TEACHER AND TEACHER-RESEARCHER CLASSROOM COLLABORATION: PLANNING AND TEACHING IN A SECONDARY ENGLISH CLASSROOM USING PROCESS-ORIENTED DRAMA APPROACHES

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Adrian R. Rodgers, B.A., M.A., B.Ed., M.A.

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The Ohio State University
1999

Dissertation Committee:

Professor Kenneth Howey, Co-adviser
Professor George Newell, Co-adviser
Professor Amy Shuman

Approved by:

[Signatures]
ABSTRACT

The need to improve America's public schools has been a recurrent theme in the recent history of the United States. Increasingly, would-be reformers have looked to teachers and to ongoing professional development as avenues for change that place how instruction might foster student learning at the center of reform. This study examines one case of a collaborative effort between a teacher and a teacher-researcher who were interested in implementing, at a classroom level, a teaching strategy that was new to that context and to the teacher's instructional repertoire.

Specifically, this study was conducted in the context of an urban school which is the site of multiple building and district reform initiatives. The study uses an action research case study approach to document a sustained collaboration between a veteran grade twelve English teacher and a teacher-researcher. The collaborators employed process-oriented drama approaches as a teaching strategy that shared their planning, teaching and reflecting on lessons in significant ways as they taught grade twelve students in a World and British literature course. The theoretical and conceptual
underpinnings of the process-oriented approach are based in drama in education, process
drama, and creative dramatics and are intended to offer teachers an alternative to more
traditional ways of teaching students to write and to read literary texts.

This study found that there were a number of factors which affected the planning,
teaching, and reflection on English lessons. These factors included institutional
constraints, such as a textbook driven curriculum which made it difficult for the
participants to implement more student centered alternatives and the participants'
personal beliefs and routines for the teaching of secondary English. Other factors
included student response to instruction, the participants' interpretation of the student
response, and tensions which emerged due to differing visions of teaching.

This study suggests that collaborative professional development is a powerful way
of accomplishing educational reform, but also acknowledges the incredible complexity
and difficulty inherent in such an approach. Implications for collaborative reform in
general and in English education in particular are offered.
Dedicated to the
children of Labrador and Newfoundland
who so kindly taught me about teaching and learning.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

During my doctoral studies I have had a number of advisers. I am most grateful to my former adviser, Dr. Cecily O’Neill, who recognized my enthusiasm and commitment to children, teachers and teaching. It was with her support that I was able to move from remote geographic isolation to a scholarly community. Former adviser Dr. Deborah Bainer’s infectious enthusiasm for quality teacher preparation was also a wonderful model.

Co-adviser Dr. Ken Howey’s good humor and clarity of thought enabled me to navigate the complex course posed by teacher education issues. Co-adviser Dr. George Newell and Dr. Amy Shuman’s rich way of looking at issues brought invaluable insight to the dissertation.

Teachers and artists in Labrador specifically, in Newfoundland generally, and lately in Central Ohio, have supported my work and allowed me to share in the rich context of an educational community. My graduate student colleagues at Ohio State also gave me a wonderful opportunity to share our developing understandings of studies in education.
I have tried to express my gratitude to the education community, but I could never write enough to express my thanks to my family and parents. Eric and Elizabeth Parrott started our family tradition of teaching when they began working in isolated one room schools in the then country of Newfoundland during World War I. Since then, someone in my family has worked as a teacher. I am thankful that my parents and family have supported me in taking time away from teaching so that I could build my understandings into teaching and learning and share them with other individuals committed to working with children. Thank-you.

Finally, my wife Emily has fulfilled all of the roles that I have described above and more. We have literally traveled winding roads and heavy seas to arrive at this point. It’s been a delightful journey, and I am so glad that we have shared, and continue to share it together. She’s a great traveling companion.
VITA

November 28, 1963...................... St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada

1983........................................ B.A., English, History
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland

1986........................................ M.A., History
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland

1986........................................ B. Ed., Secondary Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, Newfoundland

1997........................................ M.A., Drama Education
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

Integrated High School, Labrador City,
Labrador, Canada

1994 - 1996....................... Graduate Teaching Associate
The Ohio State University

1996 - 1998....................... Graduate Research Associate
The Ohio State University

1998 - 1999....................... Assistant Professor
The University of Toledo

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Education
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The United States has witnessed a number of attempts to reform education in the late twentieth century. State curricular mandates and proficiency tests aim to give frameworks and rigor to school districts whose standards are perceived as lax. Some teacher preparation programs are reviewed by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) to ensure that college students receive adequate curricula and instruction to become quality teachers. National initiatives, such as the National Commission for Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF), work toward overhauling current educational practices. Research aims to create a knowledge base for educators so that promising programs can be replicated and “best practices” for teaching and learning can become possible.

Although curricular mandates, program accreditation, revision of current practice, and research findings may all work together to improve education on a state or national level, educators must also pay close attention to the work of the individual teacher and her or his classroom context. Educators must attend to the teaching practices of individual teachers in a particular classroom context because these practices may not change merely
because of national and state efforts. Therefore, educators must begin to understand how
individual teachers develop knowledge of classrooms, curricula, instruction and students
so that reforms articulated on a national and state level may be undertaken in a classroom.

In this study I examine one teacher’s classroom practice which is nested in a
milieu of school, state and national reform. Specifically, this study reports research that I
undertook with a veteran teacher in a grade twelve English classroom located in an urban
high school. The class was located in a reform-oriented comprehensive school which is a
part of a large, urban school district. The veteran teacher and I used peer collaboration to
explore how the use of a process-oriented drama approach might shape his planning,
implementation and assessment of students’ learning as we taught twelfth grade English.
Given my interests in how planning, teaching and debriefing might support our
development of a teaching approach that was largely new to both of us, I devised my
research questions to explore these collaborative processes. Thus, this study is largely an
“inside account” which describes our professional development as it took place within the
context of other larger reform initiatives that were active in the school and the district.

Specifically, the veteran teacher and I investigated drama strategies as a teaching
approach which was largely new to us. We chose this set of strategies both because the
nature of the strategies dovetailed well with recent thinking regarding the nature of
educational reform, and because the nature of the strategies themselves provided a way to
foster active learning, a possibility that had appeal to the veteran teacher and me. Because
of my interest in the larger issues of reform and the specifics of teacher change, process-
oriented drama was an especially appealing agenda as an approach to reform, and
specifically as a way of teaching secondary English with a student-centered focus. In this study, I will discuss the changes that occurred in a teacher and a teacher-researcher’s planning, implementation and reflection as we attempted to change our teaching practices. I will also describe the significance of these changes in terms of the larger context of educational reform.

In this chapter I will explain constructivism as a theoretical frame which supported this study. Then I will describe the larger context of reform and the use of professional development as a tool for accomplishing change. Next, I will explain how scholars have begun to articulate the need for school reform to consider what happens at the level of the teacher and the classroom. I will also discuss how drama strategies can be used as an approach that dovetails well with the current trend in reform initiatives. Finally, I will conclude the chapter by explaining what was examined in the classroom in this particular study by providing an overview, list of research questions, and discussion of the educational significance of the project.

**Theoretical frame**

*Constructivism* is a construct which supports my understandings of professional change. I believe constructivism is a theory which can account for how experienced teachers accept, resist, or ignore change, and how I construct my understandings of professional development. By “constructivist” I mean that the teacher or researcher “interprets events on the basis of existing knowledge, beliefs and dispositions” (Putnam & Borko, 1996, p. 674). It is this combination of the existing knowledge and beliefs
within the process of interpreting new events which allows the educator to "piece together" or construct new understandings especially in interaction with others. Lambert (1995) offers this explanation of constructivism:

Professionals make sense of their work as they consider information that is gathered, generated, and interpreted in interaction with others. The reciprocal processes of [constructivism]... evoke potential, enable participants to construct meaning, break set with old assumptions, and frame actions based on new behaviors and purposeful intention. These processes are propelled by meaning-making, because meaning-making is motion.... Constructing... change is a function of "the conversations" (p. 82).

It is clear from these definitions that constructivist theory embraces many assumptions, and in the design of my study I adopted at least four. The first assumption is that constructivist learning is a social enterprise which takes place through talking, planning and working with others. Indeed, this emphasis is a focus of many reforms in education that will be discussed in subsequent sections. The second assumption is Putnam and Borko's (1996) claim that constructivism addresses not only knowledge, but also beliefs. This assumption is central to my belief that research must examine not only what teachers know, but also what they believe if educational change is to be realized. The third assumption is that constructivism implies that learners must somehow synthesize new experiences into their already existing knowledge and dispositions. It is this synthesis, or integrating the new with the old, that suggests an integral part of constructivism: the learner has to "have ownership" of what is being learned so that it can be integrated with understandings that were previously held. Finally, the fourth
assumption is that, in the process of synthesizing the new with the old, individuals often reflect on what they previously knew so that they can determine how to integrate new learning with old understanding. Accordingly, I have sought to study teacher change using collaborative inquiry guided by these assumptions with a classroom teacher.

The four assumptions that I outlined above stress the need for planning, integrating new and previously acquired knowledge and dispositions so that lessons can be implemented, and reflected upon. I used a process-oriented drama approach as a teaching method, and a collegial, sustained approach to professional development as a means of rethinking teaching practice. Process-oriented drama assumes that meaning can be made from social interactions. Additionally, the emphasis on process means that new learning can be integrated with already acquired knowledge, especially when students are given time to reflect on what they have taken from drama activities. Likewise, the approach to professional development that I took with my classroom teacher collaborator stresses our relationship as a social enterprise which supports new knowledge and attitudes, as well as the synthesis of new learning with already held beliefs. In particular, our frequent reflections supported the development of our thinking about a continuously unfolding curriculum and instruction. We too were able to reflect on our practice.

A recent report on the need for national reform

Recently, the National Commission for Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF, 1996) released the report What Matters Most: Teaching for America’s Future. What
Matters Most paints a picture of America’s troubled educational system and offers a blueprint for reforms which will be national in scope.

Although educational reform has been an issue in the United States since the launch of the former Soviet Union’s Sputnik space program (The Holmes Group, 1986), the last ten to fifteen years has seen a plethora of reform-oriented initiatives. NCTAF reports that this renewal of reform has been spurred, in part, by the 1983 release of A Nation at Risk that declared American “schools were drowning in a ‘rising tide of mediocrity’...” NCTAF reports that this renewal in reform needs to be maintained since “graduation rates and student achievement in most subjects have remained flat or have increased only slightly.” Recently, NCTAF (1996, p. 3) claimed that “this sense of urgency [to reform American education] is well founded. There has been no previous time in history when the success, indeed the survival, of nations and people has been tied so tightly to their ability to learn” [emphasis added].

Although NCTAF claims that it is urgent the American educational system be reformed, the need for reform is especially felt in urban areas. The state of Ohio is one of a few select states that works closely with NCTAF on providing data and instituting reforms. In spite of these reporting and reform initiatives, many urban districts in the state remain hard-pressed to actually accomplish change. Under a recent “report card” system instituted by the state, all seven major urban areas in Ohio met fewer than five of eighteen academic and management standards. As a result, some city districts face state intervention (Columbus Dispatch, 21 June, 1998). Although national initiatives call for a special focus on urban educational reform, the mere call for reform obviously does not
necessarily mean that reform will be achieved. Therefore, it is especially important that educators know how to realize reforms at the *classroom* level in city schools as well.

Although education reform initiatives are often national or state-wide in scope, most of these initiatives see teachers as the front-line for accomplishing change. It is not surprising that teachers should find themselves regarded as key agents for reform initiatives. The Holmes Group, a consortium of large American colleges of education with a reform orientation, explains: “America’s dissatisfaction with its schools has become chronic and epidemic. Teachers have long been at the center of the debates, and they still are today…” Indeed, the Homes Group reports that teachers are often the “butt of most criticism” in the talk regarding educational reform (Holmes Group, 1986, p. 3). Thus, because teachers are seen as the one group that can play the most powerful role in reform, NCTAF (1996, p. vi) bases one of its “three simple premises” on the claim that “what teachers know and can do is the most important influence” on what students can learn, and therefore on educational reform. Because the onus has been placed on teachers as front-line change agents, it is incumbent on educators to understand how change works in the context of the individual classroom.

Since teachers are continually placed at the forefront of reform, the challenge for those interested in educational change is to develop more potent ways of addressing initial and ongoing teacher preparation. Although there are many innovative and exciting reforms currently under way within initial teacher preparation, including alternative or graduated licensure and internships, these initiatives are outside the scope of this study and will not be discussed further. Instead, I focus on the importance of continuing
professional development as the principal vehicle for reform. Continuing professional development holds greater promise for fostering educational change than reforming pre-service education because the effects can be felt by many of the teachers already working in schools rather than the smaller population of those entering teaching. Changing the professional development of inservice teachers also offers great promise because alternative educational approaches can be attempted within the classroom context. Reforms attempted within this contextualized approach have the possibility of being more successful than a “one-size-fits-all” approach of some preservice teacher education reforms.

Although collaborative professional development holds promise, it can either enable or short-circuit school reform and teacher change. My study represents one effort to understand “from the inside” how teacher change may occur in a continuing forum of professional development. These changes are reported within the context of a collaborative relationship in which an English teacher and an English teacher-researcher examine their knowledge and experiences in the light of a broader reform initiative.

Professional development as a vehicle to accomplish change

To accomplish teacher-oriented change, those interested in national reform have actively explored what they could do to improve American education through a nationwide focus on the professional development of teachers. The Holmes Group (1986, p. 3) explains that “paradoxically,” although teachers are often the target of criticism, they are also often “singled out as the one best hope for reform.” To support teachers as they
reform their practices, many state governors have committed themselves to reallocating funds for professional development (NCTAF, 1996). Thus, it is this national emphasis on professional development for individual teachers that unites two very different levels of educational change. Although there are many sources that address professional development, for the purposes of this introductory chapter I will focus on the NCTAF report because it offers a concise view of the relationship between the classroom context and national reform.

Those interested in educational change have recognized that to accomplish a national reform of individual practice will require a change in the way professional development has traditionally been implemented. NCTAF (1996, p. 42) explains that the “historical view of professional development” has viewed “professional knowledge” as something “developed by ‘experts’ who hand it down to teachers.” In this traditional view, professional development is viewed as the “delivering [of] simple recipes to teachers working in isolation....”

NCTAF (1996, pp. 42-3) has cited many professional development initiatives which represent viable alternatives to the traditional approach.

These new approaches connect teachers to one another through in-school teams and cross-school professional communities that tackle problems of practice over time. Though different in some respects, all of these approaches share certain features. They are:
- Connected to teachers’ work with their students;
- Linked to concrete tasks of teaching;
- Organized around problem solving;
- Informed by research;
- Sustained over time by ongoing conversations and coaching.
Historically, professional development has, too often, been unconnected to students or teaching and was not supported by groups of teachers approaching problems collaboratively. What NCTAF advocates is that the national agenda needs to turn to school-embedded, and sometimes classroom-embedded reforms which are longer term, student and teacher related, and collegially developed.

In some cases these alternatives are supported by scholars who believe that it is critical for those interested in professional development to not only look nationally at what is needed, but also to work locally to see how reform objectives might be achieved in various contexts. Fullan (1993) has articulated how large-scale reform initiatives might be more successful by considering how the local practices of schooling and beliefs regarding learning might be “re-cultured.” Re-culturing is the changing of the customary ways of doing things so that educational practices are more likely to be reformed.

According to Fullan, this sort of re-culturing can only occur when reform initiatives consider individual teachers and the part that they play in educational reform. Fullan (1991, p.132) argues that “there is no getting around the primacy of personal contact” as an integral part of successful educational reform because “educational change depends on what teachers do and think - it’s as simple and complex as that” (p. 117). Fullan also believes that it is very important for those who are interested in educational reform to treat teachers as individuals rather than assuming that they are like-minded. “The teacher as a person has … been neglected in teacher development. Most approaches to staff development … either treat all teachers as if they were the same (or should be the
same), or stereotype teachers as innovators, resisters and the like…” (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992, p.5). Mindful of Fullan’s caution, some scholars have suggested approaches that those interested in reform can use with individual and small groups of teachers.

_Grass roots efforts: Individual and small groups of teachers as a part of national reform_

Although Fullan’s focus on the need to reculture educational systems is helpful in thinking about how reform can be accomplished at the school level, even more detailed suggestions are required so that reform can actually be accomplished. It is NCTAF that has set the tone for changing reform initiatives through their suggestion that professional development be “reinvented” by making “ongoing professional development part of teachers daily work through joint planning, research, curriculum and assessment work, study groups and peer coaching” (NCTAF, 1996, p. 86).

A number of scholars have suggested specific ways of accomplishing this “reinvention.” For Little (1987) and Maooff (1993) the reinvention of professional development can be accomplished by having teachers work together more closely. Little emphasizes a closer working relationship involving collaboration on curriculum and instructional development as the site for reinventing professional development. For Richardson and Anders (1994), Calhoun (1994), and Atwell (1991), the reinvention of professional development can best be accomplished through the establishment of professional relationships that withstand the test of time. Richardson and Anders (1994) believe that the development of collegial relationships over a substantial time period
supports teachers in examining their own and others’ practices and premises. It is this long-term collegial relationship which leads to significant educational reform. Calhoun (1994) believes that action research can be used to support teachers in becoming life-long learners, a strategy that I rely on for this study. Calhoun also believes that the combination of active inquiry conducted over a protracted time period brings about an “essential component of school renewal... an orientation to work that means we are willing to accept the discomfort and joy of never finishing our education, of never graduating from our study of teaching.” Finally, English educator and classroom teacher Atwell (1991) affirms Calhoun’s belief that reform might occur if teachers can become life-long learners. She explains that when teachers can act as “scholars, closely reading, [and] heatedly debating... schools become more thoughtful places” (p. 3).

These scholars are recent contributors to a professional conversation that asks how classroom-embedded professional development can be fostered. Joyce and Showers research in peer coaching (1980, 1995), Rentz and Pinnell’s research in teacher reasoning (1985), Wesley, Hampel, and Clark’s (1997) research into “kid’s voices” in reform-oriented schools, and the Holmes Group’s (1986) emphasis on Professional Development Schools (PDS) are all a part of the now burgeoning literature that argues large-scale reform initiatives in the area of professional development must be contextualized within schools, and in some cases, within individual and small groups of teachers in their classrooms. Indeed, Zimpher and Howey (1992) conclude that the characteristics of the new, non-traditional professional development initiatives include teachers and students as the main voices in the reform. Additionally, the non-traditional approach includes
pedagogical and curricular elements, engagement over time, and a variety of strategies. In conclusion, the sum total of the literature on collaborative professional development specifically suggests that critical dialogue in classroom settings over time, is a very powerful tool for reforming teaching practices. This tool for reform can be further supported with the modeling of instructional techniques that provide an opportunity for practice and feedback. These are approaches that teachers cannot do by themselves and that require the support of their colleagues.

Process-oriented drama approaches: Definitions, usefulness, disadvantages, and rationale

Knowing that reform might be achieved through a combination of discussion, modeling, and feedback, and knowing that a close collegial relationship might foster change, my collaborating teacher and I were encouraged to more fully explore process-oriented drama approaches as our own form of professional development. We hoped that by keeping the reform initiative small-in-scale we could devise a form of professional development that could respond quickly to the student needs perceived by the teacher. In this section I will explain why we chose to pursue drama as the avenue of professional development, and I will sketch the significance of drama approaches to the curriculum.

Process-oriented drama approaches will be discussed more fully in chapter two, but for the purposes of an introduction I will note at this point that process-oriented approaches rely largely on an approach known as “drama in education.” Wagner (1998, p. 7) offers a more complete description:
In drama in education (DIE), the starting point is usually an area of the curriculum that the students need to be introduced to. There is less emphasis on story and character development and more emphasis on problem solving or living through a particular moment in time. Through ritual, dramatic encounters, pantomime, *tableaux vivants* (still pictures made with the bodies of the participants), writing in role, and reflection, participants enter the mind of imagined characters and play out their responses to challenges and crises. Experienced teachers of DIE often initiate or move the drama along by assuming a role themselves and heighten the tension by challenging the participants to respond to dilemmas in authentic and believable ways.

The veteran teacher and I chose process-oriented drama strategies because we perceived them as a useful approach for inquiring into our professional practices for a number of reasons. Drama was in many ways a "logical choice" to explore professional development because the recent trends in reform dovetailed with drama approaches. For example, the current trend in professional development emphasizes collegial forms of professional development which foster dialogue and teacher ownership. In many ways, the drama approaches we used supported our discussion of teaching practices. Additionally, the teacher and I were interested in drama approaches, as I had observed prior to the study that he was using some activities in his classroom.

All of these factors suggested that the teacher and I believed that we had some ownership of the teaching strategies that we were going to use. This led to what Hundert (1996, p. 203) has called a “fluid process of teacher-teacher collaboration and shared expertise.” Put another way, the teacher and I contributed to the collaboration in unique ways: although I had a stronger theoretical background for the use of the drama strategies the teacher knew more than I did about the context in which we were to apply them.
including the students' abilities, their experiences, and their attitudes. Therefore, in a very real sense, our knowledge supported and complemented one another. Rather than relying on distinct roles such as expert or novice, we each had varying degrees of expertise about different aspects of teaching and learning, and there was a sense of mutual collaboration.

Although process-oriented drama offers many opportunities for professional development, the approach can also create challenges. Teachers who are unaccustomed to activity-based teaching and learning may find it difficult to include such a new tool in their teaching repertoire. Also, students who previously have not been asked to be active meaning-makers may find the approach odd or unusual. These are significant difficulties that emerged as central to the kinds of changes we tried to implement.

Drama also has a unique set of expectations which are different from typical classroom activities. For example, although students are typically expected to follow specific teacher-sponsored routines, in drama it may be very important that students portray characters by relying on their own personal observations of human behavior. Although it can be a welcome release for students to get to "act" in a different way, it can be challenging for students to understand and adapt to the differences between typical classroom routines and more student-centered activities. Because of the unique features of drama that I have discussed above, drama offers a double-edged sword for fostering changes in teaching practices in that it offers great possibilities for changing teacher practices, but it also issues the challenge of a different set of expectations which students are expected to meet.
Although process-oriented drama approaches are not a panacea for educational reform, my veteran teacher collaborator and I nevertheless decided that it was the approach we would use for a number of reasons. One reason was the collaborating teacher believed his students would respond positively to instruction if he used a more activity-based approach. The teacher perceived any kind of drama as an activity that might be interesting to his students and, therefore, he was interested in exploring them with me. He thought that the use of activities which were both interesting and new was especially important for a world literature course, the focus of his twelfth grade English curriculum. Given that formal academic approaches to literature instruction, in his judgment, tended to bore and alienate students, the collaborating teacher had hoped that the activities would make some of the literary selections more engaging.

Another reason why the teacher and I used process-oriented drama as an alternative to more traditional approaches (Applebee, 1993) was that we were interested in developing our pedagogical skills. Skill development can often require guided practice and feedback, and we felt that drama offered a way of being able to observe teaching practices that some other teaching approaches would not offer. Indeed, Edwards and Cooper (1996) recently concluded that when teachers undertake select forms of drama approaches, there can be “a fundamental shift in one’s view of teaching and learning” (p. 53).

Finally, the collaborating teacher and I were interested in using drama approaches because we knew that they had not been thoroughly explored in the context of teaching secondary English (Applebee, 1993). We believed that if we were able to demonstrate the
value of drama as a way of teaching literary texts within the secondary English classroom we could begin to make a case for the use of drama for English teaching. Perhaps one of the reasons that teachers do not use drama as a way of teaching literature is that there is scant scholarship on this topic. Byron (1986, p. 66) offers the following observation:

Most books on the teaching of English fall into one of three categories in respect to their stance towards drama: category one books don’t mention drama at all; category two books say drama is a “good thing” FULL STOP (sic) - but say little about why and less about how; category three books give more specific guidance, typically centering on the notion of animating text. “If pupils act it they’ll understand it better”.

Research questions

At the beginning of this chapter I explained that the purpose of this study was to implement a collaborative and peer-supported professional development initiative which took place over time. I explained that the study was undertaken using a constructivist perspective as the theoretical frame. I also noted that some of the assumptions which accompanied this constructivist frame were that planning and reflection be undertaken in a social context, and that a teacher’s implementation of lessons needs to consider how new knowledge and dispositions regarding teaching are integrated with prior ones. These assumptions led me to develop this central research question: How did the collaboration between a teacher and a teacher-researcher influence reflection during lesson planning, during lesson implementation, and during the debriefings of lessons which had been taught?
I then developed the following questions which allowed me to consider the lesson planning, lesson implementation, and lesson debriefing in more detail:

1. How did collaborative lesson planning proceed and what factors shaped the planning sessions?

2. How were lessons implemented, what factors influenced the lesson implementation, and "what worked" or "did not work" according to the perceptions of the teacher and the teacher-researcher?

3. What issues were discussed during debriefing sessions and how did the teacher and the teacher-researcher make sense of the lesson?

**Definition of key terms**

Throughout this study I typically define a term when I first use it. Nevertheless, to provide a glossary for the reader I have included explanations of the most frequently used terms in this section.

- **Preservice teacher** – An individual attending a teacher preparation program who has yet to be licensed by the state.

- **Inservice teacher** – A practicing teacher licensed by the state.

- **Professional development** – Activities, workshops, or investigations undertaken for the purpose of developing the knowledge, skills, or attitudes of teachers.

- **Collaborative professional development** – Activities, workshops, or investigations devised with the active participation of teachers undertaken for the purpose of developing the knowledge, skills, or attitudes of teachers and / or teacher educators.
Customized professional development – Professional development delivered in a school or classroom context which is tailored to a specific teacher or staff.

Constructivism – A process whereby professionals make sense of their work as they consider information that is gathered, generated, and interpreted in interaction with others. (Lambert, 1995. p. 82).

Lesson planning – Procedures employed to prepare lessons for teaching. The procedures can include thinking, consulting with others, and searching for relevant materials.

Teaching – Interactions between a teacher and students. This may include direct instruction, lecturing, or monitoring group work.

Reflecting – Deliberation on teaching. This reflection may occur during or after class.

Process drama or drama in education (DIE) – Using drama as a medium to explore ideas, information, and experience through imaginative and reflective activity while de-emphasizing the creation of finished products.

Process-oriented drama – The teacher’s and my adaptation of the principles and / or strategies of process drama as we explored alternative teaching techniques.

Pedagogical reasoning – The process teachers employ when they take what they know and make it ready for instruction.

Pedagogical content knowledge - That “special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of [professional] understanding” (Shulman, 1987, p.8).

Overview of the study

In this study I worked as a researcher and a teacher who used participant-observation to investigate the constructivist way in which the collaborating teacher and I “took on” a teaching strategy that was largely new to us. After an extensive search, I identified a veteran teacher in an urban school who was disposed to learning more about the student-oriented instruction, especially the uses of process-oriented drama I have
described above, and who was active in a number of professional development initiatives. Although I had some formal training in the use of process-oriented drama strategies, I lacked experience in the application of these strategies in school settings. These strategies were also largely new to the veteran teacher, so we agreed that we would focus our attention on planning, implementing lessons, and reflecting on our teaching as we employed process-oriented drama activities with a twelfth grade English classroom. We felt that by closely examining the way we came to understand a teaching method which was new to us we would become better practitioners, and we might have a stronger understanding of how and why particular changes in a teacher’s teaching repertoire work or not within a specific instructional context.

I assumed the role of a co-teacher in this study by meeting and jointly planning units of instruction, or groups of lessons, with the veteran teacher. I will describe these joint planning sessions in greater detail in chapter three. I also taught parts or all of some of the lessons in the units, and reflected on and planned new lessons and units. I also assumed the role of a researcher in this study by formulating questions, designing the study, collecting artifacts, reflecting on the “intervention” I undertook with the veteran teacher, analyzing the data, and reporting the results. The veteran teacher took the roles of teacher, peer coach, and fellow researcher, but only to the extent that he reflected on his developing understandings of his teaching and his student’s responses to the process-oriented drama activities.

My study was carried out in a grade twelve English classroom which was situated in a reform oriented urban school where a block schedule had been implemented. In the
school’s block scheduling arrangement, each trimester a student enrolled in three classes lasting 120 minutes each. Each class met at the same time, every day, for approximately 63 days, or one trimester. Each weekend, for thirteen weeks, I met for two to three hours with the teacher to collaboratively plan a unit for the upcoming week. During each class I would teach, the collaborating teacher would teach, or we would both teach. Observations were collected and debriefings were held. At the end of the trimester final grades were issued, new classes were scheduled, and students began anew with a different schedule of classes. Accordingly, with the school’s trimester scheduling arrangement, I could participate in the planning and teaching of an entire course between late August and mid-November.

Significance of the study, projections and conclusion

The National Commission for Teaching and America’s Future has identified the lack of school-embedded professional development opportunities as the target of reform initiatives. A number of educational reformers agree that an investigation of professional development opportunities is in order, but too frequently reform focuses on system- or school-wide initiatives. My study is one of a few studies which examine what occurs when two teachers (1) work in close collaboration, (2) over a long period, (3) using new strategies with (4) a research-oriented focus on their teaching, (5) embedded in ongoing professional development initiatives (6) in a challenging urban school context. The significant and promise of such research is suggested by its concern for what occurs when
teachers engage in the kinds of extended and closely collaborative professional development initiatives for which many reformers are now calling.

While the research I am reporting here uses a case study approach and is therefore not generalizable to other cases, it does portray an important aspect of teacher professional development within the context of national and state reform. The portrait’s value comes, not in its generalizability to all teaching contexts, but in its ability to capture the details of what occurs at the classroom level within the context of a widely publicized and highly funded national and state reform agenda.

The study is also significant for English and drama teachers who daily face the balancing act between “covering the content” and providing their students with socially and personally meaningful learning. By considering the changes in the collaborating teacher’s and my knowledge, skills, and attitudes, other readers may see parallels to their own experiences both as teachers and agents of change. Thus, the significance of this case lies in the typicality of this study’s depiction of the challenges teachers face when they attempt to use a new teaching strategy and are confronted by a number of institutional and professional constraints.

In the research design which I will discuss further in chapter three, the reader will see that I have brought together a combination of a number of different disciplines to focus on a researchable problem. This study can contribute both to new conceptual understandings and expanded methods of inquiry. My study is also significant because it examines how teachers “enact” what they know. Rentel (1994, p.261) has suggested “that if knowledge is to be accessible, it must be actionable”. Shulman and Lanier (1977)
suggest that teacher research should involve a dialogue between teacher and researcher. My research has created a dialogue between the teacher and I which is both “talk” (talking about our lesson plans) and “show” (executing our plans).

I began this chapter by describing four assumptions of constructivist theory. I explained that if we were to develop as professionals, constructivist theory assumed that we would need to take some “ownership” over what we taught and how we taught it. I also explained that constructivist learning implied a social and collegial approach where the collaborating teacher and I could share both what we knew and our attitudes regarding what we knew. I then summarized the work of theorists who have been prominent in educational reform. I have reported their claims that, if veteran teachers and teacher-researchers can closely examine their teaching practices over time, then we might better understand professional development and its role in school reform. I have addressed these claims by formulating research questions and defining relevant key terms and I have explained that the significance of this study lies in its two-pronged approach to examining classroom instruction in the context of a large-scale reform.

