less theory and more practice, implementation rather than reading and reflection, less challenge and more compliance” (p. 74).
In 1992, the government mandated that “all university-led courses had to be run in formal partnerships with schools and a number of new routes to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) were introduced, including some led by schools rather than universities” (Whitty, 2014, p. 470). These school partnerships, identified as “school-centred initial teacher training schemes (SCITTs)” offered alternative training from the traditional university-based Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE; Whitty, 2014, p. 468).

In 1997, teachers and teacher educators alike hoped that the newly elected Labour government would end the strict educational constraints. Unfortunately, the Labour government continued the redesign of teacher education initiated by the previous government. Teacher education was renamed “teacher training,” and two more governing bodies were established to oversee its execution: the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA; MacBeath, 2012, p. 68). These two new agencies were established to oversee entry into the profession, qualifications, curriculum, and professional standards. The result was a significant tightening of the already heavily controlled management by Ofsted.

Yet another new development in teacher training reform during this period was the creation of programs that sidestepped the traditional university preservice teacher education programs: Employment-based routes (EBITTs); Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP), Overseas Trained Teacher Programme (OTTP); and Teach First (Whitty 2014, p. 468). According to MacBeath (2012) these programs, deemed “providers” of teacher education, offered “an almost bewildering array of agencies and routes into teaching” (p. 68). Teach First, for example, is a:

Charity working to end educational inequality. Since 2002, thousands of graduates have joined the Teach First Leadership Development Programme (LDP) in schools across England and Wales and helped change the lives of thousands of young people in low-income communities. (U,K. Department for Education, 2015, p. 1)
They developed this program in response to a challenge to prominent business members to address the attrition rate of teachers in inner-city London schools. The Teach First program (originally named Teach for London) was developed by McKinsey & Company: modelled after the Teach for America program (described in Chapter 2 of this dissertation). Teach First recruited top undergraduates, provided a 6-week intensive training, and then a placement in London’s disadvantaged and underperforming schools for a period of 2 years. The recruit was supported by fellow teachers or mentors and members of the business community. After successful completion of the 2 years, the recruit was awarded a QTS, which was equivalent to the PGCE. The PGCE is a highly ranked qualification that was, until recently, solely obtained by graduating from a university-based initial teacher education program.

Interestingly, Smart, Hutchings, Maylor, Mendick, and Menter (2010) report, “Teach First is targeted at new graduates who would not otherwise have become teachers, and it is anticipated and accepted that many of them will go on to careers in other sectors (hence the name, Teach First)” (p. 36). Regardless, Ofsted’s evaluation of the program states, “the training prepared the trainees well for their immersion into teaching and enabled all of them to achieve QTS” (Ofsted, 2008, p. 12). If Smart et al. (2010) are correct that many Teach First teachers would not stay in the system long, then it seems that Ofsted did not consider teacher training to be a long-term investment. As long as the monitoring body for teacher education in England maintains this attitude towards teacher education, programs such as Teach First may continue to grow while reputable teacher education programs diminish.

The Context of Teacher Education in Australia

Teacher educators [in Australia] are struggling to be heard within a context where the traditional approaches to teacher education are
being questioned and teacher education itself is seen as a ‘policy problem.’ (Mayer, Pecheone, & Merino, 2012, p. 129)

Teacher education in Australia has faced dramatic reforms over the past three decades and appears to be following the grim path of reform established in England (Kosnik, Beck, et al., 2016). Louden (2008) reports that 101 government reports—which he refers to as “101 damnations”—have been produced over this time, all criticizing the effectiveness of teacher education and supporting funding cuts, yet offering no productive suggestions for improvement. As Mayer, Pecheone, et al. (2012) point out, teacher education is currently being viewed as a “problem” (p. 129), yet, it was not always such.

The 1980s and early 1990s were characterized by a strong sense of professionalism in teacher education in Australia and it was renowned worldwide for being informed by local, current research. The teacher education programs were essentially governed by the institutions in which they were offered and teacher educators “influence[d] the political agendas related to professional learning and professional practice” (Mayer, Pecheone, et al., 2012, p. 114). The mid-1990s, however, were characterized by a sharper focus on “quality assurance” and “outcomes” (Mayer, Pecheone, et al., 2012, p. 114). Following the wave of criticism of teacher education in the United States, politicians, bureaucrats, and the business community in Australia also began to ask: What is the value of teacher education? (Mayer, Pecheone, et al. 2012). Arguments surfaced that empirical evidence, in the form of the results of standardized testing, should be used to judge teacher education. Evidence included comparisons to international test results produced by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Reflecting on the transformations in education and teacher education in the mid-1990s, Dinham (2013) made this passionate assertion:
A fixation with the performance of other countries represents the worst form of cultural cringe. We need to recognize and build on the strengths we have rather than attempting to 'cherry pick' what appear to be recipes for success from vastly different contexts. (p. 94)

Nevertheless, in 1996 the era of self-government for teacher educators began to come to an end. Under the new Liberal government, the newly formed National Council of Deans of Education supported a project to develop national standards and guidelines for initial teacher education (Australian Council of Deans of Education, 1998). The ensuing report recommended that the “National Standards and Guidelines for Initial Teacher Education be used as criteria for the accreditation or approval of initial teacher education programs” (Mayer, Pecheone, et al., 2012, p. 118). Over the next 10 years numerous bodies (e.g., Teaching Australia and the National Council for Educational Research, NCER), came to support a national system of accreditation for initial teacher education.

More recently, following the election of the Labour Party in 2012, there has been a much stronger push by the government to increase its influence over the work of teachers, schools, and teacher education. Prior to the election, the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEEDYA) endorsed:

New national professional standards and a new process for accrediting initial teacher education programs. Program accreditation will continue to be undertaken by the relevant state and territory authorities; however they will now do this using the new national graduate teacher standards, and program standards, and using the endorsed national accreditation processes. (Mayer, Pecheone, et al., 2012, p. 118).

These standards were, in turn, endorsed by the new government, and the Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) was formed to monitor the accreditation of initial teacher education programs. As a result, significant changes in initial teacher education programs were
made. For example, teacher education programs were required to place more emphasis on outcomes and accountability, and provide evidence that graduates demonstrated professional knowledge, practice, and engagement.

O’Meara (2011) suggests a possible motivation behind these reforms was to introduce centralization and marketization into education in response to the pressures of global competition. Unfortunately, as O’Meara warns, this kind of competition among teacher education providers may have negative repercussions, particularly destabilizing Australia’s commitment to educational equity as “some small and less prestigious institutions that struggle to attract sufficient students to continue to provide a viable education service may also be forced to close” (p. 429) Further complicating these reforms, the state and territory education authorities and Teaching Australia (a national body for the teaching profession funded by the Australian government) developed their own versions of professional standards for graduates of initial teacher education programs, some of which conflict with the federal standards. These conflicting standards have only served to fragment the landscape for teacher educators (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012).

Another recent addition to the initial teacher education context was alternative pathways to accreditation. One such program was Teach for Australia, which commenced in 2010. This program was similar to Teach for America (outlined in Chapter 2 of the dissertation) and Teach First in England (outlined in the previous section). In this program, outstanding undergraduates were recruited and trained to teach in an intensive six-week program, then placed in socioeconomically deprived secondary schools for two years. With the assistance of mentor teachers and business partners these students essentially learned as they taught. They were also expected to take a variety of courses at a designated university. At the end of their 2-year
commitment, the recruits graduated with a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching which enabled them to teach anywhere in Australia. Mayer, Pecheone, et al. (2012) report that “many in the academy and the teaching profession are alarmed at what they see as deskilling and deprofessionalization of teachers and their work” (p. 115). Dinham (2013) called on the teachers and teacher educators to speak out against the reforms:

If we fail to do this, the outcomes will be neither pleasant nor productive, and we can expect to continue to slide down the international student achievement league tables, with the resultant negativity feeding upon itself. If this occurs, we will all be poorer for it. (p. 103)

Unfortunately, Dinham’s plea has, to date, not been heeded and initial teacher education programs in Australia continue to be systematically undermined.

*The Context of Teacher Education in Ontario, Canada*

There is both an intellectual and a practical component to teacher education [in Canada]. It must be situated within a university or university-college in order to allow the meaningful interaction of student-teachers with research-oriented faculty and to promote awareness of the interconnected nature of theory, research, and practice in the profession. (Association of Canadian Deans of Education, 2006, p. 2)

While teacher education is governed nationally in Australia and England, Canada’s 10 provinces and three territories maintain jurisdiction over their own educational systems, including teacher education. The *Constitution Act* declares that each province and territory in Canada has exclusive authority to make its own laws with respect to education, therefore teacher education reforms are subject to the distinct needs and demographics of each province or territory (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 1967). Interestingly, despite the decentralization of teacher education in Canada, the *Canadian Accord on Initial Teacher Education* (Association of Canadian Deans of
Education, 2016) indicates that all of the provinces and territories support university-based initial teacher education programs.

In the interest of space it was not feasible to explore the teacher education systems of each province and territory in Canada; therefore, I have limited the scope of the investigation to one province, Ontario. England, Australia, and Ontario have all experienced educational reform over the last few decades, yet, Kosnik et al. (2015) report that teacher educators in Ontario are not as constrained by government policies as their counterparts in England and Australia.

A major shift in teacher education in Ontario began in the mid-1970s, under a Conservative government. The Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities relinquished control of teacher education and handed it over to universities in the province. Kitchen and Petrarca (2014) report:

> While the province still controlled teacher certification, in practice it simply accepted the graduates of universities that underwent cyclical programs reviews. The decentralization of teacher education was part of a broader pattern of decentralization that saw provincial examinations eliminated and curriculum guidelines replaced [highly prescribed] provincial courses of study. (p. 65)

This allowed interested universities to play a major role in developing teacher education programs; however, teacher education remained “fraught with controversy” (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2014, p. 66). Faculties of education were viewed by some critics as “places where theory and research appear more important than practice” (Sheehan & Fullan, 1995, p. 90). The ongoing debate led to the formation of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario. While the findings of the Royal Commission “praised teacher education programs and instructors,” it also recommended the establishment of a new body to oversee teacher education in Ontario: the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT; Kitchen & Petrarca, 2014, p. 66). Thus, three stakeholders
became intimately involved in teacher education in Ontario: the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (now called the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, MTCU), the OCT, and university-based teacher education programs.

Similar to Ofsted in England and the Institute for Teaching and School Leadership in Australia, the OCT’s Implementation Committee (1995) said that, “the College must have the authority to establish standards for teacher education and the power to ensure that the standards are met” (OCT, as cited in Kitchen & Petrarca, 2014, p. 67). With this in place, the OCT “regularly accredits teacher education programs through a very rigorous and complex process” (OCT, as cited in Kitchen & Petrarca, 2014, p. 67). However, this is where the similarities end. Unlike Ofsted and The Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, the OCT looked for “evidence of compliance with the regulations for teacher education rather than guiding teacher education practice” (Kitchen & Petrarca, 2014, p. 67). The MTCU, working in conjunction with the OCT, also sought evidence of compliance (Ontario Department of Education, 1996, p. 3). However, these administrative bodies allowed the educational body seeking accreditation to select their own curricular content and mode of delivery. The accreditation process was lengthy and the teacher education provider had to supply ample proof of compliance, but the OCT and the MTCU trusted that the administrators and teacher educators in the university initial teacher education programs were doing their job.

Unfortunately, although teacher educators had been afforded a great deal of leeway, there was a period of time, between 1995 and 2003, when it was difficult to admit that one had a career in education in Ontario. Teachers were systematically subjected to “a discourse of blame and derision,” and accused of “being self- interested, unaccountable and lazy, or lacking the skills and qualifications required in the ‘new global economy’” by the provincial government
(Delhi & Fumia, 2008, pp. 147-148). As a result, many teachers left the profession and many parents pulled their children from public education and placed them in private schools. Because teacher educators work closely with associate teachers in practicum placements and tend to think of themselves as teachers (Kosnik et al., 2014), the morale of teacher educators was also low. Additionally, the rapid introduction of a new provincial curriculum left teachers and teacher educators scrambling for assistance. The curriculum was to be implemented within a year without supporting resources or professional development to help teachers to understand it (Winter, McEachern, & William, 2001). These very sudden and dramatic changes stimulated a backlash of complaint from teachers and teacher educators. Fortunately, in 2003, the newly elected Liberal government made the rebuilding of public education a priority and by 2007 education in Ontario had turned a corner (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012).

In 2013, Teach for Canada, a non-profit organization, began recruiting undergraduates to teach in remote Aboriginal communities. Although this program was similar in structure and purpose to Teach First in England and Teach for Australia, all participants had to already have a university-based teaching degree. There has been no evidence, to date, that the MTCU or the OCT is considering alternative paths to certification. The traditional university preservice preparation program appears to be secure. In fact, in 2012, the Liberal government announced initial teacher education programs would be extended from eight months to two years (Ontario University Application Centre, 2016). Plans for program alterations were left to the discretion of individual universities subject to MTCU approval. The extended programs commenced in September of 2015. This reform represented a large investment in university-based preservice programs and continued trust by government that teacher educators are best qualified to set the
appropriate priorities and make the decisions necessary to improve Ontario initial teacher education programs.

**Conclusion**

All of the aforementioned reforms, both positive and negative, in all three countries affected the work of the LTEs in this study. Amidst the anti-education rhetoric, dismantling of programs, forced focus on testing, and marketization of teacher education in response to global competition, these LTEs continued to teach with pride in themselves and their programs, demonstrating a strong sense of commitment to do what is right for education and the children who would ultimately be taught by their student teachers. In the main findings in Chapter 8 I discuss how these governmental reforms, although challenging, did not deter these LTEs’ passion for their life work.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented the individual case studies for each participant. Additionally, a brief discussion was presented of the recent history of the education systems in which these teacher educators live and work. This provided a context for the study and its findings. In the course of the three interviews conducted with each participant, the teacher educators in the study revealed themselves to be dedicated to and passionate about their work in spite of the difficulties they have faced due to reforms in education introduced by their respective governments. Teachers and teacher educators in England and Australia have struggled under the weight of major reforms, while in Canada, largely due to the decentralization of the teacher education system, teachers and teacher educators have, for the most part, enjoyed a more positive and supportive environment.
CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

Introduction

The findings reported in this chapter (and Chapters 6 and 7) show in detail how the LTEs in this study conceptualized and actualized their interpretations of multiliteracies. These findings are presented in a cross-case analysis format, a format that allows for a thematic examination of multiple perceptions (Creswell, 2007). Rowsell et al.’s (2008) six key multiliteracies themes (recognizing a diversity of language forms; combining the old and the new in literacy pedagogy; having a broad concept of literacy; implementing an inclusive, critical approach to literacy; balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives; and using a constructivist, dialogical approach; pp. 110-114) were initially used as the framework to examine the visions and conceptualizations of the six LTEs; however, the analysis produced a reorganization of the key multiliteracies themes under new themes.

Eight themes emerged through the analysis and will henceforth be referred to in the findings as themes 1 through 8. The key multiliteracies theme, having a broad concept of literacy, encompassed two of Rowsell et al.’s (2008) key multiliteracies themes: recognizing a diversity of language forms and combining the old and the new in literacy pedagogy. This new theme emerged as theme 1 and was renamed, enacting a comprehensive view of literacy. As suggested by Charmaz (2006) all themes that emerged in the analysis were labeled using gerunds to highlight participants’ actions, feelings, and/or attitudes (e.g., embracing, creating). Theme 1 also emerged as the core category that contributed significantly to the final theory. (The core category is discussed in Chapter 8 of this dissertation).
Further, analysis revealed the literacy concepts of the two key multiliteracies themes balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives, and using a constructivist, dialogical approach clustered together under one theme. This theme was identified as theme 2: enacting a rich pedagogy. Only one key multiliteracies theme, implementing an inclusive, critical approach to literacy, although related to the other key themes, emerged as an independent theme. Due to its content, this theme was identified as theme 3: fostering social justice. Beyond the three themes identified using Rowsell et al.’s six key multiliteracies themes, five more strong themes emerged: theme 4: constructing coherent courses; theme 5: utilizing research; theme 6: negotiating challenges; theme 7: internalizing prior influences and experiences; and theme 8: embracing their role as LTEs. It should be noted that the eight themes were found to be highly interrelated. There were several pedagogical practices, assignments, and comments by the LTEs that could have been categorized in more than one theme. This overlap supports the major finding discussed in the final chapter of this dissertation.

**Theme 1: Enacting a Comprehensive View of Literacy**

*Conceptualizing Literacy in a Shifting Landscape*

The LTEs in this study conceptualized literacy as broad, evolving, and holistic, which laid the foundation for their comprehensive view. They were not constricted by the limiting notion that literacy is a simple process of acquiring basic cognitive skills (e.g., reading and writing). Instead, they viewed literacy as multiple forms of meaning-making, critiquing, and communicating situated within a particular sociocultural context. For example, Sara found the term “literacy” somewhat restrictive and preferred to use “literacies” because it implied the multiple forms that literacy can take. Similarly, Beatrice preferred to use the subject title “English,” because she felt it connoted a variety of practices. Whether using the term literacy, literacies, or English, all the
LTEs used a wide range of descriptors to capture the multiple dimensions of literacy. Beatrice referred to literacy as multimodal, artistic, and powerful, and Sara and Carolina used the terms innovative, reflective, and digital. Justin, on the other hand, was adamant that literacy be understood as social semiotic and critical, yet he also referred to it, like Stella and Martha Ann, as creative. These broad interpretations of literacy contributed significantly to the LTEs’ comprehensive view.

Their broad view was supported by their understanding of literacy as constantly evolving. Sara felt that literacy courses had to be “forward thinking rather than just trying to roll out the same old stuff. For me it’s got be evolving.” Similarly, Beatrice suggested that literacy courses should not remain static; she reviewed and redeveloped her courses yearly to keep up with the ever-changing nature of literacy. Justin instilled his notion of literacy as constantly evolving in his student teachers through an assignment on the history of English:

I have a strong attachment to ensuring that our [student teachers] have a sense of the historical development of English as a subject, because I think that sense of the history of English is itself potentially emancipatory. If you see English as constructed and changing, then the possibility of it continuing to change and you the [student teacher] having a part to play in its reconstruction becomes more real than if it's simply a set of the givens that have existed through all eternity.

Through this assignment Justin impressed upon his student teachers the concept of English/literacy as evolving and opened the door for them to develop similar views.

The LTEs also viewed literacy as holistic. In fact, the holistic nature of the LTEs’ practices were so finely integrated that occasionally during the interviews some of the participants had difficulty separating literacy into separate parts. For example, when asked questions about the importance of implementing digital practices into teacher education, Justin declared, “isolating digital technology [is] a problem for me because I can’t imagine teacher
education in our society now not being conducted significantly through the affordances of digital
technology.” Similarly, Sara had difficulty separating out her digital practices as she saw literacy
education “all in a holistic way.” Carolina eloquently described the intricacy of her work in
literacy as a “three-dimensional cube. If you touch this piece it affects that, because you can’t
just look at this narrow bit. Everything is connected.” For all of the LTEs, every aspect of
literacy teaching and learning, whether academic or functional, was connected and needed to be
presented as such to their student teachers. All of these descriptions of literacy are evidence that
the LTEs had progressive, broad, and holistic outlooks. These views were deeply embedded in
the LTEs’ practices and were evident through the range of different language forms and the
integration of old and new literacy practices they used in their courses.

*Employing a diversity of language forms*

All of the LTEs enacted a comprehensive view of literacy that aligned with an interpretation of
multiliteracies as literacy pedagogy as opposed to an interpretation of multiliteracies as art or
technology pedagogy (as discussed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation). This does not suggest,
however, that these LTEs did not use technology or arts-based experiences, as in fact they did so
extensively. The LTEs’ interpretation of literacy pedagogy supported Rowsell et al.’s (2008)
statement “it is inappropriate for schools to focus on ‘a singular, canonical’ language form
such as formal written English” (p. 110). The LTEs recognized that schools needed to
incorporate many types of literacy (home literacy, local literacy, informal literacy, cross
curricular literacy) into their curricula and acknowledge that all modes of communication are
also types of literacy. With this in mind, the LTEs aimed to broaden their student teachers’ views
of literacy by including many types of literacy in their courses and portraying literacy as a
multimodal concept. The LTEs extensive use of multimodalities is discussed in the following
section. The use of different types of literacy (e.g., home literacy, community literacy) is addressed in the discussion of theme 3: fostering social justice.

\textit{i. Portraying literacy as a multimodal concept.} The LTEs used a number of different terms to describe their multimodal view of literacy. Beatrice stated, “multimodal education is crucial to the way in which I teach.” Carolina reported, “I really try to make sure that part of my teaching encompasses the multiple modes of teaching.” Stella spoke of “different modes of literacy,” and Sara reported using “multi-representations” in her classes with student teachers. Justin shared that he had presented a workshop series on “multimodalities and social semiotics” and said that these forms played a significant part in his understanding of literacy teaching and learning. Martha Ann remarked, “when we began in the late nineties thinking that text was more than just print, people were talking a lot about multiliteracies. I’m not seeing it as much now as multimodalities.” Although the terminology differed slightly, the results in their courses were strikingly similar: multimodal literacy was a prominent feature in all of their courses, particularly in digital forms (e.g., blogging, using iPads) and arts-based experiences (e.g., drama, visual art, dance). These experiences prepared their student teachers to integrate a range of communication approaches into their own pedagogies.

\textit{ii. Implementing digital technology.} All of the LTEs described using digital technology in their courses. When asked how important it was that teacher educators use digital technology, all suggested it was either highly important or of medium-high importance. However, two of the LTEs, Justin and Sara, qualified their high rating by suggesting it mattered “how” the teacher educator used the technology. They felt the technology should not just replace older forms of communication (e.g., PowerPoint replaces blackboard), but enhance the communication (i.e., stimulate more participation or interaction). Beatrice remarked, “I think that multimodality is
very important, but it's a kind of tool rather than an end. We don't teach to be multimodal, [it] is the means by which we achieve what we are going to achieve.” Stella concurred, “I think it’s an essential feature, but it’s a tool along with all the other tools that you would use in teaching. I don’t think it needs to be privileged as being the only way of working with a text or with language.” Justin added a note of caution:

Though we induct [the student teachers] into how they might use the technology, we signal that there are dangers to this, too. There is a danger in thinking that the lesson happens in the act of preparation and that the lesson itself is mainly the presentation. Also we signal that there is a danger in thinking that the fancier the work that they have produced, the PowerPoint presentation [or] whatever else, the better . . . the fancy PowerPoint that entrances everyone but leaves the learner as a passive recipient of what’s on the screen.