In chapter two, I review literature which is related to these national reform efforts. Additionally, I review literature related to reforms which can be instituted with teachers in classrooms, especially where process-oriented drama has been employed. In chapters three and four, I report reform-oriented research that I undertook with a teacher of a class which was located in one reform-oriented school. Finally, I conclude this dissertation in
chapter five by offering findings and recommendations related to both the reform
initiative undertaken in the classroom, and to the state and national context of educational
reform in which that classroom is located.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The primary purpose of this chapter is to explore what we know about professional development initiatives that have sought to support teachers in thinking about and sometimes changing their practices. Additionally, by identifying research that still needs to be done, I will present a rationale for conducting my research with the prospect that I can, in some small way, contribute to the knowledge base on teaching and learning.

In chapter one I explained how my study was nested within a context of multiple reforms which were being conducted by federal, state, and local educational authorities. I explained how teacher educators have offered collaboration and reflection as ways which could help teachers rethink the methods that they use. I also explained that this study approached the subject of professional development from a constructivist standpoint. In spite of widespread agreement on the need for collaboration we know little about its impact. In order to address these issues this study focuses on a teacher and a teacher-researcher involved in a collaborative effort. In the last chapter I also reported that process-oriented drama approaches was the vehicle through which the teacher with whom
I collaborated and I explored alternatives to more traditional literature and writing instruction.

In this chapter I will describe and critically examine studies of teacher change. There has been a large amount of research on this topic ranging from teacher effectiveness (Cruickshank, 1996) to psychological aspects of the teacher (Sprinthall, Reiman, and Thies-Sprinthall, 1996). I will not summarize this expansive array of literature. Instead I will focus on two philosophical and two research strands that have an impact on my study. First I will focus on the philosophy that professional development needs to maintain a local classroom-based emphasis which considers teachers as active participants who are invested in the professional development process. As a part of this focus on classroom practices, I will discuss how critical pedagogy offers teachers an opportunity to rethink their teaching. Second, I will focus on the philosophy that pedagogical reasoning supports teachers in rethinking the way they represent curriculum to their students. As a part of this focus I will explore the research and theory that has led to Shulman’s notion of pedagogical reasoning.

Third, I will review research on specific strategies that have been used to support teachers in bringing change to the way they teach. For example, I will consider peer coaching and reflection on teaching as two ways that teacher education research has been employed to support teachers in creating change. Fourth, I will conclude this chapter by considering content-oriented approaches to classroom change. I will consider research on how drama might be used to support changing teaching practices, and I will discuss
research of teaching secondary English in which researchers have acted as agents of change.

Throughout this chapter I will refer to a number of articles or studies which helped to inform my research. Because this study examines teacher change in a collaborative professional development context through the use of a drama approach in a secondary English classroom, the amount of material to review was quite large. In order to offer a concise summary of relevant material, I limited my review to recent studies in which individual teachers reflect on their practice with a view to examining and changing it. I also focused on studies in which one or two teaching strategies were shaped for or used by a small group of teachers in the hope of changing teaching practice, especially if a peer collaboration approach was employed.

Recent conceptual work on teacher change as a part of collaborative professional development

In Sprinthall, Reiman, and Thies-Sprinthall's (1996) comprehensive review of literature related to teacher change through collaboration and professional development, they found that a very common trait of research studies which investigated collaboration was that such studies often had an interactive component. By interactive, they referred to collaborative professional development designed “to engage the teacher as an active participant in the learning process” (p. 687). The interactive research studies which Sprinthall, Reiman and Thies-Sprinthall discussed seem to be largely based on constructivist theories of learning, in that they examined teachers actively constructing
their understandings of reform in terms of the impact the initiatives could have on their own teaching.

Fullan (1991, p.55) is another scholar who reviewed the literature on collaborative forms of professional development. The studies he summarized focused on how teachers could rethink "what they teach and how they teach it". He found that the literature suggested that,

1. teachers engaged in frequent, continuous and increasingly concrete talk about teaching practice;
2. teachers and administrators... develop[ed] a “shared language” for teaching strategies and needs; and
3. teachers and administrators planned, designed, and evaluated teaching materials and practices together.

Again, a thread running through these findings is that collaborative efforts in professional development that include social interaction, teacher ownership, and teacher reflection are constructivist in their nature. A number of other scholars have reached similar findings (Palinscar, 1988; Rentel and Pinnel, 1989; Richardson, 1994).

Like Fullan, Miller (1996) has also suggested that reforms need to take place at the school building level. She has expressed concern that large-scale reform efforts remain unresponsive to the situation of the individual teacher. She decries, for example, those reformers who have suggested that specific reforms should be embraced across all of the diverse classrooms in the United States. The attempt to make reform initiatives universal, she says, is further complicated by teachers' shifting views regarding.
professional development. She points out that teachers rarely agree on particular professional development initiatives, and that even when they agree, they often change their minds because of the "constantly changing and unpredictable situations, relationships, and intentions within any one school or classroom" (p. 86).

Miller cautions that professional development must be concerned with the difficulties of individual teachers. The difficulty with teachers, Miller explains, is not that they are opposed to professional development but that their circumstances, and therefore their perceptions, change so quickly that professional development initiatives are hard-pressed to respond to them. Therefore, Miller offered a caution to all would-be reformers, including me, that reform initiatives can be seriously tested when they are implemented "on the ground".

Taken as a whole, the beliefs of Fullan, Miller and others suggest that teachers' understandings need to change from "covering the book" to "ownership" of curriculum and instruction through collaboration, and that this ownership necessitates that the teacher be an "active participant" in constructing the knowledge needed to be an effective teacher. Although these literature reviews stress the active role teachers need to take in their own learning, this role is often stymied by the fact that "school teachers must work with a curriculum that they did not devise, and often with materials they do not like, as a matter of local practice, or state policy, or both. This restricts their opportunities to do thinking differently" (Cohen, 1988, p.56). While the literature suggests that teachers can be supported in changing their practices through social interactions which focus on
ownership, reflection, and the development of a teaching repertoire, teachers are often limited by the above constraints.

The role of critical pedagogy in teacher change and collaborative professional development

Some scholars have focused their research on public schools and frequently use classifications such as socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, or race to critique both the curriculum and instruction of schools as hegemonic. This body of research is critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy questions the power relationships inherent in the structure and culture of educational institutions. Paulo Freire (1973, 1985, 1993), who derived much of his theory from working with South American peasants, is one of critical pedagogy’s seminal writers. Critical pedagogy is relevant to this study because it offers those interested in professional development a rationale as to why they would want to consider an examination of teaching practices.

Many who write about critical pedagogy support Freire’s (1993, p. 54) claim that too many schools employ “banking education”. Banking education stresses a teacher-centered rather than a student-centered view of teaching and learning and implies that educators can “deposit” information in their students with little regard to how the students process this information. In a banking education system, teachers underestimate the students’ “creativity and regenerative capacity.” Instead, teachers try to “fill” students “with what technicians believe is right…” (p. 30). After continued exposure to such an approach students tend to adapt to the system (Freire, 1985, p.31). Eventually, students
who have spent "years in dull transfer-of-knowledge classes" lapse into a "culture of silence" (Shor, In Shor and Freire, 1987, p.122).

This has important implications for teachers who seek, through interactive professional development activities, to reconceptualize and change their teaching. According to Freire, a teacher who might be interested in changing her teaching style so that students are required to be active learners may be challenged by the students' lengthy experience in less active classrooms. English education scholar George Hillocks (1995, p. 31) relates just such an experience:

...I recently witnessed a teacher attempting to capture the interest of what had been designated by the school as one of its lowest-level ninth-grade groups. She had asked them to write journal entries about their own personal experiences or whatever concerned them.... So far as I could see, she was doing everything she could to follow Donald Graves's (1983) recommendations. Nonetheless, the African American inner-city youngsters were not buying it. They saw no value, at the time, in writing about their own personal experience. Several students had even asked the teacher if they could go back to doing fill-in-the-blank exercises. This they regarded as "real" English.

Under such circumstances it is certainly difficult to re-write student's experiences and understanding of what English is supposed to be and enlist them as active learners. Nevertheless, Freire (1985) has suggested a starting point for change. In place of the "banking" model, educators need to substitute a dialogic system of "education for freedom which is an act of knowledge and a process of transforming action that should be exercised on reality" (p.102). In practical terms, teachers have "a lot to learn" from the students "and if we refuse to do so, we can't teach them anything" (p.25).
A principle task of the teacher, then, is to listen to the student. By listening to the student and engaging with them in a dialogue about learning, the teacher forges instruction “with” the students as active participants, not “for” students as passive learners (Freire, 1993, p.30). A way to engage the students in this dialogue is to put “the thing to be known on the table”. In doing so, knowledge can no longer be in the possession of “the teacher.” Instead, knowledge can be an inquiry undertaken by many. When education is an undertaking of both students and teacher, the classroom will be a place where teachers both teach, and are taught (Freire, In Shor and Freire, 1987).

This claim has very significant implications for teacher change and professional development. Critical pedagogy suggests that teachers can actually change their practices and engage in professional development by listening to their students. Since teachers are continually working with new students, they are continually challenged to reformulate their conceptions of teaching. This process of reformulation, or organizing new knowledge so that it can fit into already developed understandings, also demonstrates the constructivist nature of critical pedagogy that Freire advocates. By being involved in an ongoing process of listening to their students, he says, teachers can always be involved in an ongoing type of professional development. Through engaging in such a form of professional development the teacher will commit to becoming a life-long learner with teaching as her subject and students as her teacher.

In summary, although a number of studies have already applied critical pedagogy as a way of analyzing classroom and teaching practices, my study views critical pedagogy as a way of thinking about how the teacher plans and reflects on changing her or his
teaching practices. Thus, critical pedagogy is a valuable way of conceptualizing how changes in teacher practices can be fostered.

The role of pedagogical knowledge in teacher change and collaborative professional development

In this section I discuss Shulman's (1987, p. 15) pedagogical knowledge as a construct which describes how teachers can conceptualize their instruction. A key aspect of pedagogical reasoning is the process a teacher employs when she takes what she knows and makes it ready for effective instruction. Specifically, Shulman argues that thoughtful teachers take “what they know” and what is “in the textbook” and set about “converting” these two forms of knowledge so that lessons can be taught. In this section I will describe the “Model of Pedagogical Reasoning and Action” that Shulman devised as a result of his inquiry into effective instruction in the content areas. I will summarize the six steps of the model which are comprehension, transformation, instruction, evaluation, reflection, and new comprehension.

Before a teacher begins planning, Shulman believes that a teacher should comprehend the material. With this initial comprehension, Shulman believes that a teacher can set about the process of transforming the material from a text (typically, although not always, a textbook), into something that can be instructed. This transformation is a complex task. Teacher first prepare by analyzing and segmenting the texts. They must then consider the metaphors, analogies, examples or demonstrations which might represent the material to students. The teacher then selects what is
appropriate from an instruction repertoire of teaching techniques that might include learning stations, small group work or overhead notes. Finally, the teacher must consider the student characteristics which are likely to affect the instruction and tailor the lesson accordingly.

After the material has been transformed into lesson or unit plans it must be taught. Instruction requires the teacher to consider how the class, the presentation and the material will be managed. In the evaluation stage, the teacher must evaluate both the teaching and the student response to the teaching. Additionally, the teacher must consider summative evaluation such as paper and pencil tests, or alternatives and traditional forms of assessment. Finally, the teacher should both reflect on the experience, and undertake new comprehensions of either new material and students, or recomprehensions of previously taught material and of self.

The significance of this work for teacher change as a part of professional development is that Shulman highlights the complexity of teacher knowledge that is required for the everyday activity of lesson planning. In the context of the present study, I examine how process-oriented drama activities shaped a teacher’s pedagogical reasoning during lesson planning, lesson implementation and reflections on the lesson. Therefore, conceptual work which addresses the complexity of teacher knowledge provided my study with valuable insight because it suggested that I needed to look at a rich range of possibilities that constitute how teacher knowledge effects planning, teaching and reflecting.

Shulman (1987) contends that it is this rich realm of different kinds of teacher
knowledge that offers great opportunities for teacher change. He explains that if teachers are engaged in the process of thinking about what they will teach and how they will teach it, then they will typically need much more than subject content knowledge alone. He suggests that there is a different kind of knowledge at work when teachers integrate their knowledge of content with what they know about how to teach that content in a particular context. He has labeled this “pedagogical content knowledge,” that is, a “special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of [professional] understanding” (p.8).

Grossman, Wilson, and Shulman (1989, p. 27) further divide pedagogical knowledge into “content knowledge, substantive knowledge, syntactic knowledge, and beliefs about the subject matter.” Grossman (1990, pp. 8-9) redefined these categories a year later to include “knowledge and beliefs about the purposes for teaching a subject at different grade levels”, “knowledge of students’ understanding”, “curricular knowledge”, and “knowledge of instructional strategies”.

Because Shulman’s model emphasizes that the teacher must be an active interpreter of how new knowledge integrates with previous experience, his work is largely supported by a constructivist theory of learning. This is articulated by Shulman when he describes how the teacher must convert the material from the representation of the textbook to a representation that will work for a particular teacher working in a particular class. When the teacher transforms the material to be taught into lesson plans she makes the material her own. By claiming ownership over the material to be taught, the teacher frees herself from teaching from the textbook so that she can teach in the way
that she thinks will work well with a group of students. By thinking of her students as she makes the material her own, she is also providing a context in which the students can also make the material their own.

Thus, the work of Shulman is important to my study for a number of reasons. First, it is a theoretical model derived from classroom observation which assists teachers and would-be reformers in highlighting the many different kinds of knowledge teachers can employ for curriculum planning and classroom instruction. This emphasis on providing “high-quality, professionally informed curriculum guidance” to teachers so that they can be helped to “organize their teaching and build on the work of their predecessors” or peers has been a recommendation of the National Commission (NCTAF, 1996, p. 25).

Second, Shulman’s theoretical work supports teachers who do not just use the text, but rather rethink the way they convert material from textbook representations to other representations to support student learning. It helps teachers to move from a view that the material in the text book must be covered, to a view that the ideas in the text must be structured as an understandable representation for the student. This is an important concept for my study because Shulman suggests that teaching can be transformed through careful consideration of the way teachers plan and teach their lessons to particular groups of students. This process of transformation of daily lesson planning and teaching text based approaches to literature using process-oriented drama is pertinent to my study.

Third, the work of Shulman is significant because it places a great deal of emphasis, not just on daily instruction, but also in shaping the classroom curriculum.
chapter one I explained that process-oriented drama strategies were important because they placed the onus on the teacher to be an instructional leader. The theoretical work of Shulman also raises the stakes in that it suggests that the teacher transform the formal, written school curriculum into what Ben-Peretz (1990) calls “curriculum potential.” In other words, teachers interpret curriculum materials as they transform them for instructional purposes.

Fourth and finally, the work of Shulman makes the teacher responsible for being someone who tailors their material so that it is appropriate for the students being taught. This necessarily leads the teacher to consider student’s background and experiences, including factors such as social class. By articulating the processes that teachers need to undertake so that they can transform their teaching practices, Shulman has provided those interested in professional development with a host of ways in which teacher change might occur.

The role of peer coaching in teacher change and collaborative professional development

In this section I will discuss research related to peer coaching by examining research studies devoted to how the development of skills can change teaching practice. I will begin by discussing studies which focus on skill development in a generic context. Then I will look at collaborative efforts which are specific to certain content areas and grade levels.

A number of commentators on professional development have called for closer collaboration between teachers and their colleagues, and this collaboration has taken
many forms. Surprisingly, little developmental work and related research has been done on coaching and even less on peer coaching. Showers (1984) and Joyce and Showers (1988, 1995) are the most well known of those writing in this area. Initially, Showers (1984) believed that coaching could be undertaken by peers, supervisors, principals or others using a model that she had developed. The purpose of coaching was to provide a combination of several elements including companionship, technical feedback, and an analysis of the way a teacher applied a particular technique. Since Showers’ initial description of her “coaching” model other scholars have placed a greater emphasis on “peer” coaching. Phillips and Glickman (1991, p. 21), for example, describe peer coaching as a “process in which classroom teachers observe one another teach, give feedback concerning the observation, and together develop an instructional improvement plan”.

For Joyce and Showers (1988), the main purpose of coaching is to implement “innovations to the extent that determination of effects on students is possible” (p. 87). While Joyce and Showers utilized a sophisticated statistical calculation to determine the effects of their coaching program, their definition is reasonably wide enough to allow educators the possibility of determining the effects on students in many different ways. For example, Joyce and Showers suggested that their training program could change the students’ classroom experiences by influencing the following: the social climate, curriculum, the teachers’ teaching strategies, the learners’ learning strategies and teaching to support different students’ learning styles. Joyce and Showers also believe that a second purpose of coaching is to “build communities of teachers who continuously
engage in the study of their craft” (p.84).

The Joyce and Showers model has clearly defined steps and rigorous training. These steps include group discussion, modeling or demonstration of a teaching skill, practice of the skill, including practice with other teachers, and feedback regarding the teaching. Their peer coaching model includes fifty hours of training and Joyce and Showers conclude that, “…for most of us, learning a new approach to teaching - a new piece of repertoire - will require 20 or 25 trials and the assistance of someone who can help us analyze the student’s responses…” (p. 82). An important factor to note regarding this training is the use of the training model over time with the goal of substantive change in teaching practice.

In addition to drawing conclusions regarding the length of the training period, Joyce and Showers have made interesting observations regarding coaching which challenged my initial assumptions about what it was. When I first thought about working with another teacher, I assumed that the teacher who was teaching would be coached, and the observer would be the coach. Joyce and Showers turn this assumption on its head by suggesting that the teacher is the coach because the person teaching is offering a demonstration as to “how to do it.” Furthermore, the person teaching is the one who elicits the response from the observer, and in so doing, the teacher coaches the observer.

Thies-Sprinthall (1984) has also developed guidelines for a peer coaching program which claims to promote teacher thinking. In Thies-Sprinthall’s model there are five discrete steps. First, role-taking experiences place the teacher in a different experience which stretches them, but still remains within their teaching level. Second,
guided reflection is fostered through careful feedback. In Phillips' and Glickman's (1991) analysis of the Thies-Sprinthall model, they suggest that reflection can be fostered through three processes: individual analysis of the teaching episode by the coach, presentation of this analysis to the teacher being coached, and joint consideration of alternative actions with consideration for future teaching. Third, a balance between real teaching and reflecting on that teaching is undertaken. Fourth, personal support of the teacher being coached is offered. Fifth, continuity of the coaching program is essential, lasting for at least six months.

While the Joyce and Showers model placed some emphasis on the development of a community of teachers interested in developing their teaching, Thies-Sprinthall places emphasis on a number of other significant features. She emphasizes reflection as a tool for developing teacher thinking including individual analysis and joint debriefing, an ongoing cycle of teaching and reflecting, close collaboration between the coach and the coached, and an acknowledgment of the process of reflection and collaboration through the need to undertake a sustained commitment to coaching and developing teaching lasting several months.

Both of these models have features which are valuable to my study because I have also collected samples of student work, focused on alternating cycles of teaching and reflection, and maintained a close collaboration between teacher and researcher lasting several months. Although Joyce, Showers and Thies-Sprinthall have documented how a teacher or other educator can coach another teacher, the emphasis has been on a one-way process. By this I mean, a coach coaches the coached. Something that these scholars have
not considered is the reciprocity that may develop, that is, the teacher and researcher take
turns coaching one another. Another issue of some concern to me is how peer coaching
might contribute to teaching in a content area such as English language arts as
differentiated from other content areas.

The role of reflection in teacher change and collaborative professional development

In this section I will suggest that reflection can be used as a tool to help us make
transparent teachers’ thinking and that, in turn, teachers might consider what works and
why within their own teaching contexts. This use of reflection represents a practical way
for teachers to view their practice so that change might be accomplished. Zeichner and
Liston (1996, p. 10) explain that they have borrowed from Dewey (1944, 1960) to create
the following operational definition of reflective teaching:

...an active desire to listen to more sides than one, to give full attention to
alternative possibilities, and to recognize the possibility of error even in
beliefs that are dearest to us. Teachers who are open-minded are
continually examining the rationales that underlie what is taken as natural
and right, and take pains to seek out conflicting evidence.

Recently Sprinthall, Reiman, and Thies-Sprinthall (1996, p. 688) borrowed from Dewey
to describe reflective action as an “active, persistent and careful consideration of any
belief...” In both of these descriptions of reflection, contemporary educators have chosen
to stress active consideration as a principal task of the teacher.

There is now a kind of “reflective teaching” movement that has taken several
forms. For example, Argyris and Schon (1974) believe that, by becoming “competent in taking action and simultaneously reflecting on the action to learn from it”, educators might further develop as professionals. Several scholars have undertaken extensive research into reflection in a variety of contexts (Wildman and Niles, 1987; Cruickshank, 1987; Wedman, Martin and Mahlios, 1990; Bainer and Cantrell, 1991; and Cruickshank, Bainer and Metcalf, 1995). In addition, to make teacher’s thinking discernible to the researcher teacher educators have employed a number of techniques to do the same. Tom (1985), Cruickshank (1987), Zeichner (1987), Zeichner and Liston (1987), Howey and Zimpher (1989), Wedman, Mahlios and Whittfield (1989), and Winitzky and Arends (1991) collectively list action research, ethnography, writing and journaling, simulations, protocols, clinical supervision, alternative supervisory approaches, seminars, classroom event analysis, situational teaching, and curriculum analysis and development as alternative methods to promote reflection by preservice and inservice teachers. Of all of these activities, journaling was by far the most popular activity to engender reflection, especially for preservice students (Korthagen, 1985; Stover, 1986; Bolin, 1988; Surbeck, Han and Moyer, 1991; Gipe and Richards, 1992; and Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993).

From my review of this literature, however, it seems clear that some areas related to reflective inquiry have not been fully investigated. First, although researchers have given a good deal of thought to the tools, such as journaling, they can use to either foster or document reflection, these tools are not as important as the issues that teachers are reflecting about and less attention is given to this. If researchers seek to make the teacher’s private reflection public by asking that the reflections be written in a journal,
perhaps another way to make something public might be to engender reflection in a social context. Those researchers interested in using reflection (as I have already described) make little use of dialogue, yet Schon argues that "the dialogue between coach and student in a reflective practicum is ... a needed exemplar for a new epistemology of practice" (Sprinthall, Reiman, and Thies-Sprinthall, 1996, p. 689). The need for a greater emphasis on dialogue or collaborative talk in the reflective process is reflected in my study.

**A description of drama approaches**

In this section I will review recent conceptualizations of "process-oriented drama". In the next section I will examine studies that have looked at the effects of such activities on teaching and learning.

Many parents are familiar with theatrical presentations which are undertaken by their children in their school classes or as a part of an extracurricular activity. Although a number of processes go in to the making of these theatrical presentations, the emphasis remains on the presentation of a honed product. Teachers also utilize a number of drama orientations which represent alternatives to typical theatrical presentations. In her book *Educational drama and language arts: What research shows*, Betty Jane Wagner (1998) offered a concise description and definition of two of these alternatives.

Wagner, (1998) explains that the first alternative known as "creative drama" or "creative dramatics", was popularized in the United States by Winifred Ward (1939, 1952). Wagner has analyzed Ward's work and claims that in creative drama explains that
in creative drama, students typically begin with some sort of warm-up exercise, and then
dramatize a story or poem using a variety of techniques which can include movement,
gesture, improvisation, and role playing. Although the field of creative drama continues
to evolve, Wagner believes that “enacting a story is still its center” (p. 7).

A second alternative to theatrical presentation which is used by school teachers is
“drama in education” or “process drama”. It is an approach which has its roots in the UK
and has attracted the attention of Canadian and Australian educators. Although this
approach has similarities to theater, there are also many differences. One of the principal
exponents of process drama, Cecily O’Neill (1995, p.11), explains:

“Process drama” is similar to theatrical performances in some respects. Both require the complicity of all present to create a “dramatic world”. In both theatrical performance and process drama the participants weave together a series of episodes. A key difference however is the nature of the audience. Conventional theatrical performances generally distinguish the players from the spectators. In process drama, all of the participants are witnesses to their own acts.

The differences between theater and process drama are even more pronounced when other factors are considered. O’Neill (1988) has delineated the following list of process drama features:
- separate scenic units linked in an organic manner
- thematic exploration rather than isolated exploration
- happening and experience not dependent on written script
- concern with participant's change in outlook
- improvisational activity
- outcomes not predetermined but discovered in process
- script generated through action
- leader actively working both within and outside the drama

Table1: Features of process drama (O'Neill, 1988, p.13)

Clearly, both creative drama and process drama are useful approaches for teachers because they support students in responding to lessons with what Wagner (1998, p. 8) calls an “authentic and spontaneous oral language”. She notes that while “for creative drama teachers, engagement and authentic language tend to be the goal,” process drama teachers have a different purpose. Wagner explains that for process drama teachers, “the goal goes beyond that to what has been learned from the experience - about history, human interactions, scientific discoveries, the role of persons in various professions, the texture of the lives of characters in literature - in short, the larger school curriculum”. Thus, process drama may be useful to teachers because it can support them in finding
ways to convert the classroom curriculum from material represented in a book to a more substantial learning experience where students join with the teacher in actively transforming book knowledge to student and teacher understanding.

The teacher can play many key roles or functions in process drama. These include interpreting the student’s reaction, deciding how to proceed, and leading additional drama activities which build on prior work. Through these processes, both teacher and students can engage in what Wagner has called “authentic” learning experiences. Johnson and O’Neill (1984, p.42) provide a wonderful reminder of what a good teacher can do when writing about the pedagogical work of drama practitioner Dorothy Heathcote:

In her teaching and writing [Heathcote] considers herself primarily as a teacher and only secondarily as a teacher of drama, using the powerful tool of drama for her purposes as an educator. Instead of being an onlooker and supporter, the teacher works within the group, and has a positive and leading share in the direction of the group’s activities and a peculiar responsibility for the interactions that are the life of the group. Dorothy Heathcote has always recognized that she has these responsibilities as the most mature member of the group with whom she works. In setting up and sharing learning experiences with children, she operates from within the creative and educative process.

A key phrase above is *sharing learning experiences*. Johnson and O’Neill’s summary of Heathcote’s work reminds me that in the field work that I undertook, I did not want to abrogate the role of the teacher. It is the teacher who must have a leading share, and it is also the teacher who can both teach students and learn from them.

Wagner (1998) concludes her summary of process drama by claiming that it is a medium through which teachers and students can explore the curriculum: “The goal in
DIE [Drama in education, or process drama] is to learn through drama - for example, to explore the world in which a novel is set... to see what other walks of life feel like” (p. 8). Heathcote (in Morgan & Saxton, 1987, p.22) bolsters this claim and writes about engagement by suggesting that first...

... I must attract their attention. If I have their attention, I can gain their involvement. Then I have a chance for their investment and from that their concern. If I have their concern, I have hope for obsession.

I agree with most, but not all, of Wagner's claims. For example, I would argue with her claims regarding “the goal” of process drama. When scholars consider a very rich medium which can be used for teaching and learning, it is difficult to reduce the medium to one “goal”. Surely there are several goals and those goals change all of the time depending on the circumstances and contexts teachers and students create in classrooms. However, I also acknowledge that Wagner's purpose is to draw for her readers a concise picture of drama approaches. Her portrayal is very valuable, and illustrates some dramatic alternatives to theatrical presentation. More extensive descriptions are also available (O’Neill and Lambert, 1982; Heathcote, 1989; O’Neill, 1995), and some doctoral dissertations also offer an extensive historical description of the development of creative and process drama (Kaaland-Wells, 1993; Gabb, 1994; Scheurer, 1996; Edmiston, 1991).

The term I have used to describe my primary collaboration with a veteran English teacher is “process-oriented drama strategies”. I have deliberately chosen “process-
oriented drama” rather than “process drama” because it suggests that I have attempted to use the principles of process drama but may not have had the opportunity to fully implement them because of institutional or classroom constraints. In other words, I am using the term process-oriented drama to suggest the fledgling, experimental nature of the kinds of teaching that this study describes. My use of process-oriented drama also implies that teachers’ must interpret their uses of drama activity according to their instructional context.

Clearly, process-oriented drama offers a lot of opportunity for student-centered teaching that is anchored in constructivist theories explained earlier in this study. Morgan and Saxton (1996, p. 233) offer some insight into the possibilities that can occur when process drama is used to explore issues. They explain that drama provides students with opportunity to...

...challenge the old mores, to defend their viewpoints, even if unpopular, to examine critically their culture and behaviors, to stand alone if necessary,... to challenge authority and to assume and relinquish leadership, to discover how to mediate their own wishes and desires through the collective, and to arrive at that collective vision.

Rogers and O’Neill (1993, p. 73) add that the key goal of some kinds of drama is to allow “for maximum student initiative”. By creating a pedagogy which “can be more inclusive of students’ knowledge and voices,” drama can become a way of offering an alternative to teacher instruction which sees students as passive recipients of information (p. 69). Thus,
drama offers the possibility that students might become more active in constructing their own knowledge as a result of the dramatic experience.

The role of drama in secondary English

Applebee (1993) found that very few English teachers have undertaken the kind of exploration into the humanities teaching that drama offers. Beginning in 1989 he considered a series of studies concerning the content and approaches in the teaching of American literature in American high schools” (p. 12). In one case, Applebee examined seventeen American schools which had been selected on the basis of their local reputation for excellence. Another study surveyed department chairs, librarians and English teachers at 650 schools across the United States and surveyed current practices in teaching literature. Yet another study analyzed the content and teaching suggestions of high school literature anthologies between grades seven and twelve. In all cases, Applebee found a dearth of drama approaches to the teaching of literature. Drama, as an approach, was infrequently used and narrowly conceptualized. For example, drama typically ranked below other teaching approaches in terms of the frequency of use of teaching approaches. Additionally, when teachers did talk about how they could use drama they tended to limit their suggestions to how students might read aloud or dramatize literary selections rather than thinking of a more complex application of drama strategies to their classroom.

Applebee found that, as an approach, teachers rarely used drama and that this is a result of a heavy emphasis on the content of literature as presented in literature anthologies. He (1993, p. 153) notes that literature texts fail to provide “an integrated,
cumulative, and coherent effort to involve students in the ongoing cultural dialogue about
the human condition that literature at its best demands…” Instead, textbooks tended to
emphasize a chronological approach, that articulates an approach in conflict with
interactional dimensions of process drama that focus on students’ literary responses.

Clearly, Applebee’s findings illustrate a number of the difficulties that my
cooperating teacher and I faced. We were challenged to reconceptualize the chronological
approach of the literature texts which we taught. The nature of drama suggests that we
use activities that build on each other, but our teaching experience had shaped our
Teaching repertoire so that we were used to activities that can be employed independently
of each other. Thus, we came to understand that, in spite of the opportunity for teaching
and learning that process-oriented drama activities offer, we realized that the objectives
Posed by Morgan and Saxton (1996) and Rogers and O’Neill (1993) and others were
both ambitious and bold.

Research studies that use process-oriented drama approaches

In the previous section I summarized literature which conceptualizes what
process-oriented approaches to drama are and I summarized some of the challenges that
this approach posed for the collaborating teacher and myself. I will now turn to six
research studies which use process-oriented drama approaches as a method for classroom research.

The first of these studies was undertaken by Edmiston (1991) as a part of his
doctoral work and has also been reported in Wagner (1998). Edmiston was interested in
how he and other teachers structured their approaches to drama in elementary and middle school classes in the Midwestern United States. To accomplish this he made field notes and collected videotape of his teaching and other teachers over a two year period. His analysis included initial descriptions of what he observed on commercially produced films of British dramatist and master teacher Dorothy Heathcote, and his observations from sixty-eight video tapes he collected of his own and other teacher’s classrooms. He then generated five series of analyses; each more detailed than the one before.