He was adamant that his student teachers keep the children’s needs the focal point of a lesson.

While maintaining their cautions and priorities, all of the LTEs aimed to keep up with technology in order to use it effectively in their courses, but some found this very challenging. As a result, their comfort levels in implementing digital technology varied. Two of the LTEs indicated they were not completely comfortable using it (although they did regularly) and the remaining four indicated they were fairly comfortable using it, but wanted to learn much more.

Interestingly, Carolina pointed out that initially she had to debunk her own assumptions about her student teachers’ knowledge of digital technology: “When I first started to teach this I just presumed they would know so much. But they are actually so restricted.” She learned that although her student teachers may use digital technology in their personal lives (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram), it never occurred to them to use it in a classroom as a teaching tool. Her
goal then became re-focusing what they could already do and teaching them to use it creatively in a classroom setting.

Although all of the LTEs used technology, their understanding of the affordances of digital practices and their actual application of technology varied enormously. All were using the information management systems (also called virtual learning environments) provided by their institutions to share resources, communicate, and monitor assignment submissions. All of the LTEs also used PowerPoint as a tool to accentuate the sharing of information during in-class work, particularly if the class involved a lecture. These uses were considered “the basics.” From there the more sophisticated uses of the technology grew. Carolina stated:

We might have a vodcast lecture or a podcast lecture and then we might have the 2-hour, face-to-face lecture. So we try to mix it up in a whole range of ways. We try to build in opportunities for students to engage in social media in each subject. For example, we have a subject blog where the students can do more formalized tasks. So we might set a task that requires them to post a blog entry response to a particular reading for example. Or it might be that we have a wiki where we put up key concepts that we might be developing in literacy, for example the concept of multiliteracies. We would then separate that out in terms of the component parts and have the students then add to their understandings of what they think that might mean so that they are building on their understanding.

Sara reported using advanced distance learning techniques:

I've created this [online] module using Camtasia. [I] can do voice overs and it’s much more interactive for students . . . One of the things I've been trying online is releasing information developmentally to get [the student teachers] to engage with the activities. I build a narrative for them that is the vision of what we are trying to do in the unit, this is the why, and then I [create and] embed a video or a film into the program. [Finally], I link them to a website.

Justin mentioned introducing his student teachers to whiteboards and providing them with iPads so they could make short films in response to literary texts. Beatrice described teaching her student teachers how to analyze videos and films and then have her student teachers respond to
the films and videos through a variety of writing genres. Stella used technology to take text “off the page, doing comic performance work with it, looking at different ways of using digital technology to analyze words, to re-present poems, and listening to poetry using the poetry archive.” She also mentioned blogging, text tagging, and having her student teachers use “comment boxes to respond to each other’s reflections.”

Martha Ann tended to use technology as a resource for exploring websites, videos and games. Although she felt somewhat hampered by her lack of knowledge about digital technology, she still regarded it as an enormous opportunity to foster creativity. To this end, she encouraged her student teachers to use digital technology in some of their assignments, as did Carolina. These assignments are addressed in the discussion of theme 3: constructing coherent courses in Chapter 6 of this dissertation.

**iii. Exploring arts-based experiences.** All of the LTEs incorporated arts-based experiences into their courses as a means of exploring multimodal literacy because, as Beatrice passionately declared, “it’s really, really important to emphasize the artistic side of language use.” Martha Ann recalled:

I read The Whale Song to the students, and then did “‘hot seating’.” I asked [student teachers] to be volunteers, to be the three characters in the book. [They were] to be part of a television show panel discussion about their lives. And I asked one man to be the MC. I said to him, “’Go on the internet while they’re thinking about their roles and see if you can come up with some whale song.’” So he did. I was in the background while they were acting this out. The [rest of the student teachers] were all responsible for coming up with some questions, excellent questions to ask these characters.

---

4 Hot seating is an exercise that involves one person assuming a role and sitting in the “hot seat” to answer questions posed by other members of the group.
Stella described getting her student teachers to perform poetry. Similarly, Justin used role playing in his courses, however he enhanced the student teachers’ experience by combining it with visual art:

We set them the task in groups of making a model of the Eiffel Tower out of newspaper and tape. And they approach the construction of the Eiffel Tower with just this magnificent seriousness. It’s just wonderful to watch. And then, when, they’ve finished, we get them to go around assessing each other’s Eiffel Towers. . . When they start assessing, invariably, they go into role. My favorite is when they become sort of art critics, and they inhabit a different discourse. Even if they are going into role as structural engineers or something, in order for them to assess the Eiffel Tower that’s being constructed, they have to do it from a perspective and the perspective can’t quite be them, partly because the criteria and the role are kind of linked. It just seems the most effective way of opening [the discussion], What is assessment criteria?

Beatrice and Sara also provided arts-based experiences for their student teachers, such as storytelling, creative writing, and drama. Table 2 below lists the digital literacy experiences and arts-based literacy experiences provided for the student teachers by each LTE.

Table 2
Multimodal Literacy Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Digital Literacy Experiences for Student Teachers</th>
<th>Arts-based Literacy Experiences for Student Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
<td>View websites, films, videos, YouTube</td>
<td>Write prose; Dramatize; Analyze films/videos; Scrapbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justin</td>
<td>Interact/create with iPads, wikis, whiteboards; View websites, films, videos</td>
<td>Construct art; Dramatize; Listen to storytelling Create videos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stella</td>
<td>View websites, films, videos; Create interactive documents; Create webpage on website</td>
<td>Dramatize; Write poetry; Perform poetry; Write prose</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Integrating Old and New Literacy Practices into Teacher Education Courses

As mentioned previously in this dissertation, the NLG (1996) does not support eliminating effective traditional literacy practices in order to implement new or more current practices. Rowsell et al. (2008) explain, “While it is true that schools should continue to teach formal language skills and literary appreciation, the nature and purpose of this teaching must be re-visioned in line with multiliteracies.” Further, Rowsell et al. (2008) suggest modifying, enhancing and/or refining traditional literacy practices to achieve the re-visioning needed. The LTEs in this study both enhanced and modified their teaching of formal language skills and literary appreciation thus aligning their pedagogy with multiliteracies.

#### i. Enhancing traditional literacy learning experiences

The NLG (1996) suggests “if one of our pedagogical goals is a degree of mastery in practice, then immersion in a community of learners engaged in authentic versions of such practice is necessary” (p. 84). In keeping with this
philosophy, three of the LTEs enhanced their teaching of traditional practices through immersion in an authentic community of learners. Carolina, for example, had her student teachers, “practice reading a picture book out loud to the people at their table and then think of two things that [the picture book] could be used for,” and “go into their study circles and try to use the reciprocal teaching strategy.” She then authenticated these experiences by having her student teachers practice these strategies during in-school practice sessions with children. Carolina said:

We’ve organized, with experienced efficient teachers who don't mind having people in their rooms, to have up to 10 of our pre-service teachers in their classrooms. [The student teachers] would practice working pairs, as a mentor-in-pairs with small groups of [children]. Just practicing, even at first just talking to [children]. How to talk to a child and respond. How to read to a child, and then how to support the child, just practicing very particular dialogic pedagogies. Even notice how the teacher uses wait time. Now you practice it. Notice how the teacher vacates the floor and lets the students take over discussions. Now you practice it. So it's a very supportive program.

Similarly, Sara placed her student teachers into schools (outside of their practicum) to assess children in authentic contexts. Even Justin, although he was preparing his student teachers for work as secondary school English teachers, was committed to helping them understand traditional literacy practices through authentic experience. Through an assignment called the Preliminary School Experience (PSE), Justin’s student teachers had authentic learning experiences with primary school children. Justin explained:

All secondary school [student teachers] in all subjects spend at least one week in a primary school before we meet them in September. For potential English teachers this is invaluable, and we give space and time at the start of the PGCE to discuss this experience.

Justin’s student teachers were expected to use an extensive list of questions to guide them in the collection of data for a case study they would present later in the course. The list included questions such as:
• Is there a time in the school day when the teacher reads to the class?

• What happens? Did you notice any gendered differences in the choices children make and/or in the way they read?

• If you get chance to talk to children—and we hope you do—ask them about their favorite kinds of reading and viewing, inside school and out.

• If you get chance to read with a child or small group, think about the strategies they adopt to make sense of the text. How do they deal with difficulties? (Syllabus, 2012-2013, 59)

The student teachers examined and reflected on the PSE case study in the PGCE course in numerous ways, allowing them time to process their understanding of traditional literacy practices from an experience in an authentic context.

Stella and Beatrice’s programs did not allow for their student teachers to experience authentic literacy learning in schools outside of the scheduled practicums. So these LTEs sought other means to enhance their student teachers’ experience of traditional literacy learning. According to Stella’s syllabus (2012-2013, p. 14), her student teachers explored traditional language learning by experimenting with teaching strategies in their practice teaching: “DARTs [Directed Activities Related to Text]; group, guided, and other reading approaches.” Afterwards, these activities were explored more deeply in additional workshops identified as TDCs (Teacher Development Courses). According to one of Ofsted’s initial teaching education reports teacher development courses are an effective means of “enabling trainees to learn about local and
national issues and try out teaching methods in micro-teaching situations⁵” (2011, p. 12). In this way, Stella’s student teachers experienced authentic traditional language learning.

Beatrice felt very strongly about providing her student teachers with an understanding of traditional language teaching experiences:

It is really important for all children to acquire print literacy because it is a powerful text, and if [they] don't have that powerful literacy then [they] are at a great disadvantage. [Print literacy] is the cultural capital of the Western world.

To enhance her student teachers’ understanding of traditional language skills, particularly print literacy, Beatrice used combinations of old and new practices. For example, her student teachers read about and explored different reading techniques in small groups, then explored and integrated these techniques through “textual recasting activities” (Syllabus 2012-2013, p. 18). Textual recasting is an inquiry-based experience that involves creating personal texts by clustering texts from similar sources and comparing those texts to personal experiences, thus gaining new perspectives on a topic (Claggett, Reid, & Vinz, 1996). The recasting experience enabled Beatrice’s student teachers to internalize and process different traditional literacy practices, compare it to their own literacy experiences, and in turn, generate their own, deeper understanding of the use and purpose of traditional reading practices.

**ii. Modifying the use of traditional literacy texts.** All of the LTEs were committed to helping their student teachers develop an awareness and appreciation of quality literature (e.g., children’s literature, adolescent literature, canonical literature), and learn how to effectively integrate this literature into their teaching. To realize this goal, the LTEs modified their use of traditional literacy teaching by combining it with other current literacy practices. For example,

---

⁵ Micro teaching is a short lesson delivered to a small group of children or fellow student teachers posing as participating children for the purposes practicing delivery, managing timing, and receiving constructive feedback from the other student teachers.
some of the LTEs used children’s and adolescent literature to engage their student teachers in critical readings of texts, and challenge their assumptions about what counts as literacy. Martha Ann introduced her student teachers to picture books with radical change characteristics:

I love the idea that it disrupts, especially the English majors, their ideas that there are beginnings, middles, and ends. Sometimes there are four stories on one page, and you know it can jump outside the margin. If you think of *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales*, they disrupt the layout, like the table of contents: it’s not in the right place.

Beyond disrupting her student teachers’ notion of how a picture book is *supposed* to look, she challenged her student teachers with adolescent fiction that highlights voices often marginalized in mainstream literature. For example, Martha Ann had her student teachers read and discussed the novel *Fatty Legs* (Jordan-Fenton, 2010), which explores the issues faced by a young Inuit girls in a residential school.

Similarly, Justin and Stella required their student teachers to read a number of children’s and adolescents’ works that honor marginalized voices (e.g., *The War Orphan*, Anderson, 1987; *The Boy in the Stripped Pyjamas*, Boyne, 2008; *(Un)arranged Marriage*, Rai, 2001; *Refugee Boy*, Zephaniah, 2001). Reading these texts was so important in their courses that the readings were assigned prior to the student teachers’ arrival in the PGCE program. Stella explained:

Before [the student teachers] begin their course, they are sent a pre-course reading list, which includes a number of young adolescent and children’s literature and graphic novels, and they have to have read at least six of those before they start the course. During the course of the year, they have to have read at least another 20. So we put quite a high rating on that.

Stella and Justin also included an extensive list of recommended children’s and adolescent literature in their course syllabi so that their student teachers would have a substantial book list in hand when they became teachers.
Sara and Carolina stated that they used children’s literature extensively and “in a variety of ways.” One of Sara’s goals was to “get a book that's going to have a different cultural perspective . . . or language stories that are from other cultures.” She thus used literature as a way to acknowledge and value diversity. Likewise, Carolina capitalized on the cultural affor-dances of traditional texts when possible, but she also tried to move discussions around texts into digital formats: “So we might set a task that requires them to post a blog entry response to a particular reading, for example.”

Like Carolina, Beatrice recognized the affordances of digital practices, particularly when combined with literature; however she used digital practices with canonical works:

Just recently I showed [my student teachers] videos of Shakespeare. I've used the Browning and the Olivier [versions of] Henry the 5th. I want to show them that you can use these to interpret Shakespeare differently. . . . I [also] show a film version of Pride and Prejudice and interpret it filmatically.

She also used YouTube and other websites to deepen her student teachers’ understanding and appreciation for canonical literature. By modifying her teaching of traditional language skills, Beatrice, like the other LTEs, better prepared her student teachers to deal with 21st-century learners in 21st-century classrooms.

**Theme 2: Enacting a Rich Pedagogy**

We cannot remake the world through schooling, but we can instantiate a vision through pedagogy that creates in microcosm a transformed set of relationships and possibilities for social futures, a vision that is lived in schools. This might involve activities such as simulating work relations of collaboration, commitment, and creative involvement; using the school as a site for mass media access and learning; reclaiming the public space of school citizenship for diverse communities and discourses; and creating communities of learners that are diverse and respectful of the autonomy of lifeworlds. (NLG, 1996, pp. 72–73)
All of the LTEs enacted a rich and thoughtful pedagogy to engage and help their student teachers develop as literacy teachers. The essence of their pedagogy was “walking the talk,” which went far beyond the modeling of best practices. These LTEs created microcosms of ideal learning conditions that their student teachers could learn in and from. Their methods aligned with the vision for a multiliteracies pedagogy of the kind suggested by the NLG in the opening quote. The LTEs carefully balanced social, cultural, and individual perspectives by creating communities of learners that were respectful of the autonomy of lifeworlds. They also implemented a constructivist, dialogical approach by encouraging dialogical learning, modeling exceptional teaching practice, and providing opportunities for practical experiences to support the theories explored in class.

**Balancing social, cultural, and individual perspectives**

  
  *i. Building a classroom community.* Beck and Kosnik (2006) suggest that student teachers “need to have a sense of security and a personal bond with each other so they are willing to work together in collaborative projects, take risks in class discussions, and bring their personal lives and experiences to the dialogue” (p. 56). All of the LTEs in this study believed that creating a safe and supportive environment in which their student teachers could share with each other and them was an integral part of enacting a rich pedagogy. Justin stated he knew his students and “seeing classrooms as dialogic and therefore safe spaces seems central to what I'm about.” Beatrice said she would not consider herself motherly, yet she was a nurturer and she was pleased that her student teachers “obviously feel safe” in her classroom. Stella mentioned the “importance of developing community, a safe community in your teacher education class.” The LTEs used a variety of strategies to create the safe communities that protected, supported, and encouraged their student teachers.
Although an enormous commitment in time and energy was required, all of the LTEs felt that establishing good relationships with their student teachers was a significant contributing factor in establishing a safe and trusting environment in their courses. Sara was disturbed when she discovered that some of her fellow teacher educators did not even “know their student teachers’ names.” She felt strongly that teacher educators should take the time get to know each of their student teachers personally. She even tried to establish personal connections with the student teachers in her online classes: “I'm wanting to use [digital technologies] more in interesting and creative ways so that I can work with the students no matter where they are in space and place and time to build that same sort of relationship.” To this end, she created videos of herself talking to the student teachers as though they were working face-to-face. She carefully included answers to questions and explanations that student teachers asked when she previously gave the lecture face-to-face. Carolina was also adamant about developing strong relationships:

For me [that relationship] is an important investment. They are [my student teachers] but in one way they are [also] my developing peers, so I need to be able to connect up with them interpersonally, which means knowing who those people are that I'm working with in the day to day.

Carolina recognized that many of her student teachers were young and away from home for the first time, so she would do “all those practical interpersonal things that you do as a teacher,” such as making herself available to her student teachers through personal meetings, phone calls, and email exchanges.

Justin also valued the teacher educator–student teacher relationship and shared that he and his team had “very close relationships with our tutees, who are the student teachers whom we will visit [in practicum].” He was very aware of how much his student teacher’s anxiety levels fluctuated depending on where they were in the program or in their practicum and adjusted
his teaching accordingly. His only regret about teacher education was that he felt limited by the short nine months of the PGCE program and he wished he had more time with his student teachers. To make the most of the time he had, Justin would draw on his personal experiences as a teacher to connect with his students by bringing in artifacts from his teaching days and telling his student teachers stories about his experiences working in challenging schools. Similarly, Martha Ann reminisced about her time as a classroom teacher because it “helped her [student teachers] understand” and it “sparked a kind of empathy in them.” In fact, Martha Ann took her storytelling a step further and shared her personal history as a divorcee and single mother with her student teachers. She found that this established credibility with the older students who found it helpful to know that “[she] was able to forge a career for [herself]” later in life. This credibility contributed to the trust and bonding she hoped to establish.

Stella, on the other hand, employed a different strategy:

I get the [student teachers] performing a poem in groups. Everybody in the room, by break time, has performed for each other, in a kind of really trusting, not scary way at all. That breaks down those barriers and gets them to talk in a less inhibited way.

She used expressive arts activities to create a relaxed and trusting atmosphere. The LTEs realized that by creating a safe environment their student teachers were more willing to take risks, discuss difficult topics, and remain open to new and challenging ideas, which in turn, enabled them to thrive as developing teachers.

**ii. Honoring individual differences.** The NLG (1996) state, “as people are simultaneously members of multiple lifeworlds, so their identities have multiple layers that are in complex relation to each other” (1996, p. 71). As a result, the NLG suggest teachers support students’ individual differences; however, Rowsell et al. (2008) believe that the NLG (1996) do not
support the individual point of view as well as they should. Rowsell et al. (2008) state “we feel the importance and legitimacy of the individual point of view is not mentioned often enough in multiliteracies discourse” (p. 113). Regarding “individual identity” the LTEs in this study moved beyond the limited multiliteracies discourse (Rowsell et al., 2008, p. 113). They were deeply committed to supporting individual differences and demonstrated their commitment in variety of ways. Stella explained that she really listened to each of her student teachers and encouraged each one “to voice their own opinions.” Martha Ann encouraged her student teachers to choose projects that were of personal interest to them:

I had them do a group project and I had them choose different areas. For example, one group did body image. I have a lot of people who are very interested in the whole notion of self-esteem, bulimia, and anorexia.

Similarly, Sara explained that one of the reasons she incorporated digital technology into her courses was to “make it real for the [student teachers] in terms of their own social worlds.” If her student teachers were comfortable using technology in their private lives, then she would incorporate this into her courses, even though learning about and setting up new forms of technology could be very time consuming (e.g., Camtasia, podcasts, wikis).

Carolina recognized that many of her student teachers needed individual academic support:

I find I really get to know who they are after their first assessment piece . . . and then it shifts. I’ve got this group of people that actually aren’t getting their literacies right. They’ve got their own issues. So that’s when I find that I have to differentiate.

Just as she did when she was a classroom teacher, she focused on developing “their personal literacy skills” because a lot of her student teachers were “relatively lacking in their own personal
literacies. Writing, reading, comprehending texts, all of those things, they have difficulty with.”

Likewise, Beatrice adapted to the individual academic needs of her student teachers:

At the end of the first term I take stock of what we’ve done and what they need to do. I know there are other things that I might have to bring in. [For example,] I read their KWL sheets and see if they might want to do more on struggling readers.

In this way, Beatrice consistently assessed the needs of her student teachers and addressed those needs as they progressed through the course. She also carefully observed her student teachers so she could support them emotionally when necessary. She explained that she occasionally had student teachers, “who never speak.” When this happened, she persisted in reaching out to them, and encouraged them to participate.

Justin shared that in his course evaluations his student teachers were “without exception, effusive in their praise and thanks for us, is in terms of the amount of time and attention we give them as individuals.” Justin found this praise validating, but he also acknowledged it was sad because he recognized his student teachers were making a comparison between his course and their undergraduate courses, “where there was no personal contact at all.” Justin and his team worked hard at changing the undergraduate mindset and were clearly successful. Through careful monitoring, assessment, personal sharing of stories, positive reinforcement, and acknowledging their student teachers’ preferences, the LTEs were able to build class communities that supported the individual needs of their student teachers both academically and personally.