After undertaking these analyses, Edmiston found that drama could often be characterized by a cycle of alternating improvised playmaking with reflecting on that playmaking. This cycle is not especially relevant to my study, but an additional finding that Edmiston derived from the cycle is relevant. Edmiston found that “students need to own the drama text they create, and if the teacher becomes too directive, the participants, in addition to losing interest, lose the valuable opportunity to reflect on a drama they own” (Wagner, 1998, p. 79). Edmiston suggests that lessons must be a co-constructed dialogue featuring both students and teacher. Edmiston’s analysis reminds me that, while it is important for the teacher to own the lesson, she should not own it too much. Too much ownership acts as a barrier rather than a facilitator to student’s ownership. This study therefore has implications for my work as the teacher and I engaged in the negotiation of how to control the new drama strategies that we are using.

In 1992, Taylor undertook a study where he used process drama strategies for a four month period in a grade seven English/Social Studies classroom. The four months were a part of a year-long teaching commitment that Taylor had made to a parochial
school which was located in a large American city. Taylor used research logs, audio tapes of 35 classes lasting 40 minutes each, videotapes of five classes, student journals and student interviews to examine what happens when students and their teacher experience drama. Taylor found that when students were hesitant in a drama structure it may be because they feel uncertain of their own relationship to the work. He also noted that a drama structure should have a flexible framework to empower students.

Like Edmiston’s work, Taylor’s story suggests that an important part of teacher knowledge is the judgment regarding how much control of the curriculum is enough, and how much is too much. That line needs to be drawn in a place where the teacher can control the material to be taught in such a way as to not limit the power of the student. These were problems with which the teacher in my study and I struggled.

Taylor (1998) has more recently reported the findings of an action-research case study which he undertook with a teacher he named “Carl.” Carl was a veteran grade five and six teacher working in Melbourne, Australia. Taylor’s purpose was to document both the affects of the drama instruction on the students and Carl. To do this, Taylor visited Carl’s class for six sessions and used process-oriented drama techniques during that time. The teacher kept an action-research log and the researcher collected student work and interviewed the teacher.

Taylor found that the action research approach supported Carl in thinking about drama in a reflective way. One key to Carl’s development as a teacher included an ongoing commitment to reflection through action research. However, it is important to note that many of Carl’s reflections on how drama activities worked with the students
were reinforced by the ongoing dialogue between Carl and Taylor. Again, I have employed reflection through dialogue as a key mechanism for teacher reflection in this study.

Recently, Gabb (1994) undertook a weekly professional development in-service course with 21 teachers at an elementary school in the southeastern United States. The teachers received a continuing studies credit which could be used for maintenance of their teaching credential for participating in the sessions. Gabb's research question was “How would a staff development course in drama and creative oral expression affect the teacher participants, with respect to concerns of curriculum change and concerns with change in personal attitudes towards drama and creative oral expression?” (p. 21). She used a qualitative case study approach and gathered data by taping the eight 75 to 120 minute development sessions, conducting questionnaires, keeping field notes and logs and interviewing each participant for thirty minutes after the course.

Gabb coded her data using a modified grounded analysis with the assistance of a computer software coding program and the ongoing re-tuning of the codes that appeared to emerge (for more on an explanation of such coding schemes, see the analysis section in chapter three). Gabb found that the teachers needed to find the alternatives that she was offering them intelligible and useful if they were to extend their understanding of a particular drama device. She also found that the teachers needed to have a way to connect their new beliefs about how and why a drama device might be a sound way of teaching with their earlier beliefs and understandings. Additionally, the influence of constructivist theory can be seen in Gabb's findings, particularly when she discusses the teacher's need
to connect new beliefs with prior experience.

These are interesting findings since they resonate with some of the conclusions I drew in earlier sections of this chapter when I discussed the need for teachers to take ownership of the material. Gabb’s findings suggest that fitting the newly acquired knowledge and perspectives into the teacher’s already existing ideas of what it means to teach is a way of helping to create this sense of ownership. The implication of Gabb’s work is that those interested in professional development need to consider, not only the new strategy being taught, but also the manner in which teachers perceive that they can plan and implement the strategy in their day-to-day teaching.

Flynn (1991) conducted a two month study where she observed a drama specialist who traveled between visual art, dance, drama and music classrooms located in four different elementary schools. The specialist worked with four elementary teachers in classrooms ranging between grades 1 and 5. Flynn observed the classes, interviewed the specialist, and analyzed lesson plans using qualitative methods.

Flynn found that the structure of the collaboration between the specialist and the classroom teacher affected much of what the specialist could and could not do. For example, the drama specialist always had to begin her lesson plans by stating how the lesson linked to “the adult-determined curriculum needs of the students and teachers, not on ideas generated by the participants…” (p. 5). Likewise, because the drama specialist traveled between classrooms and did not have a classroom to call her own, she was constrained by the amount of time allotted for instruction by the classroom teacher and by the amount of time that could be spent in a particular school. Additionally, because she
was visiting the school, she was not able to control the space in the way that she would want. This has an important relationship to my study since I was also constrained by the amount of time allotted for drama instruction and since the classroom in which I worked was not my own.

Because of some of these limitations the drama specialist used a number of tools to control her classes. She would use whole group involvement, a particular style of giving instructions, or the establishment of a “serious” class atmosphere to support her in her instruction. This relationship that Flynn identifies between how a teacher is controlled by curricular and institutional factors and how the teacher compensates through instruction is central to my research questions and is something that I will further explore in chapter four.

Edwards and Cooper (1996) conducted a longer and larger study in an elementary school. Edwards and Cooper conducted a 21 month collaborative action research project with seven Alberta elementary school teachers who taught in a number of different content areas and whose experience levels ranged from novice to veteran. The purpose of the collaborative effort was to act as a support group of peers for the teachers who were using drama approaches in their classes. The teachers received classroom visits from one of the researchers at least ten times a year and the researchers collected data through classroom videotapes and audio tapes of researcher-teacher discussions.

The researchers used an inductive analysis of transcripts and found that, as time progressed, the teachers moved through five discrete phases. First, anxiety characterized the teachers’ struggles while they initially used drama methods. Second, the teachers
focused their discussions on curriculum planning. Third, after three or four months the teachers perceptions were marked by “a new level of awareness” and a re-examination of previously held assumptions (p. 59). Fourth, especially when the teachers began to move into the second year of the project, they began to regard themselves as experts. Fifth, and finally, after the group disbanded some teachers continued as a talk group for other kinds of support.

The Edwards and Cooper study is interesting to me for a couple of reasons. This study suggests that the support structure offered by the peer collaboration supported the teachers, not only in changing their classroom teaching practices, but also in developing their knowledge of how, when, and why to use particular approaches. Another important finding is that very significant changes in the teachers’ knowledge took place only at the end of the first year and the beginning of the second year of the study. The Edwards and Cooper study offers a powerful conclusion regarding the function of time in peer collaboration. This finding certainly raises questions about what might be accomplished if short term attempts at reform could be lengthened and carried over into a second year. The influence of time on professional development is an important one, and it is something that I will address further in chapters three and five of this study.

Ross (1992) conducted a study with one secondary school English teacher who worked on the outskirts of a medium-sized Western Canadian city. Ross posed the following question: “What is the possibility of using group drama as a response to literature in a secondary English classroom as viewed through the eyes of the collaborating participants?” or in Ross’ case, the teacher, researcher, and students (p.8).
Ross kept field notes and a journal. He audio taped interviews with select students and kept a dialogue journal (a journal where both researcher and teacher write to one another) in collaboration with the teacher. Ross and the teacher undertook joint lesson planning and Ross co-taught 15 class sessions.

Ross found that vulnerability of the teacher and the researcher in using a new method emerged as an initial theme. Over time, more themes such as the “crisis of time” and the status of the teacher-researcher-student relationship emerged. These are significant findings because, up to this point, the assumption has been that peer collaborations are typically useful for accomplishing change and that peer groups operate without tension. Ross’ case study approach was able to capture the strains on the teacher-researcher relationship through the detailed picture that he offers. Ross cautions that peer collaboration can lead to tension between teachers and professional development collaborators. It is not surprising that, if rethinking teaching practices require teachers to change long-held knowledge and beliefs, then there will be a considerable amount of tension between collaborators as a result of the change process.

The researcher as agent of change in the English language arts classroom

Five of the six research studies that I will summarize here used researchers as an agent of change in an English language arts classroom. By agent of change, I mean that the researcher was taking an active role, either alone or in collaboration with teachers, in trying to change teaching practices. This active role might have been realized through coaching or modeling of teaching behaviors and can be distinguished from passive roles.
where a researcher may have merely observed a classroom or collected data through a survey.

Langer and Applebee (1987) conducted a study in which they worked collaboratively with a small cadre of secondary teachers from a range of subject areas. The teachers were hand-selected, partly because of an interest that they expressed toward the use of process-oriented approaches to writing in content areas.

Langer, Applebee and their colleagues observed the teaching of content area teachers several days a week for a period lasting between 5 months and 2 years. The observers collected field notes sometimes using observation schedules, teacher and student interviews, and writing samples. The researchers anticipated that they would see a shift from the teacher-oriented emphasis on product approaches, a shift which in some ways may resemble the “banking” education described by Freire, to a student-oriented emphasis on process approaches, which may represent a dialogue between student and teacher.

Although Langer and Applebee (1987, p. 148) were somewhat successful in introducing more process-oriented approaches to writing in the case study teachers’ classrooms, the degrees of success varied. Although the authors suggest a number of reasons to account for such resistance they noticed that textbooks often limited change:

Virtually without exception, the materials available provided piecemeal and inadequate models of teaching and learning. In working with us, none of the teachers could turn to the materials already available for helpful suggestions or new ideas; they had to create each activity from scratch. Even with the support provided by the project staff, this was a slow and
laborious process requiring more time and energy than most teachers can afford to invest (p.148).

This is a very troubling finding with several implications. In terms of critical pedagogy, Langer and Applebee’s findings suggest that it is not enough for the teacher alone to commit to a dialogue with the student. Since a teacher needs a curriculum to support her teaching, any dialogue fostered between the teacher and the students is likely to be a function of the quality of the curricular materials.

Another implication is the difficulty that limited curricula create for teachers who are otherwise committed to abandoning banking education and replacing it with a dialogic approach. Surely such a dialogic approach requires that a teacher make the material their own. Langer and Applebee explain that, in the case of teachers, instructional approaches became successful when they were discussed in collaborative planning meetings and “were elaborated and reinterpreted while the teachers made them their own” (p. 73). Once the curriculum is accessible to the teacher, the teacher might then be able to make the curriculum accessible to the student. In the case of students, Langer and Applebee found that “effective instructional tasks must allow room for students to have something of their own to say in their writing” (p. 141).

Although Langer and Applebee’s findings stress the need for teacher and student ownership, their findings also suggest that it is unlikely that teachers will take ownership of the material if they have to create it from scratch. This is probably because a teacher can lose time earmarked for curriculum preparation with a desperate hunt for a library book or waiting in line at a photocopier. When a lot of time is lost hunting for worthwhile
materials, it is hard for a teacher to devote even more time to supporting student ownership of the material. It can be concluded that, regardless of the teacher's knowledge of and commitment to a critical pedagogy, a teacher's knowledge of how to teach is as much influenced by the books that tell them what to teach.

Issues of "owning the curriculum" and creating curricular materials have clear implications for both curriculum policy makers and for this research study. One implication is that teachers need the support of quality curricular materials. The second implication, which is strongly linked to the first, is that instruction cannot be changed merely by changing the curriculum. Curricular designers must consider the needs of the discipline, and the teachers, and the students. Like Langer and Applebee, the work of Elbaz (1983) also has important implications for those who work in the context of English language arts classrooms. Elbaz (1983) has attempted to describe the "complex, practically-oriented set of understandings" which teachers use to "shape and direct the work of teaching" (p. 3). Elbaz chose to describe this knowledge because she thought that curriculum developers "too frequently [emphasized]... diagnosing teacher failings...". The author was interested "in seeing and understanding the situation from the teachers’ own perspective" (p. 4).

Elbaz chose one Canadian teacher of English and Reading as the subject of her research. She then gathered data through two observations of a class taught by the teacher and five interviews with the teacher which each lasted two hours. Elbaz analyzed her data by transcribing interviews and identifying issues which emerged from the data that were related to teacher knowledge. Elbaz explains that issues such as first hand experiences,
interests, needs, strengths, repertoire, classroom management skills, and a number of other factors combine to create "practical knowledge" (p. 5).

Elbaz presents three findings which are of interest to my study. First, she explains that practical knowledge is something that can be "held actively" and moved "from intellectual space out into the classroom to affect practice" (p. 101). This sounds very much like the transformation of content knowledge to pedagogical knowledge that Shulman describes. A second finding made by Elbaz "is that it is possible for teachers to become aware of and articulate their own practical knowledge..." (p. 170). Elbaz believes that this does not necessarily have to occur as part of a research study. The awareness of practical knowledge could be promoted by talking to "another teacher" or writing in "a notebook". In either case, "a measure of formality is required because the process is one of giving form to one's knowledge" (p. 170). In my research, I document both the collaborating teacher's and my own development of planning, teaching and reflecting-on-teaching using a peer teaching approach, a strategy similar to Elbaz's suggestion that teachers talk to other teachers to articulate their practical knowledge.

Finally, a third important finding of Elbaz is related to her understanding of the usefulness of collaborative research. Elbaz explains that initially, she "formulated a series of high-sounding statements about research as a shared endeavor" between teacher and researcher. After conducting the research, she confesses that she "found that it was difficult for two people to come together, to talk, to explore ideas, much less analyze data..." (p. 168). Elbaz concludes that it is difficult to create collaborative research because the researcher and the teacher have different roles to play.
Like Elbaz, Swanson-Owens (1986) also undertook collaborative research with teachers. Swanson-Owens examined how two secondary school English teachers made sense of a reform initiative. Her primary concern was “to develop an insider’s perspective as to what strategies teachers employ in their efforts to translate theory into occasions for learning” (p. 69). Swanson-Owens drew on constructivist theories of language comprehension to look at planning in much the same way Shulman does. Like Shulman whose pedagogical reasoning includes consideration of how to convert text, content, and pedagogical knowledge into teachable lessons, Swanson-Owens concentrated on the “practical knowledge used by the teacher in his or her plans for and assessments of the class” (p. 75).

Using writing-to-learn strategies, Swanson-Owens met, co-planned lessons, and interviewed two teachers over a twenty week period. Each meeting lasted forty minutes. Additionally, Swanson-Owens made eighteen weekly visits to the class of each teacher. During this time she collected numerous artifacts including many student writing samples. She also audio taped and transcribed interviews and class sessions which became primary data.

Swanson-Owens then analyzed her data using modifications of analytic categories developed by Elbaz. She correlated the curriculum-related themes which emerged from her data in the initial round of analysis with each of the other themes. In this way, she was able to consider how elements such as knowledge, materials or activities, the teacher, and the student affected each other. She then segmented the transcripts to look for evidence that would support the correlations she had made.
Two significant findings emerged from Swanson-Owens’ study. The first finding was that a “locus of attention”, or a “primary concern... mediated many, if not most, of [the teachers’] ... analyses of curricular issues and instructional methods”. For example, one teacher held the belief that the meaning of a literary work resides in the text, and the other teacher saw writing as a way to record information for later use. Swanson-Owens concluded that these beliefs affected the teachers’ planning, teaching, and reflection on teaching.

More interesting is Swanson-Owens’ discussion of how teachers interpret suggestions for change. When she asked the two teachers to modify their traditional way of teaching, including how writing might be used in certain lessons, the teachers did not teach in the way that she had expected. The writing-to-learn strategies which were the subject of her research were sometimes ignored and often reinvented in ways quite different from what was agreed upon. She concluded that the locus of control was strongly related to what she called a “teacher’s resistance” to process-oriented writing approaches. Swanson-Owens explains that often, teacher resistance is “a perspective that views teachers’ responses negatively, a perspective that views these responses as reactions against, rather than as commitments to, proposed changes” (p. 72). Swanson-Owens attempts to change this connotation by using the phrase “natural sources of resistance.” She believes this suggests that teachers’ responses “identify discrepancies that are appropriate given the presence of particular mismatches” between the teacher’s (insider) understanding and an outsider’s understanding of how a lesson can be taught.
The significance of these findings for me and others interested in professional development is that Swanson-Owens highlights the interaction which occurs between a reform initiative and the teacher's knowledge system. For the reform initiative to be accomplished, it must be recast into a teachable lesson that rely on the teacher to make sense of it through her own system of meaning. This means that those who support teachers in changing their practices as a form of professional development need to be especially aware of what kinds of understandings teachers have, how this will have an impact on their teaching, and how the impact on teaching will affect the reform initiative.

Smagorinsky (1996) made similar findings in his recently published study of three graduate students in the Great Plains region of the USA who were collecting data for their masters theses. The students were interested in forming a discussion group with the author regarding the transfer of knowledge from methods courses which they had recently completed to its actual implementation in classroom use. Although Smagorinsky's study is different from other studies in this section in that he did not actually conduct his study inside a classroom, he still affected classroom change through his discussions with teachers.

Smagorinsky's group of graduate students met weekly for a university semester, and the students were responsible for leading talks on books that might be used in their teaching. Smagorinsky used journals, oral inquiry and the teacher's classroom research to find that the meetings filled an important therapeutic need for the teachers. He also found that the group stretched his traditional role as a faculty member and assisted him in being a collaborator with his students. Although Smagorinsky does not identify this, I suspect
that one of the principle reasons he feels like a collaborator is because of the dialogic and social nature of the reflections. Smagorinsky explains how the weekly meetings took place in people’s homes, at the library, at a local Mexican restaurant and often lasted longer than the allotted two and a half hours. During these conversations, the participants talked both about what they had done and about what they planned to do. This reinforces for me the social nature of dialogue as a form of reflection and the ability for teachers to develop their knowledge using reflective processes.

Recently, English educator George Hillocks (1995) postulated that something he called “frame” experiments might be a way of undertaking more reflective teaching. Although Hillocks borrows a case from many years ago to illustrate what he means, the way he conceptualizes frame experiments is still relevant to current research. Hillocks (1995, p. 33) recounts how a friend of his was teaching a class of former remedial students who had recently been moved to a “regular” English class. He explains that his friend, Jim McCampbell, was challenged by the students’ reluctance to write more than a few lines for an assignment:

> Normally, our instructional emphasis was on the development of content as students wrote, shared drafts, provided feedback in small groups, and revised. Because these students wrote so little, McCampbell decided to jettison the usual emphasis and adopt one that concentrated on encouraging students to write more.

Hillocks goes on to describe how, rather than concentrating on applying process writing approaches to the few lines the students had written, his friend continually reinforced the
students' initial writings. Hillocks explains that by using this process, the students were soon writing ten and fifteen times as much as they had written before.

Hillocks describes how this frame experiment had six elements which were essential to reflective teaching: a) an analysis of where the student stands in relation to the course goals, b) a consideration of the possibilities available for the student, c) the devising and d) the implementation of strategies to undertake change, e) the assessment of the reform, and f) the entrenchment of the change if it was successful or the rethinking of the change if it was not successful. In analyzing the frame experiment in this way, Hillocks offers a useful and concise summary for thinking about how reflection can be infused with action research to accomplish reform in a relatively short period of time.

William Louden (1991) recently undertook doctoral studies in Toronto, Ontario where he conducted a collaborative action research study which was similar to Ross’ described above. Louden sought to provide a perspective on teacher knowledge by examining a teacher’s biographical context, her planning and her teaching. Between February, 1988 and February, 1989 he worked with Johanna who taught art, music and drama in a small Toronto public school.

Louden conducted 65 visits to the school. During the autumn of 1988 he was especially active, conducting 44 visits as a result of almost daily visits to Johanna’s classroom. Louden acted as both a participant and an observer, collecting data by making extensive field notes at the end of the day or by audio taping selected classes. His data recorded both his planning and teaching, the teacher’s planning and teaching, and the teacher’s and researcher’s co-planning and co-teaching.
Louden offers a rich description of Johanna’s teaching. Based on this description he concludes that educational reform is best approached by acknowledging that:

Teachers can and do want to change, but the possibilities for change are shaped by their horizons of understanding and by the traditions of teaching within which they work.... [E]ducational reform is best approached by exploring change from the teachers’ perspective” (p. xii).

Although this acts as an endorsement for the kind of case study of teacher change that I have undertaken, there are several implications for Louden’s claim.

One implication is that it is critical for those interested in professional development to explore changing teachers’ practice by examining teacher’s “repertoires”. Although the repertoires are often “safe and familiar practices”, Louden explains that it is this very familiarity which can allow a teacher to “overcome the most common problems” (Louden, 1991, p. xiii).

A second implication of Louden’s claim that the teacher’s perspective must be considered are the complications that are raised for those interested in professional development. Louden explains that “Johanna’s practice is deeply connected to her biography and her hopes and dreams for teaching” (Louden, 1991, p. xiii). The difficulty with this finding is that it becomes incumbent on reform advocates to know each teacher’s biography and aspirations. The complexity of this task alone, which then must be multiplied by all of the other concerns of reformers, shows how difficult a task professional development can be. Louden underlines the slow pace at which reform must proceed if there are to be fundamental changes in teacher practices by explaining that he
has learned the lesson that “serious educational change at Johanna’s classroom level proceeded slowly, by the gradual fusion of her horizons, rather than by sudden leaps of insight” (p. 196).

Louden’s study is very much an argument for the use of reflection as a tool to work toward the change of teacher practices. Both the deliberative nature and the depth of reflection capture the sources of the profound changes which occur in teachers when they make substantial changes in their practice. Louden explains that “proposals for change in teachers’ practice [are no less than] proposals to change teachers’ lives and should be approached with care and humility, not arrogance and certainty” (p. 197). Certainly such profound changes are well-served through sober reflection.

In conclusion, while Louden’s rich description of Johanna’s teaching is helpful for those implementing change, it also shows how complicated change at the classroom level can be. By establishing the close connection between biography, planning, and teaching, Louden also establishes the difficulty that would-be reformers can have in initiating change. Reformers need to consider both the initiative they want to institute, how teachers as a group are likely to respond to that initiative, and how factors in each individual teacher might interact with other factors. With such a complicated equation, Louden’s study is a good argument for more case study research so that we can develop many pictures of how the factors above interact in the lives of classroom teachers.
Conclusion

In this chapter, I have considered literature related to teacher change as it relates to professional development. I explained that teacher change literature is expansive, ranging from psychological theories related to teacher development to lengthy lists of factors that make for effective and lasting changes. Although all of this literature may in some ways be useful to those interested in professional development, the literature which undergirds collaboration and professional development was most useful to me. I began this chapter by considering how critical pedagogy contributed to the kind of collaborative professional development that I undertook. I explained that critical theory offered a rationale to pursue why teachers might consider changing their practices. I explained that, according to critical theory, the students come to prefer traditional forms of instruction. The task for teachers who seek alternatives to traditional approaches is to change classroom discourse so that learners can be active participants in the lessons. I also explained that the theory of pedagogical reasoning offered insight into the complex forms of knowledge that teachers need to plan and teacher their lessons. Then, I turned to specific strategies such as peer coaching or reflection on teaching and discussed what this research contributed to my study. I explained how these approaches might offer those interested in professional development a way to support teachers in changing their teaching practices.

In the second half of this chapter I narrowed my focus by considering what research had been conducted on process-oriented drama approaches and I explained why the collaborating teacher and I were eager to use the approach as a way to explore changing our teaching practices. Finally, I concluded the chapter by looking at a number
of cases where researchers had acted as agents of change in English language arts classrooms.

It is clear from this review that if reformers are to be successful, they must consider how teachers can be involved and engaged with new approaches. Those attempting reform must be supported with quality materials and ongoing support over an extended time period. I will further discuss these issues in chapters four and five. In chapter three I will describe how I formulated a case study action-research approach which supported my research into the developing understandings of a teacher and I as we undertook a set of teaching strategies which were new to us.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Overview

The purpose of this study is to understand what occurred when a teacher and a teacher-researcher used a teaching technique that was new to them in a grade twelve English classroom in order to understand some of the complexity of collaborative professional development in classroom contexts. Three questions guided this study. First, how did collaborative lesson planning proceed and what factors shaped the planning sessions? Second, how were lessons implemented, what factors influenced the lesson implementation, and "what worked" or "did not work" according to the perceptions of the teacher and the teacher-researcher? Third, what issues were discussed during debriefing sessions and how did the teacher and the teacher-researcher make sense of the lesson? These questions may be particularly significant to other researchers and teachers who are in the process of exploring professional development through the implementation of "new" teaching strategies.

To answer these questions, I employed a qualitative case study approach, that included ten weeks of participant-observation and data collection. According to Patton
(1990, p. 388), a case study seeks to assemble raw data related to a case, construct a condensed case record through organizing, classifying, and editing, and represent the findings through a descriptive narrative. For the most part, my research design included these strategies.

In this chapter I will elaborate on each component of this case study. First, I will explain my research design and my efforts to establish the trustworthiness of the results. Second, I will discuss the selection of my research site and the participants in the study. Third, I will explain the procedures that the teacher and I used when we planned, taught and debriefed by reflecting on the teaching. Finally, I will conclude this chapter by explaining the techniques I used to analyze the data, to look for emergent trends, and to consider alternative explanations to the trends that began to emerge. The results of my data analysis will be reported in chapter four.

Research design and schedule for research

My case study employed a "participant-observer" approach to action research (Patton, 1990). Both the cooperating teacher and I adopted Glesne and Peshkin's (1992) view that we did not have to act as either participants or observers. Instead, we could act as both observers and as participants, moving back and forth on a continuum of possibilities where we might be more participant than observer at some times, and be more observer than participant at other times. In some cases the cooperating teacher and I were both participant and observer at the same time. Typically, we found that when we adopted the role of participant we were teaching, and when we adopted the role of
observer we were observing the teaching with the purpose of conducting subsequent
debriefing and planning in a collaborative fashion. Thus, I use the labels “participant-
teacher” and “observer-reflector” to augment Glesne and Peshkin’s (1992) view of the
participant-observer continuum. A more detailed description of how we planned, taught,
and reflected will be offered in later sections of this chapter.

I employed the participant-observer method described above by using action
research as my methodology. By action research, I mean a repetitive cycle of planning,
action, observation, and reflection (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988). Sprinthall, Reiman,
and Thies-Sprinthall (1996, p. 694) explain that educators frame action research as...

... inquiry done by practitioners with the help of a consultant.... They
attribute four characteristics to action research: (1) it is collaborative, (2) it
addresses practical classroom problems, (3) it bolsters professional
development, and (4) it requires a specialized structure to ensure both time
and support for the research initiative.

Thus, the action research methodology is congruent with my theoretical frame
because it emphasizes collaboration, practical classroom problems, and
professional development. I will provide more detail regarding the cycles of
planning, teaching, observing and reflecting in later portions of this chapter. The
action research cycle is depicted in figure 1:
Figure 1:  
The Cycles of Action Research  
Victoria, Australia: Deakin University.

Table 2 presents the timetable in the planning, data collection, analysis and writing of my study over an 18 month period beginning in the summer of 1997. By completing an initial literature review during the Summer of 1997 I was able to focus my data collection on issues that I had identified as being current in the field as well as issues
of significance to a classroom teacher. The school’s “Project Tri” restructures the use of class time so that the school year is organized into three 60 day semesters. Each school day is divided into three 2 hour blocks. Under this plan, the class of twelfth graders I observed met for 2 hours a day for 12 weeks. This meant that I was able to complete the bulk of my data collection of one full course in three months, allowing me the opportunity to take a large amount of time to analyze my data and report it.

| June - Aug., 1997 | - Committee approval of proposal - Human subjects review |
| July 15th - Aug. 15th, 1997 | - Undertook initial literature review |
| Aug. 15th - Dec. 15th, 1997 | - Interviewed teacher |
| | - Collected artifacts from teacher and students |
| | - Coded data collected from working with teacher. |
| Aug. 25th - Nov. 15th, 1997 | - Teacher and I used different process-oriented drama approaches to twelfth grade class of English students. Visited and taught at school, usually on a daily basis. |
| | - Preliminary analysis of collected data |
| Jan. 2nd - Apr. 30th, 1998 | - Analysis of coded data. |
| | - Defense of findings; final changes to dissertation. |

Table 2: Case study design
Because I was able to observe the entire “life cycle” of a class, and because I had a protracted amount of time to analyze and report my findings, I was able to create more trustworthy results.

Trustworthiness

For the qualitative researcher, the issues related to trustworthiness are different than for the quantitative researcher. Glesne and Peshkin (1992, p. 146) use the following narrative as a way of defining what qualitative researchers mean by trustworthiness:

In his article on James Agee, author of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, Hersey cites reviews of Agee’s book, concluding with a quotation for Mrs. Burroughs, a woman from one of the tenant families portrayed in the book: “And I took it home and I read it plumb through. And when I read it plumb through I give it back to her and I said, Well everything in there’s true. What they wrote in there was true”.

When Mrs. Burroughs explains that the things she read in the book were true, she probably does not intend a positivistic notion of truth but that what she read matched her subjective understanding of her experiences.

Although the kind of qualitative research I am undertaking assumes a different meaning to “trustworthiness” than a positivist might, I nevertheless have a number of tools available for undertaking and reporting research that trustworthy. I have already discussed the first of these tools in my discussion of Mrs. Burroughs. By describing my own subjectivity, I can also recognize it. By recognizing my subjectivity, my assertions can be considered in the light of that subjectivity.
For this case study, I spent over one hundred hours in one class teaching and observing, over thirty hours co-planning classes with the collaborating teacher, and over twenty hours reflecting with the collaborating teacher on the classes that we taught. The time I spent building relationships at the school was founded on a three year professional relationship that I had with the collaborating teacher. According to Glesne and Peshkin (1992), the amount of time spent in the field should work to strengthen the trustworthiness of my study's findings. Indeed, the teacher with whom I collaborated spent much more time planning this course than we would usually invest in planning most courses.

The use of triangulation or multiple data sources can assist in developing trustworthy results (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992 and Bramwell, 1996). In this case study I videotaped all of the class meetings and transcribed selected excerpts. I also audio taped both the weekly planning sessions and the debriefing sessions between the collaborating teacher and myself which took place after each class. In addition, I studied printed material that was available at the school such as the textbook and the handbooks for both the teachers and the students. Finally, I copied all of the assignments and the students' responses to the assignments. With such a large amount of data, I was able to triangulate my findings both within each type of data and between different types of data. Although the large amount of data was useful for triangulation it posed a problem because there was too much data to transcribe and analyze. I therefore had to select certain weeks for more careful analyses. I will describe this process in the “curriculum and classroom as research sites” section of this chapter.
Although triangulation of data contributes to the trustworthiness of a study, scholars have criticized the word as implying “certainty and commitment to a known position or truth” (Taylor, 1996, p. 43). Such implications can constrain “the multiplicity and complexity of human experience” with which qualitative researchers are often interested. Instead, scholars have offered the metaphor of a crystal to describe ways of looking at trustworthiness:

Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colors, patterns, arrays, casting off in different directions. What we see depends on our angle of repose. Not triangulation, crystallization. In post-modernist mixed-genre texts, we have moved from plane geography to light theory, where light can be both waves and particles (Richardson. 1994, p. 522).

In my case study, I found the crystal metaphor very helpful because I was often attempting to describe the positions that the collaborating teacher or I took in relation to the drama strategies that we used to teacher English. Therefore, the crystal metaphor was valuable because I was able to avoid the trap of claiming that one person’s knowledge was superior to the others, and I could instead describe the differences in knowledge as a function of the different positions that the collaborating teacher and I held. I have indicated earlier that my theoretical frame rests on a constructivist and collaborative approach. The crystal metaphor was helpful to me because it reminded me that while I might construe the work that I undertook for this study in one way, my collaborating teacher might construe things in a very different way. In other words, the crystal metaphor offers participants the opportunity to view the same event and interpret different things.
One of the benefits of empirical research is that it is often \textit{generalizable} to other circumstances. This claim cannot be made about the type of qualitative research which I have undertaken. My findings consider only the beginning developing understandings of a veteran teacher and myself when we undertook a particular teaching strategy in a particular instructional context. Therefore, although the findings are not generalizable to a wider population, my case study approach offers a rich depiction of what occurs when reforms are implemented in a classroom context. Indeed, one of the strengths of case studies is that they describe not only the particular case being investigated, but also add to an understanding of similar cases (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992). Thus, the strength of my study lies not in its \textit{generalizability}, but in its contribution to understanding similar cases that may prove useful in developing a general theory of teacher change.

\textbf{Site selection and description}

In the following sections I will describe the school, the teacher, myself and the class who were all a part of my research study. My study was undertaken at Midwest High School (names of the school, teacher and students are pseudonyms to protect the identity of the participants, as outlined in the Human Subject Review protocol). Midwest High School has a student enrollment of over 1,400 and a teaching staff of eighty, including ten English teachers. The school is one of fourteen high schools in the city’s public school system and seeks to offer a comprehensive program of studies to the students who attend. The English department offers only four English courses - grade
nine English, grade ten English, grade eleven English and grade twelve English - and each course includes a “college bound” or “challenge” track and a “regular” track.

Although Midwest High School is located outside the expressway that loops the city, the teachers and students called it an “inner city” school. They seemed to use this term to refer to their school because it included students from sections of the city that have experienced problems typical of urban centers. Despite their “inner city” label, the section of the “city” in which Midwest High School is located shares boundaries with many rural townships so that the distances between some areas which the school serves can often be increased by the interruption of a corn field. Because of Midwest High School’s location, students are sometimes bussed up to 5 miles.

To limit the size of the school system’s school bus fleet, the district begins bussing the high school students at 6:30 am so that they can arrive at the school in time for their first class which begins at 7:30 am. In the afternoon the secondary students are picked up last at 2:30 p.m. so that, if they go home, they arrive by 3:30 p.m. Because of this bussing policy, it was common for students to come to class quite tired as they may have been up late the night before working at part-time jobs.

Generally, the atmosphere in and around the school is peaceful. The building is monitored by over fifteen closed circuit cameras, and there are a limited number of entrances which are usually locked throughout the school day. During lunch or arrival and dismissal times, teachers observe the building’s entrances to monitor the student’s comings and goings and use two-way radios to remain in contact with one another. The school does not have a metal detector to screen students, but it does have a city police
officer assigned to the building. Typically the police officer is engaged in drug prevention activities and building relationships with students. In spite of these precautions, occasionally violent incidents did occur at the school.

I gathered data about the school from statistics and interviews. According to statistics provided by the school’s enrollment office, eighty-five percent of the students at the school are African American, ten percent of the students at the school are of South East Asian descent, and the remaining students are of European descent who are a part of a larger Appalachian community near the school. The informal interviews I conducted used a convenience sample of seventy percent of the school’s English teachers. I conducted the interviews by “hanging out” in the English department’s staff lounge during two or three afternoons. Of the teachers with whom I conducted interviews it was typical that teachers would have at least fifteen years of service, were of European descent, and lived more than 5 miles away from the school. The teachers characterized the students as coming from neighborhoods that were largely “working class” or “lower working class”. The teachers thought highly of their school and believed that it was in the “middle of the pack,” in terms of both student achievement and quality of teaching experience, when compared with the city’s other schools.

The staff, the school, and the district are involved in a large number of professional development and reform activities. During the past five years, they have been active participants in the Coalition of Essential Schools (Sizer, 1992). The Coalition is a network of teachers in a few hundred schools who are in the process of reconceptualizing their instruction. Rather than proposing a particular model of reform,
the Coalition is based on nine common principles which can be adapted to a particular school's context. These principles include a focus “on helping adolescents use their minds,” setting simple and universal goals which can be personalized to each student, emphasizing that the student is a worker, issuing a diploma based on a student’s exhibition of her or his work, creating a school with an attitude which expresses high expectations of student work, building a staff which has a sense of commitment to the students and the school, and budgeting issues which would support reduced student loads per teacher and “substantial time for collective planning by teachers” (Wasley, Hampel, and Clark, 1997, pp. 217-219). The Coalition also explains that change can be accomplished by undertaking a number of activities, including a process of “Planning/Acting/Reflecting” (Maeroff, 1993, p. 24). The cooperating teacher with whom I worked was a key member of the Coalition’s team at the school and articulated an interest in the kinds of reforms discussed above.

In addition to the reform-oriented approaches undertaken by the school’s staff, Midwest High School also operates as a Professional Development Site (PDS) in collaboration with a College of Education which is part of a nearby research university. The net effect of the large number of reform initiatives at the school would seem to place Midwest High School at the forefront of educational reform in its district. Yet, in spite of these initiatives, a number of elements necessary for reform were noticeably absent. For example, although the teachers told me that almost all of the students in most of their classes were not college bound and that they “just wanted the kids to keep reading books”, they delivered their curriculum from an anthology which seemed more
appropriate for college bound students. Indeed, in spite of the project which focused on developing a curriculum for block scheduling, it seemed like the curriculum had not changed very much at all. It was the seemingly inherited traditions of the way the English program operated in the school that my cooperating teacher and I would come to negotiate in very different ways.

Selection and description of a veteran teacher

I chose to make Midwest High School the site of my study because of the large number of reforms with which they were involved, and I identified a teacher who would collaborate with me because of his involvement in these reforms. In the Spring of 1997 I made daily trips to the school for a week-long period. During this time I met with and observed the teaching of five of the school’s ten English teachers. I found that a number of the school’s novice and veteran teachers were, at that time, struggling with classroom management problems. I thought that these issues would complicate my study. Therefore, I looked for a reform-oriented teacher with reasonable classroom control. When I observed the teaching of a former colleague of mine and he described the extensive reform efforts with which he was directly involved, I made my selection.

I first met David Kleinman four years ago at The Ohio State University (OSU) when he taught a general pedagogy course to undergraduate students in the College of Education. OSU had worked out an arrangement with Dave’s school district to obtain the services of veteran teachers for teaching preservice teachers. I had just arrived in the USA from Canada and was offered an assistantship position teaching in the same program with
Dave. In the years that I have known Dave he has also been a part-time doctoral student at OSU and worked as a "coach" of other teachers in a professional development program. The program, known as Peer Assistance and Review (PAR), is housed in the school district and places specially trained consulting teachers in the classrooms of beginning teachers and teachers who are in need of further professional development. As an accomplished PAR coach, Dave undertook special training so that he could assist other teachers who were encountering difficulties with their teaching. Dave also traveled to national conferences sponsored by the Coalition of Essential Schools and worked on building a team of teachers who attempted to implement the Coalition Principles at Midwest High School. Because of his involvement with these initiatives, I believed that Dave would bring a sophisticated understanding of professional development issues to the understanding. I thought that we would have a shared understanding and language. In short, I saw Dave as a dedicated professional who had been a leader in his school’s reform efforts and a person whom I had come to know, not only professionally, but also personally.

Although Dave worked closely with his fellow staff members in some ways, in other ways he was removed from them. For example, for many years Dave was released from his teaching duties so that he could work half-time as a clinical educator at a nearby large university. This sort of interrelationship between universities and school districts is to develop a close working relationship that school districts and universities often try to develop. For instance, his release time scheduled him to be at the university in the afternoon, and it was impossible for him to leave the university and return the 20 miles to
the school in time for the staff meeting. Dave explained that this sometimes made him feel removed from his colleagues. One afternoon when Dave was preparing for his first staff meeting of the year, I asked what the atmosphere would be like. Dave explained that he did not know, because he had not attended a staff meeting in several years. Some of the things that Dave did to place him at the forefront of collaborative professional development may have inadvertently isolated him from other forms of collaboration with his colleagues.

In addition to undertaking a number of professional obligations Dave also juggled a number of personal ones. He is married to a teacher and has three sons. In the autumn when my study began, Dave’s eldest son received a sports scholarship and left home to begin studies at a small private college about 500 miles away. Dave is very committed to providing his sons with a quality education and he and his wife occasionally traveled on weekends to visit with their son. Both Dave and his wife also work as tennis coaches in a nearby upper and upper middle class suburb in order to earn extra money for their sons’ education.

Dave had always had an interest in drama and occasionally attended plays. He was even more interested in storytelling and once visited the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesboro, Tennessee. Dave felt that drama and storytelling were similar in that they were opportunities for students to explore oral language which represented an exciting alternative from the curriculum’s emphasis on print text. Before I began my study, Dave told me that he used, and I saw him use, drama and storytelling in his classes. On these occasions, he would ask students to work in small groups so that they could prepare
scenes from a play. These scenes were then performed for the class and were evaluated on the basis of the student’s performance skills, their participation in the preparation, their presentation of the scene, and their completion of additional homework-related tasks. In short, although Dave did understand the value of the kinds of active participation drama might foster, his pedagogy did not rely on process-oriented drama.

Although Dave expressed to me that he had a limited understanding of ways that he could use drama with his students, he was eager to know more. Although Dave expressed to me that he had a limited understanding of ways that he could use drama with his students, he was eager to know more. Dave thought that, by working with me, he might develop a number of strategies that could augment his current teaching repertoire. Dave sometimes described what he and I were doing as “showing the old dog new tricks.” I was surprised that he used this description since I had attempted to describe the drama strategies to Dave as something more than tricks. I had explained to Dave that the emphasis on process orientations might affect the way we thought about the curriculum. When I talked with Dave about this, he focused on how drama might make some of the literary selections which he perceived as dull more exciting. Dave thought this excitement might result in the students being more likely to read the literary selections and attend to classroom instruction. Dave never described my ideas as “too theoretical” but it was clear that his interest lay in using drama as one more strategy to augment his established repertoire. Thus, while Dave and I did not hold the same philosophical view of drama, we both shared a belief in its usefulness for classroom teachers.

While Dave believed that he would acquire some drama strategies that would
augment his instruction, he recognized that my purpose was to implement drama strategies in a classroom context. I also wondered if there would be a relationship between the activities and Dave’s and my personal philosophies regarding teaching. Again, although Dave and I did not necessarily have the same purposes in mind, it did seem as if our interests coincided. Because of what appeared to be a good match, we agreed that we would undertake the study.

In the very early stages I wanted to know more about Dave’s philosophy toward teaching. This is something that I will discuss in much more detail in chapter four, but for the purposes of this chapter I will note that Dave told me he was interested in having his students read both the literary selections in the text and in becoming life-long readers of literature. To accomplish this, Dave saw one of the main purposes of his class as “bringing the students to the literature” through classroom activities that he conducted. He thought that storytelling was an activity that could be used to support literature and he believed that drama might be used to the same end. Thus, Dave’s interest in drama was largely a way of organizing classroom activities to motivate potentially uninterested students. Dave also felt that products, such as stories or scenes, could be generated from these activities and that these products could be used for evaluating students.

Unlike Dave, my philosophy was that literature might be used to explore social issues with students. For example, when Dave approached *Macbeth* he wondered how we would get the students to read the play. I, however, wondered how we could explore issues of loyalty with students. Because of my teaching philosophy, I saw drama as a tool which allowed me to structure encounters to explore the issues which were posed by the
literary selections. In short, I saw Dave’s view as a largely motivational orientation and
my view as one that fostered links between instruction and a larger literary world,
especially in terms of my inclination toward process-oriented drama.

Although Dave’s orientation toward drama did cause me some concern, I decided
to go ahead and undertake the study with Dave for a couple of reasons. First, he was
interested in the ongoing consideration and analysis of his practice. Second, Dave was
frequently at the forefront of state and national reform efforts undertaken by his school.
Thus, Dave offered me an opportunity to conduct a classroom study nested within a
context of large-scale reform initiatives. If I was to learn about a teacher’s developing
understandings in using something that was new to them, Dave seemed like an ideal
choice. He had expertise in reform-oriented initiatives, but limited experience in the
process-oriented drama that I wanted to investigate.

In the year before I began my study I visited some of Dave’s classes and the
classes of other English teachers so that I could better understand the context in which we
would work. Originally, Dave and I thought that I could work with his grade nine class.
The grade nine course was one that he had taught for a number of years and Dave felt that
he had the flexibility to integrate some new teaching strategies into his teaching of the
course. In the autumn of 1997, as I was ready to begin my observation and co-teaching
with Dave, I called him three days before classes started to make some final
arrangements. Dave was concerned. Because of the commitments of our work schedules,
Dave and I had agreed that we would work together each afternoon during the school’s
third period. Dave had just received word that instead of a grade nine class, he would be
teaching what he called a “terminal” grade twelve English class during this period. By terminal, Dave meant students that were unlikely to ever take another English class after this one. This meant that Dave was under a lot of pressure to keep the students interested, specifically in this particular literature class, and generally in English in the hope that they would develop some interest in books and continue reading after graduation. Dave had been given only three days of preparation time, most of which he would need to spend on the road delivering his son to college.

After a lengthy conversation, Dave and I decided that I would still work with him. Although Dave felt less competent to teach new reading and writing assignments, he felt I might be of some help since I had taught some of the literary pieces in the text more recently than he had. Furthermore, since he was in the process of designing, what was for him, a new course, he felt that there would still be opportunities for us to try some of the process-oriented drama strategies that we had discussed.

**Researcher as subject of research**

I began my teaching career as an English teacher in a medium-sized junior and senior high school in Labrador City, Canada. Labrador City is located in Labrador which is a large, but extremely isolated and sparsely populated region of northeastern Canada. The inhabitants of this region have a very homogeneous ethnicity and, because of its isolation, very few individuals from the “outside” move “in” to Labrador. Because the school in which I worked at that time was ethnically homogeneous, my colleagues and I tended to not think of the students’ ethnicity. Instead, we tended to think of the students
as belonging to a “kid culture” rather than to a particular ethnic culture. By “kid culture”, I mean that the students I worked with had largely the same way of conducting themselves and viewing the world. If I could use techniques to help me break into that kid culture, I would be more likely to engage them in the study of English literature and language.

Therefore, I devoted a lot of my time into trying to know each of my students so that I could choose relevant examples to illustrate different elements of literature that we talked about in class. I encouraged them to talk about themselves, thinking that if I could get to know their stories, or “kid culture”, I could then interest them in the stories of others which were represented in literature. My theory was that, after learning both their own stories through their writing and oral language and the stories of others through reading literature, they could better understand themselves and the world in which they lived. At the beginning of this study I explained that my theoretical foundation was that professional development should be collaborative and constructivist. Perhaps this was the same approach that I attempted to take with my students when I was working full-time as a school teacher.

During my time teaching in Labrador I also became active in extracurricular drama activities. After working with children and teachers in script creation and professional development activities related to drama performances, I began to question how drama could be used as a curricular activity rather than as an extracurricular activity. This led me to leave my teaching position and return to full-time studies as a doctoral student. In my university studies I examined the theory of how process-oriented drama
activities could be used in different contexts, but I felt that I did not have time to hone my skills in classroom contexts. Working with Dave would give me an opportunity to begin to sharpen these skills without having the need to concentrate on all of the professional responsibilities of being the teacher. Since I was freed of the responsibility of being the teacher, it was easy for me to think of drama as a way of engaging the students and to not think of the kinds of things with which Dave was concerned such as evaluation and student resistance.

My Canadian teaching experience was a valuable one for me because it provided me with both an emic and an etic perspective in my studies of American education. Because the two educational systems are so similar, I feel I have an insider’s understanding regarding many of the practices in American schools. At the same time, my Canadian teaching preparation has always been different enough from the American experience that I feel I am able to “make the familiar” of American schools “strange” through my Canadian lens. For example, since I have moved to the United States I have been told by many teachers that the reason some school districts have poorly designed curriculum is because of the lack of funds. From my position as an international student, I am surprised by this claim. I know that I taught for many years in the most isolated part of the poorest province in the country of Canada, and despite this teachers were provided with their choice of several texts. Teachers were supported by curriculum guides which were distributed by the province’s government but which were designed by teachers who acted as consultants to the Department of Education. My experience as an outsider from a poor region who has come to study in a wealthier country gives me an opportunity to

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view things in a different way than my American colleagues who are often so immersed in their circumstances they do not have my perspective.

The curriculum and classroom as research sites

Dave’s first extensive encounter with teaching grade twelve English was when, just several days before the beginning of school, he picked up a copy of the twelfth grade literature anthology and started to think about the curriculum he would have to develop. His next significant encounter was when he met the students on the first day of class. In the following sections I will briefly describe the English curriculum in Dave’s classroom and summarize the social context of the class. I will elaborate on how we used drama in his classroom for later sections of this chapter and will discuss the uses of drama further in chapter four.

In Dave’s grade twelve classroom there was only one textbook available. A 1,052 page anthology titled *English Literature with World Masterpieces* (1989) that includes samples of work by the Ancient Greeks, and then took a chronological approach to literature including everything from *Beowulf* to Beckett. As is rather typical, this literature anthology contains works of the western literary canon and largely ignores literature closer to the students own cultural background and experiences (Applebee, 1993). Dave often searched for appropriate ways of engaging his students in reading, discussing, and writing. Accordingly, Dave typically spent 30 to 45 minutes a day teaching literature using three instructional methods: reading aloud, teacher-led discussion, and activities related to literary selections. A condensed Table of Contents for the textbook is offered in
the Table 3 and a more complete version is offered in Appendix A. After Dave consulted with other teachers who had experience teaching the course, he decided to follow their lead and opted for teaching the selections in chronological order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Anglo-Saxon Period 449-1066</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Medieval Period 1066-1485</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Elizabethan Age 1485-1625</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Seventeenth Century 1625-1700</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Romantic Age 1798 - 1837</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Victorian Age 1837-1901</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The twentieth century 1900 - present</td>
<td>689</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Masterpieces of world literature
Homer *from the Iliad*                        806
Virgil *from the Aeneid*                     864

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Table 3: Summary of the Table of Contents from *English literature with world masterpieces*

When Dave and I began to work with this textbook we looked for additional guidance. I thought that the English coordinator for the district might refer me to district-developed course guidelines. When I spoke with the English coordinator for the district I was told that guidelines for the course were still under development. Additionally, the school district did not provide textbooks or other materials for the writing instruction which was a part of the state-recommended instruction. The literature anthology supports writing as a response to reading in some limited ways. It offers writing prompts under headings such as “recalling” or “interpreting” which asks students to respond to what they have read. However, if Dave or I wanted to have students write essays or create pieces for
a portfolio there were few materials to support such an approach. Accordingly, Dave
devised his own writing assessments and other materials for students to write. These
included a narrative essay and what Dave called a “process analysis” essay. Although
Dave’s assignments solicited some student interest, there were no additional instructional
materials to support his teaching of these genres of essay writing.

Dave typically spent 30 minutes to one hour a day, almost every day, teaching
writing activities. At the beginning of a writing unit Dave would spend a lot of time in the
classroom attempting to motivate the students using whole-group activities. After a
couple of days of this, Dave would send 20 of the 24 students to the 20 seat computer
room to write rough drafts. The students might spend one or two days there to work on
their rough drafts. After the rough drafts were completed they would return to the
classroom to discuss their essays. Usually they could return to the computer room the
following week so that they could type in their changes to their rough draft. While Dave
stayed in his class to work with the 4 students who remained, another English teacher
who had been assigned to the computer room as part of a duty period would supervise the
20 students.

The computer room with many defective computers with limited hard disc space
also posed a challenge to Dave’s instruction. The machines were prone to “crashing” and
often students would lose all of the work that they had done in a period because of a
computer malfunction. The machines were connected to two aging dot matrix printers,
but because of the limited number and slow print rate of the printers, students would
often wait long periods of time to print-out their work. As a result of these complications,
students often took two to three days to write a two page rough draft of an essay.

By the fourth or fifth day of writing instruction students usually had been able to write and print-out the rough draft of their assignment. Dave took these assignments home over the weekend and made comments on them. He returned the student assignments the following week and would spend a part of Monday’s class reviewing the kinds of comments he had made. His hope was that when the students read his between-draft comments they might use them to revise their work. On the second day of the second week of a particular unit on writing, students returned to the computer room to make largely surface-level revisions. On average, most writing assignments took two weeks to complete. The school district also did not provide any materials for listening, visual literacy, or oral communication which are the other topics Dave and I were supposed to be teaching according to the state of Ohio’s Model competency-based language arts program (1996).

When Dave consulted with other teachers as to how he might teach the course, a number of them recommended intensive vocabulary instruction. Although vocabulary development was not outlined as a principal form of instruction by the formal curriculum, Dave felt that it was an important part of his grade twelve curriculum. Each day he used approximately 30 minutes of class time to review a set of 20 vocabulary words. At the end of the week the student’s knowledge of these words was tested and new words were taught in the following week. As a result, approximately 20 to 25 percent of the total instructional time of 128 hours was used for the teaching of approximately 220 vocabulary words.
Although Dave had some control over his instructional choices, clearly his instruction was shaped both by institutional limitations and by his being a product of the system in which he taught. For example, the school claimed to support collaborative planning and even paid Dave during the preceding summer to work with other teachers in revising the grade nine curriculum. This was certainly a shortfall of the system, especially considering the lack of preparation Dave had to prepare his lessons. With the school system’s lack of collaborative planning opportunities, it is not surprising that Dave viewed his instruction as a set of procedural steps. In the next chapter I will describe how Dave thought of the process-oriented drama activities as a series of procedures. By leading the students through these procedures, Dave felt he could dramatize literary selections. The school’s culture shaped Dave’s thinking about drama as a sequence of instructional techniques rather than as an alternative approach to thinking about teaching and learning. Although Dave had little time to collaborate with other teachers, he did defer to them on instructional choices like the use of vocabulary and chronological approaches to the textbook. This was surprising since the school did not have formal procedures to support collaboration. Nevertheless, clearly Dave saw the culture of his school as one where he should emulate the approaches of other teachers.

The description that I have provided above accounts for how Dave used between 90 minutes and all of his 120 minutes a day with the class. During days when there was time available, Dave and I undertook the drama activities which are the principal focus of this research study. Occasionally, the activities took somewhat longer than 30 minutes, but because they were used primarily to support the reading of literature, the activities
were viewed by us as part of literature instruction.

Table 4 summarizes the literary selections that were taught and the major writing tasks that were assigned to the students. For each element of curricular content, Dave or I tried to devise a drama activity to support it. The exception to this occurred during the last two weeks of the study when Dave felt that he wanted students to spend most of their time silently reading a novel.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Curriculum Content: Vocabulary</th>
<th>Curriculum Content: Lit. selections</th>
<th>Curriculum Content: Writing assignments</th>
<th>Drama Activity</th>
<th>Leader of Drama Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Thurber <em>The Iliad</em></td>
<td>Formal paper on ancient Greeks</td>
<td>Tableaus</td>
<td>Adrian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td><em>The Iliad</em> <em>The Aeneid</em></td>
<td>Formal paper on ancient Greeks</td>
<td>Tableaus</td>
<td>Adrian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td><em>The Aeneid</em></td>
<td>Complete formal paper Autobiography</td>
<td>Tableaus Hot-seating Group discussion Ritual creation</td>
<td>Adrian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td><em>Beowulf</em></td>
<td>Autobiography</td>
<td>Tableaus Writing-in-role Group discussion Ritual creation</td>
<td>Adrian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td><em>Beowulf</em></td>
<td>Complete autobiography Begin legend</td>
<td>Hotseating</td>
<td>Adrian / Dave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>King Arthur legends</td>
<td>Complete student legend Begin paper on “A journey”</td>
<td>Videotape of professional actors Writing-in-role</td>
<td>Dave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Chaucer, <em>Canterbury Tales</em>(selections)</td>
<td>Journey papers ends Begin resume</td>
<td>Teacher-in-role Mantle of expert Writing-in-role</td>
<td>Dave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Poetry selections: <em>To an athlete dying young</em></td>
<td>Complete resume</td>
<td>Interviews Student-in-role Group discussion of interviews</td>
<td>Adrian / Dave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td><em>Macbeth</em></td>
<td>Complete resume Begin Process Analysis paper</td>
<td>Show videotape of pro. production create scenes writing-in-role</td>
<td>Dave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td><em>Macbeth</em></td>
<td>Complete process analysis</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>Dave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Novel: <em>Things Fall Apart</em></td>
<td>No writing assignments. Students keep notes on novel</td>
<td>No drama activities by teacher request</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Shading indicates these were weeks that were transcribed

**Table 4: Summary of drama activities used to support literary and composition teaching during the study**
The literary selections include classical literature, Old and Middle English, some poetry and short story selections, a Shakespearean play, and a novel. The novel Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe was selected because it was the only “class set” of novels that Dave was able to borrow from a teacher in the building. Since Dave was uncertain about the choice of this novel, he wanted to rely largely on silent-in-class reading form instruction.

Dave also assigned an eclectic choice of writing tasks. In some cases they overlapped with the literary instruction but in many other cases the assignments were independent of the literary selections. Dave used a number of activities to support students in their literature and writing lessons. Some of these activities included drama components. I will define these components more completely in chapter four, but briefly the principle activities included:

Tableaus - students working in groups of 3 to 5 discuss and mould their bodies to form “frozen pictures” or scenes that depict what they have read or a moment from what they want to depict.

Hot-seating - a student is placed in role and responds to rapid-fire questions

Group discussions and rituals - students discuss events related to rituals and then depict them in a stylized and ceremonial way. In one case I discussed what occurs when a student meets someone they have not met in a long time. We then created a greeting ritual.

Writing-in-role- students write a diary entry or similar writing Responses as if they are in role as someone else.

Videotape of professional actors - students view professional theatre on television.

Teacher-in-role - the teacher takes on a role.

Mantle-of-the-expert - students are endowed with the attributes of an expert and undertake activities as if they are experts.
Because of the huge amount of data created through multiple recordings of many lessons, it was essential that I reduce the number of tapes to be transcribed. In the table above weeks 1 and 2, 4 and 5, and 9 and 10 are shaded because these were lessons for which I transcribed tapes. I selected these lessons because they represented, in terms of time, curricular content, and drama activities, a cross-section of the work that Dave and I undertook. My choice to narrow the amount of material to be transcribed gave me the opportunity to look carefully at the weeks I selected for careful study.

The students and the social context of the classroom

The students are not “subjects” of my research in the same way that Dave and I are. However, their work is important since what they did shaped how Dave and I planned, taught and reflected on our lessons. Therefore, although Dave and I did come to know their aspirations and their troubles on a personal challenges, I will not describe each student individually. Instead, I will describe the social context of the classroom to clarify what students contributed to our efforts to plan and to develop process-oriented drama activities for the study of literature.

Midwest High School uses a two level system for instruction. Students with high grade point averages are placed in the “challenge” level. All of the other students are placed in the “regular” classes. In the twelfth grade “regular” class that served as the site for this study, the students ranged in age from 17 to 19 years old. There were two Cambodian-born females who were in the process of becoming naturalized American
citizens. The remaining students were all US citizens born in the Midwest region of the USA. Of these students, there was one white Appalachian male. All of the other students were African American.

The official student roster changed frequently. At one point during the data collection there were over thirty students in the class, but after the first couple of weeks 24 students regularly attended class. Of these 24 students, 9 were female and the remainder were male. Although enrollment settled at about 24 after the first couple of weeks, they were not always the same 24 students. Absenteeism was chronic. School policy required the teacher to issue an automatic failing grade for the grading period if a student had more than four unexcused absences. There were four of these grading periods during each trimester. Thus, a student could miss 16 of the two hour classes and still be able to receive credit for the class. Additionally, Dave reported that students sometimes forged the names of their parent or guardian on excuse notes so that they would miss even more classes but not “fail out”.

On one occasion, when I asked the class what they planned to do after they finished high school, one third of the class told me that they planned to attend college, one third planned to attend community college or technical school, and one third planned to enter the work force. When I asked how many students had already actively investigated colleges or technical schools by looking at admissions brochures or understanding the entry requirements, only two raised their hands. The students told me that they were not especially interested in English, but that they knew it was important that they receive credit for completing the course.
The class met after lunch so the students often entered the class engaged in noisy conversation. Dave usually began the class with vocabulary and the students quickly took out their notebooks and diligently wrote down notes from the board. Although the class was sometimes boisterous, there were other times when students were literally falling asleep. During August and September, the school’s air conditioning system did not work properly sending the room temperature to over eighty degrees. High temperatures and early morning bus rides often combined to zap student energy. Given that the students seemed somewhat bored with more conventional instruction, I had expected that they would enjoy the opportunity to get out of their seats during drama sessions. This was not always the case. Often, students asked for an activity which they could do sitting down and at times refused to do activities that required standing up without considerable cajoling from Dave or me. When I asked why they were so tired many students responded with “‘Cuz we been up since 5:30”.

Procedures: Planning sessions, classroom teaching and teacher debriefing sessions

Generally speaking, Dave and I used an action research method by engaging in a cycle of planning lessons, teaching the lessons, observing what ensued during the teaching, and reflecting on the process. Dave and I would usually meet each weekend for a few hours to plan our lessons for each unit of instruction. Typically, each unit lasted for the five 2 hour class periods of the following week. Dave and I repeated this cycle of planning until the end of the grade twelve course which lasted twelve weeks.

Planning was a difficult task. Because each class was 2 hours in length, each of
our weekend sessions required planning the equivalent of more than 13 lessons each of
which would typically be 45 minutes in length in a more traditional class schedule.
Originally, when we had planned to work together on teaching a grade nine class, the
meeting time on the weekend would have been devoted to how drama could have been
used as a teaching strategy. However, because Dave was assigned the grade twelve class
at the last minute we had to not only deal with discussing how drama strategies might be
used, but also with considering objectives and selecting relevant pieces from the literature
anthology. This was extremely difficult because of our limited knowledge of the
selections in the textbook and because of what we perceived as literary selections that
were largely inappropriate for Dave’s students. Ironically, although we wanted to have
additional planning time, Dave’s grueling schedule of full-time teacher, part-time coach,
full-time father and husband, and part-time Coalition of Essential Schools and other
professional development initiatives would hardly allow that.

When Dave and I met, we would talk about how lessons worked during the
previous week. We would consider which portions of lessons worked well and which
lessons did not seem to capture student’s enthusiasm. Since Dave had adopted a
chronological approach, we often chose a literary selection because it was the next one in
the textbook. I attempted to identify a theme in the literature that we could pursue with
students by using drama. Thus, when Dave decided to teach Beowulf after the Aeneid, I
suggested that I could use drama activities to explore “heroes” or “threats” as motifs in
Beowulf. Then Dave would identify writing activities that he could use to explore these
motifs. Finally, I would discuss with Dave the particulars of the drama activities that I
proposed to undertake with the students. All of these lesson planning sessions were audio taped and subjected to follow-up analysis which will be discussed in an upcoming section.