---

6 KWL is a metacognition strategy in which the instructor has the students to fill out a chart that lists what they already knew (K); what they still want to know (W); and what they have learned (L).
Using a constructivist, dialogical approach

In their study on how preservice faculty implement multiliteracies, Rowsell et al. (2008) report, “there was discussion and modeling of elements such as teacher–student dialogue, teachers and students learning together, experiential learning, and building on the needs and interests of students” (p. 117). These elements represent a social constructivist understanding of teaching and learning (Rowsell et al., 2008; Beck & Kosnik, 2006). At the core of social constructivism are the assumptions that learning is a social construct and that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition (Brooks & Brooks, 1993; Bruner, 1960/2003; Dewey, 1938/1974; Doolittle & Camp, 1999; Kooy, 2015; Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). Furthermore, learners need to be encouraged to reflect critically on experiences and build upon existing knowledge in order to expand their knowledge (Beattie, 2007; Korthagen et al., 2001). Vygotsky and Cole (1978) state learners need knowledgeable experts (e.g., peers, teachers, or coaches) who can guide them from their present state of knowledge to new levels of understanding. Bruner (1960) outlines the general characteristics inherent in an educator who subscribes to a social constructivist approach:

- encourages and accepts student autonomy and initiative by being willing to let go of classroom control;
- starts the learning process from where the student is;
- serves as one of many resources for students, not necessarily the primary source of information;
- encourages questions and discussion among students;
- makes raw data and primary resources available along with manipulatives and interactive physical materials.
The challenge then for teacher educators is to provide rich learning experiences that start with and challenge student teachers’ prior experiences, provide ample opportunity for students teachers to construct their own new knowledge, and allow them to learn from various sources. Notably, all of the LTEs in this study subscribed to a social constructivist notion of teaching and learning and conducted their classes accordingly. They used a range of strategies to implement a social constructivist model in their courses, three of which will be highlighted here: dialogical learning, modeling, and learning theory through practical experience.

*i. Dialogical learning.* Carolina regularly “vacated the floor” to encourage her student teachers to lead and develop their own discussions:

> Part of my deeply embedded beliefs about effective pedagogy is around opening up communicative spaces to have the students engage in sustained conversations with substance, with challenging conversations, with opening up those sorts of spaces. It’s around that whole idea about dialogic pedagogies, which I have written about, and I put into practice in my own teaching.

In this way she demonstrated she was devoted to developing a dialogical approach to teaching and learning with her student teachers. She also used a strategy known as critical friend protocol. In this strategy, the student teachers work in pairs so they could observe each other as they work with children. They “identify things they realize their partner isn’t doing” which enables them to “start having professional critique conversations really early.” Sara, on the other hand, promoted discourse between her student teachers and herself through an “action process” that involved presenting her student teachers with new information (e.g., theories, experiences, topics, and concerns), encouraging them to experiment with the new information, and then reflect on, unpack, and discuss it. The process involved the student teachers working independently, then in small groups, and finally in large groups.

---

7 Critical friend protocol uses collegial relationships to critically support the growth of a colleague through observation and frank follow-up discussion.
Justin stated that he and his team shared a “kind of Vygotsky orientation. We do see the development of language as being inextricably social and we see Vygotsky as absolutely essential to a kind of theoretical perspective that we share.” This orientation led them to encourage much discussion in their courses in the form of partner sharing\(^8\) and small and large group discussions. Beatrice had her student teachers engage in small and large group discussions as well, but enhanced those experiences with collaborative strategies such as jig saw\(^9\), gold fish bowl\(^10\), and partner sharing. Stella, like Carolina, used critical friend protocol. Stella and Beatrice both used literature circles\(^11\); personal writing conferencing\(^12\); and scheduled presentations of assignments so that their student teachers could share and discuss their different learning experiences and ever-expanding knowledge about teaching and learning. Through these various experiences, peer-support strategies, small and large group discussions, and collaborative learning exercises, the LTEs enabled their student teachers to learn from each other as much as they learned from their teachers. The LTEs also provided space for their student teachers to internalize new information and construct their own personal meaning.

\(ii.\) **Modeling expert practice.** The term modeling was used by all of the LTEs but in a sense that went well beyond merely demonstrating a good strategy. Sara passionately described the antithesis of teacher educator modeling:

\(^8\) Partner sharing is an informal more intimate form of information sharing in which each partner has a chance to express his/her opinion without being heard by several people.

\(^9\) Jig saw is a cooperative learning technique that involves students being given the responsibility for collecting and sharing information with many groups of people.

\(^10\) Gold fish bowl is a cooperative learning strategy in which the students are arranged in two circles, one inside the other. The inner circle conducts a discussion while the outer circle listens in, takes notes about the discussion, and then summarizes the inner circles discussion when it is completed.

\(^11\) Literature circles are similar to book clubs in that a small group of students discuss a piece of literature. Sometimes the members of the groups assume roles (e.g., discussion director, summarizer, word smith).

\(^12\) Personal writing conferences are personal discussions between an instructor and a student writer about aspects of a particular piece of writing that usually follows a set of questions (e.g., What did you like best about this work?)
They are not living their practice. They are not passionate about what they are doing. They are basically poor role models. They are people who are disconnected, unprofessional, and unfortunately they stand in front of a group of preservice teachers and talk at them.

The LTEs in this study were indeed the opposite of the portrait painted by Sara. They lived their practice and aimed to be role models of disposition and practice whom their student teachers could emulate. For example, Justin provided an example of modeling disposition when he discussed his practicum visits with his student teachers:

I think that children and young people are unfailingly fascinating, creative, inventive, and resourceful; and I think one of my strengths is in reminding my student teachers of the creativity of the learners they may encounter in the classroom. When I go visiting my students [in placement] I write very detailed narratives of their lessons and I think those narratives are much more important than the summary that we have to produce that nods in the direction of competencies and standards. Often my students, initially, are slightly taken aback, that I have found so much to say about what's been going on in the lesson. I tend to be particularly focused on what the kids are doing, and part of the point is that classrooms are complex environments, so complex that one can never take in everything that's happening. Whatever perspective one has, and certainly when one’s charged with responsibility for managing the classroom, there's lots of stuff happening that is going to elude one’s attention. So having an observer in there, I think, although part of my role is to reach judgments about my students, equally important is to say look at this stuff that's happening here, isn’t this interesting?

Stella modeled a positive disposition through her passion towards the expressive arts. She felt strongly that teacher educators should show a “commitment . . . or personal engagement” to their subject area, or an aspect of that area. To that end she passionately and joyously shared many forms of poetry with her student teachers and maintained a blog so they could read the poetry for themselves and develop their appreciation of it as both an art form and an excellent literacy development strategy.

As well as modeling dispositions, the LTEs consistently modeled expert practice. Beatrice described her practice as “model[ing] how to teach as well as teaching a subject area.”
For example, she would demonstrate to her student teachers how to critique a film before she expected them to do it. Carolina focused on modeling expert practice by demonstrating how to engage in professional dialogue and how to professionally critique a peer so her student teachers could follow her lead and help each other when they observed each other working with children. She also took the time to analyze her lessons with her student teachers:

I unpack [the lessons] with them. What did we learn? How did we learn it? How do we go forward with the learning of it? So the how do they learn, it is them critiquing me. They need to be able to identify what I’ve done. We worked in groups, well how did that go for you? I try to tease out a critique for practices as we are doing them. . . . So we aren’t just coming in and whizzing through a few activities and off we go. I say ‘I did it like this because…’ So they are getting a sense of [what I’m thinking]… it’s almost like a think-aloud. So they are hearing the reasoning behind it.

By asking her student teachers to critique her teaching and examine her thinking process, she enabled her student teachers to “think like a teacher.”

Justin adopted a similar approach after making a discovery about modeling in his research:

I have been doing some research on beginning teachers and I couldn't get over how many of them didn't realize that what their instructors were trying to do in their Teacher Ed Program was model good practice. We sort of go on the assumption that they are appreciating that we are modeling, but now I make [my practice] much more explicit.

Recently, one of Justin’s student teachers told him she realized “what you do with us in the seminar on Friday is modeling the kind of practice you’d like us to adopt in school.” He was pleased that this student realized this and hoped more would do the same.

iii. Experiencing theory through practice. Weaving together theory and practice can be a complex process:
It is not difficult to see that teaching can be viewed as comprising a knowledge of theory in and through practice and that each gently moulds the other in the creation of purposeful pedagogical experiences. The ability to make all of this clear and helpful to students of teaching and learning in teacher education requires a genuine scholarship of teacher education and demands much more than simply ‘demonstrating good teaching.’ (Loughran, 2006, p. 18)

The LTEs in this study were masterful at enhancing the theory–practice connection in their courses. This was achieved through carefully structured courses and experiential learning opportunities embedded in theories and research-based practices. Notably, all of the theories and research-based practices were directly related to concepts and theories embedded in multiliteracies (e.g., experiential learning, sociocultural theory).

Five of the six LTEs included lecturing, yet remained particularly mindful of emphasizing hands-on experiences through follow-up seminars, tutorials, and/or workshops. They recognized that lectures were necessary to explain information, particularly about theory, but always created space for their student teachers to explore the information to enhance their understanding and move the theory into some form of practice. Martha Ann stated she used lectures but they were “mini lectures” and then very quickly moved her student teachers into active learning tasks. Similarly, Stella stated, “I will occasionally [lecture]. I will use some PowerPoint slides to point out references to readings, or outline activities I want them to do. But I don't stand at the front talking to them very often at all.” Stella preferred an active, experiential class structure where she could stand back and watch her student teachers “really engaging with one another.” Her syllabus stated: “All of our sessions are very active and draw on examples of best practice” (Syllabus, 2012-2013, p. 12).

Carolina committed more time to lecturing, but still balanced it with experiential learning:
We have a lecture and a workshop structure. So we have a one-hour lecture, where we would be more theoretical, laying down the theoretical frame for what we are talking about. And then we separate [them] and they have a one-hour tutorial.

She then went on to say “and then on top of that we have the workshop, that's a two-hour block, to workshop the ideas that are presented at the lecture.” Similarly, Justin mentioned using lectures, but emphasized they tended to “be highly interactive” and were team taught. These were then followed up by two tutorials that explored the content of the lecture, and optional workshops were also made available to the student teachers. Sara’s structure was similar to that of Carolina and Justin. Only Beatrice declared “we don't really lecture to them at all. We do workshops with them,” demonstrating her commitment to experiential learning.

All of the LTEs situated the core of their course content in educational theory and/or evidence-based research, although the theories and research-based strategies selected tended to vary from one LTE to another. For example, Martha Ann was a strong advocate for “process learning,” thus, for example, used Writer’s Workshop\textsuperscript{13} in her course. She reported, “I want [my student teachers] to understand that [writing is] a process where students have to generate ideas, draft, revise, and so I try to model that in my classes.” To this end, she said “for approximately forty-five minutes for six or seven classes, I would give them time to read and write in class, because I want them to realize that they need to give time to this.”

It was important to Beatrice that her student teachers understand Kolb’s Theory of Learning Styles. Initially she encouraged her student teachers to experiment with the different learning styles, but discovered the student teachers found it “almost impossible because they constantly focused on whatever learning style they happened to like.” As a result she developed

\textsuperscript{13} Writer’s Workshop is a method of writing instruction developed by Donald Graves which involves taking the writer through a process from brainstorming ideas for writing to a self-published work.
lessons such that she would “start with something concrete, have her student teachers reflect on it, draw conclusions, and then go and practice.” Her lesson exploring the creative stage of Kolb’s model involved writing poetry based on the book, *Rose, Where Did You Get That Red?* by Kenneth Koch. She gave each student teacher a rose and posed the question, “Rose, where did you get that red?”

And then they write these poems that are just like the Blake poems. I [also] give them Tiger, Tiger and ask them to write a poem about Tiger Woods. [In this way] I introduced the [learning styles] theory in the practice.

Besides learning styles, Beatrice emphasized assessment for learning\(^\text{14}\) practices in her course. She brought in examples of her own children’s suspense writing and instructed her student teachers to compare these to the work of three other children using a set of criteria she provided. She found this exercise enabled her student teachers to recognize strong aspects of writing in children’s work that they initially may have overlooked. Further, by using her own children’s work she provided her student teachers with not only an authentic learning opportunity, but also a chance to connect with her on a personal level.

Carolina also emphasized assessment with her student teachers, but embedded this in practical applications of sociocultural theory through work in the community. She used a two-part process to allow her student teachers to experience an application of sociocultural theory first-hand. First she had her student teachers personally experience language as a social practice. This was accomplished by first giving her student teachers a lecture focused on language development and how to teach reading comprehension strategies that emphasized social practices. Her student teachers then used the strategies presented in the lecture in their tutorials:

\(^{14}\) Assessment for learning is a process of assessment that highlights using assessment to inform instruction and encourages student to be more active in their learning process.
After the [student teachers] do their welcome board [activity], they go into their study circles. We try to get them to practice at least one of the [comprehension] strategies [from the lecture]. Reciprocal reading we find is quite good. Or we might model other strategies so they get to put a few things into their teaching tool kit.

The second part involved her student teachers taking their dialogical learning experiences from the tutorial into the sociocultural context of a classroom by using “some of those reading comprehension strategies in classrooms with children.” Carolina reported that after just a few weeks of using the strategies with children, and discussing the experiences in the university classroom, the student teachers began to realize that, “whether they were in kindergarten, or whether they are in year 6,” each child had his or her own cultural capital.

Sara’s preferred model of teacher education also involved reaching out to the local community and employed assessment for learning practices embedded in a sociocultural context. Sara identified schools “in a low socioeconomic area” that had issues with “language development” and then assigned her student teachers the significant task of assessing the childrens’ needs before introducing them to the strategies of teaching reading and writing. The content of her teacher education classes were then constructed around meeting the needs of the children (e.g., reciprocal reading strategies, cueing analysis). Sara explained:

We shifted the side of learning from the university into the school. We work with the teachers, the children, the parents, and the teacher education and the preservice teachers together. First of all we start off with diagnostic testing, in terms of . . . assessing students’ needs . . . So the student teachers still learn the content, for example, the reading in cueing system, but they do it within context, because then the preservice teachers are going out and working with the children. The [student teachers] look at strategies, language experience, modeled reading, guided reading, modeled writing . . . and then they fit it in a model that actually goes from where the little ones’ needs are. So I would say that it’s more in-depth.
Through her university-school model of teacher education, Sara hoped her student teachers would recognize that teaching is “complex.” And although it was a great deal of work to organize, she was committed to “tweaking models [of teacher education] that are trying to keep this community-school-university partnership.” Sara realized that some of the student teachers preferred to learn through text books, lectures, and tutorials, but for the most part, the student teachers recognized that learning through this model was more “authentic and purposeful.”

Occasionally, the LTEs would invite members of the local community into their classrooms to help them bridge theory and practice. Beatrice, Stella, Carolina, and Sara invited practicing teachers into their courses to demonstrate how they implemented particular learning theories in their classrooms. For example, Beatrice invited a practicing teacher into her course to model how he used assessment for learning in digital form. Using computers, her student teachers then learned how to comment on each other’s work. Stella preferred to involve former PGCE graduates:

We involve teachers who are working in schools who would be PGCE alumni and they input into the course as well. The [student teachers] like the kind of reality that that brings to [the class]. They have real teachers [to talk to].

Through these experiences the student teachers connected to “real” teachers in the field, which in turn validated their experiences as student teachers.

Whether bringing in guest speakers or alumni, using artifacts produced by children, or designing complex links between classroom practice and the community, the LTEs strove to make theoretical understandings of teaching and learning as experiential as possible for their student teachers. The methods they used both motivated and engaged their student teachers with
the promise they were learning something valuable towards their goal of becoming a practicing teacher.

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the cross case analysis findings of this study. The findings emerged as eight themes: enacting a comprehensive view of literacy; enacting a rich pedagogy; constructing coherent courses; utilizing research; fostering social justice; negotiating challenges; internalizing prior influences and experiences; and, embracing their roles as LTEs. Theme 1, enacting a comprehensive view of literacy, emerged as the core category that contributed significantly to the final theory. In this chapter the first two themes, enacting a comprehensive view of literacy; and, enacting a rich pedagogy; were examined in detail. The first theme revealed the LTEs’ conceptualizations of literacy as broad, evolving, and holistic. This conceptualization aligned with an interpretation of multiliteracies as literacy pedagogy which was highly multimodal in nature and incorporated both digital and arts-based experiences. The second theme, enacting a rich pedagogy, described how the LTEs effectively built classroom communities, used constructivist approach to learning, and ensured their student teachers enacted their theoretical learning through practice. The remaining 6 themes are explored in Chapters 7 and 8, respectively.
Theme 3: Constructing Coherent Courses

Goodwin and Kosnik (2013) find that, “beginning teachers consistently display an insatiable desire for ‘tool kits,’ or ‘tricks of the trade’ – things they can implement immediately even when there are few methods that will work universally” (p. 341). Cope and Kalantzis (2000) describe a pedagogy that merely supports a wide range of tricks-of-the-trade strategies as a “fractured” or “shopping mall curriculum” (p. 147). Although the LTEs in this study supported their student teachers in acquiring a variety of teaching strategies and Carolina stated she wanted to add to “their teaching tool kit,” they did not subscribe to a shopping mall curriculum. They aligned themselves with the NLG’s (1996) opinion that “people do not learn anything well unless they are both motivated to learn and believe that they will be able to use and function with what they are learning in some way that is in their interest” (p. 85). As a result, the LTEs carefully constructed coherent courses that were driven by big picture ideas; broad goals that were most likely to facilitate their student teachers’ understanding of teaching and learning. Furthermore, they set specific course goals that were relevant to teaching and created assignments that were personal and meaningful.

Setting Purposeful Course Goals

All of the LTEs had one broad goal that was carefully woven through every aspect of their course. This broad goal served to hold together all of the “bits and pieces” (Kosnik et al., in press) inherent in literacy courses. When asked about a broad course goal, Justin stated:
I see our work as being about the development of teachers as public intellectuals. not simply to prepare beginning teachers for whatever the particular curricular or pedagogic demands of policy here now are, but for a lifetime in teaching. And this involves them being able to be both critical of initiatives that are thrust on them and creative in their approaches.

Justin prepared his student teachers to see a much bigger picture of literacy and literacy teaching rather than a collection of strategies. His vision entailed consistent critical analysis of policy and creative approaches to teaching. Stella was also committed to developing thinking, creative teachers: “What I want to do is encourage [my student teachers] to think and to experiment, and to take risks.” This broad goal prompted her to consistently use creative and inquiry-based in-class tasks. Martha Ann’s broad goal was to help her student teachers “develop a sense of self-efficacy. I’d like them to be willing to take the initiative and continue learning, to feel empowered to go out and make a difference.” Hence, Martha Ann was constantly providing tasks that encouraged and supported her student teachers’ emotional and mental development.

Carolina, on the other hand, was adamant that her student teachers understand:

Teaching is not about [them], it’s actually about the students and the contexts . . . The big bottom line is that each of these little people in front of [them] are all different with their own cultural capital. As a teacher, [they] need to think beyond what [they are doing] and think about what [the children] can bring to the table.

For Carolina that meant “starting with assessment, so the [student teachers] are responding to the context of students, the participants in their space.” Sara concurred, “I think the [student teachers] need to know that you need to start from the children, from where the learner is.” Similarly, Beatrice’s primary goal was to have her student teachers start with the learner, thus she frequently looped back to “assessment for learning” tasks in her classes.

Beyond their big picture goals, the LTEs identified 17 specific course goals on which they built their literacy courses. These goals were either listed in their syllabi or mentioned
during their interviews. Interestingly, these goals were common to all of the LTEs, although actualized through different methods and strategies. Table 3 below lists the 17 common goals and examples of how these goals were actualized in the various courses.

Table 3

*Specific Course Goals and Examples*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Course Goals</th>
<th>Examples of Actualizations of Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge and appreciation of literature</td>
<td>Examine and explore children’s picture books, graphic novels, adolescent novels, and canonical texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of multimodal texts</td>
<td>Examine and/or create cartoons, photographs, children’s books, text books, art work, dramas, raps, poetry, websites, movies, and YouTube videos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of government standards or curriculum</td>
<td>Examine media curriculum, language arts curriculum, national standards, National Curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of literacy as a broad and evolving concept</td>
<td>Explore and discuss multiple literacy theories: multiliteracies, multimodalities, critical literacies, sociocultural theory, social constructivism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model and develop knowledge of pedagogical strategies</td>
<td>Participate in and unpack various pedagogical strategies: jigsaw, fishbowl, critical friend, book talks, literature circles, textual recasting, discussions, dramatizations, use of wait time, vacating the floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand knowledge of digital technologies</td>
<td>Use whiteboards, wikis, blogs, podcasting, websites, Facebook, PowerPoint, iMovie, iPads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge practice teaching and academic program</td>
<td>Connect assignments to practice teaching; encourage discussions and unpacking of practicum experiences in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of different uses of assessment</td>
<td>Use assessment for learning strategies to assess reading and writing levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Course Goals</td>
<td>Examples of Actualizations of Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of professional roles</td>
<td>Participate in peer critiquing; examine teaching standards documents; discuss Ontario College of Teachers’ Foundations of Professional Practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of social justice issues, diversity and inclusivity</td>
<td>Examine a variety of texts addressing marginalized voices and/or issues of racism and human rights; discuss race, culture, and power issues; create art work that explores issues of diversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect with local community</td>
<td>Set up practice sessions in schools with children; set up student teachers as judges in a national book contest; assign case studies in schools; invite in local teachers, Aboriginal elders, and community leaders; blog publicly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build a classroom community</td>
<td>Develop close personal relationships with student teachers; monitor and assess student teacher progress; provide academic assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect theory to practice</td>
<td>Follow theory with practical experiential sessions; provide extra workshops to explore theory; provide in-school sessions for student teachers to practice theory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of a reflective practice</td>
<td>Reflect through portfolios, audit booklets, blogging, journaling, exit slips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage collaborative planning and team work</td>
<td>Small and large group discussions; partner sharing; collaborative assignments; group presentations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of lesson/unit planning</td>
<td>Discuss and create lesson plans, explicit teaching plans, and/or lesson schemes individually and in groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of multiple resources</td>
<td>Access and use websites, text books, journals, teaching centers, organizations, kits, packages, field trip sites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many of the course goals were actualized through the wide variety of examples (which are listed in Table 3) and through the meaningful assignments the LTEs created for their courses.
Creating Meaningful Assignments

i. Balancing the assignment load. All of the LTEs required their student teachers to complete a list of assignments. (Beatrice, Justin, and Stella’s university also gave all student teachers extra assignments that related to their subject specialty. Although these extra assignments were managed and graded by Beatrice and Justin, they were not technically a class assignment and are therefore not included in this discussion).

Some of the class assignments were to be completed individually while others were completed collaboratively. The assignments were marked by the LTEs and different assignments were weighted differently with respect to the course grade. For example, Carolina assigned two pieces of work. The first assignment, a collaborative creation of a multimodal text and 10 blog posts, was worth 60 percent of the student’s final grade. The second assignment, a unit of study, contributed 40 percent of the student teacher’s final grade. All of the LTEs reported their student teachers found the assignment load challenging but not too difficult. Justin stated, “[the student teachers] see these pieces as formative. Particularly by the time they reach the end of the course, they are very clear that these pieces have served them.” All of the LTEs provided time in class for their student teachers to work on one or more of the assignments. This prevented the student teachers from having an overwhelming workload outside of classes, allowed for collaboration and discussion of the assignments in class, ensured the LTEs were available to the student teachers for ongoing guidance and clarification, and allowed the LTEs to monitor their student teachers’ work as it was developing.

The following are summaries of the course assignments for each LTE:

Beatrice
Beatrice’s student teachers were expected to complete seven assignments that pertained directly to her subject class. Two of these assignments were portfolios, one on subject knowledge and
one on assessment. These portfolios could be set up as a “scrapbook, logbook, or whatever.” One collaborative unit plan was assigned “which will take between fifteen and eighteen lessons to deliver” and was to be presented to the class. Two microteaching lessons (one on grammar and one on poetry) were to be presented to “their group.” Student teachers were also to observe one lesson of Beatrice’s using a “specific technique for observing and analysing lessons.” Student teachers were also to observe two or more professionally taught lessons in a classroom and write “accounts, in different genres and according to different research paradigms.”

Justin
Six assignments were listed in Justin’s syllabus, two of which were assigned before the course began: a written paper on the student teachers’ own subject knowledge development examining the student teachers’ perceived strengths, passions, and gaps in knowledge about the subject; and a case study of a child/student. The remaining four were: a language autobiography; an overview of the “place of English” in the curriculum; an extension of the child/student case study profiling the child as a reader; and a focused observation task “based on a lesson [the student teacher] observed.”

Carolina
Carolina’s syllabus outlined two major assignments in detail. The first assignment was broken down into two distinct parts: creating a group multimodal digital text and completing 10 weekly online tasks. The second assignment entailed creating a unit that required the student teachers to “design, produce, implement and critique a teaching plan and multimodal text with children.” The task comprised three distinct parts: the teaching plan; the digital multimodal text; and the assessment and evaluation.

Stella
Stella assigned four “subject tasks” that were specific to her English PGCE student teachers. The first of her subject tasks was to create a portfolio which required a minimum of “six distinctly different pieces” (e.g., 2-3 poems, short story, piece of reportage, film review). The second task was a unit or “scheme of work” based on media in English. The third task was a 500-word language autobiography for which the focus was left entirely up to the student teachers but suggestions were provided (e.g., your early memories of learning to talk, read and write; your personal experiences of Standard English and regional dialects). The last subject task was a small group assignment which allowed the student teachers to choose between creating a “scheme of work for a pair of texts” or an “Media task.”

Sara
Sara’s syllabus outlined two assessment tasks. The first was a detailed accounting (minimum 2000 words) of “two literacy events that you have observed,” while in a primary classroom, day care center, home, or community center during the first four weeks of the course. The assignment required the student teacher to include “your evolving beliefs about your role as a teacher of literacy and describe how what you learned might be translated into your future professional practice.” The second assessment task was a planning assignment (minimum 2000 words) that was to be developed collaboratively, with a partner. The student teachers were instructed “to choose a children’s picture book from a list which will be provided to you,” and include
“teaching related to the literacies of the text. For example, what would need to be taught in order for the children to access the text.”

Martha Ann
Martha Ann outlined four assignments in her syllabus. The first assignment was a conglomerate of smaller tasks: active participation in the course; a written personal history of their experiences as a literacy learner; and a final course reflection detailing what they learned about literacy in the course. The second assignment was a portfolio collection of the written pieces developed throughout the course while participating in the readers’/writers’ workshop lessons. The third assignment entailed working in a small group to produce a multigenre/multimodal text in response to a Canadian social justice picture book. The final assignment, also collaborative, required the student teachers to develop a unit of study centered around a novel which required 20 instructional hours based on a social justice theme.

Table 4 below depicts the similarities and differences between each of the LTE’s assignments.

Table 4
Assignments at a Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beatrice</th>
<th>Justin</th>
<th>Stella</th>
<th>Sara</th>
<th>Carolina</th>
<th>Martha Ann</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Assignments</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Portfolio</strong></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Case Study</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Autobiography</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multimodal Response</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit of Study</strong></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observation of Lessons</strong></td>
<td>XX</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>History of English Essay</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The LTEs’ assignments involved a wide range of strategies with some striking similarities and differences:

- All LTEs assigned at least one task that involved reflection;
- All LTEs connected the assignments to in-class work;
- All LTEs made the assignments relevant to teaching;
- All LTEs aligned the assignments with course goals;
- Five LTEs assigned unit plans;
- Five LTEs included small group collaboration as an assignment requirement;
- Five LTEs included an element of choice in at least one assignment;
- Four LTEs connected at least one assignment to the student teacher’s practicum or work in the community;
- Two LTEs incorporated multimodalities.

These similarities and differences are explored in detail in the following section.

*ii. Making assignments meaningful.* Four factors contributed to making the LTEs’ assignments meaningful: connections to in-class learning; relevancy to teaching; personalization; and actualization of course goals. The first factor, connections to in-class learning, was consistent in all of the assignments. For example, Justin stated he revisited and discussed the
student teachers’ case studies with them many times during the year. Similarly, Beatrice, Stella, and Martha Ann’s portfolio assignments were used and built upon in class for many months. Justin, Sara, and Beatrice’s assigned observations of practicing teachers were used as points of reference during many class discussions.

An example of the second and third factors, relevancy to teaching and connecting assignments to course goals, was achieved by all of the LTEs, save Justin, by assigning their student teachers a collaborative unit of study. (Justin also assigned a unit of study, but preferred to enact the assignment as a collaborative in-class task that spread over several sessions.) The unit assignments were practical and relevant to teaching in that they required the student teachers to integrate many aspects of teaching. Additionally, the unit plan assignment actualized many of the LTEs’ specific course goals, which ones depended on how the assignment was constructed. Table 5 below outlines how many goals were actualized by the unit assignment for each LTE who assigned it.

Table 5

*Aligning Unit Assignments with Course Goals*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Goals</th>
<th>Beatrice</th>
<th>Sara</th>
<th>Martha Ann</th>
<th>Stella</th>
<th>Carolina</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge and appreciation of literature</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of multimodal texts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of government standards or curriculum</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of literacy as a broad and evolving concept</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Goals</th>
<th>Beatrice</th>
<th>Sara</th>
<th>Martha Ann</th>
<th>Stella</th>
<th>Carolina</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of different uses of assessment</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of social justice issues, diversity, and inclusivity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect theory to practice</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of a reflective practice</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage collaborative planning and team work</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop knowledge of lesson/unit planning</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model and develop knowledge of pedagogical strategies</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beyond actualizing the specific goals identified in the table, Carolina required her student teachers to “critique and be aware of the interrelationships of power within various texts.”

Martha Ann used the unit assignment as an opportunity to connect theory and practice by instructing her student teachers to also “submit a 2-3 page report which describes how your group process gave insights into literacy teaching, and implications for developing the literacy program. How did social/cultural constructivist and reader response theories inform your curriculum decision-making?” Sara emphasized to her student teachers that when designing a unit of study “they are working with an individual or small group of kids” and must be “analyzing the children’s needs.” Beatrice used the completed units as an opportunity for student teachers to share their new knowledge and learn from one another:
The unit will be presented by the group to the whole cohort. The presentation should include:

- Contributions from each member of the group
- Use OHPs, PowerPoint or interactive whiteboard
- Examples of at least three student resources for the whole cohort

You should avoid a presentation that simply goes through lesson by lesson. The presentation is designed to be a group effort and should reflect the overall aims and rationale for the scheme along with illustrations and examples of how this might be achieved. (Syllabus 2012-2013, p. 15)

Beatrice was often pleased with the results, stating “they do quite well.”

The remainder of the LTEs’ assignments also actualized course goals, sometimes just one goal but more often two or more. For example, Beatrice’s microteaching assignment actualized two goals: build a classroom community and develop knowledge of lesson/unit planning. As did Stella and Martha Ann’s portfolio assignments: develop knowledge of a reflective practice; connect theory to practice, and develop knowledge of pedagogical strategies.

The final factor that made the LTEs’ assignments meaningful was the personal connections the student teachers were able to make. For example, the reflective assignments allowed the student teachers to connect their learning to their own needs, assumptions, and insights. Kosnik and Beck (2009) caution that reflective activities can be overused in teacher education: one teacher in their longitudinal study reported having to produce over 30 reflections over the course of his teacher education program for lessons that were never used again. As a result the reflections had little purpose or value. The LTEs in this study, however, limited the number of reflection exercises to one or two meaningful assignments that had clearly stated
purposes. Beatrice, for instance, viewed her ongoing portfolio assignment as “a self-study” that she found very helpful for her student teachers because it reflected their learning and development over the several months of the class. Justin, Stella, and Martha Ann used their language autobiography assignment as a meaningful way for their student teachers to reflect on their own literacy development. Justin shared:

A student of mine a couple of years ago, who was of Vietnamese heritage, who had been born and grown up in London, had gone to Cambridge for an English [degree] and had then gone and done a bit of publishing. And at the end of writing about her language autobiography, she said that it was the first time in the whole of her educational career that she had been encouraged to take a positive view of her bilingualism or of her cultural heritage. Which I thought was both wonderful and also shocking . . . The language autobiography is a significant staging post in [their] development because they realize that they actually are experts about their own language development and that can be quite liberating.

Furthermore, the autobiographies helped the student teachers face their own assumptions about teaching.

Additionally, the LTEs sometimes personalized their assignments by incorporating an element of personal choice or giving options. The NLG (1996) suggests that schooling “needs to be seen as a range of choices one makes in designing communication for specific ends, including greater recruitment of nonverbal features.” Five of the LTEs included an element of choice in at least one assignment. For example, Martha Ann’s reader response activity, which was part of her readers’ workshop portfolio, listed 74 possible responses the student teachers could choose from. Similarly, Stella suggested 12 different writing genres her student teachers could choose from and gave the option of adding “any other creative projects you are involved in.” For her digital essay assignment, Carolina stated:

You may choose your mode of response or design your own combination (you may be as creative as you like); for example you may choose to represent your
learning in an animated PowerPoint presentation, a photo story, a podcast, vlog, photo-diary, comiclife, a digital collage, a movie, a claymation, a YouTube clip etc. (Syllabus, 2012-2013, p. 5)

These kinds of options not only allowed for a personal commitment to the work, they encouraged creativity and innovation, which in turn promoted motivation.

**iii. Limiting Multimodal Options.** One striking finding revealed through the analysis of the assignments was the overall lack of multimodal representation, particularly in light of the fact that the LTEs professed to use and emphasize multimodal meaning-making in their courses. For example, Justin stated he preferred to use a multimodal teaching style, yet his six assignments involved only two modes of expression, reading and writing. This may be due to the fact that Justin, and the other LTEs, did not have control over the design of the assignments. Or it may align with Steils, Tombs, Mawer, Savin-Baden, & Wimpenny (2015) who report that even when higher education instructors use multimodal practices during lessons, particularly digital modes, they tend to revert to traditional assessment practices due to accountability These possibilities are discussed in detail under theme 6: negotiating challenges.

Four LTEs mentioned the use of multiple modes in their syllabi, but only two deliberately set out to engage their student teachers through multimodal assignments using both digital and arts-based forms of expression. Beatrice used a portfolio as one of her assessment strategies and stated in her syllabus that the portfolios could be set up as a “scrapbook, logbook, whatever.” This implied an option for student teachers to use multiple modes of expression. Stella indicated she expected her student teachers to explore digital technology in the assessment section of her syllabus, although technological work was not formally assessed or included in an assignment. Evidence of its use was to be demonstrated in practicum and the following note was printed in
the syllabus: “We hope you will experiment with using interactive whiteboards, webcams, digital video, handhelds, VLEs, blogs, wikis, podcasts, and school intranets” (Syllabus, 2012-2013).

Martha Ann and Carolina were the only two LTEs who created assignments for their student teachers that required use of multiple modes through digital and arts-based forms. Martha Ann reported:

When you change symbol systems, it changes the way you think about how you present and articulate ideas. So I really draw upon the notion of transmediation in my own teaching. Particularly in terms of encouraging [student teachers] to do assignments that allow for multimodal responses.

Her syllabus stipulated involvement in a multimodal project called *multigenre composing*:

“Working in small groups, teacher candidates will compose a multigenre/multimodal text in response to a Canadian picture book” (Syllabus, 2013/2014). She also included multimodal options in her readers’/writers’ workshop portfolio assignment. Her student teachers were instructed to: “Select a children’s or young adolescent novel to read during the term and complete one response to the novel. (Refer to list of Response Activities in course package).”

The response activities list was extensive and included a range of arts-based choices (e.g., dramatize an episode; illustrate key scenes; do a water color of a scene; create a poem about a scene; write and perform a song to accompany the book; produce a video of the story; build a scale model of an important object from the story).

Carolina incorporated multimodalities into one of her assignments using a multiliteracies theme:

[The student teachers] use the content knowledge about multiliteracies, multimodality, semiotic systems, understanding design and show it in a multimodal text. We call it a digital essay. They have to capture the points, but they also have to capture the essence of the points, like design, multimodality, and
semiotic systems. So they have to do both—and some of the students do the most remarkable things.

She also offered her student teachers many multimodal options for creating their digital essays. She explained that her students used many semiotic systems: “they’ve written scripts . . . they act things out . . . and they write raps of the course. They can do whatever they want.” Afterwards their creations were transferred into digital form and included in their essay. Notably, the multimodal artifacts created by the student teachers were not evaluated on their own merit, but as a part of the project as a whole. Possible reasons why only two of the LTEs used multimodal options in their assignments and why the multimodal projects were not assessed are discussed in Chapter 8 of this dissertation.

Although the LTEs offered limited options in multimodalities in their assignments, this does not suggest the assignments were not aligned with a multiliteracies approach. There were many other factors that aligned the assignments with multiliteracies:

- encouragement of collaboration;
- scaffolding assignments in class;
- use of reflective practice;
- connection to experiential learning;
- use of authentic learning; and
- offering choice.

These factors, in conjunction with course goals (e.g., develop knowledge of social justice issues, diversity and inclusivity; expand knowledge of digital technologies; build a classroom community; connect with local community) reflect a multiliteracies view of education.
Theme 4: Fostering Social Justice

The decline of the old, monocultural, nationalistic sense of "civic" has a space vacated that must be filled again. We propose that this space be claimed by a civic pluralism. Instead of states that require one cultural and linguistic standard, we need states that arbitrate differences. Access to wealth, power, and symbols must be possible no matter what one's identity markers—such as language, dialect, and register—happen to be. States must be strong again, but not to impose standards: they must be strong as neutral arbiters of difference. So must schools. And so must literacy pedagogy. This is the basis for a cohesive sociality, a new civility in which differences are used as a productive resource and in which differences are the norm. (NLG, 1996, p. 69)

Rowsell et al. (2008) suggest that the NLG’s commitment to implementing an inclusive, critical approach to literacy is perhaps the most fundamental aspect of the multiliteracies pedagogy. As noted in the opening quote, if differences are to be used as a “productive resource” and be considered “the norm,” then educators, particularly literacy teacher educators, are responsible for making this “new civility” a reality in schools in the future (NLG, 1996, p. 69). Villegas and Lucas (2002) use the term culturally responsive teacher educators to describe teacher educators who enact teaching practices that recognize all students learn differently and that these differences may be connected to family, language, culture and/or socioeconomic status. Further, Villegas and Lucas (2002) identify six characteristics that are common to culturally responsive teacher educators:

1. Are socioculturally conscious;
2. Have affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds;
3. See themselves as responsible for and capable of bringing about change to make schools more equitable;
4. Understand how learners construct knowledge and are capable of promoting knowledge construction;
5. Know about the lives of their students; and
6. Design instruction that builds on what their students already know while stretching them beyond the familiar. (p. 20)

All of the LTEs in this study demonstrated the six characteristics of culturally responsive teacher educators in their teacher education courses. As socioculturally conscious educators, they took their responsibility with respect to social justice (e.g., equity, inclusivity, diversity, multiculturalism) very seriously. They were committed to addressing sociocultural issues related to literacy learning and instruction using a variety of means: valuing many types of literacy; modeling an anti-deficit model of education; inviting members of the community into the classroom; and exploring social justice-oriented literature.

**Positioning Their Courses**

All of the LTEs indicated the significance social justice issues would play in their courses on the first day of class when they distributed their course outlines. For example, Justin’s syllabus stated:

> From the beginning of the course we focus on learning. We ask you to consider the diversity of pupils by asking the question, ‘Who are the learners and what do they know?’ The individual, social, cultural and linguistic diversity of pupils is a distinctive feature of London classrooms; how this diversity affects teaching and learning is central to the course. On the English and English with Drama PGCE course we are committed to the principles of inclusion and to thinking about pupils with a variety of backgrounds as positive resources for learning and teaching English…This means that student teachers must learn about pupils and their backgrounds, and think about how this knowledge should inform your planning, teaching and assessment. (Syllabus, 2012-2013, p. 20)

Justin felt it was important that his students realize this as quickly as possible as he viewed his course as “characterized by an interest in diversity and culturally linguistic diversity of London school students and of a commitment to social justice.”
Similarly, the other LTEs’ syllabi stated their stance on social justice issues and clearly communicated their expectations:

- Martha Ann: “Understand issues related to multiculturalism, diversity, inclusion and social justice” (Syllabus, 2012-2013, p. 20);

- Sara: “Demonstrate their understanding of a range of effective and inclusive teaching strategies for literacy in primary grades including assessment and reporting” (Syllabus, 2012-2013, p. 5);

- Carolina: “Consider the importance of teaching learners ‘how to learn’ by considering the key multiliteracies aspects of choice, flexibility, social justice, diversity and communication in a globalised world” (Syllabus, 2012-2013, p. 1);


Although Beatrice’s syllabus did not state her expectations with respect to social justice as the other LTEs’ syllabi did, her syllabus did list two mandatory professional studies workshops in the student teachers’ calendars on the topics of equity and inclusion respectively.

Some of the LTEs were acutely aware that the concepts of diversity, inclusion, and/or multiculturalism were new for their student teachers, while others recognized these were concepts some student teachers may have already encountered during their own elementary and secondary schooling. For example, experiences with multiculturalism were quite different for Carolina’s student teachers than they were for Justin’s, largely due to their urban versus rural contexts. Carolina said that most of her student teachers were “White Anglo rural kids from farms,” who may have only experienced “very small primary schools.” As a result their assimilation into large school contexts with a range of ethnicities was “quite disruptive” for them, so she needed to provide space where they could:
Talk a lot about different cultural backgrounds . . . Some people today in our sessions were talking about thousands of people in schools, whereas some of [their schools] had 15. So their experiences are very, very different. We do talk a lot around different cultural backgrounds, as this is quite new for our students.

Whereas, Justin acknowledged:

The composition of the cohort has shifted significantly in the last 10 years in that a higher proportion of our students are people who themselves were school students in London schools. Whereas 10 years ago, in the beginning of the course, we talked about the diversity of London classrooms for lots of our PGCE students, and this was in a sense, news. Now, for the majority of them, it’s not. They have more of a sense of what they are letting themselves in for or what the challenges and experiences of London classrooms will be like.

Even though Justin’s student teachers may have had more exposure to and been more accepting of multicultural experiences, Justin recognized it was unlikely that most of them would know how to implement equitable or inclusive practices as a teacher. Therefore, both Justin and Carolina, like all the other LTEs, realized they had much to do to prepare their student teachers to deal with issues of social justice.

*Valuing Many Types of Literacy*

The LTEs recognized and valued many types of literacy in their courses outside of the multimodal forms of communication that were discussed under theme 1: enacting a comprehensive view of literacy. For example, the LTEs valued home and community literacies, which sometimes included regional, Aboriginal, immigrant, and foreign languages, as opposed to focusing solely on the nationally spoken language. Carolina introduced the notions of home literacies and family literacy practices. She endeavored to teach her student teachers that their success working with children was “situated within sociocultural discourses and the student’s backgrounds.” She reiterated the idea, “it is not about you, it’s actually about the students and
their contexts.” Her student teachers were expected to get to know the subjectivities, backgrounds, and family traditions of the children they worked with in their school visits and practicum placements. Carolina also invited members of the community into her classroom: “I like to bring in Indigenous elders because here I am talking about [different sociocultural discourses] but there is no better person to talk about that than someone who lives and breathes these lives.” Through discussions with her guests her student teachers were able to explore issues “around racism and the language of teaching and how it actually can shape identity.”

Similarly, Sara aimed to highlight community literacies in her classes, telling her student teachers, “to be the best teacher you have to know where [your students] are coming from.” To this end, she also invited community members (e.g., Aboriginal elders; Torres Strait Islanders) into her classes to inform her student teachers on aspects of culture and traditional language. She also reported: “We’ve been working with the Somalian population. So we would have someone from the community come in to provide cultural [and] linguistic background about traditions [and] stories.” Recently, Sara recognized one of the areas where her student teachers were practice teaching “is becoming increasingly a place for refugee people to be settled, so the Sudanese community is becoming a big population.” As a result, she focused on getting her student teachers “into [the] community so that they [could] see the lives of [the children] outside of the classroom first.” These practices allowed her student teachers to gain valuable insight into the local communities and understand that they must, in turn, reach out when they are teachers in order to understand and appreciate the local communities that shaped the identities of the children in their classrooms.
Modeling Anti-deficit Education

Gorski (2010) defines deficit teaching as basing one’s approach to students upon perceptions of their weaknesses rather than their strengths. The LTEs were careful to portray children in light of their strengths and encouraged their student teachers to do the same. Beatrice encouraged her student teachers to recognize their students’ background experiences and use them as powerful resources. She described one teaching situation in which she guided a student teacher to recognize such opportunities:

One student was teaching post-world war poetry and he was teaching the Soldier by the Sea, which is a beautiful poem and so sad. A soldier kills himself and no one the next day refers to him. It’s as if he never existed. It is really poignant and touching . . . . He was teaching this class, and this class had a lot of refugee students in it. It had students from Afghanistan. I think it had some from Syria, so these pupils had actually experienced war. They knew what it is about. [But the student teacher] just went through the poem and all these kids just sat there. One [student] kept trying to say how the poem made him feel.