Typically, Dave would have an idea as to the kinds of activities or the objectives he wanted to accomplish for literature, writing, and vocabulary. Together, we would explore what he planned to accomplish for approximately 90 minutes of each class. Then, we would plan the specifics of the drama activities that would be used in the remaining 30 minutes as a support for the other instruction. Most of the time we talked about how the drama work could support his teaching of literature. For example, because Dave was concerned that the students would not understand the complexities of events which occurred in the *Iliad*, we planned a short session where students would have to create tableaus, or "frozen pictures," based on what they had read. Dave was often interested in using activities that would capture the interest of the student and that would help them remember the plot. On the other hand, I was more interested in using activities that could be linked to other activities that we were using for instruction. For example, I was interested in how the tableaus created by students as a response for the *Iliad* could foster student writing, and subsequently writing-in-role where the student adopted the stance of a literary character. I hoped that the tableaus could be used as a way of getting the students to write about what they saw. As I will discuss in chapter four, Dave would become dissatisfied when drama activities were not directly linked to supporting the student’s knowledge of plot, and I was dissatisfied when the activities were only about
plot and were not linked to the exploration of the motifs that I was anxious for the students to explore.

During the teaching of lessons I either taught, co-taught or observed Dave’s teaching. A lot of the time I observed Dave teach vocabulary or lead students in discussions of the literature they read. Dave and I usually had a prearranged time at which the discussion would lead into an activity led by me. During these times Dave tended to sit and watch me teach, although sometimes he co-led activities with me. Generally, after the drama activity Dave led the students in a writing activity. I attempted to link the drama and writing activities together, but at times Dave and I had difficulty finding links between the drama activities that I undertook and the writing activities that Dave led.

For all of the classes I made videotapes, and when I was observing I made field notes. I also photocopied any written assignments or student work which was submitted to Dave for evaluation. At times students were asked to orally evaluate their drama work and these evaluations were also captured on videotape. Thus, data was collected through video tape, student work samples, a field log, and transcriptions of tapes. I used my field notes to help me select portions of videotape which were subsequently transcribed and analyzed. I conducted a content analysis of the student’s work but since many of the assignments were related to writing activities which were not based on drama strategies, I decided that the student’s formal writing was not an integral part of this study. In a later section of this chapter I will explain how I analyzed this data to formulate findings.

During my class sessions I noted “who did what when” by observing where students looked, what they looked at, what they heard, and recording my observations in
my field log. I tried to capture dialogue that I thought might not be picked up by the video camera’s microphone. I also used my field notes to attempt to capture my subjective understandings regarding the atmosphere of the class and the receptivity of the students to instruction. I was interested in how I felt when I sat along-side the other students in the class and viewed the teacher from the student’s perspective. Finally, my field notes also served as a log so that I could later return to moments that I considered interesting and transcribe selected portions of the tape. I chose what to transcribe based on my understanding of the relevance of the event to my research questions and to the trends which were beginning to emerge from the analysis I was beginning to undertake.

At the beginning of my study I asked Dave to keep a reflective journal which would focus on each lesson. Despite my attempts to solicit journal entries, including having Dave respond to specific writing prompts, the journal entries were not being written. Although Dave offered no explanation as to why he did not write journal entries, I suspect it is because of his hectic schedule. We experimented briefly with Dave recording his reflections on audio tapes, but he typically did not do this. Finally, we settled on a 15 to 30 minute debriefing session at the end of each class. I made notes regarding these reflections and also audiotaped all of them. The taping of these sessions was very helpful for fostering reflection regarding each teaching episode.

Typically Dave and I would discuss what we thought worked well in each class. We would sometimes offer tentative explanations of why students interpreted our teaching in the way that they did. This was an important activity because when I offered a tentative interpretation as to what occurred, Dave had the opportunity to make both first-
hand interpretations and to challenge my interpretations. The opportunity for Dave to 
debrief with me so that my interpretations could be shaped by his interpretations was an 
important part of the collaborative debriefing process. We would then review our 
tentative plans for the following day and would occasionally make alterations based on 
the experience of the lesson that we had just taught. Additionally, we would discuss 
various details about particular students including their attendance, progress they were 
making in assignments they were writing, and personal details that seemed relevant to a 
successful school experience.

In the preceding sections I discussed the planning, teaching, and reflecting phases 
that Dave and I undertook for this study. In discussing these phases, I explained that I 
used tapes, transcripts, writing samples, and notes gathered from planning sessions, 
classroom observations, in-class debriefing with students, and teacher reflections as data 
Sources. In the next section I will explain how I analyzed this data and I will note how the 
focus of my analysis was tailored to the kind of data that I collected.

Data analysis

Data analysis "is the process of systematically searching and arranging [data]... to 
increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have 
discovered to others" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992, p. 153). In this section I will explain 
how I took the data that I had amassed through my numerous classroom visits and worked 
with it so that it could be represented as findings to others. In the upcoming sections, I 
will explain how I undertook five categories of analyses: organizing, categorizing, testing,
proposing alternative explanations, and reporting my data (Marshall and Rossman, 1995).

The nature of the data source that I discussed in the preceding section dictated my focus of analysis. For example, when I analyzed transcriptions of Dave’s and my reflective sessions I focused on different things than when I analyzed classroom lessons. Table 4 shows how my focus of analysis shifted depending on the data source.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Data Source</strong></th>
<th><strong>Focus of analysis</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit and Lesson Planning Sessions (transcribed from audio tapes)</td>
<td>Curricular goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field notes</td>
<td>Instructional objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation of student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations of classroom instruction (transcribed from video tapes)</td>
<td>Implementation of lesson plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handouts for students</td>
<td>Social context of classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio tapes of classroom discussions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher and Teacher-researcher debriefing (transcribed from audio tape)</td>
<td>Teacher evaluation of the lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Curricular goals and institutional objectives for subsequent lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature anthology (text book)</td>
<td>Nature of available curricular resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handbooks and other instructional material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large group debriefing with students</td>
<td>Students' perception of lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5: Data sources and the foci of analyses**

Once I decided on a focus of analysis for each data source, I needed to develop a system of data organization (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). In my case, since I was
interested in looking at lesson planning, lesson implementation, and reflection on the lessons over a period of time, I arranged all of my data in chronological order. Instead of keeping all my videotapes of classes together, I placed the tapes, transcripts and logs for the first week of field visits together. I then undertook the same process for subsequent weeks of the study. In figure 2, I offer as an example a day-by-day and hour-by-hour summary of how I segmented one particular unit of instruction. In the left column of the figure, I list the activities that I undertook during the weekends and weekdays that were used for planning, implementing and reflecting on lessons. In the right hand column, I elaborate on certain moments of the planning, implementation and reflection, by offering a minute-by-minute account.

As an additional step in the segmenting of my data, I examined each planning and class session and I then considered each sub-event of the unit planning and teaching. This step is represented in the right hand columns of figure 2. By event, I mean a planning session or a class that was taught. By sub-event, I mean parts of the planning session such as discussion of the literature to be taught, or the writing assignment to be undertaken. Likewise, sub-events could include the parts of a lesson that was taught. It was helpful to organize my data in this way because it meant that I had the capability to look only at a particular kind of session, such as a planning session, or to look at all of the different kinds of sessions that, when added together, became a unit of instruction.
### Sample Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sun.</td>
<td>1:30-4:00</td>
<td>Joint Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun.</td>
<td>7:00-9:00</td>
<td>Teacher’s Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon.</td>
<td>12:30-2:30</td>
<td>Class Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon.</td>
<td>2:15-2:30</td>
<td>End of Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collection of stdt. work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon.</td>
<td>2:30-3:00</td>
<td>Class Debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Dave &amp; Adrian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon.</td>
<td>7:00-8:00</td>
<td>Teacher’s Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>12:30-2:30</td>
<td>Class Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Teacher - Researcher Joint Planning Session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Sub-Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>Discussion of Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:52</td>
<td>(Field note segment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:52-</td>
<td>Objects of Drama session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:57</td>
<td>(Transcript segment)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Observation of & participation in Class Meeting Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Sub-event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:30-</td>
<td>Vocabulary words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:48</td>
<td>(Field notes/Stdt work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:50-</td>
<td>Beowulf intro.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:02</td>
<td>(vidtape &amp; transcript)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:03-</td>
<td>Stdt.s.work on tableaus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:09</td>
<td>(vidtape &amp; stdt wrtng)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Figure 2:** Illustration of how data from one instructional unit was segmented and ordered for analysis

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After I sorted my data, I undertook further analytic choices including coding, and looking for patterns (Miles and Huberman, 1984). This kind of sorting allowed me to more easily use different data sources to triangulate my findings. For example, in the debriefing sessions considered whether Dave and I could discuss how the planning of lessons and the teaching of lessons was interrelated. Even if we could not articulate the relationship, the videotapes provided another perspective for obtaining evidence that there might still be a relationship between how we planned the lesson and how we taught it.

These initial analytic procedures enabled me to generate trends. One technique I used was to sort notes in my log and notes that I was making on my transcripts into four categories: methodological notes, observational notes, personal notes, and theoretical notes (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989, p. 68). This helped me to “tie different pieces of data together in a cluster, or... [to] show that a particular piece of data is an instance of a general concept” (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p. 69). Methodological notes included what Dave and I did at the school and how we went about conducting our activities. For example, if Dave and I decided to divide the class into small groups I recorded this observation as a methodological note. Observational notes included what I saw or heard. For example, if Dave made an especially significant comment I noted it so that I could be sure to return to it when I transcribed data. Personal notes included my feelings, Dave’s feelings or other things of a personal nature. For example, when I recorded that I was disillusioned with how some lessons were proceeding, I labeled it as a personal note. Finally, I used the label theoretical notes to refer to observations or events that pertained to theories emerging from the data. For example, if Dave said that it was important for
students to have control over facets of instruction, I labeled his comment as “ownership - t.n.” to indicate a theoretical note regarding ownership of the curriculum.

These notes were helpful for developing sensitizing concepts or ideas that represented the early emergence of material which I would later cluster together to develop trends. By combining the use of notes and the sensitizing concepts that were generated from them, I was able to develop a number of “analyst-constructed typologies” (Patton, 1990, p. 390), or ways to group the subjective understandings of my analysis. For example, I began by subjectively categorizing Dave’s judgments regarding drama activities as accepting or resisting. As I gathered more data I found that Dave’s acceptance or resistance was linked to the student’s ability to relate plot from literary selections and that my acceptance or resistance of the drama was related to whether or not I was able to link the drama activity to other activities that the students did in class.

As a hypothesis began to emerge regarding how Dave and I judged the implementation of our drama activities, I developed a coding system (Marshall and Rossman, 1995). I found that as I read through my data, I was able to classify the data according to a number of characteristics. For example, if Dave was wondering how we might use drama to support the teaching of the Iliad, I placed the questions that he asked in a category I called “Teacher processes”. If I made some suggestions to Dave, then I placed these suggestions in a category called “researcher processes”. Then, if he commented on the likelihood of the suggestion working well thereby prompting me to make more suggestions, I placed this back-and-forth conversation in a category I called “Teacher-researcher interaction”. I then reviewed these classifications further and found
that I could group lesson planning separately from the reflections we made after classes. Additionally, I found that sometimes we would talk about how we might use drama as a prompt for student writing, and in other cases we would talk about what we hoped the students would do. As a result of the growing complexity of the coding, I developed a matrix of codes which is depicted in Figure 3. Once this matrix was developed, I could easily code whether Dave or I were doing the talking, and what we were talking about.

The codes were very helpful because I found that data which often said the same thing but which were separated by several weeks often ended up in the same category. Thus, if Dave made a comment like “I don’t think the drama worked today because the student’s were slow to do what you asked” in week one and week twelve, I was able to classify his statement as “Teacher processes: Reflection on student activity”. In this way, my coding scheme helped me correlate my subjective notes in my field journal with my coding of the transcribed data. By using my coding system, the hypothesis which emerged from my field notes could be supported with my coding scheme based on transcribed data.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY TYPE</th>
<th>Student Activity</th>
<th>Student Talk</th>
<th>Student Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEACHER</td>
<td>Lesson Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROCESSES</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEACHER-RESEARCHER</td>
<td>INTERACTION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCHER</td>
<td>Lesson Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROCESSES</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3: Coding structure regarding teacher and researcher planning, instruction and reflection for each unit
Alternative explanations and writing results

As I developed my coding scheme, I began to find that “as theory with related concepts emerges from analysis, negative instances … lead to new data collecting and analysis that serve to strengthen theory” (Marshall and Rossman, 1995, p. 112). In my case, what I initially saw as conflicting statements represent what Marshall and Rossman call negative instances. By developing new codes or, what Marshall and Rossman would call new analysis, the negative instances were re-categorized so that I could develop a stronger theory. For example, when I developed figure 3 which illustrates the way I coded my data, I began with fewer columns and rows. For example, I did not have a row for the teacher-researcher interaction. Also, I grouped all of the student responses in the same column. I found that as I coded more data, I had placed conflicting statements in the same category. As I examined why this had occurred, I realized that I needed to develop additional categories in my coding scheme to make sense of the data.

I found my coding system a valuable one because it allowed me to view the data I had collected in different ways. Because of my coding scheme, I was better able to consider trends and negative cases that were exceptions to these trends. For example, if I wanted to know how Dave’s lesson planning understandings were different than his reflections, I could compare different rows of the matrix. If I wanted to know the differences between Dave and myself during a week, I could compare the top three rows with the bottom three. If I wanted to see the difference between Dave’s understandings between the first week I was at the field site and the last week, I compared the first matrix I coded with the last one I coded. In summary, by dividing codes into matrix structures I
could view data across different dimensions such as time or tasks that were undertaken by the teacher and researcher.

These codes directly addressed my research questions because the chronological ordering allowed me to address research questions such as “How was the drama implemented?” with ease. My codes were also ways of supporting the notes and sensitizing concepts which I described at the beginning of this section. Since the task of transcribing and coding was an arduous process, I reduced the work load to a more reasonable level by limiting my examination to weeks “1 and 2”, “4 and 5”, and “8 and 10”. I selected these weeks because they were a good cross-section of the time spent at the research site, and because they offered a look at different kinds of instruction that Dave and I attempted.

In the preceding sections I explained how I analyzed my data using segmenting and coding schemes. In chapters four and five I will report the findings and implications of the findings that my analysis generated.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

In the first three chapters of this study I indicated that professional development has been recognized for some time as one way of bringing about reform in education. I explained that there are many ways of conducting professional development, but that reformers recently have begun to advocate development which is school-embedded. These reformers argue for collegial, supportive, co-teaching which is social, innovative, and contextualized in school classrooms. In such a context, reform initiatives can focus on student and teacher interaction at a micro-level as they are formed by macro-level initiatives and support structures. For the most part, this study is concerned with the micro level with the larger context of the macro level.

Process-oriented drama approaches are among a group of strategies which can be used to explore these classroom-level initiatives since the approaches provide a context to explore collaborative teaching and require the student to be active meaning-makers. It is the hope of reformers who argue for such initiatives that professional development
reforms with these kinds of features may avoid some of the problems associated with professional development that assumes a one-size-fits-all approach.

In order to examine the possibilities of such an approach to teacher change, in this chapter I will answer the following research questions:

1. How did collaborative lesson planning proceed and what factors shaped the planning sessions?
2. How were lessons implemented, what factors influenced the lesson implementation, and “what worked” or “did not work” according to the perceptions of the teacher and the teacher-researcher?
3. What issues were discussed during debriefing sessions and how did the teacher and the teacher-researcher make sense of the lesson?

In the first part of this chapter I will examine the process of lesson planning that I undertook with the teacher with whom I collaborated. In the second part of this chapter I will examine the lessons that we collaboratively taught and the debriefing sessions in order to “unpack” the content and intentions of the lessons that we collaboratively taught. Finally, I will consider the degree to which our collaborations enabled Dave, the teacher, to employ dramatic activities in the context of his classroom.

Although the research questions appear to be largely focused on procedural activities related to planning, teaching, and debriefing, my discussion will go beyond these procedures. As I discuss what Dave and I did and said, I will also identify the
tensions and sources of tensions that existed as Dave and I tried to work collaboratively. It is important to note that these tensions are not necessarily damaging to Dave’s and my collaboration. Indeed, these tensions are helpful in that they illustrate the complexity and difficulty of sustained collaboration in a classroom context. The use of the word “tension” can stop those involved in collaborative professional development from thinking of their work in terms of “success” or “failure”. Instead, the word tension can support educators in understanding the contextual forces that affect their efforts.

**Part One: Collaborative lesson planning**

First I will consider how planning sessions took place. Then I will consider the factors which shaped our collaborative planning sessions throughout the study.

**Lesson planning: How planning proceeded**

At the beginning of the school year as Dave assumed a curriculum and a grade level new to him, he was unsure about the instructional units and types of evaluation that he would use in his grade twelve English class. Although he had used trimester-long syllabi with grade nine classes that he had previously taught, Dave decided that he did not want to develop trimester-long syllabi for his grade twelve class. One reason that he did not want to develop a long-range syllabi was that he had not planned beyond the first two weeks of the school year. By not committing to a long-range syllabi, Dave retained a lot of flexibility in the planning process for the grade twelve course which was so new to
him. On the other hand, he faced substantial difficulties in trying to give his curriculum and instruction a coherent shape.

In order for Dave to remain organized and to communicate course requirements to students, Dave decided that he would issue weekly syllabi to his students at the beginning of each week. These syllabi summarized the work that he hoped to cover during that week. By using these weekly summaries, Dave did his planning on the weekend immediately preceding instruction. A sample of this kind of weekly syllabi is featured in Table 5.
Day 4
Vocabulary test and new words
Writing: Personal narrative
Reading: Finish *The Iliad* - Open notes test: pp. 779 - 783
Journal: Why the fuss?
*To an Athlete Dying Young* p. 556
Homework: Complete personal narrative

Day 5
Writing: Keyboard personal narrative
Reading: Virgil’s *Aeneid* p. 862

Day 6
Vocabulary: Pre-test
Journal: War - What would you die for?
Library: Work on projects
Writing: Peer editing
Reading: Thurber - *The Last Flower*

Day 7
Vocabulary: Test
Journal: War - Is it ever justifiable?
Collect Journals
Reading: Views of war
Yeats - *An Irish Airman Forsees his Death* - p. 643
Brooke - *The Soldier* p. 659
Owen: *Dulce et Decorum est*

---

**Table 6: Sample of weekly syllabi developed by Dave**

This table illustrates a number of things. First, it illustrates the kinds of material that Dave and I discussed during the weekly planning sessions. The emphasis on titles and writing exercises suggests that Dave thought about the curriculum he was beginning to teach in terms of work to be covered. Although the topic of war links many of the
readings and projects there are some projects that do not relate to war. For example, Dave wanted the twelfth graders to write personal narratives because the grade nine students who he usually taught responded well to this kind of writing prompt. Second, although the students can use the weekly syllabi to plan what text and note books they need to bring to class, the syllabi indicates little about how the students will be evaluated and how much each piece of evaluation will contribute toward the final grade. This lack of attention to student evaluation foreshadows some of the challenges that Dave and I would have later regarding how process-oriented drama strategies figured into unit plans and student assessment. Third, the table illustrates that while Dave and I knew what we were doing on a week-to-week basis, our planning and teaching lacked the fuller sense of direction that teachers typically have when they have taught a course before and when they use a course-long syllabi. The lack of overall direction or vision meant that Dave and I struggled in every planning session to keep our teaching coherent. This struggle complicated our planning sessions. In addition to these difficulties our planning sessions rapidly became more complicated. Although Dave generated these weekly plans we did not always follow them. For example, although Dave planned for students to keep a writing journal so that they could respond to writing prompts, by the end of the third week he abandoned the idea. Thus, from the outset Dave and I felt a tension in our planning. This tension was created by our professional expectations that we should conduct long term planning, the fledgling nature of our collaboration, and Dave’s last minute assignment to the course which caused us to grapple with the short term.
Even though the use of weekly syllabi posed difficulties, it was the organizing device on which Dave and I focused when we met each weekend to plan instruction for the following week. Typically we met at his house for about three or four hours each Saturday or Sunday to undertake week-long unit planning sessions. By unit, I mean a group of four to ten lessons devoted to a particular topic, to the study of one literary work, or to the study of one particular genre of literature. For example, Dave conceived of an Essay unit, a *Macbeth* unit, and a Short Fiction unit.

We often talked about a range of education-related topics and interspersed these discussions with general goals that we would try to achieve in the upcoming week, the selection of readings or writing activities to achieve those goals, and the brainstorming of specific strategies that we could use to support students’ reading and writing. In some units we sought to link literature instruction and writing instruction in some way. In other units, this linkage proved quite difficult. I will elaborate on what this curriculum looked like in the next section. In the upcoming sections I will also use transcripts to report Dave’s insights regarding the way he viewed planning.

In order to provide some detail about the routines of our collaborative planning an edited transcript of one of our weekly planning sessions is provided below. During this particular meeting Dave and I were trying to decide which piece of Middle or Elizabethan literature we should select for the students to read. Dave also grappled with how this literature might relate to resume writing which the students were undertaking as a part of writing instruction. We eventually decided that, since there was no link, we would treat the literary instruction and the writing instruction as separate entities in the upcoming
week. As a part of brainstorming teaching strategies, I began to suggest the use of a “teacher in role” activity. By teacher-in-role, I mean that the teacher enacts or takes on a role. For example, in the following transcript excerpt I will suggest to Dave that he act as a bureaucrat at a large company when he introduces resume writing to his students. This activity was eventually used and will be discussed later in this chapter when I examine the kinds of lessons that Dave and I co-taught.

In the following transcript of a planning session, the reader can see the ease with which we jump between different topics and concerns.

Dave: I think the kids really like to have themselves taped. Do you want to do a mock interview tomorrow? Just kind of like you did with the other paper. And then on Wednesday have them interview each other, and then on Thursday have the formal interview?

Adrian: How come you don’t want to have them just go and interview each other and stop? Why do you want to have outsiders?

Dave: Ah, I thought that they’re not going to get much feedback from the person who will be interviewing them. And I thought if we had other people we could perhaps give them some feedback.

Adrian: I wondered if, when we do the peer, when we do the student peer interview we could develop a forum as if they were college acceptance [admission] people, and so you do the interview and there would be questions like “Does this person’s resume fulfill the standard?” And then they have to write their responses to that and pass them in, so it keeps them accountable and it gives them something to write because we’re trying to develop writers…. (We talk further regarding both the writing assignment and the teaching of literary selections)….

Dave: Hopefully I will have come up with enough strategies for block C [the third period on the timetable] that, I won’t say to make things entertaining because I’m not sure the kids are going to be entertained, but, ah- if I had to do this again - I dunno if it’s a case - I don’t think I could have had it more structured because I’m just feeling my way through it. Basically with the 9th graders is that the kids are in a routine, and I’m finding it very hard to get routines for these [the twelfth graders] guys. Because it’s the end of the day.
and they don’t as easily fall into routines and because they have different attitudes. I mean ninth graders will pretty much do things as you ask, but with these guys you have to do a lot of pushing....

Adrian: How do you want to do the interviews tomorrow?

Dave: I think that the pairs will work good. As a class we’ll brainstorm some questions.

Adrian: Would you want to try a teacher in a role strategy there? Normally we might do that by saying, “OK guys, what questions do you want to ask of each other?” But another way to do that would be to say, I am an expert in personnel development and relations for many multinational companies, and I know that you are people who are going to be doing interviews and who are highly paid to do this job can use my help in developing questions for you.” So you’re sort of taking on a role as a teacher - usually some sort of bureaucratic role. And you can place them in a role too. What do you think?

Dave: OK. Let me get this straight. Who are we giving the role to?

Adrian: We take on a role. Instead of being teachers and saying, “What questions will we ask each other,” we say “I’m a highly paid administrator and in preparation for these interviews that we get paid a lot of money to do, we have to figure out some sort of questions that we can ask.” So, you’re the one taking on the role. And then you can assign roles to them. You don’t like that? I see that smile?

Dave: That smile is saying, why are we doing this?... Why will they generate better questions than if they’re just brainstorming questions they might ask?

Adrian: That’s a good question. I don’t know. They might not, BUT they might, because you can give them a stake - well you know, if you don’t want to give me good questions I’m afraid I’ll have to let you all off and I’ll hire other people to do the interviews and we’ll just do Chaucer.

Dave: Sounds pretty punitive - Let’s DO IT!! (He laughs).

Adrian: If you want, I can get you started because I can say “Welcome to our company - today we’re going to have interviews. We’ve hired a consultant, and I could introduce you.” But I’d like to see you do teacher-in-role – and then do all of those things you were going to do. What are some questions – I need to send you in different groups because the Los Angeles office over here will ask different questions than the New York office.

Dave: OK. So, I’m going to do this that we’re a German company, we’re coming over, we’re opening a new plant and we are doing massive hiring for good paying jobs but we must also be guaranteed because the initial hiring will be critical.... (Planning session, 09/13/97)
This transcript illustrates a number of patterns and routines which were characteristic of the unit planning sessions that Dave and I undertook patterns that led to a number of different issues. In some cases we thought very generally about the literary selections and their relationship to student writing assignments. We placed these deliberations in a number of different contexts. In some cases we referred to our prior professional experiences as a sort of litmus test to compare our current experiences with what we believed we should have the students doing. For example, we asked what other students might have done or we questioned the relevance of what we were doing. In other cases, we attempted to think about the impact of our deliberations on classroom management issues. Sometimes we spoke of the need to establish classroom routines, what days we would select as due dates for assignments, and how we could maintain student interest in the assignment.

In the transcript above, the dialogue is reciprocal in that it shows how Dave and I both influence the decisions and ideas of one another. This is an important characterization because it suggests that collaborative planning sessions can serve to foster the kind of constructivist approach to professional development that I outlined in earlier chapters. On the other hand, it also suggests some of the challenges of doing so. The transcript above especially illustrates a key tension which was emerging between Dave and I. The transcript represents the ongoing negotiation between Dave's reliance on his grade to emphasize student products and my desire to explore the process-oriented drama strategies which are the subject of this study.
In addition to the weekend planning sessions, Dave and I also undertook combined debriefing and lessons planning sessions after each class. After each teaching session we met in his classroom for thirty to forty-five minutes. During the first half of these sessions we would generally discuss our perceptions of the lesson's strategies, strengths, and shortcomings. I will describe these sessions in more detail in the latter part of this chapter. After undertaking this analysis, we would then discuss what we would teach the following day and how we would teach it. Generally, these plans were an elaboration of what we had already decided in the weekend planning session. In other cases, we would change what we had decided on the weekend because of how things transpired during class earlier in the day. Consequently, we would sometimes devise new lesson plans. The most notable characteristic of the planning sessions that took place after class was that they were limited in duration. As a consequence, our discussions were much more to the point, and we spoke specifically about who would do what in the class on the following day.

Our planning sessions were not always as rambling as the one transcribed above. In some cases, Dave knew what he wanted to teach, but we both struggled with instructional strategies. This struggle represents an elaboration on the tension created by Dave's reliance on the grade nine curriculum which he knew so well and my desire to explore process-oriented drama activities. In the case of Beowulf, a literary selection which I knew fairly well but which Dave had not read since finishing college, I tried to explore alternatives in addition to having the students read the epic. I suggested to Dave
that a critical motif in *Beowulf* are the recurrent threats to safety. I reasoned that “threats”
was a motif which the students might be interested in exploring.

Dave: So what are you thinking about doing with threats?

Adrian: Well, ... there are different kinds of threats in there. There’s the threat of
Grendel, but then there’s also the threat from within and how they could support
*Beowulf*. Could they possibly support *Beowulf*? That sort of thing.

Dave: (Dave brings in an article from the paper) I don’t know whether this would
tie in well, but they had a piece this morning, I wouldn’t say it’s really heroes...
and it dealt with Diana [the late Princess of Wales who died the previous
month]... Is *Beowulf* killed at the end? Does he die? (Interview, 09/20/97)

In this discussion, I try to convince Dave that we need to pursue threats, but I had not
described my idea to him as clearly as I needed to if I was to convince him to attempt my
idea. In an attempt to tie *Beowulf* to something he had tried with his classes in the past, he
initiates discussion of the hero concept. This was a theme that had worked for him before.
Once Dave and I clarified and agreed on pursuing the motif of a threat, things went a lot
more smoothly. Dave was able to understand more precisely what I had in mind when we
discussed the details [The comments in parentheses below indicate that more than one
person speaks at the same time]:

Dave: So what do you think you’re going to do?

Adrian: I had 3 or 4 things in mind. One was I was going to bring in a picture ....
It’s just a really barren landscape and get them to brainstorm about what kinds of
threats might exist in that sort of place.

Dave: It’s very desolate?
Adrian: Yeah. And another one was we could have a town meeting of people who live in this place. We’d imagine living in this place and we’d talk about what we’re worried about.

Dave: So you’re setting a scenario.

Adrian: Right.

Dave: OK.

Adrian: And then we’ll imagine -

Dave: Tell me more about this town meeting.

Adrian: I’ll probably be sort of playing role there and - (Dave: Such as?) The roles that are usually best are sort of a bureaucrat - town clerk (Dave: OK).

Dave: Well - see I didn’t know if you were going to be a town meeting moderator.

Adrian: Right. Moderator, right. A very bureaucratic function works best.

Dave: How are you going to organize them. Are you going to put them in a circle? (Planning session, 09/20/97)

Because of such discussions, I found that the claims of many of the authors regarding collaborative professional development that I reviewed in my second chapter were confirmed. Specifically, a teacher’s application of process-oriented drama approaches can very much be governed by curricular knowledge and meaning. It also seems clear that teachers who use process-oriented approaches have to be able to use the curriculum in a malleable way. In the previous example, we began by talking about the plot, then threats, then heroes, and then how we could approach using a role-playing strategy so that the students could explore the issue of threats as if they themselves were being threatened. As
we became more flexible in considering what we were going to do, Dave and I could also
edge toward planning our lesson. Within a few weeks of beginning the study I began to
conclude that, through a combination of curricular knowledge and flexibility in
conceptualizing teaching, we were able to explore possibilities beyond having the
students summarize plot lines or the behaviors of the character. These patterns began to
emerge over the first few weeks of the study caused me to consider factors and tensions
that shaped our collaborative planning sessions, and how these factors and tensions might
have changed over time. I will answer this question in the next section.

**Lesson planning: Factors and tensions shaping collaborative planning during the study**

A number of factors shaped the lesson planning that Dave and I undertook. In this
section I will describe three of these factors and describe the tensions which resulted from
these factors. First, I will explain some of the traditions of the school and its teachers, and
how these traditions affected the way Dave thought about what and how he needed to
teach. Second, I will describe my former experience in using process-oriented drama
strategies to teach English and will explain how the philosophies that I developed effected
the way that I planned lessons. I will then complete my discussion of factors that shaped
Dave’s and my lesson planning by explaining how we were constrained by the textbook.
My central point will be that it was difficult to achieve those curricular representations
because of specific tensions, including our fledgling collaborative relationship,
institutional constraints, and limited curricular resources, which emerged during our
collaborative sessions.
A number of factors were present at the beginning of the study which influenced Dave’s planning and these factors remained significant throughout the study. In some cases these factors were larger, structural issues such as Dave’s last minute assignment to teach the course, an institutional decision that Dave could do little to alter. In other cases there were factors related to the school’s English department. For example, how the school’s English teachers traditionally viewed what they should teach and how they should teach it. Finally, there were factors related to Dave’s instructional routines. These issues included his philosophy toward teaching and his desire for his students to produce products so that their learning could be evaluated. In this section I will describe each of these factors, the tensions that resulted, and the way they shaped Dave’s lesson planning.