Unfortunately, the student teacher did not allow the student to express himself. Afterwards Beatrice coached the student teacher to see past the technical interpretation of the poem and instead draw on the students’ experiences. She began the discussion by asking, “How do you think those children reacted? I think an awful lot of them had seen war and experienced what you were talking about.” In this way, Beatrice encouraged her student teachers to recognize the cultural capital of their students.

Justin used his past experiences as a teacher to explore the notion of seeing students in terms of their strengths:

One of the lectures I give is on the multilingual classroom. I start that by showing three short films made my 12 year olds in the school where I worked most recently. They were all bilingual learners, fairly recent arrivals to the UK. And my point in that is absolutely to emphasize that it’s a mistake to start off with a deficit model of bilingualism and bilingual learners. [The student teachers need to] start
off by looking at their funds of knowledge, at what they bring, at how much they know about multimodal technologies and multimodal meaning-making. Start from conceptualizing learners as objective, as active, as culturally part of something, as cultural participants and as cultural producers, not as a kind of blank slate, or a deficit.

Similarly, Carolina would frequently point out to her student teachers, “the [children] are not blank slates coming into your classroom,” and she was pleased to relate that they understood that once they had spent time with the children and got to know them.

**Using Social Justice-Oriented Literature**

In the discussion of theme 1: enacting a comprehensive view of literacy, the notion of modifying the teaching of traditional literacy in order to respond to diversity was explored. Further to that, the LTEs used both children’s and adolescent literature to examine other social justice issues (e.g., human rights, racism, stereotyping, social politics). For example, Stella devoted an entire class to exploring the picture book *The Island* (Greder, 2008). This poignant and chilling book depicts people on an island who, out of fear, lock a stranger who arrives on their island in a goat pen and feed him only scraps put aside for the pigs. The fear eventually develops into hatred and the islanders end up forcing the man into the sea. Stella invited a drama expert to lead the class through the various themes in the book (refugees, xenophobia, racism, multiculturalism) using a variety of drama exercises.

While Stella used a picture book to explore social justice themes, Martha Ann used novels. To prepare her student teachers for unit design, Martha Ann modeled a novel study unit she had originally used with Grade 8 students and their teachers. The unit was based on the novel *The Breadwinner* (Ellis, 2000). In this novel a young Afghan girl in a Taliban-occupied town is forced to disguise herself as a boy so that she can earn money to keep her family alive. Martha
Ann used both drama and art activities to explore the human rights themes prominent in the book. Another novel unit Martha Ann modeled for her student teachers was based on the young adolescent novel *Bifocal* (Ellis & Walters, 2007). In this novel the perspectives of two young men of different ethnicities are explored when one is accused of terrorism. Through literature circles, juxtaposing texts\(^{15}\) and transmediation she examined issues of racism, stereotyping, and media representations with her student teachers. Martha Ann expected all of her student teachers to base their collaborative unit assignments on a social justice theme and she provided them with a list of over 100 books that explored a variety of issues of social justice (e.g., *Mud City*, Ellis, 2003; *Newblood*, McPhee, 2011; *Shattered*, Walters, 2006). Martha Ann also contributed to and shared a website with her student teachers on “Canadian literary resources selected by teachers that raise issues of social justice in their classrooms.” This website listed and summarized dozens of novels, picture books, poems, plays, short stories, and non-fiction books that explored a wide variety of social justice issues.

**Chapter Summary**

This chapter explored the findings revealed in themes: 3, constructing coherent courses, and 4, fostering social justice. Theme 3 explored how the LTEs set purposeful goals for their courses. All of the LTEs started with big picture goals and then set smaller, more specific goals. The goals were aligned with meaningful assignments that connected the theoretical underpinning of their course with practical applications. Theme 4, fostering social justice, revealed the LTEs commitment to implementing an inclusive, critical approach to literacy. The LTEs modeled an anti-deficit model of education, and encouraged their student teachers to explore and understand the sociocultural discourses and backgrounds of the children they worked with in practicum. The

\(^{15}\) Juxtaposing texts is a literacy strategy in which two or more texts are compared and contrasted.
LTEs also used drama and literature experiences with their student teachers to explore difficult topics and issues related to stereotyping, racism, marginalization, and human rights. The last four themes are examined in the next chapter.
Chapter 7
Findings

Theme 5: Utilizing Research

We hope that this [multiliteracies manifesto] might form the basis for open-ended dialogue with fellow educators around the world; that it might spark ideas for possible new research areas; and that it might help frame curriculum experimentation that attempts to come to grips with our changing educational environment. (NLG, 1996, p. 63)

The NLG’s (1996) hope that educators will continue to “dialogue with fellow educators around the world” and investigate “possible new research areas” is a vision shared by the LTEs in this study (p. 63). Using the work of the NLG, their own research, and collaborations with others the LTEs were committed to “com[ing] to grips with our changing educational environment” (NLG, 1996, p. 63). The LTEs contributed to literacy research by: deepening and expanding their own research specializations through action research studies; networking nationally and internationally; and sharing their research with their student teachers so that their findings would inform the practices of the teachers of the future.

Expanding Research Specializations

All of the LTEs were continuing to deepen their knowledge of literacy they had begun in their doctoral studies. Additionally, all of them had recently expanded their research base to include significant aspects of multiliteracies. Carolina’s doctoral thesis focused on “examining classroom teachers’ interaction patterns and matching [them] to what they talked about in relationship to their theories and literacy education.” Her research over the years reinforced her belief that “classroom interaction as a core practice” builds “an understanding about how [to] hear and
connect up with the students in a classroom.” Although to do so was labor intensive, she actualized her belief about the importance of classroom interactions by conducting action research studies in classrooms with teachers and children. Still maintaining her commitment to action research, she had recently expanded her research to include how teachers interact in the context of professional development: “how they are working in different settings and also their interaction patterns now as teachers engaging with new technologies.”

Justin had completed his doctorate a few years prior to the first interview for this study. He described his research as “a neo-Vygotskian approach to how the shared reading of texts produces effective learning.” In this work he stressed that reading is a social event and recommended all reading should be viewed this way. He regarded this research as “a completion of the work [he’d] done for 20 years in [urban] schools” and “a way of continuing to think about that work and theoriz[ing] it adequately.” Like Carolina, he preferred to conduct research in schools with children and teachers. His research interests had recently expanded to include multimodal learning and social semiotics, and he enjoyed presenting his work at conferences:

Last summer I presented at a seminar series. I showed video footage of a classroom where most of my research has taken place in the last few years. I was followed by another friend who was talking about the multimodal semiotics of operating theatres.

Justin attributed his great interest in multimodalities to the influence of Gunther Kress, who was in his view “the granddaddy of multimodalities,” and who was also a member of the NLG.

Beatrice did her Ph.D. research in English and assessment: she examined whether or not the kind of teacher you are determines your views about assessment. Over the years, she continued to conduct research on assessment, but more recently had begun to examine
multimodality in literacy and English teaching. Like the other LTEs, Beatrice explained that her research had “ostensibly been about innovation. All my research is classroom based.”

Martha Ann’s doctoral study entailed conducting “around fifty interviews to find out what changes [teachers] had made in their language arts programs.” Although she continued to be “very interested in professional development and change processes,” she reported her current research also focused on “how collaborative inquiry groups promote teachers’ understanding of social justice.” She said that her action research projects in school classrooms were key to her teaching, that it informs what she does. She described a project she had conducted with grade eight students and teachers: “It was a novel study on The Breadwinner, and we did it through acrylic painting. I was exploring multimodalities and mediated comprehension.” Afterwards, she used the study with her student teachers as an example of a unit on social justice.

Sara’s doctoral focus combined her love for literacy and teacher education. After working in teacher education for a few years as a sessional instructor, she realized, “[the student teachers] are not prepared, they’re not prepared for the communities in which they’re working, they’re not prepared to work with diverse learners, they’re not prepared—I’ve got to do something better in teacher education than that.” As a result she developed a narrative study that compared how unprepared she was for teaching against a newer model of teacher education. The study prompted her continued interest in exploring and refining different models of teacher education. Sara stated, “I [will] forever define my area of research as teacher education with a focus on literacy” because “literacy seems to be the best way to bring people . . . opportunity and access.”

For her dissertation, Stella conducted a series of case studies exploring secondary teachers’ use of poetry in their classrooms, hoping to capture a picture of “what those kinds of teachers were like and how they came to be the kind of teachers they are.” Her passion for poetry
and interest in classroom teachers’ use of poetry has remained a constant in her research; however, she recently expanded her interests into the digital world by exploring “how poetry is shaped and formed through digital mediums.” Like all of the other LTEs, she conducted her research studies in schools with students and teachers.

By incorporating digital technologies into their research, Stella and Carolina aligned their current research interests with multiliteracies. Similarly, Beatrice and Justin’s interests in multimodalities and Martha Ann’s research in social justice aligned with multiliteracies. Sara’s continued interests in advancing models of teacher education and promoting literacy access, is also aligned with multiliteracies. All of the LTEs were working hard towards coming “to grips with [the] changing educational environment” (NLG, 1996, p 63).

**Networking Nationally and Internationally**

All of the LTEs maintained national and international connections for purposes of research and professional growth. Carolina stated, “I think it is important for my teaching that I have a very strong network of people across Australia, so I can draw on the expertise of other experts.” Yet she also said, “I think research beyond an Australian perspective is really important for me. Australia is quite isolated.” Carolina recalled being invited to join an international research team by a fellow professor at the university: “He drew me into his research group and I was only just starting [teaching]. I was very fortunate because that led me to be a key member with the international research network.” She considered being involved in international research a “personal strength” that contributed greatly to her practice. Yet, she also recognized that she brought “connectivity between classroom practices, pedagogy development, and the theory” to the research team. This reciprocal relationship was not only validating, it also served as an enormous source of professional development for Carolina: “[The international research] helps
me reach beyond the local to the global and I think that's an important perspective to have, especially in literacy education when we are thinking about techno literacies and global literacies.”

Justin reported that his international network was maintained through collaborations about teaching literature with colleagues in six countries. He was open to learning from his international colleagues as a means of professional development. He mentioned being inspired by a particular Australian researcher from whom he felt he had learned a lot. Justin valued his time working with him on policy and National Curriculum issues.

At the time of the final interview Beatrice was managing a number of large research projects and was in the developmental stages of yet another focused on arts-based research. She mentioned she had submitted a grant proposal for an international study and was waiting to hear the results. Like Justin, she maintained her international network and global perspective by collaborating on publications with researchers from other countries.

At the time of the final interview, Stella had just completed a fellowship in another country where she conducted research on teaching poetry in diverse contexts. She also led poetry teaching in-service events for teachers. Upon returning to England she conducted another study on teaching poetry in diverse contexts so she could compare the two countries. She was also in the developmental stages of a project “looking at actual poetry and websites for the teaching of poetry.” Martha Ann’s commitment to research was nationally and community-based. Her national connections were made through her active involvement in the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE); however, her research passion lay with community-based schools.

Like the other LTEs, Sara’s research was conducted in schools exploring innovative programming, but unlike the others her research wasn’t always “pure literacy” because the
projects were “connected to school–community partnerships.” At the time of her last interview she was developing “a school–university model working with [teacher educators] and the teachers in the school using iPads and [other] technology.” She hoped to build capacity not only of her student teachers, but also of the entire staff of the school. Sara’s long-term goal was to conduct an international study with another university on rural teacher education. She explained she would like to “connect it to the rural education Special Interest Group,” of which she was member, with the intent of making teachers “proud of working in rural areas and rural education.” All of the LTEs used their local, national, and international research and networks to, as the NLG (1996) had hoped, engage in open-ended dialogue and discover new ideas about literacy, and thus contribute to the constant evolution of literacy teaching and learning.

**Theme 6: Negotiating Challenges**

We do not deny that pre-service teacher education (like preparation in other professions) stands in need of improvement. However, in our view teacher educators already do much good work, and we must acknowledge and build on this foundation. (Kosnik, Beck, et al., 2016, p. 267)

The LTEs in this study recognized that pre-service teacher education, as pointed out by Kosnik, Beck, et al. (2016) above, “stands in need of improvement,” and were working hard to make improvements where they could (p. 267). However, as described in Chapter 4 of this dissertation, the contexts in which they taught often made this very challenging. This theme examines the similarities and differences in how these LTEs negotiate the governmental, institutional, and student teacher challenges they faced in each of their contexts.
Dealing with Constraints

i. Coping with governmental constraints. All of the LTEs, with the exception of Martha Ann whose teaching context was Canada, were dealing with major changes and constraints in their teacher education programs. Sara, who taught in Australia, referred to the changes she was encountering as a “nationalization.” She went on to explain, “We’ve moved from state to national everything: National Curriculum, accreditation, and registration.” She lamented:

[Teacher education was] really well theorized, well structured, contributed to by teachers and teacher educators and consultants, [but] our recent government has basically said ‘Oh this is not what we should be doing. We’ve called a 2-person panel to review the curriculum. We want to go back to basics, [such as] phonics.

Surprisingly, she added that the changes, although they affected everything she was doing in teacher education, “had not been problematic—yet.” She and her colleagues were adjusting and managing.

Carolina, also from Australia, discussed the newly imposed curriculum constraints, but also the new mandatory entrance level testing administered to her student teachers in the third week of the program. The “hurdle test” results were compared to an exit test administered at the end of the program:

The students weren’t able to even think about doing our readings or engaging with our subjects because they have to pass their hurdle test. The students were given particular times that they had to go and do these tests. So students would come in, and say ‘I have to leave an hour before the session finishes because I’ve got my first math hurdle.’ We had no knowledge that these students had to leave our classes to do math hurdles. The students were having meltdowns. The students were walking in and out, impinging greatly on our work, on the students’ work, and even them thinking of themselves as a student [instead of a teacher].

Interestingly, like Sara, Carolina did not allow the interruptions, student anguish, or changes to her curriculum to affect her passion for literacy education. Carolina said:
The essential things that drive you from the bottom of your stomach and that you are passionate about will drive the others. It’s almost being true to yourself, rather than being true to the curriculum and to the accountability and to the policy. I mean those sorts of things will come in and they shift and change. And even since I’ve been at the university, they’ve shifted and changed a thousand times. But if you are true to yourself about what you believe as being effective then I believe you will be able to make steps forward.

In England, Justin, Beatrice and Stella were experiencing even stricter governmental constraints and challenges, yet were also still managing to remain positive. Justin described the teacher education situation as “a struggle,” but he was “not defeated.” He recognized that implementing the National Curriculum was part of his job. He explained that he did not ignore the National Curriculum; it was indeed addressed in class. The following excerpt from his syllabus illustrates that his student teachers were assigned readings from the National Curriculum (and Ofsted reports), which were then discussed in class:

Your Preparation:
- Read the National Curriculum sections on Writing: 2.3; 3.3; 4.3
- Read and evaluate the English at the Crossroads Ofsted report sections on Writing: p 22-26; 48-51.
- Read the document Getting going: Generating, shaping and developing ideas in writing (2008) DCSF (Syllabus, 2012-2013, p. 20)

Although Justin addressed the National Curriculum he also maintained a perspective towards it that he shared with his student teachers:

In my working life, I have experienced four or possibly five different versions of the National Curriculum in the UK, so preparing student teachers for the version that currently exists isn’t doing them any favors. They need to prepare, not only for this version of the National Curriculum but also for the other ones that will come along.

Due to his comprehensive view, Justin’s vision of literacy and literacy teaching was much broader than any of the government directives with which he was dealing and that was the vision he ultimately shared with his student teachers. Likewise, Stella aimed to provide her student
teachers with a thorough understanding of the National Curriculum; however, one of her course
goals was to “reflect critically on the English/Media curriculum.” Stella did not want her student
teachers to blindly accept any curriculum without thoughtful analysis of its content. Beatrice also
addressed the national standards with her student teachers, but did so with caution. She was
disturbed that the present government had “wiped out all mention of computing, media text, so
all multimodal devices” from the curriculum. She realized that working with 21st-century student
teachers and students made multimodal options a necessity. As a result, she said, she addressed
the National Curriculum, yet “will carry on” using multimodalities.

Beatrice, Justin, and Stella also discussed the changes and demands placed on them by
the Ofsted inspections. Stella succinctly articulated the constant threat the inspections posed:

I’ve become more critically aware of pressures on me to perform at a certain level
and to make sure that what I do is going to be compliant. I am very clear that if
they came in and they could ring up this afternoon and come in on Monday and
within two days they could say our course didn't fit the bill and that would be
curtains. And that's terrifying.

Further, Stella was distressed by the fact that, “[in] the last inspection we had, there wasn’t an
English inspector involved in the inspection. The lead inspector was from a completely different
field and hadn’t worked with teachers educators at all.” Justin concurred:

This year, it felt like the whole process was run by bureaucrats who literally went
around with clipboards and when they asked you questions, unless what you said
was something that they could fit into the box on the clipboard, there was no
response whatsoever. There wasn’t hostility, there was just blank
incomprehension. The only thing that they wanted was words to fill in in the right
space to answer the questions that they had in advance. And it just felt soul-
destroying.

Understandably, this complete lack of acknowledgement for the good work they did,
vulnerability to attack by uninformed inspectors, and the constant state of readiness the LTEs had
to maintain, left them somewhat weary. Yet, they remained vigilant and positive towards teacher education and their student teachers.

Another constraint faced by the LTEs in England was what Stella described as a sudden and dramatic national initiative to have “schools take the lead in the training of teachers for a range of subjects both in secondary and primary.” Justin added:

There is a completely un-thought-out, ideologically-driven move to relocate teacher education in schools, to diminish the role of the university. I have absolutely no problem, of course, with teacher education being in partnership between schools and universities. But the idea that universities shouldn’t play a prominent role in the process is to do with what people think teachers are, is to do with a conception of teaching as not an intellectual job.

Stella explained that this unforeseen change in the structure of initial teacher training called upon schools to submit documentation declaring the subject areas in which they were willing to accept student teachers for practicum. If a school did not submit a request, then not only did the school not get a student teacher in that subject area, but also the national tallies sometimes declared the local teacher educators of that subject redundant, and the teacher educators were suddenly released from their positions. She reported that, quite unexpectedly, in the beginning of the school year, some of her staff were told: “We don't need you anymore. And that happened nationally to a number of very, very significant players in initial teacher education.” Stella described the event as “professionally devastating.” She further reported:

Because we have good relationships with all our partnership schools, we worked with around 80 schools in the region. But we are having to do so much work to actually persuade them now to apply to be able to offer places in conjunction with us.

She had to arrange for a conference between “the head teachers and vice principals of schools to talk them through the process.” Thus, the new system created a significant amount of work not
only for her, but for all of the initial teacher education programs, and all of the schools that wished to remain involved in teacher education as well.

Fortunately, Martha Ann’s situation in Ontario, Canada was quite different. Martha Ann stated she addressed “[Ontario] Ministry policy in the area of Language Arts and because I believe in inquiry across the curriculum, I look at the Arts guidelines and the Social Studies guidelines [as well].” That was the extent to which she had to fulfil expectations from her government. Martha Ann had much more freedom to address curriculum as she saw fit. She also was not hampered by regressive curriculum sanctions, intrusive student teacher testing, regular inspections, or sudden dramatic changes to the structure of her program. Martha Ann remained passionate and highly committed to her role. But surprisingly so did the LTEs in England and Australia despite the difficulties they faced.

**ii. Managing institutional change.** Occasionally, the LTEs had to deal with changes in their teacher education programs that were implemented by their universities. For example, Carolina reported:

> We’re downsizing courses. The bachelor of education will no longer exist after this year. Next year it's a Kindergarten to Year 12 degree. We are in a state of shock because we were fighting tooth and nail around keeping our primary specialization degree.

Carolina admitted that changes of this magnitude were very difficult to deal with because it was not just about her, “it’s about children of the future. Our concern is we find it hard enough reaching the students that we have in our courses [now]. We are stretching it out even thinner.”

Similarly, Martha Ann expressed disappointment about the changes in her teacher education program: “We’re losing the Junior/Intermediate program. They might bring it back in five years but there’s a money crunch.” For Carolina and Martha Ann, as it was for all of the
LTEs, the standards of education were a priority and the changes being imposed on them impacted them personally and professionally.

Carolina added that the downsizing of faculties unfortunately coincided with forced redundancy of positions, which, in turn, caused a lot of tension and disharmony across teams. Furthermore, as faculty members were declared redundant and other faculty members retired, the university continued to cut spending and replace faculty-level colleagues with occasional contract instructors. Generally the contract teacher educators had a background in teaching but not theory and often required much more guidance. As a senior staff member Carolina was often given the responsibility of monitoring these instructors:

To mentor them takes time. I love teaching but I’m becoming more of an administrator of the work. I was employed as an expert in the field of literacy [but] I’m being taken away from that because of the management.

Stella also discussed being frustrated by the downsizing taking place in her institution. She explained it was her institution’s response to the changes mandated by the government. In her university, if an LTE was no longer needed to teach a particular subject course, but was to be kept on as faculty, there was a “serious kind of regrouping and looking at who was going to be teaching what.” She reported that some teacher educators were reassigned “to teach more in other programs.” As all of the LTEs were collegial and enjoyed team work, they were distressed by the leaving of their colleagues.

Helping Student Teachers Unlearn

Another interesting challenge all of the LTEs faced was the resistance of their student teachers to viewing and practicing literacy in a new way. The LTEs explained they had to assist their student teachers to unlearn their preconceived notions of literacy and literacy teaching and learning
before they could move forward. For example, Martha Ann reported that her student teachers usually thought literacy was simply reading and writing and were shocked when told otherwise:

I had media students last year, who were actually shocked to see how much media and digital technology is incorporated into the language arts and that all texts are considered legitimate for language arts. . . . They don’t even think about all the variety of texts that are in literacy. And they’re shocked when they think ‘Oh my God, we’re instant messaging one another, we’re on the internet constantly. This is all literacy?’

She had to help her student teachers let go of their old notions in order to accept the new approach to literacy she was offering them. Martha Ann admitted this took time and she approached it as a process. Stella acknowledged that for some of her student teachers the unlearning process was a big challenge:

A number of the student teachers that I'm working with this year have had several years as teaching assistants in schools. It’s interesting for them to begin to unpick their role as a teaching assistant and look critically at the teaching that they've participating in or supported previously. Sometimes they have quite a mechanistic view of how it should be taught. Maybe they've not been involved in the actual selection of the texts or the selection of the approach. They have been involved but up to that point it has been more about the delivery of the lesson rather than the creating of the lesson idea, the materials, and the approach. So they do have to refocus on things.

Similarly, Beatrice found that every year she had to “get [the student teachers] to unlearn what they've learned before.”

Carolina suspected the resistance she encountered was due to student teachers having spent many years as students: “Some students think, ‘I've been through school so I know teaching, I know education. I know how to read and write. So, if I know how to do it then of course, what else is there to learn about?’” She added that they were merely “victims of their own experiences in education.” She suggested that this created even greater difficulties for the mature students:
The mature age students experienced a different way of learning than even the young, straight-from-school learners. So they don't like interacting and talking. They sort of want to ask questions but they don't like group work or co-construction. So their understandings around teaching and learning are really an unlearning situation as much as it's a learning situation.

Carolina’s observations validated Lortie’s (1975) apprenticeship of observation, which was discussed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. Lortie’s claim is that student teachers often feel they already know how to teach merely from watching teachers for many years as students.

Justin observed his student teachers’ need for unlearning sometimes depended on the previous experiences they had had as teachers. He reported that quite a few of his student teachers came into his program with “really quite substantial experiences” in teaching and in some cases that was “immensely beneficial to them.” Yet, in other cases it was “quite difficult for them to unlearn habits that they have picked up in very different contexts [such as teaching in other countries].” Justin stated that generally a lot of what he did was a “reshaping or a repositioning of subject knowledge.”

Sara reported resistance from her student teachers, particularly her postgraduates, but she attributed this to them developing a belief that they learned best through the methods they had used in higher education. Many of them wanted simple, clear-cut instructions on how to teach. They wanted Sara to “give them the right answer,” and felt she was making teaching complicated. But she knew “it is complicated. [Teaching is] complex.” They resisted going into schools for the tutoring program she had organized so they could learn while working with children. They wanted to go to a lecture or tutorial or learn from a textbook. Yet, Sara persisted with her university–school model, sending her student teachers into the community to learn by having authentic experiences. Similarly, Justin recognized he had to disrupt his student teachers’ higher education training and he started with their writing style. He used his autobiography
assignment to get them to “shift into a first person style,” as a way of “knocking away all the props as well as unlearning things that they have done.”

The LTEs never regarded literacy teacher education as an easy vocation. They found it to be fraught with challenges, which sometimes included the student teachers to whom they dedicated their lives. They recognized that every year some of their student teachers would demonstrate resistance and need not only their guidance, but their persistent modeling, redirection, and support in order to move towards using 21st-century pedagogy.

**Theme 7: Internalizing Prior Influences and Experiences**

According to Dewey (1938/1974), “education, experience, and life are inextricably intertwined.” Feiman-Nemser (2001) extends Dewey’s claim into the lives of teachers, suggesting a teachers’ own schooling and their early teaching experiences are highly influential on their practice. Although there is a body of research substantiating the significance of early experiences on the professional lives of teachers (e.g., Benson, 2003; Bullough, 1997; Sunstein & Potts, 1998) there is very limited research into the early experiences of the teacher educators. Interestingly, the findings of this study on teacher educators are consistent with Feiman-Nemser’s (2001) findings with respect to teachers. According to the LTEs, all of their earlier experiences contributed significantly to their current practice. For example, when asked which of her experiences influenced her practice the most, Beatrice replied, “I think I draw on all of them.” Similarly, Justin reported, “part of what I like about my work as a teacher educator is the fact that nothing in my history seems irrelevant to it.”

Most of the LTEs spoke openly about how their childhood experiences encouraged their deep love for literacy, literature, and multiple modes of expression. All of them gratefully
acknowledged mentors who guided them along the way and also identified significant incidents that acted as turning points in their careers and contributed to who they were and how they practiced as teacher educators. Many of their experiences contributed significantly to the LTEs developing a multiliteracies approach.

**Identifying Influential Childhood Experiences**

1. **Expressing an innate love of literacy.** Five of the LTEs reported that their early childhood experiences with literature, language, and creative modes of expression greatly informed their current pedagogical approach. Beatrice shared, “the English that I had in primary school was very creative and inventive and I was allowed to be imaginative.” She also stated she “read early” and “voraciously” as a child. She felt she still carried these passions into her practice with her. Likewise, Sara described herself as a student who leaned towards “the creative arts.” She stated, “English, drama, dance, and music were always my thing.” She considered reading her “joy.” Her grandparents spent a great deal of time with her and were highly influential, particularly with regard to her love of literature. She fondly recalled:

   They used to buy books, so that [we] would have [them] at home. I would receive a book once a year, and it was always a special gift . . . So literature in that respect was very important. Reading [was] very important. It was a gateway, particularly from my grandfather’s point of view. He saw that literature opened you up to the world.

As a result, Sara developed a deep reverence for literature which was evident in her literacy courses.

   Stella’s passion for literacy, particularly poetry and writing, was fostered at a young age by her primary school teachers. She wrote her first poem at the age of 7:
It was a lovely experience. I remember it being up on the wall in the school and it was obviously something different that I had not done before. I liked the feeling it gave me. I liked playing with language.

She was further encouraged by her teachers in secondary school. These teachers deeply affected her personally, and helped to shape her identity as an artist, which profoundly affected her practice as a teacher educator. Martha Ann described the influence of family members in the development of her love of language and literature:

My great aunt was a storyteller and having her in our lives impacted every single one of us. The interest she piqued in imaginary creatures, like kings and queens of Ireland and the leprechauns and the fairies!

Although she loved to read many types of books, she fondly credited her father for instilling in her an appreciation for alternate forms of literature, particularly comic books.

Carolina remembered loving to read as a child, but not at school because the books at school were “not very interesting, they were boring.” Fortunately, her home was well supplied with stimulating literature, so she did most of her reading there. Interestingly, unlike the other LTEs, even though she loved literature, her passions in elementary and secondary school were mathematics and science. In fact, in secondary school she was interested in pursuing a career in science, but was discouraged from this by her school counselors. She eventually developed her passion for literacy as a primary school teacher when she realized that literacy “was the core practice that actually held together all of the other teaching disciplines. [She] thought that if [she] was a good literacy teacher [she] would] be really good at all the other subjects as well.”

**ii. Acknowledging the influence of childhood context.** Carolina and Sara shared one key childhood influence – a rural upbringing. Carolina described her experience moving from a small rural township to the highly multicultural urban university she attended as very challenging. She
referred to her undergraduate years as a “very big learning experience.” For this reason she was sensitive to the needs of her rural-based students who were new to the university and urban experiences. She also felt her rural background contributed to her drive:

Because I was brought up in a very small rural town and I still live in a small rural town, I've always been a person to actually seek out answers to questions that might be benign to other people. I think that drives me but it also drives my teaching.

Sara also recognized the influence of her childhood locale: “I’ve got a passion for rural education, and a lot of it comes out of my experiences growing up as a regional rural child.” She added, “it all comes back when I talk about literacy teaching.”

**Honoring Inspirational Mentors**

All of the LTEs reported that their practices were informed by the positive relationships they had with mentors. Some of these mentors were university professors while others were colleagues or family members. These mentors inspired a wide range of qualities, pedagogical practices, and theory development (e.g., sociocultural theory, creative approaches, social justice stance, inquiry learning, scaffolded learning, and respect for students) that encouraged these LTEs to ultimately adopt a multiliteracies approach.

Carolina identified a mentor who strongly influenced her teaching while she was enrolled in her graduate program. She studied under a renowned scholar of multiliteracies. She described this professor as having a profound effect on her perspective and understanding of literacy, saying “his attitude towards teaching, and to me, was very uplifting,” and working with him over a 10-year span helped her develop “multiple ways of thinking about literacy and literacy education.” Carolina began to view language and literacy as a social practice, and aimed “to make sure all of [her] teaching encompass[ed] multiple modes.”
Justin identified a number of people who influenced his current teaching philosophy and style. He described his year as a student teacher in the PGCE program as transformative, largely due to two remarkable mentors who were not only “extraordinarily nice,” but they also “made [him] see just how intellectually exciting [urban] classrooms could be and how intellectually fulfilling the work of a classroom teacher could be.” One of those mentors also inspired Justin to write about his experiences as a teacher which were later published. Additionally, during his first year of teaching he worked with a colleague he greatly admired and even wrote about at length in his doctoral research:

The thing I learned most from her was her ability to [maintain] an intellectual seriousness in all of her planning and teaching. She could see the intellectual quality of student’s ideas. . . There was a kind of rigor to her valuing of an analytical approach.

He was glad to report that, over the years, he had remained close to all of his mentors.

Beatrice’s most influential mentor, she was proud to share, was her mother. Unfortunately, Beatrice’s experiences in secondary school were not very positive; she had English teachers “who [were] just interested in exams.” Beatrice reported her mother assisted her through this trying time:

It was having a mother who was an English teacher who really inspired me to do English, despite my English teachers at school. [My mother] really loved English and she encouraged me to read and profit from all those books, and that made me very keen.

As a result, in her adolescence Beatrice decided to become an English teacher, recognizing she could follow her mother’s lead and “do it differently” than the English teachers in her school.

Beatrice also had other mentors along her journey who influenced her ability to teach. She credited two of her university professors; one in English studies, and one in American
studies as being really inspirational. She also said that the head of the English department in her first posting as a secondary school teacher was “massively important” in guiding “what [she] did” as a teacher. And she described an English advisor as significant because she “transformed the way [Beatrice] actually taught” by introducing her to the English and media center, which “provided her with an enormous amount of resources.” Beatrice shared she still used these resources extensively in all of her courses and arranged for her student teachers to visit the English and media center as part of her PGCE course.

Stella met her mentors after she had become a teacher. At that time she met two men who became highly influential in her life. Stella fondly recalled the “lovely man whom [she] worked with when [she] was head of English.” This individual encouraged her to write about her work as an English teacher and was so impressed with her writing, he encouraged her to enroll in a doctoral program. Eventually he became her Ph.D. supervisor. Stella acknowledged that completing her Ph.D. was a huge step for her, one that opened many new doors, so she was very grateful for his encouragement and mentorship. The second individual who heavily influenced her work was her partner, whom she met while she was a student teacher enrolled in the PGCE program. Also a writer, she recalled how they “encouraged one another and supported one another in [their] writing.” He also shared her passion for all of the creative arts and her love of teaching.

Martha Ann reminisced about a professor she met while in her Master of Education program who was not so much a mentor as an inspiration. He was “a young man who taught the curriculum course. He was doing all these creative things!” As a result, Martha Ann also began implementing more creative approaches and she prided herself on designing classes that were engaging and exciting.
Interestingly, Sara regarded many of her university colleagues as mentors:

I’ve been very lucky because I’ve had a lot of literacy professors [who model for me], like Barbara Comber, Joanne Reid, and Bill Green. I think of them as mentors. I see Joanne Reid as someone I’d like to be like. She’s someone who also crosses borders, who does rural and teacher education and indigenous [work].

Sara recognized that she did not work in a teacher education silo, but crossed many borders in education to develop the school–community partnerships that she valued and these mentors supported her in this work.

**Recognizing Turning Points**

All of the LTEs described significant events or opportunities they considered to be turning points in their lives. These events profoundly influenced their development as teacher educators. Justin described his experiences in his first and last years as a secondary school teacher as being formative of his thinking as a teacher educator. His first teaching position was in an urban school “where the pupil population was just about entirely students of Bangladesh origins, so bi-lingual learners.” While working at this school he was profoundly struck by the inequalities in education. This experience increased his desire to address diversity and seek social justice for all learners. Also during this year, he became active in an international union. He credited the group of people he met at the union as being “absolutely inspirational to [him] in terms of their commitment that [was] both political and educational.”

It was in his last year of teaching secondary school that he experienced a “very traumatic turning point” in his career. Justin recalled loving working at his school, and would have stayed; however, the government “declared it a failing school.” He reported the “inspectors’ interventions . . . turned a school that was a challenging place to work into a school that was impossible, and it closed.” The collapse of his school prompted him to conclude his 20-year
career as a high school English teacher and seek employment in teacher education. Thus began a new phase of his career in education.

Beatrice also reported experiencing a significant turning point during her last year as a classroom teacher. She described how really difficult the class was and how she tried absolutely everything to connect with them. When she finally succeeded, she said “they were the class that I was most sorry to leave.” She found as a literacy teacher educator she occasionally experienced challenging student teachers and used her experience from her last year in the classroom to guide her. Beatrice believed “if you are teacher, you are a teacher” and she would “teach a 35 year old the same as [she] would teach a seven-year-old.” She said her content may have changed but not the style she developed as a classroom teacher.

Carolina experienced a turning point during her time in university. She became actively involved in a program working with disenfranchised youth, “particularly young males who [had] left school and got themselves into trouble with the law.” As a result, she became an advocate for social justice: a role she strongly encouraged her student teachers to adopt. Carolina also described a research project “working with young Aboriginal boys and their experiences of classroom interactions,” as another turning point in her career. Carolina regarded this project as “very important for [her] development as a person.” Through this project, she developed “a real commitment to having classroom interactions and understandings of cultural dimensions of literacy practice as a core underpinning of my work.” This influence was profoundly evident when Carolina described the emphasis she placed on her student teachers’ need to know the cultural backgrounds of the children in their classes.

Martha Ann stated a huge turning point in her life was entering university to obtain her undergraduate degree. Her second turning point was enrolling in doctoral studies. She reported:
My Ph.D. studies were enlightening. Before I did the Ph.D., I never thought I could get one. There were no mentors around to encourage you. So when I was admitted to the Ph.D., and after the first summer, I thought ‘Wow. There’s a whole other life out here.’

Sara reported a turning point occurred in her first year of teaching. She was offered a primary teaching position in a small rural town. The town had a very high Indigenous population and as the new teacher she felt that she was restricted in where she could go. She remembered being shocked at the division within the town:

There was an Indigenous pub and a non-indigenous pub. I was really, really troubled but I didn’t know how to fight against a community that I was already being socialized in as the White new teacher. Somewhere inside me, I felt this is wrong. I know it’s wrong, I just don’t know what to do about it.

She was deeply offended by the apparent injustices, but at the time, she did not have the knowledge or strategies to battle the attitude that surrounded her. However, she believed that it was the “literacy, empowerment, choice, [and] opportunity” she was raised with that led her to ask, “How can I actually make some of those things different?” Through her work in literacy, she developed the knowledge and understanding of social justice practices that empowered her to make a difference in teacher education.

Another key experience mentioned by Sara was an opportunity her principal offered her during her first few years of teaching. The principal told her “you do really good work, and I think you should think of yourself as a leader.” Shortly afterwards, she was assigned her first literacy leadership position. For a half day each week, over six months, she worked with her fellow teachers in a professional development role. Sara recalled being really creative and making many new resources for the teachers:

I found myself in a large community school, in a leadership role, and I thought ‘Well, I’ll talk to the teachers, and I’ll get the teachers to tell me about their kids,
their learning, and I’ll see if I can work with them to come up with more learner-focused literacy resources.’

Sara recognized that opportunity nurtured her interest in creating individualized and innovative programming and enabled her to view herself as a leader. All of these factors contributed to her eventually seeking work in teacher education.

Stella mentioned two events that were formative in her development as a teacher educator. The first involved a week-long conference in New York City she attended while she was a classroom teacher as the teacher representative for her subject association. Stella recalled thinking, “I quite like this [experience], so how can I do this more often?” She identified the experience as a big step in her academic journey. She also recalled, as the newly appointed head of the English department, taking a political stand on behalf of her department against government testing. That significant event encouraged her to stand up for her educational beliefs, support her staff, and face criticism; all qualities she would later use as an LTE.

Clearly the childhood experiences, tutelage of mentors, and turning points in the LTEs’ careers significantly helped to shape their practices. Notably, the inspiration and guidance of the early years’ teachers and family, and most of the mentorships could not be specifically attributed to a multiliteracies approach. Only Carolina reported a mentor who deliberately schooled her in multiliteracies. Yet, indirectly, over the years the LTEs were all encouraged to enact their passions for language, literature, creative pedagogies, social justice, and intellectual rigor, which resulted in them enacting a multiliteracies-oriented praxis. Table 6 below lists the significant early literacy experiences, mentors, and turning points identified by each LTE.
# Table 6

**Influences on Practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Early Literacy Experiences</th>
<th>Mentors</th>
<th>Turning Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Beatrice | Loved reading  
Loved expressive arts in elementary school | Mother (who was a teacher)  
Two university professors  
Head of English department during 1st year of teaching  
English advisor | Challenging class in last year of teaching secondary school |
| Carolina | Loved reading  
Loved math and science  
Rural upbringing | Professor of multiliteracies | Working with disenfranchised youth  
Working with young Aboriginal boys |
| Justin | N/A | Two instructors in PGCE program  
Colleague in 1st year of teaching | Dealing with diversity in 1st year of teaching  
Joining union  
Closing of school |
| Sara | Loved reading  
Loved expressive arts in elementary school  
Books were special  
Rural upbringing | Inspiring LTEs: Barbara Comber, Joanne Reid, and Bill Green | Facing racism in first teaching job  
Assigned a literacy leadership role |
| Stella | Loved reading  
Loved expressive arts particularly poetry in elementary and secondary school | Ph.D. supervisor  
Partner | First international academic conference  
Standing up against testing while head of English department |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Early Literacy Experiences</th>
<th>Mentors</th>
<th>Turning Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martha Ann</td>
<td>Loved reading</td>
<td>Lecturer in master’s degree program</td>
<td>Attending university (BA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aunt was a storyteller</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enrolling in doctoral program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father loved comic books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sharing Research with Student Teachers**

As teacher educators who valued research and were deeply committed to research, the LTEs felt that all teacher educators should have a background knowledge of research and research practices. The LTEs felt strongly that teachers educators should have a research background; not necessarily a doctorate, but at least, as Justin suggested, “an ongoing commitment to intellectual rigor.” Beatrice said she can now “see what research brings to the process,” and Sara reported:

> I think to really be effective, you actually need to understand research, you need to know how to do the research, you need to know how to participate in the research in a scholarly way in your community. You need those tools.

Martha Ann concurred, “[LTEs] really have to know about the literacy research and what’s current,” as did Stella, who added that this was important, “because of the increased emphasis on drawing on research in the work that we do.”

Occasionally the LTEs shared their own research with their student teachers, or at least let them know they were actively researching. Justin stated:

> I think it’s important for my student teachers to see me as research active. Classrooms are extraordinarily rich and fascinating places and I want my students to see me as research active in the sense that this is interesting stuff, I’m interested in it, and I want them to be interested in it too. So I want them to see their roles as teachers as involving research into their own practice and the practice of colleagues.
Similarly, Martha Ann said, “I think it’s important for them to know I’m still going into classrooms [to research]. I’m still learning about literacy.” Justin and Martha Ann both shared their own research projects with their student teachers, as did Carolina. Stella took the notion of sharing her own research with her student teachers a step further by involving them:

[A colleague and I] started developing a project looking at actual poetry websites that are out there for the teaching of poetry; looking at what is available, and how useful it might be. We are going to get our PGCE students involved in trying out some of these things and looking at where there might be gaps in the market.

Sara and Carolina, like the other LTEs, shared research with their student teachers that they were reading themselves. Carolina and Sara mentioned the work of Luke and Freebody, and Carolina also mentioned Gee. Beatrice, Justin, Martha Ann, and Stella all mentioned the work of Kress. Notably, all of these scholars were members of the NLG (1996) and contributed significantly to multiliteracies theory and pedagogy.

The LTEs utilized research in many ways in the development of their own practices and the practices of their student teachers. Their national and international research networks allowed them to remain current on a very broad scale and “dialogue with fellow educators around the world,” in order to “spark ideas for possible new research areas” (NLG, 1996, p. 63). They shared research with their student teachers, sometimes their own but more often the work of multiliteracies scholars. They were open to new research ideas and as a result they could offer their student teachers cutting-edge ideas about literacy.

**Theme 8: Embracing their Roles as LTEs**

To be a passionate teacher is to be someone in love with a field of knowledge, deeply stirred by issues and ideas that challenge our world, drawn to the dilemmas and potentials of the young people who come into class each day—or captivated by all of these. (Fried, 2001, p. 1)
The term *embrace* was carefully chosen for this theme because it evokes the remarkable fervor with which the LTEs approached their work. The LTEs in this study were indeed captivated by many facets of teaching (Fried, 2001). Due to their commitment with their field, their role, and their research, the LTEs maintained high standards for themselves and expected other LTEs to maintain those standards as well. Furthermore, they demonstrated a unique set of dispositional qualities that sustained their energetic teaching style, advocacy for social change, and active research agendas. These LTEs maintained a positive attitude, remained progressive, persisted when faced with challenge, and, most importantly, consistently demonstrated a passionate commitment to all aspects of literacy teaching and learning.

**Aiming for High Standards**

When asked, “What experiences or qualities do you feel are really important for literacy teacher educators to have?” the LTEs’ responses could be grouped into three areas: practical experience, theoretical knowledge, and dispositions. All of the LTEs felt that previous experience as a classroom teacher was needed to fulfil the role. Justin explained that he discovered for himself “the experience of being a classroom teacher was much more helpful than I had initially realized it would be,” and as a result would not be comfortable hiring an LTE who did not have classroom experience. Carolina felt it was definitely an asset:

> I find that the people who have been classroom teachers in our faculty actually find it easier to connect with the [student teachers]. They make authentic connections between the field of practice and the field of theory. I don't know whether it is essential, but I think it certainly does help to inform your decisions around your own teaching design.