The first of the factors which shaped Dave’s lesson planning was his last minute assignment to teach the grade twelve English course. Although Dave had desired a grade twelve teaching assignment for a number of years, he had not been successful in obtaining it until three days before the 1997-1998 school year. Because of some last minute changes in the school’s master schedule, a grade twelve English class became available on the Friday before the first day of school. After years of requesting the assignment, Dave felt he could not turn it down even though it was so last-minute. While Dave was concerned about the limited time he had for the preparation of his course, he felt that he might be criticized by his peers or the administration for turning down an assignment that he had actively campaigned for in the past. Although Dave wanted me to visit the grade nine class that he had taught for several years, I was unable to meet with this class due to job-related commitments. Although Dave felt awkward about me
working with him in developing lessons for a grade and a curriculum for which he had limited knowledge, he did feel that the familiarity that I had with some of the literary selections might be useful. Although my familiarity with some of the literature was a silver lining, Dave and I continually struggled with the gray cloud of the last minute assignment to the course. Our struggles were compounded by our limited knowledge of the textbook’s literary selections and our lack of a reservoir of materials that a veteran teacher typically builds after many years teaching the same course.

The last minute assignment to the course shaped our planning in that Dave had less time to think about process-oriented drama lessons than he had originally planned. Initially, when Dave was scheduled to teach the grade nine class, he had planned to devote considerable time to planning drama activities. With the new grade twelve class, he now had additional responsibilities, and he would need to plan both the drama activities with me in addition to planning for his other non-drama related lessons. The most serious constraint that we faced was Dave’s belief that he had to spend almost all of his time just reading the literary texts that formed the content of what he was supposed to teach. After class one day he explained:

Dave: [This was] one of the longest two hour blocks I have experienced at Midwest High. A pressure is my unfamiliarity with the content. Planning for a week at Midwest High is like planning for fifteen traditional classes. I constantly remind myself that I am teaching kids and not content. (Journal, 09/05/97)
Thus, a key tension was created. Dave and I felt quite torn between our hopes of a highly engaging classroom where we employed many process-oriented drama strategies to teach students, and our need to proceed with caution. From the outset, Dave and I questioned the degree of success that we would have in undertaking process-oriented drama strategies because of his last-minute assignment to the course. We concluded that it would be important to temper our pre-study enthusiasm. We knew that we were in some ways novices both with the course and in using process-oriented drama strategies. Therefore, we would need to be much more limited in our use of the process strategies than we had intended to be with the grade nine class. Thus, our lesson planning was always tempered by considerable caution. Although we were conservative in our expectations as to what we might achieve, we nevertheless felt that it was important to explore alternative instructional techniques with the course.

Another factor which shaped Dave’s lesson planning were the views which were traditionally held by Dave’s fellow teachers. This represented yet another tension between the staff’s traditional way of teaching the grade twelve course, Dave’s desire to use the staff’s suggestions, and Dave’s desire to pursue the alternative teaching strategies that I proposed. During the early part of the school year Dave asked his colleagues how they taught the grade twelve course. In most cases Dave was told that teachers followed the chronological order of the text and that the writing assignments evaluated the material learned in literature classes. As a result, Dave began the year by teaching The Iliad and followed it by teaching the Aeneid. To complement his teaching of classical literature, he
asked students to complete an assignment which required them to research and label mortals and gods depicted in the text.

Dave’s colleagues also suggested that vocabulary should figure prominently in his course. They offered him copies of a weekly vocabulary skill-building exercise that had been published in the 1960s. The exercises featured twenty words per week and occasionally included some obscure choices. As a routine, on the first day of instruction students were expected to use a dictionary to define the words, on the second day students were expected to complete a fill-in-the-blank exercise using the appropriate word, on the third day students were to write their own sentences using the featured word, and on the fourth day students were tested on their ability to define the vocabulary word without reference to notes. Following the suggestions of his colleagues, Dave used the prescribed handouts four days a week for thirty minutes per class. After the fourth week Dave began to question the obscurity of some of the vocabulary words and abandoned the published vocabulary package in favor of using his own lists of vocabulary words. This kind of vocabulary instruction occupied one quarter of each class four days a week.

In addition to the suggestions from Dave’s colleagues that he teach the text in chronological order and that he undertake extensive vocabulary instruction, one teacher suggested that Dave should concentrate on having his students write essays to prepare them for the demands of college writing. Dave did not elaborate on what the teacher meant by college essays and rejected the idea. He did, however, follow the school’s guidelines that every teacher undertake some activity that would support students in thinking about employment after graduation. To accomplish this Dave required students
to write resumes and an essay on career aspirations. These assignments were developed form his grade nine writing assignments, but he also revised them so that they would be age-level appropriate.

By the end of the course, in addition to reading classical literature, the students had read both *Beowulf* and *Macbeth*. Additionally, they had read a number of twentieth century authors including Thurber and Achebe. Dave’s evaluation of students included written tests on classical literature, *Beowulf* and *Macbeth*. As a part of writing instruction Dave had his students write a process analysis essay describing how to undertake a task, a compare-contrast essay, an autobiographical essay, a career aspirations essay, and a personal resume. Finally, Dave gave twelve vocabulary quizzes testing his student’s ability to define 240 words. Dave did not communicate to the students exactly what portion of the final grade each piece of evaluation was worth, and he sometimes changed the value of tests and quizzes depending on student performances. In most cases though, the final grade was determined by weighing grades from the literature tests, the writing assignments, and the vocabulary quizzes.

The traditions of the school and the English teachers at the school were powerful tensions in shaping how Dave worked with me when we planned lessons together. The traditions guided almost all of the writing assignments and the order of the literary selections that Dave taught. Consequently, Dave’s concern to base his teaching on other teachers’ suggestions left little room for him to devise writing assignments or sequence readings in ways that could be more directly related to process-oriented drama activities. For example, because the course was new to him and he would not be “wedded” to any

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particular assignments, I had originally thought that Dave would have a high degree of flexibility when it came to thinking about writing assignments. In reality, because Dave sometimes expressed to me that he was “just staying afloat”, he was loathe to ignore the advice of any of his colleagues who had previously taught the course. Indeed, he saw their advice as something that might assist him in his survival of the already arduous task of teaching the new course.

Another set of factors that influenced Dave’s approach to our planning sessions was his personal philosophy regarding teaching and the instructional repertoire that he had developed as a veteran teacher. Dave sometimes revealed his philosophy during our planning sessions on the weekends or after class. Sometimes he talked about his feelings behind what he wanted to do with students in his teaching. In other cases, he responded to direct questions that I asked him regarding his philosophy. Because of his extensive experience teaching grade eight and nine students, Dave reiterated many times that he thought that it was important for lessons to be activity-based. Although Dave favored the use of activities in his teaching, he also felt that these activities should cover the plot of the literary selection in some way. Dave hoped that a discussion of plot could lead students to a larger understanding of themes or universal elements of a literary text but reaching this larger understanding was extremely difficult, and often Dave and I would end up talking to students about what the story was about rather than the author’s artistic intentions. In the transcript below, Dave illustrates that he wants his students to know about the war depicted in the *Iliad* but he does not describe how we could get students to discuss the author’s notion of war:
Adrian: What’s your objective?

Dave: My objective is to, ah, cover content, and to get them thinking about some of the universal issues that will be part of their world. Now, it would make sense, that, you know, we started out with this *Iliad* so, I thought, well we’ll do something on war, because that seems to make sense. It’s all about war. (Planning session, 09/12/97)

In my effort to support Dave’s interest in having his students explore universal issues I suggested that we plan a number of process-oriented drama activities that would give students an opportunity to think about themes. I attempted one of these activities in a class in which students discussed their feelings without reference to the plot of a literary work. When we were planning for a subsequent lesson, Dave questioned my approach:

Dave: I’m not sure what we accomplished today… whether it’s just, ah, we had a nice talk to day. I mean that’s – is there anything beyond that? Do you want anything beyond that? (Planning session, 09/22/97)

In another process-oriented drama activity I explored cultural norms with students by leading students through a drama activity as if I was the narrator of the story and the students were the characters in the story. During this process I asked them to concentrate on different kinds of rituals such as what someone does when they greet another person. After the activity I asked the students to evaluate what they had done. Again, Dave
questioned whether there was any academic value in exploring cultural norms with minimal reference to the plot of the story that we had just read:

Dave: With this activity I wondered about academic objectives - and I often wonder how important these objectives are. The exercise introduced the concept of cultural norms.... You are very good at setting scenes as the narrator of stills / slow motions.... Debriefing was interesting: “It’s better than writing down things.”... You know, again, ... I thought they were terrifically interested, but I’m not sure beyond this is fun we’re having a good time. (Journal 09/22/97)

Dave’s teaching philosophy, which stressed that learning should be measured by the students’ ability to recollect the plots of stories, meant that he was uncertain as to how we could use many of the process-oriented drama activities which I suggested. As an alternative to the kinds of process-oriented kinds of activities I was demonstrating, Dave suggested that we should plan for the students to create products, such as student scripts and performances based on those scripts, which would demonstrate knowledge of what they had read.

Dave: How about trying to dramatize.... Teaching them how to write scripts? Too complicated? (Planning session, 09/22/97)

I resisted Dave’s desire to create products and suggested an activity which would emphasize the student’s response to the literature being read:
Adrian: You know we could have them write a diary account of the death of Beowulf…. (Planning session, 09/22/97)

Eventually we opted for my suggestion and Dave collected the student writing samples.

An additional factor which influenced our lesson planning was my assumption that both Dave and his students would embrace the alternatives to traditional evaluation that process-oriented drama approached offered. For example, when Dave and I planned classes together he would ask me how we could get the students to create products based on the curriculum that they could perform for each other. Specifically, he would consider units he was developing for teaching plays, storytelling, and resume writing and ask what I could do to have students stage scenes, tell stories and complete “mock” interviews. At this point in the trimester, I found that the way in which Dave talked about the drama activities seemed to suggest he wanted a final product that the students could perform for each other. When I suggested that drama might be used with many different literary genres as a way of introducing a story, poem, play or essay, Dave invariably insisted on discussing product orientations.

Although some of the student’s writing was interesting, Dave emphasized that students needed to demonstrate their knowledge of plots. He explained that his involvement in the Coalition of Essential Schools helped to persuade him of the need for students to demonstrate their understandings of literature: “Are you familiar with the Coalition of Essential Schools? … One of the big things is exhibition. You know, that it’s graduation by exhibition, and competency by exhibition, that type of thing.” (Planning session, 09/30/97)
As I began to understand more about Dave, his philosophies, and the factors which influenced the way he was thinking about our collaborative lesson planning, I realized the significance of the tensions that existed between the way that he thought we should teach our lessons and the way I thought that we should teach our lessons. I knew that it was important that I support Dave in finding how process-oriented drama strategies could map on to his understandings of curriculum. To better understand the source of the tensions between my philosophy and Dave’s, and to understand how process strategies related to Dave’s conceptualization of curriculum, I will explain my philosophy regarding teaching and how I tried to use it to shape Dave’s and my collaborative planning sessions.

Factors which shaped my lesson planning during the study

I had begun the study with the assumption that process-oriented drama approaches could be a way of exploring the curriculum. I had based this assumption on the training in process-oriented approaches which I had received - usually outside of school classrooms. Even when I used process-oriented drama approaches in classrooms, I was often a guest of another teacher. Because of my guest status I was usually given free reign to explore any area of literature for as long as I wanted. Therefore, I had ample opportunity to explore almost any area of literature and curriculum that I wanted for a class period or two.

My naïve experience was tempered by realism when I arrived at Midwest High School. This dose of reality thus came to shape our collaborative planning.

One difficulty that we faced was student attendance and this was especially
demanding because of the nature of some drama lessons. Many of the activities that I led built on other activities that the students had begun in the previous class. Dave observed that when I “had run out of time, because of erratic attendance, in some respects, [I] was beginning again.” (Journal 08/27/97)

In my teaching experience prior to the study I had also worked in a system where each teacher could select an anthology of essays and stories, select an anthology of plays, select two novels, and select anthology of poems from a list approved by the Department of Education. Additionally, the composition textbook which supported writing instruction emphasized usage and process approaches to persuasive and argumentative writing. Since the students under the jurisdiction of the system in which I had taught came from largely poor families, eighty percent of the cost of the textbooks for all students were subsidized by the government. There was also a thriving used textbook market and the unquestioned expectation that all students would purchase all their books at the beginning of the school year. These experiences of working with self-selected materials that suited my taste had led me to believe drama could be used successfully in most aspects of the curriculum if the teacher was interested in exploring the approach.

Once again, the reality of the Midwest High experience meant that I did not have the kinds of choices that I had in my previous teaching assignment and that Dave and I had little latitude in our collaborative planning sessions. Dave and I felt restricted in the kinds of lessons that we could plan because of the limitations offered by the textbook, and because the students were unlikely to purchase any other additional texts. At Midwest High we worked with a limited and prescriptive curriculum for literature, and no textbook
to support writing instruction. Under this circumstance, even in the first few weeks, my former belief that drama could work with almost any curriculum was beginning to change. My initial assumption, based on teaching experience prior to beginning the study, was that process-oriented drama approaches could engender complex literary understandings if students used it to explore their own related experiences. I quickly became aware that, because I was limited in the curriculum that I could select, then I would need to be wary of the methods I used to approach that curriculum. In many ways, I felt frustrated that I could not use drama to support students in exploring imaginary worlds. Instead, I needed to concentrate on working with Dave on developing process-oriented drama ideas that worked within the way he viewed the curriculum and with the limited materials that Dave and I had available to us.

Because of the limitations of the literature text in particular and the impact that it had as a factor in our collaborative planning, I will explore the textbook in the next section.

How the literature anthology shaped collaborative planning

The issue of curricular constraints emerged as a factor which shaped the collaborative lesson planning of Dave and me by limiting the possibilities that we considered in our lesson planning. With our lesson planning limited, our attempts to rethink literature teaching from a process perspective were often short-circuited. Our understandings were limited to what we could accomplish with the particular curricular materials that we had on hand.
Our main difficulty was the literature anthology, a textbook with which we were provided. It was the only textbook provided in the school district for the teaching of grade twelve English. Dave explained to me that the textbook had been selected by an assistant superintendent several years before in order to ensure that all students in the district should complete a college track curriculum. Dave derided this choice of textbooks based on the fact that, in any school year, less than twenty percent of the graduating seniors would attend a four year college.

It seemed to me that, even if all of the students in the school were college-bound, this text offered Dave and I several obstacles for successful lesson planning. Dave and I felt the textbook was largely inappropriate for the students and this drastically reduced the number of selections that we thought we could use. First of all, a number of literary selections by authors such as Milton, Pepys, and Pope seemed to be of little use for us or our students. Dave and I held this perception because we thought the selections were distant from our students’ daily lives and the language was too demanding to solicit student interest. There were a number of authors that did hold promise and that, initially, excited both Dave and I. Even after we had identified these seemingly useful selections, a large portion were abridged. For example, both Dave and I felt that selections from *Frankenstein* might be appropriate for the students but were disappointed to find that what was offered came only from the “Foreword” to the book. Selections from other prospects that Dave and I thought would be appropriate for the students such as *Oliver Twist*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* were all offered in abbreviated segments totaling only 5 to 12 pages each.
A good example of the difficulties posed by the abridged literary texts can be found in the three page extract from Oliver Twist. The editors chose to include the famous “Can I have some more?” scene, in which the orphan Oliver asks his malevolent guardians for a second helping of gruel. One of the difficulties with this excerpt is that it is laced with a number of historical references which are unlikely to be understood at a first reading by student readers. These references include “the workhouse” - the orphanage-like institutions which housed nineteenth century British welfare recipients, “the board” - the management board that operated the workhouse, and the task of “picking oakum” - the task given to welfare recipients of separating rope fibers from one another so that they can be used for other purposes.

Obviously in reading any Victorian novel students will face the difficulties posed by historical context but teachers are able to provide the students with a number of activities which can bridge the differences in nineteenth and twentieth century language. Furthermore, as students read the novel they have the opportunity to become accustomed to the differences in language and social conventions, and they may become interested in the novel to the extent that they are willing to continue reading. When the students are given only a three page excerpt, however, they are more likely to “throw in” the proverbial “towel,” tiring quickly of a passage that, to the students at least, seems short enough to read but very difficult to understand. Dave and I concluded that the overly abridged selections which we typically would have thought were appropriate for the students made them useless. There was so little of the plot represented in these selections
that they could be barely understood by a reader that did not already know the entire selection.

In the foregoing sections I have considered how Dave’s and my philosophies toward teaching were factors which shaped our collaborative planning sessions. I have also explained how the staff and the school’s approach to curriculum and even the textbook itself all created additional factors which shaped our collaborative planning. Many of these factors remained constant over time. Nevertheless, as the study concluded Dave and I began taking a different approach to our planning. In the next section I will discuss what planning looked like near the end of the study.

Conclusions regarding factors which shaped collaborative lesson planning

By the end of the study I came to recognize that veteran teachers who are beginning to use an approach that is largely new, as illustrated by Dave’s response to the process drama activity are constrained by a number of factors. I have now come to understand that drama is a medium which requires a number of curricular supports from the both the school and school district. I have also come to understand that, because drama is a medium, teachers need to develop fairly sophisticated knowledge about and skills for enabling students’ understandings. In addition, it is important for the teacher to identify a match between her or his own teaching philosophy and teaching strategies.

I have also concluded that teacher change can be difficult to achieve, even when a collegial relationship is established between the teacher and the teacher-researcher who both intended to act as agents of change. Change is difficult because there are a number
of tensions which exist either within the context of the collegial relationship, or between the participants and the institutional context within which they conduct their work. In this study, I initially believed that the close collegial relationship between Dave and myself, the fairly extensive time that he and I had set aside for the planning, teaching and reflecting, and the school embedded, student-centered nature of the reform that we proposed to undertake, would all combine to foster considerable changes in our teaching. I concur that these features are necessary elements to foster professional development, but I now believe that a consideration of the match between the teaching strategy and the teaching philosophy, the amount of experience with the proposed teaching strategy, and the content knowledge of the teacher, are also critical factors to achieve educational reform.

**Part Two: Teaching the lessons**

In this part I will consider how lessons were implemented and the extent to which they “worked”. To accomplish this I will examine three different process-oriented instructional techniques that Dave or I used to teach a class of twelfth graders. In examining some techniques, I will focus on just one lesson in the unit; in other cases, I will look at what Dave or I taught over two or three different classes. For each technique I will discuss what lesson was taught and how it was taught, I will explain what “worked” or “did not work” according to the perceptions of Dave or myself, and I will discuss how factors such as student response or Dave’s or my teaching repertoire affected our implementation. In addition, throughout these explanations I will explain the tensions that
formed and the sources of those tensions, as well as the role that drama activities played in our efforts to teach related literary texts and a writing assignment.

Using tableaus to teach the *Iliad*

Dave tried many techniques to engage his students with literary texts but early in the trimester he felt that he was having limited success. This was especially the case with the *Iliad* where both Dave and I questioned the appropriateness of the text for teaching the students. Even though Dave attempted to engage the students in his lesson by having some of them read aloud and by making references to current events, he felt that he still had not made his classes active enough. He explained: “I know the ninth grade content well and I have lots of activities to keep the momentum of the lesson flowing. I did not realize how passive the lessons [in grade twelve] were until I started plowing through the syllabus.” He asked me later: “How can I make this literature relevant to these students?”

(Debriefing session, 08/27/97) Thus, the shadow of Dave’s skill in teaching grade nine hung over his implementation of lessons grade twelve. This created a tension between the skill we desired to use in teaching grade twelve and the actual, more limited skills that we were developing as we grappled with how to teach the grade twelve course.

When Dave and I talked about these issues I suggested that we could attempt to use tableaus as a method of instruction that might be a more active way of exploring the literary selection. By tableaus, I mean a “frozen picture” where the students use their bodies to create a depiction of an event. I also believed that tableaus might be a technique which would foster student response and thereby help to make literature more relevant to
students. I used tableaus in a number of different lessons in a few different ways. I believe that I can best characterize my use of tableaus by writing in detail about a couple of lessons rather than summarizing many classes. In the next few pages I will focus on two classes where we made an extensive use of tableaus so that I can undertake an in-depth analysis.

Tableaus are often created after students discuss a range of possibilities that they might attempt to depict. An important part of the process of tableau-making, especially in terms of fostering student’s responses, is that students are asked both to create a tableau of their own and to view and discuss the tableaus of other student groups. To initiate these two objectives I illustrated the use of a tableau with two students. I explained to the class that a tableau was a “frozen picture” or pose that a small group of students could create to depict an event. I explained how a tableau was a “living statue” where students molded their bodies to reflect an idea or moment that they were trying to convey to the onlooker without using words. I asked two students to come to the front of the room and strike a pose which illustrated anger. They were reluctant to stand in front of the class at first, but soon they clenched their fists and froze in position, demonstrating a tableau.

I grouped the class into four different groups and then explained that, before they shared their tableaus, they would need to discuss how they would represent what they had read. They would have five minutes. I also explained that, after each group developed their tableaux, they would show it to the other groups who would talk about and record their observations. This task would take ten minutes. It was my hope that these
conversations would serve as a foundation which I could use later to explore the relevance between the literary text and what the students had created in their tableaus.

I thought that the tableaus worked fairly well and that the teaching strategy served as a way to start some interesting conversations between members of the class. A couple of groups found it difficult to begin the process of tableau creation but, after ten minutes, eventually created tableaus. After all of the groups created their tableaus I asked each group to demonstrate them to the other groups. I was disappointed with the level of the student’s conversation at this point because I believed that they were making surface-level observations such as “He’s mad with that person”. My attempts to push them to more in-depth observations were not all that successful.

Dave, on the other hand, felt that the tableaus were successful. In his opinion, the tableau activity served as an activity that helped to fight the passivity in the curriculum that he had commented on earlier:

Dave: The tableau activity helped the last hour to move much more swiftly. I was surprised by how the students got into the activity. There were no shrinking violets. Everyone participated. Grouping seemed simple enough. [Your] directions must have been very clear because the groups functioned very well. (Journal, 09/12/97)

Dave also believed that, although the students may not have necessarily seen the relevance of the literature, they did at least have a chance to be involved in a thinking activity.
Dave: [Your] questioning allowed for students to use thinking / analyzing skills. [They] provided greater interest in the activity. I'd like to try tableau with my ninth grade classes - perhaps scenes from Short Stories. With ninth graders I may have to be more structured. I might even have to assign scenes rather than allow them to choose a scene. (Journal, 08/27/97)

Because Dave felt that the students had reacted positively to the use of tableaus and because he liked the way I had used them, Dave and I agreed that I would use tableaus again in the next class. However, the students in the second class were much more resistant. Many of the students complained: "Why do we have to do this?" In addition, the task was more complex now since the students had to create two tableaus in a sequence. Without the previous day's instruction, some students were confused. After the tableaus were created, I decided that we would share them in a slightly different way. I explained to the students that I was a "scientist." I explained that I had a special kind of three-dimensional projector. It was my hope that the students would understand that this "projector" was going to "project" their tableaus. The students found my explanation unclear. I had lost them.

My intention in using this strategy was two-fold. First, I wanted the students to make more links to the literature since Dave had identified this as a concern. Second, I wanted to expose the students to some different teaching strategies so that they would be anxious to make use of the process-oriented drama techniques. In spite of these good intentions, this strategy created a considerable tension between the students' expectations of what I required in the first class, and their expectations of what I required in the second
class. Although the students easily followed my directions the day before, they did not do so in the second class. As I introduced each group a few students hooted derisively and complained that the activity was "wack". Afterwards, I asked the students what they thought of the activity. They repeated some of the complaints I had heard at the beginning of the lesson such as "Why do we have to do this?" Other students had new complaints which were related to the relevance of the curriculum. Mallica, for example, asked what the relationship was between the activity and the Iliad. Another student asked what this activity had to do with survival on the streets. Although this lesson was supposed to specifically target Dave's concerns about the lack of student activity and the relevance of the literature to the student's lives, he expressed the same concerns as the students did. Dave wondered, "What is it I want these students to know before they leave my class? How important is it that we devote time to dramatics?" (Journal, 09/18/97)

I had a mixed assessment of the lesson. I was pleased that I had been able to link the tableaus by acting as a narrator because I felt that the suggestion that I was a scientist heightened the fictional world which the students' had begun to create. At the same time, I knew that Dave and the students had expressed difficulty in understanding both what this had to do with the Iliad. I wondered how I could account for the difference between my perception and Dave's and the student's.

In some ways the first and the second lessons were alike in that they both used tableaus, they both targeted student activity and a desire to build relevance to the curriculum as stated lesson objectives, and they both introduced something new to the student. In the first lesson the tableau itself was new. In the second lesson the way I
linked one tableau to another tableau was new. Although the two lessons held these similarities there were also a number of different factors at work which may have influenced Dave’s and the student’s assessment of the lesson.

The first factor was created by the students’ absentee rate. I had assumed that, for the second class, all of the students would know how to create a tableau. I had assumed that everyone could quickly reassemble and reproduce the tableau that they had shared with the class the day before. This was not the case. I did not want to repeat all of the directions for tableau-making that I had given in the previous lesson because I did not want students who were attending their second session to become bored. Instead I suggested that anyone who was not present in the previous class could get directions in tableau-making from someone in their group. This was a poor choice for a number of reasons. The first problem was that there were as many explanations regarding how to make a tableau as there were students. The second problem was that some groups did not have any students who had attended the previous class. The third problem was that some of the students who were attending their first tableau-making session were less than committed and could care less about what they were being told by their peers. As a result, their peers who were interested in tableau-making the day before quickly adopted the same uncommitted attitude. Perhaps the most serious problem was that I asked the students to re-create a tableau from the previous session. This meant that students who were attending the tableau-making class for the first time had to “copy” the work of other students. As a result, there were a lot of students having to explain to others that
“Yesterday Greek stood like this. That’s what you got to do”. The task was difficult enough considering the students had not seen what they were supposed to copy.

More importantly however, the process-oriented drama approaches that I have discussed are based on the principle that they are intended to support students in exploring and taking ownership of the way in which they learn and encounter the curriculum. As I analyze my lesson, I can see now that the lesson in no way embodied these principles. As a result of this experience, I am left to conclude that great care has to be taken in the way process-oriented drama activities are sequenced when they are spread out over a number of days. The problem that I experienced only occurred once because I was careful to not repeat again the same pattern of activities spread over two days. It would be helpful if I could experiment but I do understand from my experience that I would have to be wary of the problems that are inherent in continuing an activity from one class in the following class.

There was also a second important factor which was present in the second class which was not present in the first class. In the first class the process-oriented drama activity was in some respects similar to Dave’s own teaching repertoire and the kinds of instruction that the students had received on earlier occasions. In its simplest form, I had asked the students to work in groups and share their work with other students. In some ways this was akin to a strategy that Dave had used in other classrooms where he asked students to create a scene from a play and perform it for others. Obviously, the process-oriented drama strategy is different but the form of the lesson - create and share - was at
least recognizable to both Dave and his students. Therefore they were comfortable with this strategy.

In the second lesson I used a strategy with which they were not so familiar. In addition to leading the class in a group activity I also took on a role. Indeed, even this role was not a familiar one to Dave or his students. I had drifted, in the eyes of Dave and his students, a long way from the *Iliad*. Thus, drama as an *activity* was a useful way of learning about English but drama as a *way of exploring* the English curriculum appeared to make less sense to Dave or the students. Dave or the students did not interpret my attempt at the use of a teacher-in-role strategy as one that was useful as an “instructional strategy” or as being useful for creating a set of “representations for teaching particular topics” (Grossman, 1991, p. 9). Thus, I found that tensions occurred between participants when the purpose of an activity was unclear or when the relationship of the activity to the curriculum was unclear.

*Beowulf*: Moving from tableau-making to hot-seating

At about the midway point of my study I began to understand that it was important, when implementing process-oriented drama approaches to teaching English, to select a teaching strategy that was appropriate for the students. I arrived at this conclusion after teaching some lessons which were lackluster and some other lessons which were exciting. In this section I will describe a lesson which I had difficulty leading, I will describe my analysis of what I believed to be weaknesses of that lesson, and I will describe a second lesson which worked better. In both cases, I will also describe Dave’s
reaction to the instruction and the conclusions that he reached. In this way, I will address both my and Dave's perceptions of what worked and what did not.

At the outset of a unit on *Beowulf* I chose to weave the students' tableaus together so that they told the same story as the epic poem. The approach seemed to work well at first. I introduced the activity by setting the scene:

Adrian: Remember now, that this is the story of *Beowulf*. (TJ and Moses talk quietly. Most students are still standing in their groups at this point). Beowulf who was a great warrior. (Mallica talks to Moses and TJ) And who came to our land to rid us of a horrible evil. After he succeeded in his very difficult task, many people came together from around the land and celebrated. There was an air of reverence as they met for the first time. (TJ puts his arm inside his shirt and his sleeve hangs limply. A pencil sticks out like a claw). (Classroom session, 09/20/97)

I saw the minimal talking by students and TJ’s pretending to be Grendel as a sign that there was some engagement between the students and my reading of the text.

I was pleased that I had managed to make Old English in translation so exciting to the students, and this initial success bolstered my desire to continue my teaching strategy. I made things a little more difficult. I explained to the students that, as I continued to read, I wanted them to silently show the tableaus that they had made at the beginning of the class. This was an unusual combination of narration and tableau but I thought that Dave would be impressed by the way I was combining a process-oriented drama strategy that he had seen me use before in this new way. I thought that he would like the strategy
because it helped the students link the plot of the story with the activity, and that his excitement about my approach might resolve some tensions that we were experiencing.

Adrian: (Continuing to narrate. At this point the students are imaging they are meeting for the first time after the evil monster Grendel has been defeated) And then they froze at this time and we looked toward the back of the room, (Student: That’s right) and we could see (Students laugh as they look to the back of the room and see one group’s tableau) a great warrior standing in a brightly colored orange shirt—

TJ: Oh, oh, that’s me!

Adrian: We could see him meet other warriors and friends for the first time in a long time. (Jamal embraces Marcy. Students giggle. Greek begins to talk.)

Marcy: Uh-huh! (Jamal wraps his leg around Marcy’s legs and makes humping motions, rocking her back and forth on her legs - Marcy pushes him away)

Adrian: [Earlier we had made a “rule” that students could not touch each other when demonstrating their tableau.] Now you’re not supposed to touch each other right?

Jamal: Oh, you didn’t tell me that.

Adrian: And as we saw two people sitting and two people standing, we saw them meet for them first time.

Greek: Hold up. ‘Scuse me....

Carlos: You just jacked up our whole story man....

Greek: See, we can’t even do it-

Adrian: OK.

Greek: ‘Cuz the scene was just jacked up!

Adrian: I’ll change it....

Greek: We do what we was going to do?

Adrian: You do what you were going to do. (The students share their tableau.)
Mallica: What’s that? A joint? (A student laughs.)

Unidentified student: A-h-h! He rolled down a window!