Carolina explained that she often brought in artifacts from her previous teaching or started a class with an authentic story, something she knew her student teachers could connect with, and then
she would “draw in the theoretical underpinnings.” She recognized that an LTE with no prior experience would not have this opportunity.

Similarly, Sara reflected on how much she told the student teachers about her personal experiences as a teacher. She felt this helped the student teachers reflect on their own experiences and how “their experiences shaped them into who they are as a teacher.” She added

I think it is important [to have been a teacher] because you need some sort of grounding with the ways in which the ideas actually play out in practice and student learning, in understanding kids, in understanding communities, and understanding schools.

All of the LTEs suggested that theoretical knowledge was a necessity. Carolina suggested an LTE should be able to “see the big course picture,” and not just silos of information. She felt an LTE needed:

An understanding of the range of theoretical positions that can position you as a literacy person in this world. Having an understanding of that broad brush of theories that drives their teaching and drives their thinking, I think, is really important.

Similarly, Martha Ann suggested LTEs ought to know, “[their] own philosophical position. I think they have to know enough to say ‘This is what I believe and this is how people learn literacy.’” Sara concurred, “I would want them to have a broad understanding of literacies and literacy teaching. So I’d want them to come with an ideological stance, around the notion of literacies.” Stella hoped that LTEs would know enough to keep “themselves very well informed,” about literacy and current trends.

The third area the LTEs thought was of importance was dispositional in nature. Beatrice stated, “I do think [they] need to be reflective,” whereas Carolina said that they definitely “have to have empathy for background, whether they’ve experienced that or not, definitely empathy.”
Sara felt strongly that they should be “coming from a social justice perspective, or … from wanting to make a difference.”

The standards the LTEs set for other LTEs were high, but not any higher than the standards they set for themselves. Carolina said, “I like to think I put my money where my mouth is,” and indeed she did. All of the LTEs drew from their previous experiences as classroom teachers to enrich their student teachers’ learnings; were exceptionally knowledgeable about literacy theories and bringing theory into practice; and demonstrated the dispositions they expected of other LTEs (empathy, reflection, and a desire to make a difference). However, these LTEs displayed a set of dispositions well beyond these. This unique set of dispositions is discussed in the next section.

**Committing to their Role**

Far beyond the qualities these LTEs expected of other LTEs they displayed a set of dispositions that sustained them in their research, interactive teaching, relationship-building with student teachers, and in their deep understanding of a constantly evolving subject area. Their commitment to their role as LTEs involved an emotional intensity. This emotional intensity was characterized by their dispositions to be positive, progressive, persistent, and passionate. These qualities overlapped and sustained each other, but the most prominent, by far, was the passion.

*i. Demonstrating passion.* Sara’s three interviews revealed a deep passion for literacy and teacher education:

I have a passion for teacher education because I believe teacher education is the key…. As a literacy teacher educator we are really at the forefront…. because I think we see it as right across all the disciplines: literacy is in everything.
She added that she almost had to be careful, “because I can get so passionate and so excited about [literacy teaching]” and she recognized that not all teacher educators felt the same way. She did not want to overwhelm her student teachers or colleagues with her exuberance.

Similarly, Stella expressed a deep passion for her subject area:

I think you need to be someone who has got a passion for the subject, and an engagement with the subject. It might be that you are, for example, a dramatist, and in my case I am a poet and that's really important to who I am and that's part of my identity as a [teacher educator]: that I love poetry, and I write and perform poetry.

Interestingly, Carolina and Martha Ann used the same key word as Stella, “love,” in conjunction with literacy teaching. Carolina said “I love the first assignment,” and “I love to do exit tasks.” Martha Ann said, “I love being a literacy teacher educator,” “I love my research,” and “I love working with young people and older, mature students as well.”

This deep passion emerged as a shared characteristic among all of the LTEs. Further, this emotional intensity was not limited to their feelings about their positions as LTEs. Beatrice, Stella, and Sara referred to “loving” language and the creative arts as children, and Justin said “I loved teaching” and “I loved my school” when he described his time as a secondary school teacher. It appeared that this emotional intensity was a quality that may have developed early and grew over the years.

**ii. Being positive, persistent, and progressive.** When the LTEs were asked to describe how they felt about working with student teachers, all of the responses were emotionally charged and positive. Beatrice used the word enthusiastic, while Stella said it made her feel like a “versatile and creative human being.” Sara said it was exciting and Justin used the word validating.
When the LTEs were asked to describe what it was like being an LTE in the 21st century, their responses revealed a range of emotions that demonstrated their positive attitude coupled with their recognition that they needed to be either persistent or progressive. For example, Beatrice said the role was “very enjoyable, yet demanding.” Similarly, Carolina said “interesting and challenging,” while Justin chose the words “impossible, but still very satisfying.”

Martha Ann also used the word challenging, but tempered this description by adding it was “intellectually stimulating,” indicating she maintained an openness to change and constant improvement with respect to her role. Sara displayed her progressive attitude when she described herself as determined to continue to improve models of teacher education and “make a difference” in the world. Carolina stated, “change is obvious and inevitable in our life. But these are quite remarkable things that we have to be dealing with.” Her response captured how all of the LTEs maintained their progressive attitude, even when faced with a challenging, evolving, and sometimes tenuous future.

These dispositions indicate that the LTEs were emotionally invested in all aspects of their work in higher education. Their positive attitudes, progressive mindedness, persistence towards growth, and particularly their passionate commitment to teaching and learning, sustained their abilities to conduct action research projects; build relationships with their student teachers; learn to incorporate digital technologies; build connections with their local communities; network nationally and globally; and take social action. It should be noted that all of these labor-intensive and time-consuming tasks were self-imposed and directly related to a multiliteracies approach to teaching and learning. This leads one to ask: Are these dispositions a prerequisite for the use of a multiliteracies approach? This question is explored in Chapter 8 of this dissertation.
Chapter Summary

This chapter concluded the analysis of the findings for this study. The analysis examined themes 5, utilizing research; 6, negotiating challenges; 7, internalizing prior influences and experiences; and, 8, embracing their role as LTEs. Theme 5 explored how the LTEs expanded their own research specializations through research studies; networking nationally and internationally; and sharing their research with their student teachers. In so doing, their findings could inform the practices of the teachers of the future. As described in Chapter 4, the LTEs faced similar and different constraints due to governmental reforms and institutional restraints. The analysis in this chapter revealed how the LTEs relied on their passion and positive attitudes to negotiate the various challenges. Theme 7 revealed that the LTEs assimilated the influences of their families, early schooling experiences, early teaching experiences, and mentors into their teaching which resulted in a multiliteracies approach. The final theme explored how the LTEs embraced their roles as LTEs. This analysis revealed a unique set of dispositions that sustained their energetic teaching styles; advocacy for social change; and, active research agendas. The dispositional qualities included: a positive and progressive attitude, persistence, and passion for all aspects of literacy teaching and learning. These dispositions contributed enormously to the LTEs abilities to enact a multiliteracies approach. The following chapter concludes this study.
CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine how LTEs who demonstrate a multiliteracies approach conceptualize their role and actualize their visions of literacy teacher education. Charmaz (2006) suggests an in-depth research study should resonate with or make sense to the participants in the study or to other people in similar circumstances. She challenges the researcher to consider whether the analysis offers the participants deeper insights into their lives and worlds. Throughout this dissertation I sought to deepen other LTEs’ understandings, but also improve policy-makers’, administrators’, other researchers’, and my own understanding of multiliteracies. Multiliteracies is a complex and intricately woven pedagogical approach, but it is also a very timely and valuable one particularly for progressive-minded educators who hope to connect with 21st-century learners. The fact that there had been very little in-depth research into how LTEs employ this intricate approach made this study a worthwhile endeavour. Based on the findings reported in this dissertation, it is clear that LTEs who demonstrate a multiliteracies approach enact a view of literacy that is so comprehensive it requires a wide range of skills, dispositions, and knowledge that is both experiential and theoretical. Further, the prior experiences of the LTEs indicate that these abilities were developed over time and with the assistance of mentors and other influential persons in their lives. The dispositions these LTEs acquired came about because they had opportunities that contributed enormously to how they developed the skills and knowledge they needed to enact their multiliteracies practices.
As the methodology for this study was a grounded theory approach, there were no initial hypotheses being tested. As a result, the main findings were, for me, both interesting and, at times, startling. In this chapter I summarize the four main findings of this study. Further, I identify the usefulness or “so what?” of the study through a discussion of its implications and recommendations specifically for literacy teacher educators, pre-service teacher education programs, and future research. Finally, I explore how this study affected me personally as a researcher and literacy teacher educator.

**Summary of the Main Findings**

This section summarizes the four main findings of this dissertation. The data analysis chapters (Chapters 5 to 7) identified eight themes in answer to the four research questions that guided this inquiry:

1. How do LTEs conceptualize literacy?
2. What purposes, goals, and pedagogical practices do LTEs use in their literacy courses?
3. What challenges do these LTEs encounter while enacting a multiliteracies approach?
4. What influences led these LTEs to adopt a multiliteracies approach?

The eight themes are summarized in this chapter as four main findings that relate directly to the four research questions. The first main finding or core finding, literacy conceptualization, emerged as a response to the first research question: How do LTEs conceptualize literacy? The second and third main findings, course coherency and negotiating challenges, respond to research questions two and three respectively. The final main finding, influences on practice, responds to the fourth research question: What influences led LTEs to adopt a multiliteracies approach? The
first three sections of this particular finding were captured by the focused codes: encouraging early experiences with language, inspiring mentors, and embracing turning points. However, the last section, dispositional qualities, was teased out as a result of the nature of grounded theory. Charmaz (2006) suggests that researchers should expect grounded theory methods to “foster seeing your data in fresh ways,” “spark ideas,” and “bring surprises” (p. 2). Further, she suggests that in constructing theory, we need to allow “phenomena and relationships between [insights] you only sensed” to become visible (Charmaz, 2006, p. 128). In the initial stages of data analysis, the finding with respect to dispositions was only a “murky musing,” but it later emerged as an interesting insight into LTEs who enact a multiliteracies approach (Charmaz, 2006, p. 128). Figure 3 is a model illustrating the interrelationship among the four main findings. Following the model are detailed descriptions of each of the four main findings.

![Figure 3. Interrelationship of the Four Main Findings](image)
**Literacy Conceptualization**

How the LTEs in this study conceptualized literacy emerged as the core finding of this study. This finding directly relates to every aspect of how these LTEs envisioned and enacted their multiliteracies approach. Their view of literacy influenced how they selected their course goals, constructed their assignments, and structured their courses; how they approached their research; and their decisions about which pedagogical practices and theories to share with their student teachers.

The LTEs enacted a very broad and comprehensive view, one that was not limited to a notion of literacy as a set of autonomous skills (e.g., reading and writing). They viewed literacy as multiple forms of meaning-making, critiquing, and communicating situated within a sociocultural context. Without this broad comprehensive view, these LTEs would never have included the variety of literacy experiences they provided in their courses. This view enabled them to employ a diversity of language forms that included many types of literacy (home literacy, local literacy, informal literacy, cross-curricular literacy). It led them to include members of the community in their courses (e.g., guest teachers, Indigenous elders, Somali community leaders) and send their student teachers out into the community to establish relationships and learn to understand the home lives of the local children and their parents.

The LTEs also viewed literacy as comprising multiple modes of communication (e.g., visual modes, aural modes, kinesthetic modes, and spoken modes). As a result they engaged their student teachers in a variety of digital practices (e.g., wikis, blogs, podcasts, social media), traditional print-based literacies (e.g., children’s literature, adolescent literature, and canonical texts), and arts-based experiences (drama, poetry writing, visual art, dance). All of these experiences helped to broaden their student teachers’ concept of literacy.
Course Coherency

All of the LTEs’ courses were driven by a single overarching purpose which was supported by 17 specific goals. Interestingly, many of the LTEs’ broad purposes were similar. Two of the LTEs aimed to help their student teachers become critical thinkers capable of creative approaches. Three aimed to make children the primary focus of teaching and relied heavily on assessment to accomplish this with their student teachers. One LTE focused on empowering her student teachers to take initiative and go forth to make a difference in the world. Even though there were some differences in the broad purposes, the 17 specific course goals (listed in Chapter 6) identified by the LTEs were identical (e.g., develop knowledge and appreciation of literature; develop knowledge of multimodal texts; develop knowledge of government standards and/or prescribed curriculum).

All of the course goals were actualized through a wide variety of social constructivist-oriented, experiential in-class tasks and exercises (e.g., discussions, jigsaw exercises, literature circles, dramatizations, and poetry readings) and a range of meaningful assignments (e.g., autobiographies, case studies, observations, and unit studies). The LTEs felt strongly about building a community with their student teachers so they could develop a safe and warm learning environment. They endeavored to get to know all of the student teachers personally so they could respond to and support their personal and academic needs. All of the LTEs considered modeling exceptional practice a necessity and therefore carefully and thoughtfully modeled dispositional qualities (e.g., enthusiasm, curiosity, passion), pedagogical strategies (e.g., small and large-group discussions, analysis of lessons, critiquing of colleagues’ work), and educational theories (e.g., multiliteracies, social constructivism, sociocultural theory, and multimodalities theory).
One significant goal each of the LTEs was to foster a commitment to issues of social justice in their student teachers. All of the LTEs dedicated course time to developing their student teachers’ understanding of diversity and inclusion and exploring difficult topics such as stereotyping, racism, and human rights. They supported an anti-deficit model of teaching and encouraged their student teachers to view their students as intellectual resources that held cultural capital regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic status.

**Negotiating Challenges**

All of the LTEs were challenged by government restrictions, institutional changes, and resistance on the part of their student teachers to using a multiliteracies approach. The LTEs situated in England and Australia negotiated severe educational reforms that affected both their course content and mode of delivery. The LTEs in England dealt with prescribed national standards that threatened to limit their creative and comprehensive approach to literacy, frequent inspections, and a constant threat of job loss. The LTEs in Australia faced similar restrictive sanctions, although not quite as challenging, but also dealt with class disruptions due to mandatory standardized testing of their student teachers. The LTE whose context was Canada dealt with a provincial curriculum that required curriculum standards be addressed, but the overall context was much less restrictive and more supportive of progressive practices. Therefore, the Canadian LTE experienced a less stressful and more positive work situation.

All of the LTEs managed challenges mandated by their respective universities: downsizing; budget cuts; reassignments to other programs outside of teacher education; and increased expectations to mentor occasional contract instructors. These challenges, particularly when combined with the severe reforms experienced in two of the countries, were sometimes demoralizing and stressful. Interestingly, the LTEs’ knowledge and skills, but particularly their
attitudes (discussed in the context of the last main finding) sustained these LTEs through these trying times.

Lastly, the LTEs reported often dealing with student teachers who resisted viewing and practicing literacy education in a new way. All of the LTEs had to help these student teachers unlearn the assumptions, beliefs, and practices they had developed as students being taught by teachers using outdated methods, teaching using traditional transmission methods in other countries, or working as teaching assistants. Also, some student teachers did not want to engage in good pedagogical practices; they only wanted to listen to a lecture or read about good teaching in a textbook. As all of the LTEs subscribed to an experiential, social constructivist-oriented practice, they had to work hard at engaging and motivating their student teachers to be open to new experiences, participate, and then adapt their attitudes and practices. This was a challenge every year with every new class of student teachers, but the LTEs welcomed the challenge and adapted their practices to help their student teachers both individually and as a group.

**Influences on Practice**

This finding revealed how the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that made these LTEs exceptional multiliteracies practitioners were developed over time and with assistance, including a unique set of dispositional qualities. All of the LTEs described turning points that sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly encouraged and developed their use of multiliteracies: early experiences with language, significant events, and mentors. They also displayed a set of dispositional qualities that influenced their ability to enact a multiliteracies approach within a demanding and constantly shifting landscape of literacy; they were positive, progressive, persistent, and passionate.
i. Early experiences with language. Five of the LTEs described how their childhood experiences instilled in them a deep love for literacy, literature, and multiple modes of expression. One of the LTEs identified her teachers as her primary source of encouragement, one mentioned the influence of family members supporting her interests, and three discussed a combination of the two. Two reported that their rural upbringing keenly influenced their attraction to teaching in rural contexts.

ii. Mentors. All of the LTEs identified mentors who greatly influenced their current teaching practices. Sometimes these mentors were colleagues, other times they were professors in positions of authority at the time of the relationship. One of the LTEs described being mentored by a renowned scholar of multiliteracies, while another talked about his professors in his PCGE programs who over many years became personal friends. In one instance the mentor started out as a colleague and eventually became the LTE’s Ph.D. supervisor. Two LTEs mentioned family members who greatly influenced who they became as teachers and teacher educators. All of these mentor relationships were spoken of with deep reverence and gratitude.

iii. Significant events. All of the LTEs embraced significant events in their lives that deeply affected their identities and eventually their practices as LTEs. Five of the LTEs described a variety of incidents with groups of people: dealing with a challenging class; working with an Aboriginal youth group; becoming a member of a new cultural community; facing a racist community; joining a union; and representing her staff’s protests against reform. These incidents impacted them emotionally and helped them to view either literacy or education differently. From these incidents they established new priorities and actively sought out ways to change their approach to teaching. One LTE mentioned the excitement and stimulation she felt attending her first academic conference, while another described being offered an enormous
opportunity in literacy leadership. For three of the LTEs, attending university whether for an undergraduate degree or a Ph.D. was an enormous turning point. All of the LTEs felt these turning points contributed significantly to them becoming LTEs, and ultimately felt these experiences helped them to improve education for all.

iv. Dispositional qualities. At the heart of the LTEs’ comprehensive views, pedagogical goals and practices, negotiation of challenges, and influences was their emotional intensity. This intensity drove them in their multiple roles as teachers, researchers, artists, and administrators. This main finding is characterized by four dispositional qualities: positive, progressive, persistent, and passionate.

All of the LTEs demonstrated a positive disposition that was consistent over the three year span of the interviews. They maintained their enthusiasm regardless of the challenges forced on them by government initiatives, institutional changes, or student teacher resistance. Their attitudes not only remained positive, they remained progressive. The sense of curiosity, interest, and inquiry (that some of the LTEs described themselves as having as children) was also a constant. This was displayed through the labor-intense but personally meaningful research activities; professional organizations to which they belonged; and their national and international networks.

Intertwined with the LTEs’ progressive natures was their undaunted spirit or persistence in the face of change and resistance. The LTEs maintained a committed and caring perspective towards their student teachers, teaching as a profession, and especially towards the children for which the teaching was being crafted. They persisted in their desire to help their student teachers unlearn deficit views of children and learning and in their place develop attitudes of equity, social justice, and inclusion.
Analysis revealed these LTEs were deeply emotional and committed individuals who cared about people, the trajectory of education, and the future of society. Their extensive use of words such as love, enjoy, stimulating, demanding, fun, interesting, challenging, and exciting demonstrated their commitment to their role as an LTE. Further, their enthusiasm and energy sustained them through challenging and disheartening circumstances brought about by their governments, institutions, and their student teachers. All of the LTEs maintained a sense of hope and excitement even when faced with a challenging, ever evolving, and sometimes tenuous future.

**Implications and Recommendations**

May (1986) suggests that in grounded theory, “the findings are the theory itself” (p. 148). Further, Charmaz (2006) probes the grounded theory researcher to determine if the findings or final theory contribute to knowledge or to “making a better world” (p. 182-183). Labaree (2013) suggests that conveying the larger significance of a study through a discussion citing its implications and recommendations answers the “so what?” of the study (p. 1). This section presents the emergent theory and addresses the *so what?* of this study.

Based on the findings of this study, it is clear dispositional qualities, particularly being positive, progressive, persistent, and passionate greatly affect LTEs’ ability to enact a multiliteracies approach. LTEs need to hold a comprehensive view of literacy that is expressed through a wide variety of skills and knowledge that is both experiential and theoretical in nature. Further, prior experiences, particularly early experiences and mentors, can contribute to the development of the dispositions, skills, and knowledge. These findings represent the theory of my study. Based on this theory, I propose implications and recommendations in three areas:
Implications for literacy teacher educators; implications for preservice teacher education programs, and recommendations for further research.

**Implications for literacy teacher educators**

LTEs directly influence the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of future classroom literacy teachers, and indirectly influence generations of learners and future citizens. It is therefore essential that literacy teacher educators incorporate practices and pedagogies that will prepare student teachers to work in classrooms that are inclusive and supportive; encourage creativity and innovation; meet the needs of all learners; and move all learners forward based on sound theoretical positioning. The following are implications and recommendations for literacy teacher educators.

1. **Incorporate multimodalities.** LTEs should be incorporating a range of communication and meaning-making forms of expression into their courses on a regular basis. This will address the evolving nature of literacy, diverse needs of learners, and the innovative and creative demands of the future work world. These multiple modes should include both digital and arts-based experiences. For example, the LTEs in this study included a range of digital experiences, including blogs, wikis, podcasts, websites, and videos, in their courses. The arts-based experiences included drama, visual art, poetry, writing, and spoken word activities. The LTEs also included traditional literacy activities such as experiences with children’s literature, adolescent literature, and canonical texts, although the experiences with these texts were multimodal in nature.

2. **Address issues of social justice.** LTEs need to explore ways to create inclusive and supportive classrooms that will honor the diversity of many classrooms today. The LTEs in this
study modeled inclusive practices by getting to know their student teachers personally, and creating a warm and supportive environment in which their student teachers could hold difficult discussions about race, gender, stereotyping, and human rights.

The LTEs in this study explored these issues through drama and literature. Incorporating the arts into literacy methods courses, particularly drama, provides a vehicle to safely explore and discuss difficult issues. Additionally, well selected picture books and novels provided a platform to engage in sensitive discussions. Likewise, LTEs need to include drama and meaningful children’s literature in their courses.

**iii. Remain connected to the community and practicum.** LTEs need to expand their circle of knowledge and experience to include local teachers, schools, communities, and community leaders. By spending time in school classrooms, discussing issues with teachers, and observing their student teachers in their practicum placements, LTEs remain current with school initiatives and the diverse nature of classrooms, observe current techniques for classroom management, and can observe first-hand how teachers are changing literacy practices. This enables the LTE to prepare their student teachers for the realities of teaching. When practicum visits are not feasible, LTEs can conduct research in local schools, as the LTEs in this study did. These LTEs involved local teachers and students in research projects which benefited both the researcher and the teacher. The LTEs were able to theorize their practice and the teachers were offered unique and valuable professional development opportunities.

LTEs should also find ways to involve the local community and community leaders in their courses. The LTEs in this study invited Aboriginal elders, local cultural leaders, and practicing teachers into their classrooms to discuss cultural issues and needs, and sometimes to deal with issues of racism. This enabled their student teachers to develop new insights, dispel
erroneous assumptions, and develop deeper appreciations of cultures outside of their own experience.

iv. Create coherent courses. LTEs need to build their courses on a philosophical stance that is based on strong theoretical positioning and then align their beliefs, knowledge and skills around it. Like the LTEs in this study, LTEs need an overarching purpose for their literacy courses that reflects their theoretical stance. One of the LTEs in the study referred to her philosophical stance as her “big picture goal”. LTEs can determine this by asking themselves, What is the most important thing I want my student teachers to know when they leave my course? The LTEs in this study were focused on their student teachers’ developing a broad and inclusive understanding of literacy and literacy practices.

Specific course goals should connect to the big picture goal. The LTEs in this study created 17 specific goals which covered a range of knowledge and skills, including: modelling and developing knowledge of pedagogical strategies, expanding knowledge of digital technologies, and developing knowledge of different uses of assessment. The course goals need to be connected to meaningful and relevant assignments. The assignments should be practical in nature, but have a sound theoretical base. In this way the student teachers are implementing the theories and research which the course is situated in. When all aspects of the course are connected and aligned with a theoretical position, the result is a coherent course that flows well and makes sense to the student teachers.

v. Classroom teacher responsibility. The LTEs in this study used a multiliteracies approach hoping to influence the practices of their student teachers who would, in turn, carry multiliteracies practices into their own classrooms. It is unfortunate that all of the LTEs in this study met resistance from their student teachers when attempting to help them unlearn their
outdated views of literacy. This resistance combined with the short time the LTEs had to work with their student teachers limited their progress. However, if the student teachers had encountered multiliteracies practices in their own elementary and secondary schooling, this resistance would have been greatly reduced. With the current demands placed on classroom teachers to address diversity, inclusivity, creativity, and multimodal forms of expression it is surprising that more are not using a multiliteracies approach and even more surprising considering multiliteracies was originally designed for classroom use. The transformation of literacy education lies not solely with LTEs. Classroom teachers must also be accountable for introducing multiliteracies practices in education. Perhaps dialogues between LTEs using a multiliteracies approach and local teachers or workshops by multiliteracies-focused LTEs at teacher conferences could facilitate this process. This would, in turn, affect future generations of student teachers.

**Implications for preservice teacher education programs**

LTEs are subject to the demands of the institution in which they work as well as the governmental constraints placed upon them under the guise of reform initiatives. These demands sometimes thwart the purpose, innovation, and/or progressive direction of a teacher education course. It is the responsibility of a teacher education department to monitor the quality of their literacy teacher education programs and support the LTEs in delivering the courses so they can enact the best and most progressive courses possible. To achieve the level of sophistication, research and innovation needed in the evolving landscape of literacy, LTEs who enact a multiliteracies approach are needed and their complex work must be encouraged within teacher education departments. Following are implications and recommendations for teacher education departments.
i. Opportunities for professional development. The LTEs in this study demonstrated that LTEs who enact a multiliteracies approach go above and beyond the expectations of the basic course curriculum. LTEs who are emotionally and physically invested in their work need support. Opportunities for collaboration with colleagues in their own and other institutions through collaborative research projects, communities of practice, or informal sharing sessions would provide opportunities to discuss, generate ideas, and refine practices. Further, LTEs need to be encouraged to work in larger, national and international research communities, to develop a broader and richer perspective on literacy. Encouraging LTEs to attend international conferences, to share knowledge about literacy education, to embrace digital technologies, new research, and pedagogical practices would aid the LTEs in their struggle to stay current.

The LTEs in this study shared that their multiliteracies practice was supported and developed with the assistance of mentors. Therefore, providing multiliteracies mentors both inside and outside the institution would support further development in this area. Mentors who specialize in particular aspects of multiliteracies would also be useful. Some aspects are digital technologies, arts-based experiences, children’s and adolescent literature, critical literacies and/or social justice, traditional literacy practices such as phonics and grammar, cultural diversity, and social constructivism. The LTEs in this study suggested that there was an overall lack of knowledge regarding assessment of multimodalities. If multimodal tasks and assignments are the way of the future in education, then mentorship or professional development in this particular area is needed.

ii. Hiring practices. To ensure faculty continuity regarding the use of a multiliteracies approach, search committee members need to include probing questions intended to measure a proclivity for multiliteracies. This would identify LTEs who are inclined or at least open to using
a multiliteracies approach. The LTEs in this study demonstrated strong dispositional qualities, therefore questions to determine a candidate’s passion for their subject area would be helpful. Also exploring the candidate’s comprehensive view of literacy would be useful. For example, responses to queries regarding pedagogical practices, theoretical underpinnings, course coherency, diversity, social justice, and use of multimodalities would be strong indicators. Finally, exploring the candidate’s prior literacy experiences, even discussing childhood experiences with literacy, would elicit an indication of their overall dispositional qualities in relation to using a multiliteracies approach.

iii. Maintaining realistic expectations. The findings for this study were based on self-reports by the participants and so some of the more challenging aspects of creating and maintaining the ideal literacy course may not have been disclosed. Generally, the participants painted a vivid and exciting picture for teaching literacy, but this view may be limited. Although incorporating multimodalities (i.e., addressing issues of social justice, being connected to the community and practicum, and creating coherent courses) may produce ideal literacy courses, these expectations are high and possibly unrealistic for all LTEs to sustain. LTEs cannot be expected to be competent in all of these areas, particularly if the LTE is new to the position. Each of these areas requires learning new skills, discussions with other LTEs, finesse and practiced sensitivity, and a level of confidence; all of which are acquired over time and usually with assistance. Nor can all LTEs can be expected to commit the time and energy it takes to maintain the ideal courses portrayed in this study. Therefore, considerations of personal time and professional growth must be taken into account when designing literacy courses and setting LTE expectations. Perhaps sharing the responsibilities of a multiliteracies practice across a teacher education staff is more realistic. For example, teacher educators teaching math, social science or
law could focus on issues of social justice or connecting their practice to the community. In this way the implementation of multiliteracies becomes a program-wide responsibility which is overseen by the coordinator or administrator of the teacher education program.

iv. Support against deleterious teacher education reforms. This study paints a vivid picture regarding the unfortunate constraints and reforms currently implemented in teacher education. Although the LTEs in this study struggled to stay positive and progressive, it is unrealistic to expect LTEs to continue to maintain fine work when facing constant adversity. It is the responsibility of a teacher education department to provide a voice in support of their LTEs. It is the duty of administrators and department chairs to protect their programs and instructors. As champions of educational research, LTEs hold extensive knowledge about education, teaching and learning, and new trends in education. Departments and institutions must support their faculty against government interference. Departments can organize hearings, make announcements, and publish non-academic sources of information to more completely inform the general public of the ramifications of the reforms on their children.

LTEs and teacher educators in general deserve a seat at the table when policy is being created, refined, and revised. For example, the implementation of alternative teacher education programs (e.g., Teach for America, Teach for Australia, Teach First) are placing inexperienced people into classrooms as teachers and often in classrooms in low socioeconomic areas with children who have enormous literacy needs. Children’s needs are not being met and their right to an equitable education is being compromised. If continued, these practices may harm public education, adversely affecting the development of future generations. When governmental policies are being discussed, departments of teacher education could provide valuable insight into the ramifications of making such decisions.
**Implications for further research**

Although the findings in this study offer an in-depth understanding of LTEs who enact a multiliteracies approach and contribute to our knowledge of multiliteracies, literacy teacher education, and LTEs, the study has limitations. This was a small sample, thus offering limited findings and justification for generalizations. Clearly, more time and research are needed to more fully understand this unique professional group. Research that would add valuable insights to the literature:

- Examining ways to better support and encourage novice teacher educators who wish to use a multiliteracies approach;
- Examining professional development opportunities to determine which best support LTEs who wish to start using a multiliteracies approach;
- Investigating the effects of governmental reforms (e.g., cutbacks, centralization) on student teachers who wish to use a multiliteracies approach;
- Examining the effects on students of being taught by teachers trained outside of university-based teacher education programs who were not exposed to a multiliteracies approach;
- Examining multimodal assessment practices;
- Examining LTEs who use a multiliteracies approach in additional countries, including non-English speaking countries;
- Comparing the uses of digital technologies to arts-based activities in teacher education;
- Examining how LTEs are supported in their use of multiliteracies through
professional development;

- Examining the influence mentors have on LTEs at different stages of their careers;
- Exploring whether other dispositional qualities align with other theories and pedagogical practices.

**My Personal Development**

This study profoundly affected me as researcher and literacy teacher educator. Reviewing the introduction to this dissertation while considering the conclusion of this study further impressed upon me how much I have learned and grown. I selected multiliteracies as a research topic because of my own interests in multimodal forms of communication and meaning-making juxtaposed against my observations of other LTEs merely transmitting information in a way that seemed to me to be inadequate. I was disillusioned and searching. Now, after having conducted this research, I am inspired and focused.

The LTEs in this study provided me with remarkable role models and have affected how I practice teacher education. Some of the strategies they employed were validating, for example, their commitment to developing personal relationships with student teachers. I also felt that developing relationships was important; however, I lacked the theoretical knowledge to understand why. The LTEs in this study were so clear on their philosophical stances, so articulate in their understanding of their theoretical underpinnings, they guided me in my own understanding of theory and practice. Studying the LTEs for this dissertation enabled me to reflect, discern, and compose my own theoretical underpinnings. Their use of language assisted me in identifying and articulating my favorite theories, and I began to recognize just how many theories informed my own teaching and research inclinations. Their choices for research, the scholars they read, the readings they selected for their student teachers, even the organizations
they belonged to provided me with a path to knowledge. Through them I came to understand why developing a relationship with a student teacher is important, and much more.

The enrichment in my appreciation of multiliteracies is beyond measure. The many nuances of multiliteracies embedded in the LTEs’ practices, from their use of literature to the exploration of social justice issues, to their alignment of course assignments with course goals, to their dedication to exploring aspects of multiliteracies through their research studies are still percolating in my unconscious. I feel as though many doors have been opened. By comparing their practices with my own, I came to realize there is much more I can accomplish. Through this experience I also came to recognize my limitations. I recognize specific areas I need to develop further. For example, I need to refine my abilities to guide my student teachers with respect to issues of social justice. I need to devote more time to addressing racism and stereotyping. I also would like to connect more with the local communities and invite members of the community into my classes (e.g., Aboriginal elders, and cultural leaders). Even though studying these LTEs revealed my limitations, the LTEs made it clear they also felt they had more to learn. Oddly, I felt as though I belonged to a community of practitioners with shared interests and goals. It has inspired me to search out a community of like-minded educators with whom I can share ideas.

Further, I recognize how much my understanding and appreciation for research has grown. My attention to detail, need to analyze, and fascination with linking minute points was thoroughly satisfied by the demand for rigor, depth, and authenticity. I was particularly pleased to use a constructivist grounded theory approach. Initially, it was challenging to let the findings emerge. I was therefore greatly rewarded by the result that findings I did not expect emerged. The significance of LTEs’ dispositional qualities to enacting a multiliteracies approach was a startling finding. The LTEs’ positive, progressive, persistent, and passionate attitudes were
commendable and inspirational. I had not expected the research to reveal aspects of these professionals that were so emotional or personal. I particularly enjoyed the memo writing and clustering exercises. These were simultaneously creative and analytical, which was a new experience.

The contexts of the LTEs in this study provided me with a much broader overview of teacher education. The review of the teacher education reform literature and the interview responses enabled me to develop a much deeper appreciation for my own circumstances, which are much less restrictive than the circumstances of teacher educators in other parts of the world. Due to this insight, the significance of context in research became much more apparent to me.

Through the analysis of the LTEs’ prior experiences with literacy, which included any mentors they had and turning points they identified, I was prompted to reflect on my own experiences. Some of my childhood experiences are shared in Chapter 1; however, I had not explored the significance of prominent mentors and turning points in my own career before embarking on this research, and have since taken the time to do so. During the interviews, one of the participants in the study, Sara, commented that being interviewed was emotional and powerful work. It helped her to see her own identity, and think about her work and the choices she was making. What I did not anticipate was that the research work would be equally powerful for the researcher. This was not a self-study, yet it was very much a reflexive study, and I value the insights I have gained both into the LTEs and myself.

In conclusion, the rich learning I have experienced both professionally and personally through this journey has encouraged me to plan further research studies, particularly using grounded theory. Now that I recognize how powerful and insightful in-depth research can be, I am interested in using the grounded theory approach in a self-study. I believe investigating my own
assumptions, beliefs, and practices will help me to continue to grow as a literacy teacher educator. Additionally, I look forward to conducting further research into multimodalities, specifically the effects of transmediation and synesthesia on literacy learning, and the validity and implementation of multimodal assessments
REFERENCES


Appendix A
Interview # 1

Spring/Summer 2012
Main focus: Exploring personal history

Background

1. Tell me about your work experience here at the university (when did you join the faculty, what is your rank, have you had leadership positions).
2. What jobs/positions did you have prior to joining the university (e.g., teacher)?
3. Tell me about your educational background. What degrees do you hold? Where did you do your schooling? What were your major areas of interest?

Influences on Your Current Practice

4. Thinking about your previous educational experiences and work experiences which do you see as being the most useful in your current work as a literacy teacher educator?
5. If you were a classroom teacher tell me about these experiences. To what extent do you draw on your experiences as a classroom teacher in your current work as a teacher educator? How do you draw on them?
6. Do you tell your student teachers about your educational and work experiences? Why do you? Why do you not?
7. How important is it to the student teachers that you were a classroom teacher? Why do think it is important?
8. When you go into a school, what is your comfort level?

Qualities of a Teacher Educator

9. What background work experiences do you think are important for a teacher educator?
10. To what extent are you able to stay current with the educational trends and priorities in school districts?
11. To what extent should teacher education programs prepare students to implement the initiatives of the school district? the government ministry/state department of education
12. Can you provide a job description for a literacy teacher educator?
13. How did you acquire skills for teaching adults

Knowledge + Academic Community

14. What qualities/strengths do you feel you bring to literacy teacher education? Now, let’s look on the flip side, do you feel there are any gaps in your knowledge for being a literacy teacher educator? What are they and why do you feel this way?
15. Can you tell us about your reading habits?
16. Can you tell us about your own early school experiences with literacy? (see if there is a connection between them and their views)
17. What journals do you go to – your favourite must read or the ones you turn to for your teaching or writing?
18. What conferences do you go to?
19. Which is your academic community?
20. Do you have a community of scholars in your university
21. Thinking about your life – from preschool to where you are now, were there any turning points in your career? (Draw out the timeline)

Identity

22. What qualities do you feel that you bring to your work as a literacy teacher educator?
23. When you are asked by someone outside of the university (e.g., someone you meet at a social gather) what you do, how do you describe your job/profession (teacher educator, literacy researcher)?
24. Which of these terms best describes you:
- teacher educator
- literacy professor
- literacy educator
- researcher
- teacher
- professor
- hybrid teacher and teacher educator
- other
25. How comfortable are you being labelled a teacher educator?
26. In your university, how do you feel that you are perceived and assessed by faculty in your department? Outside of your department/school of education? Do you feel that as a teacher educator you are perceived differently than a scientist or a professor of English literature?
27. Is there a hierarchy in your university?

Experiences with research.

28. Tell me about your experiences with research.
29. If you have a Ph.D. what was your area of research? How well is that research connected to your current work as a teacher educator? Had you always planned to get a Ph.D.? If no, when did you decide to pursue a degree? Why did you do this?
30. Would you like to have a greater involvement in research? If yes, what are the barriers to doing research?
31. Do you tell your ST about your research?
32. Do you think it is important for teacher educators to be doing research? If yes, why? If no, does this present any problems?
33. Should classroom teachers be encouraged to be researchers?
34. If you have written any books, who are they written for? (teachers, researchers, teacher educators)

(d) Other experiences

35. Tell me about any other education-related experiences that you have had (e.g., writing literacy textbooks for students, external consultant for an organization).
36. To what extent have these experiences influenced your practice as a teacher educator? Any other comments you want to make about being a literacy teacher educator are welcome.
Appendix B
Interview #2

Spring/Summer 2013
Main focus: Investigating the vision, content, and pedagogy of their literacy courses

(a) Framework and goals for your literacy course(s).

1. Tell me which literacy courses you teach. How many years have you been teaching these courses?
2. Choose one literacy course that you teach or have taught and this course will be focus of this interview. What is the name of the course and how often have you taught it?
3. Let’s talk first about some of the logistics of this course.
   a) How many classes? How long is each class? How many students in the course? Do you have a TA?
   b) At what point in the student’s program do they take this course?
   c) Is this a survey course or can you go in depth with the topics?
   d) Do you the students do a practice teaching placement before, during, or after your course?
4. Having taught this course X times, what has surprised you about the students' reaction to it?
   a) In general how do students respond to your course?
   b) Possible probe – course evaluations
5. Would you describe your course as organic in nature (topics develop from the students) or is it fairly pre-set?
6. What topics do you cover? (Can I have a copy of your course syllabus?)
7. What do you think students need to know?
8. What are the particular goals for this course? How did you determine these goals? Why are these goals important for beginning teachers?
9. What is the balance between theory and practical teaching strategies?
10. To what extent are you able to connect your course with fieldwork/practice teaching?
11. Which literacy theorists resonate with you?
12. Which literacy researchers do you feel that student teachers must learn about?
13. Do CR teachers come into the ac program to deliver any of the lectures/sessions?
14. Do you feel that you have the necessary support from your department to deliver/teach your literacy course?

(b) Pedagogies used and reasons for using them.

15. Are there other sections of this course? Do you use a common syllabus? How much freedom do you have in designing this course? How similar is your course to their course?
On a scale of 1-4, with 4 being the highest, to what extent is your course similar to other sections?
16. Tell me about your teaching style.
17. Do you have a typical structure/organization for each of your literacy classes? (e.g., always start with lecture, usually have small group discussion)
18. What do you feel are some of the highlights of this course?
   For You? For the student teachers?
19. What do you find most challenging about teaching literacy courses?
20. Do you model your course on a particular literacy/English professor or classroom teacher?
21. Is there something that you hold dearly to your heart that you want to be part of your teaching?

(c) Assignments and Readings

22. Do you use a textbook? Why have you chosen this book or series of readings?
23. To what extent do you use children’s literature/YAL in your teaching? How do you use it?

24. What assignments do you assign? Why have you chosen them? What do you feel the students learn from these assignments?
25. Would you describe your requirements as demanding, just right, not too heavy?
26. Are you able to assign the assignments that you want? Or are you limited by certain factors (e.g., other demands in the program)?
27. Is there anything that you would like to change about the course? Timing. Length. Topic. Sequence in the program.

(d) How and why your views and practices have changed over the years.

28. You have been a teacher educator for X years. Looking back on these years, how has your practice as a literacy teacher educator changed? Why have they changed?
29. How much did your own teacher education program influence how you work as a teacher educator? (if applicable)
30. How much has your own experience as a classroom teacher, consultant, principal influenced your practice as a teacher educator? (if applicable)
Any other comments you want to make about being a literacy teacher educator are welcome.
Appendix C
Interview #3

Spring/Summer/Fall 2014
Main focus: Investigating Critical literacy practices and uses of digital technologies

Thank you for agreeing to do a third interview. So how has it been going since we last interviewed you?

(a) Updating Your Activities

1. How has it been going?
2. What have been some highlights of your work this past year?
3. On the flip side, have there been any challenges you want to tell me about?
4. Have there been any significant changes in your teaching responsibilities and/or your research activities?

(b) Multiliteracies

1. Looking back at our first two interviews and by your studying your work, your approach seems consistent with a multiliteracies approach. Would you be comfortable being called a multiliteracies teacher educator or is there another term you prefer?
2. How do you enact multiliteracies in your program?
3. What are some difficulties/challenges you experience when addressing these topics.

(c) Teacher Education Programs

In this section we want to ask you about your views on teacher education programs.
5. As we know from the literature and our own experiences all of teacher ed is not ideal. We do not want to put you in a difficult position but we are really interested in what you consider to be poor practices in teacher ed.
6. What would you like to see in your literacy teacher education program that is currently not part of it?
7. Have you noted any contradictions in your work as an LTE? (if stuck prompts – practice teaching, mission statement of university deployment of funds …)?
   • What topics should we be addressing as Literacy/English Teacher Educators?
   • Do you feel the political pressure in your context is affecting what you can do in your literacy teacher course?

(d) Digital Technology

8. In our 21st-century context, what should teaching look like a literacy teacher ed program?
9. What place should digital technology have in a teacher education program?
10. What kind of DT do you use in your course?
11. What does digital technology provide for you as an LTE that is different from what you could do previously?
12. What does digital technology provide for your ST that is different from previous generations of student teachers?
13. What are some effective digital technology practices that LTEs you have seen or heard about?
14. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest, how comfortable are you using DT in your teaching?
15. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest, how important is it for LTEs to be using DT in their teaching?
16. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest, how much do you actually use DT in your teaching?
17. Do you have an example of when you used DT that worked really well? (on a small or large scale)
18. Do you include digital technology in any of your research, either as a focus or as a means of data collection or analysis?
19. To what extent have you had support from your institution on integrating DT into your literacy teacher ed courses?
20. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest, to what extent do you find it a challenge to remain current regarding DT?
21. To what extent do you use digital technology in your personal life?

(e) Personal/Professional

22. Where they would like to be in 5 years, personally and/or professionally? 10 years?
23. Thinking about how you got to where you are on May talking to us . . . . what would you do differently in your journey?
What advice they would you give new LTEs?