Adrian: Thank-you very much. And so, after we finished watching them smoke the ceremonial marsh grass, we turned to the final couple of two men sitting quietly in the corner where they greeted each other. (Classroom session, 09/20/97)

Dave doubted that I had accomplished any of the things that I had set out to achieve. Later Dave said:

Dave: I thought it was an interesting scenario because it did get into other issues. The groping, the smoking, and I wondered, you know, I don’t know, you know, I probably would have just ignored it, you know, but on the other hand, I think the idea behind the activity is for them to figure out how do they celebrate their big victory, and when they all smoke a joint, maybe we missed the point. (Lesson debriefing, 09/20/97)

Because my lesson did not seem to focus on the kinds of things that Dave was looking for, because I had not motivated my students in the way I had hoped, and because I felt that I had attempted a strategy that did not seem to make a lot of sense to the students I felt that my lesson had not worked.

I was disappointed with the outcome of this lesson for a number of reasons. Primarily, I was disappointed with the lesson because it, in many ways, achieved the opposite of what I wanted to achieve. If anything, I felt that this lesson would create doubts in Dave’s mind as to whether or not process-oriented activities could be used to support a student in remembering the details of the plot. I was also disappointed because I
felt I did not succeed in moving the students in the direction in which I hoped they might go. I need to explain this by saying that in the beginning of the lesson we talked about the kinds of greetings that students typically offered one another. The students, especially the boys, discussed a number of stereotypes which were a part of the drug sub-culture. I had hoped that I could lead the students in exploring some alternatives that were related to greetings which would be different than the kinds of stereotypes that the boys offered. It seemed to me at the end of the lesson that I had not succeeded in doing this. In addition to these concerns, I also felt that I had needlessly confused the students. It seemed to me that they, in good faith, were trying something new to them. Thus, a critical tension for both Dave and I was that we deliver instruction which supported student discipline. My lesson did not do this and therefore raised questions about the viability of process-oriented drama strategies for our classroom context.

Although there were questions regarding the initial viability of the process-oriented drama strategies, I thought an analysis of my lesson would help Dave and I in realizing the potential of the strategies. I believe that the structure of my lesson was one of my fundamental difficulties. I had structured my lesson so that I combined a number of different teaching strategies together at the same time. These strategies assumed the students understood a number of conventions. I needed them to understand the atmosphere and value it, to manage their participation in groups, to understand that the tableau was silent, and to know how to place the tableaus in a sequence when prompted so that they could tell a story. Although the students had done tableaus before, they had never combined so many conventions together at the same time. In addition, many of
these conventions were different than the kinds of activities that teachers often used with these students. Usually when teachers ask students to participate in an activity they are usually given very explicit instructions as to what they need to do. In my case, the instructions were more implicit - such as when I spoke to the students in the third person, told them that they were warriors, and told them that they turned to see a group at the back of the room. Obviously, this was a tall order for students who were beginners at using these sorts of activities.

Although it was difficult for the students to integrate a number of different conventions into a process-oriented drama activity it was not impossible. The lesson that I described above required students to integrate a number of different conventions for me to implement it. The lesson that I will describe next required students to integrate as many conventions, but in a different context. I believe that because the context was familiar to the students it was much easier for them to integrate all of the process-oriented drama conventions into their performances.

Dave became interested in whether we could use drama as a way of managing some students who, in recent days, were becoming increasingly disruptive because of their antics. As a result of Dave’s concerns, I suggested that I could use a hot-seating activity to explore Beowulf. In this case I asked the class to imagine that Beowulf was to appear on “The Jerry Springer Show”, a controversial television talk show familiar to most students. Up to this point some “class clowns” had created classroom management issues. I resolved this tension by using process-oriented drama strategies as a management tool. I asked one of the troublesome but witty students to take on the role of Beowulí, and
then initiated an activity where the audience peppered him with questions. Later, in a second hot-seating episode, a second student who was also doing a lot of clowning around made a “surprise appearance” as Hrothgar on the show and challenged Beowulf’s ability to kill the evil monster Grendel:

Adrian: Who would be the first person you’d want to interview on The Jerry Springer show? (brief pause) The king or do you want to interview Beowulf?

Mallica: Beowulf.

Adrian: Beowulf. OK, So, Beowulf: I think we should all welcome Beowulf to the Jerry Springer show. (I motion to a seat for Mickey T.).


Adrian: And now waiting in the wings , as they always have on Jerry Springer, they have the entourage and the King sort of back stage, but here up front - Mickey, let’s turn your chair around so you’re facing the audience (Mickey T. gets up, turns chair and sits) here we have Beowulf on the Jerry Springer show. 

   Lets stop the drama now for a moment. Now what are the kinds of questions that we would have…. (Classroom session, 09/22/97)

In the example above, taken from the same unit of instruction as the example before it, the students are able to observe all the conventions that they could not observe earlier. They create the appropriate atmosphere, laugh and are silent where appropriate, manage their participation in groups, and begin to respond dramatically when motivated. This observation brought me to the conclusion that a part of the skill of using the process-oriented approach is the selection of the activity and the matching of the activity to the
student's experience. If students do not understand the conventions required of them, this does not necessarily mean that the teacher should pick an activity with fewer conventions or that is less complicated. Instead, the teacher needs to select and lead an activity where the conventions are as complex, but are more readily understood by the participants. Since the students knew the very same conventions needed to be used in the context of The Jerry Springer Show, this was nothing new to them.

In this case, Dave had reached the understanding that this was not just a “fun” activity. Instead, he saw it as setting the students up, or as he explains, creating an anticipatory set, for further reading:

Dave: The tableau comes alive. You have taken a still shot and put it to life. Beowulf appears on The Jerry Springer Show. Students understand the format. They are contemporary TV watchers. You ask questions which are challenging. “What questions would you ask our celebrities?” Students respond with good questions. Commercials bring positive responses from the students. [Commercial breaks were inserted as a way of stopping the drama to reflect on what had been said during the hot-seating sessions.] Today’s activity was a good anticipatory set. Great participation. No heads down... That was fabulous. I mean, that was the best. And again, ... this is really what they know best. They know talk shows. (Lesson debriefing, 09/23/97)

Dave also felt that the drama worked because it managed the behavior of some students. Dave and I knew that students who sometimes clown around can upstage the dramatic activities by not taking them seriously. In the case of The Jerry Springer Show, the students were encouraged to respond as Jerry’s guests do: it was appropriate to laugh, point and jeer. Just as Jerry’s guests do, it was also appropriate to become hushed at
critical junctures as the student-“guests” revealed important details. These included Beowulf’s boasts regarding how he might kill Grendel and Hrothgar’s fears because of his inability to do away with the monster. In this way, the students were both able to understand a conflict of the epic poem, and also understand the importance of boasts in Old English literature.

The Jerry Springer genre worked as a “way in” for students to relate their own experiences to the curriculum, and as a way to engage with Beowulf. The Jerry Springer genre also gave the teacher an opportunity to use the conventions of the drama to focus the student’s behavior in the same way that Jerry can focus his guests. In a sense, the drama gives the teacher an avenue to focus who says what when. Like Jerry, the teacher could control the microphone which limited who could speak, and had the ability to cut to a “commercial” which ended immediately any confrontations between students who took on the role of powerful warriors because they returned, without being prompted, to their student role. Thus, the combination of the student’s familiarity of the TV talk show genre and the teacher’s ability to use the conventions of the genre through the manipulation of the microphone and commercials combined to let the students who liked to clown around to earn, in an academically useful way, the attention that they craved. Dave concluded: “You were able to take the clown and make best use out of him. So that worked out fabulously well.” (Lesson debriefing, 09/23/97)

Thus, in my initial example, my combination of process-oriented drama strategies was misinterpreted by the students. They had difficulty combining the narration that I was doing, the way I was speaking about them in the third person, and the tableaus they had
created into a coherent representation. This is because they did not understand the way in which I represented the Beowulf to them. As a result, the class soon went awry.

It is important that the teacher realize that there are many features in drama that inherently control the student. In this section I described how I redirected the tension of classroom management which was an issue in Beowulf into participation in Jerry Springer. The job for the teacher is to know how to orchestrate the drama activities so that those features are operationalized.

Resume writing: Dave combines teacher-in-role, mantle-of-the-expert and writing-in-role

Later in the study Dave wanted to combine a number of different teaching strategies so that we could teach a unit on resume writing. Initially he suggested that the students could write a resume, anticipate questions for an interview, and complete a mock interview with either us or a couple of additional adults who we would invite into the class. Recalling the positive student and teacher reaction that we experienced the last time we integrated a number of different tasks which I described in the previous section, I suggested a number of alternatives to Dave. Dave decided to combine the teacher-in-role and mantle of the expert approach (Johnson & O’Neill, 1984). Later he combined these strategies with a writing-in-role strategy. In this section I will explain the approaches, describe how he used them, and assess whether or not we feel they worked. I will find that the approach Dave used worked, not because if the students’ sophisticated knowledge of process-oriented drama strategies, but because the task of looking for employment was
well-known to students. Like the Jerry Springer Show, the students could link the teacher’s instructional approach with their own life experience.

When Dave used the teacher-in-role strategy he took on the role of an agent for an international company.

Dave: My company is not looking for, this is not a dirty job. These are people who are going to be trained as managers. We want good workers. We know that Columbus is a very tough labor market. But we’re going to pay 15 dollars an hour - more than anyone else. But by God, we want the best workers that the city can offer. We don’t need people with specific skills. We don’t need commercial artists. We’re going to do our own training. Previous experience is OK, but we’re going to train you the way we want.

Dave also added the mantle of the expert by endowing all of the students with the characteristic of expertise in a particular area. In Dave’s case, he welcomed the students to class one day by explaining that they were all recruiters for a high paying hi-tech company. Still in the role of a coordinator, Dave explained that the student’s jobs as expert recruiters were in jeopardy if they were unable to solicit more high school students to be employed as junior trainees who would later become the next generation of computer whiz kids:

Dave: OK. I want you to think about it for just a minute. You are all being hired as personnel managers. We want you to do the hiring of workers. You’re not going to do this job. You’re going to hire the people to do the job. And you can promise them that they are going to start out at 15 dollars an hour and eventually make 65 dollars an hour. Your job is to hire the very best people.

Now, what I would like you to do is, right now we’re going to do a little bit of a brainstorming session. Your job is to hire a good work force, but we can’t afford to hire a
lot of people so we have to make sure they’re suitable. What are some of the questions that you’re going to ask? (10/10/97)

Dave took the students through a series of tasks where they devised their own interview questions, formulated a protocol of questions, conducted interviews, and wrote summarizing reports. Sometimes Dave dropped out of his role and returned to a strategy that he frequently used as a classroom teacher. In the exchange below, Dave asked TJ to tell what he had learned about the hiring process at a nearby Honda assembly plant. The following two excerpts illustrate the degree of student engagement with Dave’s instruction:

TJ: Probationary period. If you miss one day out of the ninety days you’re fired. No excuses.

Students: Say what? Sick?

TJ: You can’t be sick. If you have a death in your family you can’t leave. 90 day probationary period.

Dave: (Returning to his role) And we’ve got the same sort of policy. As a matter of fact, we’re going to try to get some of the best Honda employees to work for us, because we need good workers like this. (Out of role) What else are we going to ask?

TJ: Probationary gotta be strict. Ask them if they can follow the rules.

Charles: What if you’re shot up? In the hospital?

TJ: That’s it man. No excuses.

Jamal: I don’t really think you’d care what your job was at that point. (laughter)

Charles: (clutching his chest) Shoot me later man. I gotta go to work.
TJ: For the drug test they pull the piece of hair off you. You don’t pee in a cup no more. (Classroom session, 10/10/97)

As a part of Dave’s unit on resume writing he also had the students interview each other as if one student was the recruiter and the other student was the prospective employee. In some cases some students wanted to clown around with their role as a prospective employee, but the student-recruiter felt emboldened by her new role and easily controlled the behavior of the errant perspective employee:

Greek: My name is Greek and I am doing interviews. At this job we require a resume and we’re not making any exceptions. (Laughter)

Jamal: See, I have a resume but it’s being typed right now.

Greek: Why would you be interested in working for us?

Jamal: I’d be interested in working for ya’ll because I know this is a very prestigious company and the pay is nice, able to support me and my 2 kids, me being a single parent and all.

Greek: Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

Jamal: I see myself working my way up in this company. Making it better using my knowledge.

Greek: Oh, so are you trying to say that our company is not good.

Jamal: I’m not trying to say that. What I’m trying to say...

Greek: That’s what you’re implying.

Jamal: You cut me! I can help make it even more excellent.

Greek: OK. Well, at this time we don’t have any openings right now. (She stands and shakes her hand, as she laughs.)
Everyone: Wh-e-e-e-e-ewww!

Mallica: Jamal, you’re not gettin no job. (Classroom session, 10/17/97)

During much of this leading Dave was able to manipulate dramatic tension to engage the students. In the first transcript excerpt, students wanted to find out how to get high paying jobs. In the second excerpt students wanted to see if Greek would hire Jamal. Dave manipulated dramatic tension by increasing their stake in doing their “job” correctly. He quickly built his skill in teaching using the mantle of the expert approach by being able to manipulate student interest through the kinds of prompts that he gave the students. After the class we talked about one example in which Dave kept building the excitement of the drama by using increased dramatic tension to keep the students interested:

Adrian: You seemed to keep upping the stakes from time to time to keep the students interested.

Dave: I suppose I reminded them intermittently from time to time [that their jobs as consultants were on the line] so they would take this seriously. I don’t know. I’m not sure that that was a conscious decision. Maybe I had a sense that if I didn’t consciously remind them that they would eventually begin to screw around, which they didn’t do. But I couldn’t tell you whether my upping the stakes kept them - I imagine, because I think this is an assignment that’s fairly easy to blow off. I think that having the kids have papers and do the 2 minute assignment at the end [the paper which reported whether the “employee” was hired] was a measure of accountability. I mean, I had watched you do the mantle of authority or whatever it is, that’s not what it’s called, the-

Adrian: The mantle of the expert...
Dave: ...the mantle of the expert, and the build-up that you gave and so I was really conscious of doing a build-up, and I wanted there to be some credibility. I think that it almost had to be to the point where they almost had to believe that there was a job like this and I'm not sure why. And to be honest with you, I was impressed at how much into character these people got. I mean I knew that Jamal would clown,... but I was pretty impressed with the answers that the kids gave. (Lesson debriefing, 10/17/97)

Dave was excited that he was able to alter his focus on teaching resumes away from his traditional use of the “employer - prospective employee” role playing in which he asked the interview questions and students answered them. He found that when he used the more process-oriented drama strategy and allowed students to take on the employer role so that they could consider what employers were looking for, he experienced sound results. Later, Dave told me:

Dave: I was impressed at how well this worked because, to be honest with you, I thought, “Oh jeez, they’re just going to blow this off” but they really took the assignment very, very seriously. Floored me. (Classroom debriefing, 10/18/97)

In this section I have described how Dave was able to combine a number of strategies so that he could use them to teach students as they explored various aspects of resume writing. Although there were a number of complex teaching strategies being used, the students were able to understand and work with these strategies because they had some familiarity with the way the “world of work” operated. They knew about employee screening and job interviews and they could
easily take the place of the people who typically interviewed them when they went to apply for a job. As a result, the students easily negotiated the combination of teaching strategies that Dave used.

In part two I have described the implementation of the lessons that Dave and I planned. I have considered how we assessed what worked or did not work, and I have considered student response and our teaching repertoire as factors which created tensions and which might affect lesson implementation. Additionally, in part two I also described some of the conversations that Dave and I had after each lesson to assess whether or not the lesson had “worked”. Although I have already offered some response to my third research question, in the next part I will offer some additional material from Dave’s and my debriefings that demonstrate how our debriefings worked.

**Part Three: Debriefing sessions which made sense of and reflected on the use of process-oriented drama activities**

In this part I will examine the issues that were discussed during debriefing sessions and how the teacher and teacher-researcher made sense of these issues. Although I have already discussed a number of these issues, I will consider two more key issues. First, I will discuss how Dave and I dealt with the issue of assessment in our debriefing sessions. Second, I will consider how students’ responses to the activities were examined in our debriefing sessions.
The issue of assessment

When Dave and I began teaching, assessment quickly became an issue. I interpreted assessment as teacher or teacher-researcher’s judgment regarding the usefulness of a process-oriented drama approach in our teaching. Thus, the debriefing sessions and my interpretation of the student response to classroom instruction was of great value to me since it helped my assessment of Dave’s and my teaching and the students’ learning. My orientation to assessment was well-matched to this study because it helped me to understand the way I constructed my judgments regarding whether or not a particular process oriented drama strategy worked or not. On the other hand, Dave’s interpretation of “assessment” was more aligned with student concerns. He viewed assessment as an evaluation of the ability or understanding exhibited by a student, especially the understanding of course content such as how well students understood the plot and characters in literary texts. Dave reminded me in a number of debriefing sessions that the students were likely to ask “How much is this worth?” Therefore, it would be important to answer this question and to explain to the students what they had to do to earn points for completing a process-oriented dramatic activity. If we were unable to do this, Dave explained, the students would be unlikely to undertake the activity.

Morgan and Saxton (1987) have made a thorough contribution as to how teachers can begin to think about the assessment of drama teaching. Their work supports both my and Dave’s orientations to assessment. They explain that assessment can be constructed as a kind of teacher-sense-making, which seemed to be my orientation toward assessment. Of course Morgan and Saxton also explain that process-oriented approaches can also be
assessed both in terms of student product, which seemed to be Dave’s orientation to
assessment, and that teachers can have the option of formally assessing drama through
some sort of test, a strategy more in line with student expectations. Clearly I would need
to rethink my initial assumptions regarding assessment.

The issue of assessment arose early in the trimester when I used tableau-making
as a teaching strategy. In an effort to make the tableaus and other activities a more
significant part of the lessons, I suggested that Dave could assess the tableaus by giving
students a “participation” grade. Dave agreed and we occasionally reminded the students
that all of the activities were worth points. However I did not see any evidence that Dave
factored these points into the student’s grade. I also doubted that the students were
concerned about this “grade”. Although I saw many students ask Dave on repeated
occasions what grade they had received in tests, quizzes, or assignments, no student ever
asked what grade they received for a drama activity. I think that Dave did not keep a
careful record of points allocated for drama activities because we never really decided
how many points each activity would be worth, and because we did not plan far enough
in advance to decide how points would be distributed in our assessment of an
instructional unit.

Although assessment was clearly an issue from the beginning of the study and one
that could not be easily resolved, it became a point of tension across the trimester. Early
in the fourth week Dave expressed his concern regarding the lack of a relationship
between some of the process-oriented drama activities that I used to lead the class and
students’ learning of course content. This was especially true when students seemed to be
highly energized by the activity in which they were involved. For example, when students created tableaus as a part of a lesson on the *Iliad* which I described in part one, Dave remarked: “I think they had a good time, and I think they worked very well. [But] from a schools point of view, somewhere along I think we have to say, ‘Now what is it they learned today?’” (Lesson debriefing, 09/15//97)

I began the unit on *Beowulf* by asking the students to think of all the things that might threaten them if they lived on an isolated island. When Dave and I debriefed this brainstorming activity Dave noted:

Dave: I think you have to be the consummate master of running a three ring circus. Now I thought the activity where the kids spend time [brainstorming] how we’re going to deal with this threat - I thought that was a very good activity. I don’t think of it in terms of a dramatic activity so much as just a creative activity. I thought it was very good; and I will tell you that when you did that, all 25 - 26 kids participated…. But I don’t call that drama. You know, again, I don’t know whether it’s all in the planning this thing about the academic objectives… I thought they were terrifically interested, but I’m not sure beyond “this is fun - we’re having a good time”… whether they picked up anything else. (Lesson debriefing, 09/22/97)

The problem that Dave and I faced on these occasions is that I was assessing my lesson as a successful one because my criteria for assessment was student involvement or engagement with the content of the literary text. Dave, on the other hand, continued to be troubled over the relationship between the lesson and how he could evaluate the students. Soon we began to re-negotiate a new use of the process-oriented drama activities.
effect of this renegotiation was not to resolve the tension that arose regarding assessment but rather to relegate it to a back burner.

Although Dave felt that we could not evaluate students based on their participation in a drama lesson, Dave did feel that the student responses could be used as a measure of how well the lesson was being received. We came to think of the students’ response to the activities as a barometer which could be used to gauge the student receptivity to the readings and writing assignments. By barometer, I do not mean a “measure” that Dave and I used to “confirm” the ultimate success or failure of our initiative. Instead, the students were a “gauge” which Dave and I frequently checked, not as a measure of content knowledge, but as an indication of student engagement with the content. For example, in my field notes I wrote: “I did not seem to be very interested and since she’s one of the ‘better’ students I am wondering about the choice of activity.” (Field notes, 09/11/97) In a debriefing between Dave and I, Dave observed:

Dave: Some of the kids really picked up and became very attentive, but other kids almost tuned out. Montel began to tune out the conversation…. Jade really began to tune out. Mickey T wasn’t affected at all. He kept doing what Mickey was going to do. (Lesson debriefing, 09/22/97)

Dave’s perception that an activity “worked” began to shift from concerns with information to discovery of ways to engage student interest:

Dave: I think there is quality [process-oriented drama] there. I mean, basically, when you’ve got a group of kids like we have at Midwest High for two hours
you’ve got to be awfully good to deal with them. If you’re in a suburban school you’ve got a captive audience. They’re going to sit there and you can just have’em read for 45 minutes or an hour but in a city school if you don’t do something the kids, the kids get ah, they’re unmanageable. (Lesson debriefing, 10/20/97)

This shift was critical for three reasons: First, it served to motivate us to keep attempting the initiatives we had undertaken; Second, Dave was able to redirect his concern from assessment of content knowledge to putting his students in a more active role as learners; and Third, the tension regarding assessment was transformed into an issue which helped to shape and support the drama instruction rather than an issue over which Dave and I disagreed. Thus, assessment became more informal and focused on how students were responding to content such as the literary texts he assigned.

A case of assessment and how it was considered in the planning, teaching and debriefing sessions

Up to this point, I have attempted to offer typical examples that were illustrative of the kinds of planning, teaching, and debriefing that Dave and I undertook. I believe that I have depicted a balanced picture where both Dave and I initially struggled with the process-oriented drama strategies and where we were eventually pleased with our teaching. In this section, I will describe Dave’s instruction of Macbeth and identify a number of factors that conspired to create difficulties. This instructional unit captured many of the elements that can
frustrate collaborative professional development and since these elements need to be understood if educators are to move forward in educational reform, it is important that I detail the problems here. Before I begin to describe this case I must add that neither Dave nor I were able to apply the drama strategies that had worked for us earlier in the trimester and that I described in earlier sections. In the following pages I will explain the factors that made it difficult to use the strategies we successfully employed earlier. The purpose of describing what happened in the *Macbeth* unit is not to point any fingers of wrong doing or to judge our collaboration as a failure. Instead, I am interested in a non-judgmental understanding of what stood in our way of using process-oriented drama strategies after earlier achievements.

*Macbeth* was the final instructional unit in the course. Dave and I had talked about the teaching of the play and I suggested to Dave that he might want to undertake the majority of the planning and teaching as an opportunity to experiment with most of how he implemented process-oriented drama approaches without my participation in the lessons. I suggested that I might offer some support, perhaps teaching parts of the lessons that he planned, but he might now take full responsibility for using the dramatic activities.

As usual, we undertook a joint unit planning session on a weekend. I suggested Dave might give the students an introduction to the play, show a movie version, and have the students participate in activities that would tie the movie and the activities together. Specifically, I suggested that after the students had seen the play he might want to
incorporate an activity where the students would have the opportunity to do some re-
reading of scenes with some activity that he might want to devise. Dave liked the plan,
especially since he had not had an opportunity to read the play up to this point. Dave told
me that he would devise and teach the lesson and that I would be able to jump in where
appropriate. Dave also reminded me that he would be out of class many times during the
next two weeks. The use of the movie, readings, and activities appealed to him because
he perceived they would be easy for a substitute teacher to implement.

The weekend passed and I went to the school on Monday. As we were getting set
up I asked Dave whether he had a chance to read the play. “This morning”, he responded.
He explained how some issues with his sons had arisen over the weekend and he had not
had all of the time he thought he would to read the play. I was concerned that Dave would
have difficulty implementing different kinds of process-oriented approaches if he was
struggling with the content of the text.

Dave began his class. After the vocabulary portion of the lesson he explained how
the next unit was Macbeth. The students collectively groaned. Dave talked for a few
minutes about the history of the Elizabethan theatre which he knew from his Romeo and
Juliet preparations that he had made for his grade nine class. Then Dave turned out the
lights, closed the drapes, and started the Macbeth videotape. After a few minutes most of
the student’s heads lay on their desks. As the movie played, Dave would occasionally
speak over the audio track and explain that this actor was playing the part of Banquo or
“That’s Macbeth”. After an hour one third of the students had seen the first two acts. The
remaining students had seen none of the play because they had their eyes closed. As the
bell rung and the students left Dave explained how he had to run home to get ready for his upcoming meetings which would take him out of town. In fact, over the next ten days Dave would only teach two classes. He explained to me that a number of the professional development activities in which he was involved would take him to a teacher retreat in-town or to two different meetings which were being held out-of-state. Dave had mixed feelings about this. On the one hand, he was excited about meeting with and seeing other colleagues from across the country who were interested in collaborative professional development. On the other hand, he was loathe to leave his students in the middle of the Macbeth unit.

At this point, Dave was struggling with at least three tensions: my suggestion that he teach the unit using a process-oriented approach which was still largely new to him; his own lack of content knowledge; and his need to plan instruction for a substitute teacher. After Dave finished showing the film, he went back to a strategy that had worked well for him in the past. Dave divided the class in groups and asked them to select a scene from the play. The students were then asked to write a version of the scene in contemporary language, rehearse the scene, and present the scene to the class.

The grading criteria for the students’ dramatic interpretation were not clearly expressed. Generally speaking, students were expected to read the scene and include some movement and props. Students received a total of about 90 minutes over three days to prepare their presentation. Many of the students that I observed did quite minimal preparation on the first two days and rehearsed their scenes only on the third day. These rehearsals were a difficult task for the students since there was almost always at least one
student missing from each group on any particular day. Two groups of students were so stymied by these difficulties that on their scheduled performance day they said they were in not ready to perform their scene and told Dave he should give them a "zero grade." Dave and I fixed this problem when I took both groups into the hallway outside the classroom. While Dave graded the performances of other groups inside the class, I rehearsed with two groups outside the class. I returned with my two groups after 30 minutes and I read the speeches of the absent student actors, so that all of the groups were able to successfully perform the scenes that Dave had assigned.

When I reviewed the videotapes of the students performances they followed a set routine. The students read from their texts in a wooden manner. These readings were accompanied by some minimal movement and a couple of props. I asked Dave what he was looking for when he was grading, and he explained that he was really grading student participation. For the couple of students who created exemplary performances characterized by fluid readings and movements which had required some preparation received an A+. For Dave, the student performances were a high-point of the unit. He felt that they had worked reasonably well because all of the students were involved in the creation of their scene in some way. Dave perceived this activity as successful because it was a teaching strategy that had been in his repertoire for a long time. Moreover, it fit with his general concern that students become actively involved in reading assignments.

In spite of considerable exposure to process-oriented activities and some success in leading process-oriented activities himself, Dave opted for activities that fit more comfortably with his teaching repertoire and that permitted him to evaluate student
performances. I believe that Dave did so for at least three reasons. First, Dave’s teaching emphasized the need to cover plot, as he often wondered if his students understood the literary texts. Second, when Dave was challenged to teach a play that he had not read, it was easier for him to reach into his teaching repertoire and use the strategy of student performances that had worked well for him in the past. Dave knew from his years of teaching experience that it was important for him to solicit student interest, and he knew that some student activity would be a way of keeping the students interested. Having students perform scenes from 

Masseth was a way of doing that.

The third reason that Dave opted for student-performed scenes may have been related to the way Dave planned. Dave explained to me that he was very much a short-term planner.

Dave: I feel that I don’t have a longitudinal look at things. I’m more like “What are we going to do tomorrow?”. “What are we going to do in 15 minutes?”. And I’ve been like that for 29 years. It’s difficult doing the block [scheduling which features a 2 hour class, 3 times a day]. I pretty much plan on the back of an envelope. I mean, I knew some stuff but the stuff gets pulled together. I don’t think sequentially. I tend to branch out when I think, and then at the last minute I pull everything together. (Debriefing session, 11/10/97)

Thus, given Dave’s experiences and the demands he faced at that time of the trimester, Dave’s instructional choices made a lot of sense.

Because Dave utilized a short term planning strategy, it may have been difficult for him to conceive a series of activities that were process-oriented and interrelated. This meant that it was easy at the beginning and the middle of the course for Dave to plan
process-oriented drama activities that were one or two classes in duration. When Dave taught resume writing, he had only imagined that the interview portion would last for a day. Therefore, when he was challenged to develop a process orientation to teaching the material, he was only challenged with generating one free-standing lesson plan. With *Macbeth* however, planning became more difficult as the lessons had to be planned in advance to permit the use of video tape and a series of activity-based lessons. Planning was also complicated by his lengthy absence from the classroom while he attended professional development activities. Consequently, because I had not provided Dave with the opportunity to construct interrelated activities that extended over a series of classes in a seamless string, it was difficult for him to use process activities that might have enabled him to construct a more coherent process-oriented representation of a complex story.

Grossman (1991) explains that a key element of pedagogical content knowledge is the “knowledge of instructional strategies and representations for teaching…. Experienced teachers may possess rich repertoires … while beginning teachers are still in the process of developing a repertoire of instructional strategies and representations” (p. 9). Although Dave was a veteran teacher, the twelfth grade literature curriculum and the process-oriented drama repertoire of strategies were both completely new to him. Representing the play to students using a sequence of process activities over several consecutive classes required a much more complex repertoire of strategies and representations. Therefore, it is not surprising that Dave chose to avoid a process-oriented approach to an entire unit of instruction, especially since the difficulty in devising the unit would be compounded as he was reading *Macbeth* for the first time.
The *Macbeth* case illustrates a number of things. It shows that the timing of professional development activities can actually have an adverse affect on instruction. More importantly the *Macbeth* case shows how, when Dave struggled with content knowledge, he reverted to the strategies that had worked for him in other contexts. He played the videotape, which he had done before, and the students re-enacted scenes from the play. All of the process-oriented strategies that Dave and I had talked about and that he had modeled in his teaching of the resume, seemed to be swept away. If pedagogical content knowledge is a teacher’s understanding of how the curriculum can be represented to students, the *Macbeth* case demonstrates that pedagogical content knowledge first requires an understanding of the content in the curriculum.

**A student debriefing and a teacher debriefing**

Dave and I wanted to gather some final impressions from the students and I was anxious to gather some final impressions from Dave. In this section I will describe the feedback that students gave us and then I will examine the sense that Dave and I made of that feedback. We had tried having the students write their responses regarding their feelings toward process-oriented approaches to drama and the responses were extremely short. Indeed, many students did not respond. In an effort to solicit response Dave and I decided that we would try talking to the students regarding what they learned. Not surprisingly, the questions Dave and I asked mirrored our orientations toward assessment. Dave asked:
Dave: (To Adrian) The last thing you asked was what did you learn from the activity.... (To the students) This is of questionable value unless you can walk away and say today I learned...

Jamal: Yeah, instead of just saying it was easy and we got credit.

Dave: So, Mickey T., what did you learn?

Mickey T.: What did I learn? ...I learned about the conflict. How it was back in those days. Everything man. I learned how to work with people, you know what I’m saying. How it was back in those days. What ever the story was trying to get at I learnt about it. (Classroom session, 11/15/97)

Although Dave was interested in what students had learned, I was interested in what “worked well.” I thought that this question was one with which Dave and I had been concerned since we started the study and that the students’ response would yield interesting discussion between Dave and I:

Adrian: I’m wondering what activities that we did over the past few days that you liked a lot. That really seemed to work well. Mickey?


Adrian: So, now, tableaus you don’t actually act out.

Mickey T.: It’s like a frozen image, you know what I’m saying? Of what was taking place of what we was talking about. It’s pretty straight....

T.J.: They’re straight. It beats writing out stuff....

Adrian: Now I’m thinking that the reason that we write down stuff is so that we understand it and we can study it. Now, when you go home tonight, we got nothing written down. Is that a bad thing?

T.J.: See, you can think about how you reacted towards the scene and put it towards the story.
Mickey T.: And you can read, you know what I'm saying, you can read the story too, man. It's better than writing. You know what I'm saying. You gotta make learning fun man. You don't want to be boring, sitting here talking, and nobody will listen and go to sleep.

Adrian: OK.

Mickey T.: Now I mean, you do something with the whole class and you learn better (T.J.: Yeah!) People don't understand, and they talk - -to -- much. (Mallica laughs.) You know what I mean, give us work. You know what I'm saying? If we do things hands on, you know what I'm saying, do it, act it out man, I'm trying to tell you, everybody'll pass man, you make it more interesting. You give us respect, we give you respect. (15/11/97)

It seemed to me that Mickey T. was making a powerful case for using the kinds of process-oriented techniques that we had been exploring for the past couple of months.

T.J. and Mickey T. had suggested that the activities which we undertook were a way of approaching literature which might be useful to the learner. I was anxious to talk to Dave and get his reaction to the students’ claims but before I had a chance some students challenged Mickey T.’s enthusiastic claims with a more balanced view:

T.J.: I mean, sometimes, you gotta write, you know what I’m saying. Like, I'll argue something like that [that sometimes students need to record notes and reflect in writing], but not every little thing you know. Like, we got like fifty thousand definitions man, and it’s like, I mean, when we get older we ain’t going to be able to remember what all these definitions mean, by the time these guys get older.... I mean, I’m like, I know what it is if it’s in the sentence, I’m not that stupid, if you give me the word ...

Mickey T.: Like he was saying, if we write it down, it ain’t going to get read at all, but if we have a good time and act it and play it out and stuff, we’ll remember stuff like that. Like, Ye-e-eah, I’m going to remember that play because we act it out and did Beowulf... ([Mickey sings:] I’m gonna tell you how much I know about this story baby because it’s the first time I followed a story).
Jamal: Man, I agree with everybody’s point, but still I think that a lot of teacher’s … are trying to get you ready for the next level. So we’re going to have to take notes. We’re going to have to sit there and listen to the talk in the lecture and take my notes and what else, and learn all the vocabulary and all that, we gonna have to do it any way and a lot of it is preparation. … But some people … ain’t thinking about that. It’s very little challenge if we just get up and act it out. What did we learn from that?

Mallica: (Seriously) How we know we won’t do tableaus at Columbus State? (Classroom debriefing, 11/15/97)

Although Jamal seemed to criticize the drama work when he said this, I asked a follow-up question:

Adrian: Who agrees with Jamal that to be prepared for Columbus State or Ohio State, we need to do notes?

Jamal: My statement wasn’t blanket. We gotta make it half and half. (Classroom debriefing, 11/15/97)

I was interested in the students’ response since their feedback seemed to be a more sophisticated understanding of the process-oriented drama strategies than they exhibited in class. I was interested in whether Dave had the same perception. He did not. Instead, the tensions between our different perceptions mirrored our different outlook regarding the usefulness of the drama strategies.

Dave and I met to review the students’ comments after the class. My impression of the students’ comments was that they reflected the kind of approach that I had hoped to take in using process-oriented drama approaches to explore the English curriculum. On
the one hand, some students saw the approach as one that acted as an alternative to traditional instruction that worked for them. On the other hand, other students recognized that process-oriented activities could not be the only kinds of instruction in the English classroom. Dave did not share this view. For Dave, the students had observed that the process-oriented approaches could be useful, but they had failed to provide any evidence that they were useful:

Dave: I like the way the discussion was going and I was going to stay out of it, but I really wanted them to identify… Mickey T. made a great point but then I wanted [him] to clinch it by giving me some evidence, by giving YOU some evidence, and that’s one of the notes that I wrote down. I was concerned that what they learned was, what they thought they were supposed to learn was “when I get together with other people” and I don’t know -
I thought the discussion – I wanted them to give me the proof. And .. ah....

Adrian: …I believed them. I mean I don’t think they were just saying it.
I don’t know. Do you believe them?

Dave: I think I believe they enjoyed themselves. (Lesson debriefing, 11/15/97)

Thus, I concluded that both Dave and I were representing in these reflections the same kinds of tensions that existed regarding student evaluation. For me, it was sufficient that the students were engaged and “felt” a usefulness for what they had done. For Dave, the usefulness for the student could only be assessed after the students offered some kind of product or exhibition - in this case, through the use of examples which demonstrated how they had made use of the process-oriented lessons.
In part three I have added to my description of Dave’s and my debriefing sessions by looking at the case of *Macbeth* and the case of how the students made sense of the drama instruction that they had received. In part four I will summarize my findings.

**Part Four - Conclusion**

At the beginning of this study I found that Dave believed drama was a useful way of creating a product and by the end of the study I found that Dave still emphasized this product orientation. A second finding was that Dave used process-oriented activities when they were particularly suited to certain literary sections and if he had content expertise in that area. If he had less content experience, he was less likely to use the process approaches and more likely to return to his old teaching repertoire. Thus, the changes that occurred in Dave’s practice during the course of this study were small but noticeable. Throughout the study I noted that a number of tensions occurred which affected the way Dave and I viewed our planning, teaching, and debriefing. I have detailed how these tensions resulted from institutional factors or from differences in the way Dave and I viewed the purpose of our instruction.

Although I have depicted tensions and findings in great detail throughout chapter four, my purpose in this brief conclusion is to summarize my findings. The following two tables summarize the way Dave’s and my beliefs evolved with regard to curriculum, student ability, and assessment over the ten weeks of the study. There are two important trends that are reflected in these tables. First, Dave began to adopt some of the process-oriented drama strategies at the midway point of the study but was foiled at the end of the
study by a series of complicating factors. Second, I began to increasingly appreciate the complexity of introducing alternative teaching strategies to a veteran teacher in a classroom context.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of instruction</th>
<th>Weeks 1-2</th>
<th>Weeks 4-5</th>
<th>Weeks 8-10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dave's position toward the curriculum</td>
<td>Proc. Or. Drama * is a way of creating a product which represents the curriculum, such as scenes from plays. The relationship of Proc. Or. Drama to curriculum that doesn’t have an inherent product element (such as a play) is questionable.</td>
<td>The curriculum can be manipulated to create increased possibilities for Proc. Or. Drama. Through this process, stdts can move beyond activity to active interest.</td>
<td>Proc. Or. Drama is an <em>instructional method</em> which can be used to: a) have stdts create products which represent the curric such as scenes from plays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave's interpretation of student activity</td>
<td>Understanding of Proc. Or. Drama is limited to “production” activity by students. Activity is a way of keeping stdts interested.</td>
<td>The manipulation of the curric to foster Proc.Or. drama possibilities means student interest can be manipulated by the teacher by controlling the student’s stake in the activity.</td>
<td>b) solicit the interest of stdts. c) foster engagement, if - based on the content expertise and drama skills of the tchrs - the curriculum can be manipulated. d) group stdts in a different way, thereby permitting them to be active, but in a controlled way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave’s assessment of what worked or did not work</td>
<td>Proc. Or. Drama works when a product has been created by the students as a response to the literature they have read.</td>
<td>Drama may be useful as a tool the teacher can use for fostering literary interest amongst stdts.</td>
<td>Proc. Or. Drama is useful for supporting the students in creating a product as a response to the literature they have read.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Proc. Or. = process-oriented drama

**Table 7**: Dave's evolving beliefs toward aspects of English instruction using process-oriented drama as a teaching strategy between weeks 1 and 10
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of instruction</th>
<th>Weeks 1-2</th>
<th>Weeks 4-5</th>
<th>Weeks 10-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adrian’s position toward the Curriculum</td>
<td>Proc. Or. drama is an approach with many methods. My assumption that the methods can be used with almost any curric. Is questionable.</td>
<td>Although Proc. Or. drama might be used in all areas of curric., this may not occur if chr has: a) limited content knwl b) limited skill with new method; is not malleable with curric.</td>
<td>Proc. Or. Drama approaches can be used individually, but can also be combined to form a powerful medium. Such a medium requires curric. Materials and tchr ownership to achieve it is full power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian’s Interpretation Of student Activity</td>
<td>The assumption that Proc. Or. drama necessarily brings about a complex level of understanding regarding critical issues in student’s lives is questionable. A teacher’s skill devpmt is crucial. The numerous methods give teachers lots of opportunities for evaluation.</td>
<td>If the tchr’s skills in Proc. Or. Drama are limited, the tchr must select activities appropriate to the age and experience level of the stdts.</td>
<td>Careful material selctn &amp; tchr skill can assist in stdt. Management. Failure to develop skills/curric. may result in abandoning of Proc. Or. Drama because of control issues. Tchr’s understanding that drama controls stdts by focusing them allows stdts to take ownership of activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adrian’s Assessment of what worked or did not work</td>
<td>My assumption that Proc Or drama can be used with all stdts. Is questnbl. It offers alternatives for a) instruction &amp; b) evaluation.</td>
<td>Tchr must clarify objectives and align them with both traditional and non-trdtl assessment to realize more opprtnty for Proc. Or. Drama.</td>
<td>In addition to the tchr evaluating the stdt to see what or what doesn’t work, the stdt must also evaluate her/his learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Proc. Or. = process-oriented drama

Table 8: Adrian’s evolving beliefs toward aspects of English instruction using process-oriented drama as a teaching strategy between weeks 1 and 10
Although the tables summarize what occurred during the course of the study, they do not capture the interrelationships between aspects of instruction depicted in the first column and the interrelationships within aspects of instruction that affected our planning, teaching, and debriefing. When I categorized these factors I noted that Dave's and my work was principally affected by curriculum, student activity, and evaluation. Within each category, there were a number of factors which vied for attention. Figure 4 represents these relationships. Although this diagram reflects what I found in this case, factors like curriculum, evaluation, and students activity are ones which are of interest to all teachers and the educators that prepare them.
Figure 4: Relationships between factors which influenced Dave's and my emerging understandings regarding our pedagogical content knowledge and the use of process-oriented drama approaches.
The arrows used in Figure 4 depict the interrelationship between and among curriculum, student activity, and instruction which emerged from the analysis of my data. This representation of the interrelationship within and between factors is significant because it elaborates on an earlier model developed by Swanson-Owens (1986). Whereas Swanson-Owens suggested that teachers “filtered” new strategies they were learning through their own interpretive lens, I am suggesting a filter which is more fluid because the dynamics of the interrelationship between factors is always changing in the directions indicated by my arrows in figure 4. Furthermore, these arrows illustrate the tensions to which I have referred throughout chapter four. I will discuss the implications of these findings more completely in chapter five. For the purposes of this chapter, suffice it to say that I have concluded that those interested in reform need not only to consider the parts, but they also need to consider the relationship of the parts to the whole.

Figure 4 shows the relationship between these factors and has important implications for those who undertake professional development initiatives and who focuses narrowly on either a curricular initiative or an evaluation initiative. My figure shows that these areas are related when teachers begin to undertake reform in their practices. Teachers as professional developers cannot focus on everything at once and they at least need to be mindful that changes in curriculum can affect teacher knowledge, skills and attitudes regarding evaluation.

It is important that those interested in reform look at both curriculum and the evaluation of how it is implemented. Even when looking at instruction, reformers might consider the relationship between the teacher’s objectives, the teacher’s instruction and
the student activity. When teachers are changing their practice, a change in one of these features may also yield a change in a different feature. It is because of these rich relationships that teachers interested in developing their practice and those who work with them need to think about their professional practices in a holistic way.

In the final chapter I will explain the significance of these findings for those interested in professional development initiatives. I will also consider the limitations of these findings, how further research could be conducted differently, and suggest future directions.
CHAPTER 5

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

I undertook this study to examine the planning, teaching, and debriefing of lessons that occurred when a veteran English teacher and a teacher-researcher worked together in a context of collaborative professional development. The task of the teacher-researcher was to consider how he and his collaborating teacher used a set of teaching strategies that were new to both of them in the teaching of a grade twelve English class in a Midwestern city. The study considered both the implementation of a certain set of teaching strategies and the institutional and classroom contexts in which the collaborative professional development was conducted.

There were a number of factors which shaped the planning and teaching sessions and the debriefing sessions the collaborating teacher and I engaged in as we implemented a teaching strategy that was largely new to us and to the students. In some cases these factors were institutional factors and in other cases they were professional and philosophical differences between the collaborating teacher and myself. In most cases, these factors fostered tensions which affected how the collaborating teacher and I assessed the usefulness of the process-oriented teaching strategies. Upon analyzing these
factors, I found that the sources of tension could be grouped under three major categories which included "curriculum", "student activity", and "evaluation". In this chapter I will review each of my research questions and discuss my findings in the light of relevant research. I will then discuss the limitations of my research study, outline the implications of my research, and summarize my recommendations.

**Question one: The role of planning sessions in the support of teacher change**

While Dave and I claimed we were committed to implementing process-oriented strategies, a number of factors challenged that commitment. These challenges amounted to tensions that existed among the process-oriented drama approach that we were trying to implement, the usual order of business at the school, and Dave's routines for teaching his lessons. Because of these tensions, the collaborative planning sessions were not enough to support Dave and I in undertaking the process-oriented strategies to the extent that I had hoped. When Dave and I talked about how much planning we would typically do for a class we agreed that we were spending far more time planning for this course than any other course that we might teach. Dave and I discussed the kinds of planning that we conducted for other courses and agreed that we typically drew on our extensive content knowledge and our knowledge of teaching strategies to select appropriate ways of teaching our students. Since our content knowledge for this course was sketchy and the teaching strategies we would use were the focus of lengthy discussion, it is no surprise that planning for this course took more time than other courses that we planned. Dave and I spent little time planning the kinds of objectives that we wanted the students to achieve.
Part of the reason for this is that we were preoccupied with figuring out what we needed to teach, how we could adapt the problematic curricular materials for use in the classroom, and how we could represent the curriculum using drama strategies. When we did speak about objectives, they were often lower order cognitive objectives such as “we want students to know the plot of a story.”

Because Dave and I had defined only a narrow range of objectives during our planning sessions, we were likely to assess our work in a limited way. Although a planning session or lesson might have achieved a number of outcomes, Dave and I were likely to judge our work based on only one part of the student’s performance. We tended to look at a limited number of student behaviors rather than student’s thinking and values. This form of assessment was in line with Dave’s understanding of what he wanted from our collaboration. He saw my work with him as a process of “learning new tricks” and his judgement of a limited range of student behaviors allowed him to assess his mastery of these tricks. This was not what I had hoped for. Because I hoped for a deeper understanding of how Dave and I might reconceptualize our teaching, I began to question this limited way in which we were judging the students’ work. I began to question this limited way in which we were judging the student’s work. Thus, a tension developed between Dave’s desire to continue to emphasize plot-oriented objectives and my desire to construct more elaborate objectives.

This dichotomy came as a surprise to me. In the very early stages of my study I had believed that I was delivering a highly contextualized form of professional development. I therefore assumed that by the end of the study Dave and I would hold
similar views. Indeed, Hundert (1996) asserted the value of delivering customized professional development in a study she published which examined the circumstances under which drama teachers would undertake new teaching strategies. In my study, I attempted to undertake professional development within the context of a constructivist and collaborative relationship. Nevertheless, Dave and I still struggled with planning our lessons. Dave and I worked at creating a collegial relationship almost every day of the study, we still had differences.

Although Hundert suggests that collaboration yields results, my findings suggest that working with a teacher in a peer collaboration does not, by itself, guarantee success. Although those who are interested in professional development have vigorously pursued collaborative approaches, it is important to recognize that collaboration does not necessarily cause teacher change or development. Several factors such as differing beliefs and concerns regarding curricular goals are also a part of the interaction between collaborators. Therefore, collaborators must consider the context in which they find themselves, especially the concerns and belief system of the teacher with whom they collaborate.

There are, however, other contextual factors beyond the collaborators control. They include the institutional limitations which constrained Dave and I and Dave’s conceptualization of teaching within the culture of the school where he worked. Surely, for a Professional Development School active in a number of initiatives, more could have been done to support Dave in his lesson preparation and teaching. It is alarming that the virtually non-existent support offered by the school and the district have been touted as
being on the forefront of professional development. Just as Dave was limited by the institutional support he received, he was also shaped by the culture of the school in which he worked. The way in which he viewed the use of drama as a set of procedures was congruent with the expectations of how teachers should teach students. It is therefore no surprise that the students covered material but did not typically engage with the literary selections.

As Dave and I planned, he turned to a number of sources. For example, Dave heeded the advice of his fellow teachers and, for the most part, followed the chronological order of the textbook they suggested. Additionally, he followed their direction to place a considerable amount of emphasis on vocabulary. Thus, Dave, whether he wanted to or not, had a lot of support for following a rather traditional curriculum based on teacher presentation of information and little support, except from me, in looking for alternatives entailed in the process-oriented drama activities. Because there was more support for a traditional approach than the kinds of instructional change that I advocated, it is not surprising that I acted as a change agent who disrupted routines, but not one who could fully implement change. Based on this analysis, I am left to conclude that the application of the process-oriented approach that I attempted to implement is governed to a large degree by a teacher’s system of curricular knowledge and meaning. A collaborative professional development approach, by itself, was not in this case sufficient to challenge the traditional way of doing things. In this case, where both the teacher and the teacher-researcher claimed that they were committed to implementing a teaching strategy which was new to them, additional supports were needed in order for the
participants to fully implement the strategies that they were attempting. These supports might include planning time before the beginning of the course for the participants to familiarize themselves with the curriculum content and the range of lesson objectives associated with that content. An additional support might include the provision of additional curricular materials so that the participants could have greater flexibility in selecting literature that is both relevant to the students and useful for implementing a process-oriented approach.

During our lesson planning, Dave and I had a number of difficulties identifying the instructional objectives for our students. No doubt this is because we were often struggling with the curriculum that was new to us, but often the significant problems were a result of time and materials. For example, in some cases we were reading the content of the textbook days or even hours before the class to be taught, and there never was an opportunity to do additional research that would allow us to interpret what we had read. Since there were no alternatives to the text, it was exceptionally difficult to tailor the course to what we saw as our students' needs as readers and writers. The traditional way the course was taught as articulated by other teachers, the dearth of instructional materials, and our lack of long-term planning combined together so that we were often left with chronological representations of literature for the students. Thus, Dave and I were struggling with both the purpose or objective of why we were teaching what we were teaching and our ability to tailor the curriculum to the students.

Accordingly, there were a number of challenges that Dave and I encountered during our collaborative planning. We were challenged by factors such as time and
materials in our planning. Collaborative professional development can become more complex than calls to “customize” inservice development suggest. Although Dave and I thought we were initially “trying out some drama methods,” in fact we were struggling with conflicting teaching repertoire, curricular meaning, and our ability to use appropriate activities in teaching students.

Question two: Perceptions of process-oriented drama approaches to teaching English

My findings regarding teaching support those of a study undertaken by Louden (1991) who developed a collaborative planning and teaching relationship with an experienced teacher of a combined grade eight and nine class. In his study, for example, Louden describes how he used a pseudo Wheel of Fortune game show format to support student interest in a science lesson. When the Wheel of Fortune case is considered, the teachers appear to pass through three stages in their attempt to take the textbook’s representation of science and make it their own representation of a lesson. At first they attempt to “teach content,” then they try to “entertain,” and finally they find a way, even with the negligible content knowledge, to take ownership of the curriculum in a way that worked previously for the teacher when she taught in a different content area.

My research appears to support Louden’s findings in that Dave passed through similar phases. At first he emphasized content and then he viewed the drama approaches as entertainment but with little substance. In Louden’s third phase two things happen. At first the teacher finds a way to take ownership of the curriculum, and then she finds an approach that will work for her even though she knows little about science. With Dave, a
similar pattern developed. At first, in the mantle-of-the-expert approach when students
did interviews as employers and employees, he was able to take ownership of the
curriculum, building a natural sequence of events to foster student writing. Later, when
Dave taught *Macbeth*, a text with which he was unfamiliar, Dave reverted to concerns
over student performances rather than concern over the thinking and engaging he had
focused on in earlier efforts.

Because a teacher experiences an early initial success, it does not mean that she or
he has mastery of a teaching strategy. When teachers are challenged by implementing
strategies that are new to them it is important that they have ongoing support. Although I
attempted to give ongoing support to Dave by my presence in nearly every class session
and I spent a lot of time modeling, I spent much less time supporting Dave’s own efforts
as he led the classes. Just as he was beginning to try different strategies and facing some
challenges, the course ended and I concluded my study. Thus, collaborative professional
development must provide provisions for ongoing support over extended periods of time.

My study offers additional insight to Langer and Applebee’s (1987, p. 87) claim
that an alternative teaching strategy is “relatively easy to introduce... as long as these
activities fulfill important pedagogical functions.” Perhaps one reason that I was
challenged by the implementation is because the purpose and goals of process-oriented
drama were not made clear enough to Dave or to the students. Since we thought of our
work as an experimental, it was easy for Dave to disregard the process-oriented drama
lessons as peripheral to English instruction. Certainly the way the lessons represented
English to the students was different than the reading, talking and note-taking to which
they were accustomed. Applebee (1996, p. 105) explains that most English classrooms have tacit student understandings regarding “what it means to ‘do English’....” Therefore, I concluded that a part of the difficulty with implementation lay in the fact that the alternative strategies that Dave and I undertook were not a part of the conventions of English teaching as perceived by Dave and his students. Thus, when I attempted to have the students create tableaus to illustrate something they had read, it was not recognized as a legitimate alternative to the traditional approach where students typically recounted the story. Hence, I was met with the student’s claims that what we were doing was “Wack” because it was not viewed as a part of the discourse system which characterized the English classroom.

On the other hand, the students more readily engaged with process-oriented drama activities when they took on the role of the employer or where they took on the role of audience members in the Jerry Springer show. It is likely the students did not view these discourse systems as being a part of the English classroom either. They probably did, however, have an understanding of the discourse involved in job interviews and television talk shows based on their own experience. Thus, while they may not have viewed what they were doing as English, they did recognize the conventions of behavior and were able to understand how the activity related to the goals of those lessons.

Because the students’ feedback is being carefully monitored by the teacher, the students influence the instruction, thereby helping to shape it and, in some cases, own it. Accordingly, this led to some more positive developments in our collaboration. For example, I explored the concept of boasts in Old English literature by “interviewing”
students who were placed in the role of Hrothgar and Beowulf on a fictional Jerry Spring show. When it was popularly received, I was encouraged by the student response, and extended the activity by encouraging the student Beowulf to boast about his prowess as a soldier. This recreated the boasts of the literary figure of Beowulf in the epic poem. This episode represents one element of process-oriented drama that Dave and I were unable to develop to our satisfaction. One assumption of process-oriented drama is that activities become generative, leading teacher and students more deeply into ideas and experiences. Yet, because Dave did not develop an internalization of such a notion, he was unable to make use of process-oriented drama as part of his own routines and repertoire. This, in turn, led us to interpret our perception of our collaborative teaching in different ways.

**Question two: Evaluating our perceptions of our teaching**

Part of this study included a consideration of Dave’s and my perceptions of “what worked” and “what did not work” during our lessons. Although I did not clearly identify to Dave that this was a research question, our informal discussions of lessons often led to this issue. Perhaps this occurred because our debriefing sessions were conducted immediately after our lessons, allowing Dave and me to consider the high and low points of the lessons that we had just taught.

When I was planning this study I generated a number of research questions. In some cases these early versions of research questions concentrated on “effectiveness” or “success.” I believed that these question were not helpful to a process-oriented approach
because they placed too much emphasis on an end product. Therefore, I eventually devised the research question which asked whether or not the lessons “worked.” I believed that the more provisional nature of this question better captured the process orientation that was the foundation of my study.

This is no longer my belief. I have now concluded that because Dave and I were focusing on whether or not the lesson worked, we were focusing on our teaching strategies in an evaluative way. Obviously, evaluation is an important component of education. Estimations of success and effectiveness allow teachers to make good use of their time and resources. I am certainly not arguing that these are not important questions. I am arguing, however, that when teachers are making fledgling attempts to take on a new strategy, an emphasis on evaluation or whether or not something worked may prematurely discourage the teacher. It is easy for a teacher to ask whether a lesson “worked”, answer in the negative, and abandon the new teaching strategy. Therefore, I have concluded that teachers and researchers really need to ask “Where do we go from here?”

This unintended emphasis on judgments regarding the success or failure of the lesson also limits the dialogic nature of the collaborative professional development initiative. When I reviewed my field notes I noted lines which I reported in chapter four such as “I wanted to impress Dave” or that a lesson that did not go as I had intended was “painful.” This suggests that if I am concerned about how Dave is judging my teaching then we cannot be equal partners in the reflection that occurs after the lesson. I was left to conclude that if a process-oriented strategy lies at the center of the collaborative professional development initiative, it is important to consider the kinds and extent of
evaluative activity. It is important to understand that evaluative language may have an effect on collaborative efforts and therefore evaluative activities must be considered carefully.

**Question three: Debriefings as a way to collaboratively reflect on teaching**

The debriefing sessions were an important part of this study because it gave both Dave and I an opportunity to identify and discuss emerging concerns with one another. I have identified these concerns in detail in chapter four and explained how the development of an ongoing collegial relationship was fostered, both by my everyday visits and teaching in the classroom, and by our ability to debrief each lesson.

The debriefing sessions fulfilled a number of purposes. First, from a collegial perspective, the sessions served to identify emerging concerns and address them in a collegial fashion. Second, from a methodological perspective, the debriefings served as one of multiple data sources that allowed me to interpret the myriad of concerns that were discussed in debriefing sessions. Still from the methodological perspective, the student debriefing sessions served to solicit responses from both Dave and I. These responses, in turn, served as a new data source that helped me to understand the positions that Dave and I had taken with regard to the usefulness of the process-oriented approaches. I do not mean to imply that the students' claims suggested that one teacher was "right" and one teacher was "wrong" with regard to the usefulness of process-oriented approaches. Instead, the student talk helped to initiate a different way of looking at the way the teacher and the teacher-researcher viewed the use of the teaching strategies. The student
conversations caused Dave, for example, to doubt the usefulness of the process-oriented strategies because the students did not provide proof for their claims that the strategies helped them to learn. The students’ conversations caused me, however, to view the implementation of the process-oriented strategies as having both strengths and weaknesses. Thus, both the content of student talk and the ability for student talk to engender teacher and teacher-researcher reaction, is an important feature of the debriefing process.

The factors to which Dave and I attended during the debriefing sessions, or what Swanson-Owens (1989) called the “locus of attention,” were especially apparent. My study affirms the work of Swanson-Owens (1989). She developed a theory regarding “curricular systems of meaning”, based on the teacher’s conception of student knowledge, the materials the teacher used, the self-defined role of the teacher, and the teacher’s evaluation of students. Although these factors were different than mine, there are distinct parallels in the emphasis on curricular materials and in the acknowledgment that students had an impact on teachers.

Swanson-Owens (1989, p. 80) found that, although these themes were all significant, the nature of their impact on the teacher was influenced by a “locus of attention.” She explains that the locus of attention acted as a filter which governed how the teachers viewed the lessons they taught under Swanson-Owens’ mentorship. I found that Dave and I similarly had a locus of attention. Dave, for example, focused on how students might construct products which demonstrated their ability to relate what they had read. I, on the other hand, focused on how Dave and I could construct lessons which
would lead the students through activities that would engender complex understandings of a literary world. Thus, my study supports Swanson-Owens’ finding that a locus of attention might be an important factor in the implementation of alternative teaching strategies.

Implications

This study has implications related to both professional development and teachers in general English education in particular. Certainly this study illustrates the complexity of professional development initiatives. Hundert (1996, p. 211) has suggested that “three conditions of the teacher’s work environment seem to impede the institutionalization of collaborative initiatives for site-based staff development: isolation, time constraints, and traditional role definition.” Although this study seemed to adequately deal with overcoming classroom teacher isolation, yet time constraints and Dave’s interpretation of his role as one who should maintain the scholastic traditions of the English program were impediments that I did not initially consider when I began the study. These impediments have even greater significance since this study took place in a school that was committed to professional development through a number of initiatives. Thus, it must be concluded that a school and teacher’s involvement in professional development does not by itself negate impediments to change: reform at the school district and school level must connect to classroom practices if changes is to be realized in the way that students are taught.

It is important to note that this study was conducted within the context of a classroom, embedded as it was in all the buzz and confusion of school life. As such, this
kind of field-based research is a valuable tool for viewing professional development initiatives. I found that the claims currently articulated by those interested in professional development - that reform needs to be longer-term, embedded in a school, related to students, and collegial rather than private - were very helpful for investigating this case. The need for protracted reforms undertaken in school-embedded, teacher- and student-centered contexts certainly suggests that those who undertake professional development through the "one shot" hour-long in-service session need to give some thought as to how their work will be implemented "on the ground."

The research that I have reported also illustrates a number of factors which complicates professional development initiatives conducted within the context of a Professional Development School (PDS). The analysis of these factors and the development of plans to address them is crucial if university-school partnerships are to function in an ongoing and sustained way. This suggests that it is important for researchers to not only document "exemplary cases" which are judged to be successful by the participants, but also to focus on cases which have difficulty in surmounting challenges. Perhaps through the study of such challenges educators might be able to surmount them. Clearly, the implication is that problems are our "friend" (Fullan, 1993) and researchers must study the problem so we can reap the benefits of problem resolution.

Indeed, in Dave's and my case, the claim that professional development needs to be embedded in a school was especially significant. It is because our study was embedded in a school, that I found that students' responses can be used as a barometer to support the teachers' understandings of what works and what doesn't work. This use of the student as
a barometer of the status of the professional development initiative’s implementation points to new directions for traditional professional development which is often undertaken after school, in a couple of hours, when no students are present (NCTAF, 1996). Because we placed the reform efforts in the classroom, Dave and I could see how the new understandings that he acquired were ignored when he had to teach a play that he had little opportunity to study himself. The authentic context of seeing how planning is implemented in a classroom situation, underlines the value of site-based collaborative research as a way of yielding results that are useful for both teacher educators and teachers.

Although I attempted to conduct a collaborative investigation with my cooperating teacher, I was not able to tell a joint tale. I believe that this is something that I would like to investigate further. If teachers and teacher educators are to collaborate together on a methodological level, it is important for teachers to join researchers as collaborative storytellers who relate the narrative of their professional development journey when they report their research. I have taken a small step toward telling a tale in a collaborative way - in this study I have included lengthy excerpts of transcripts where Dave is the speaker. Yet, this is just one small step. If teacher educators are to claim that they want to collaborate with teachers, it is incumbent on the teacher educators to support the teachers in being equal partners and participants in telling the tale of collaborative professional development.

There are also implications for English educators and teachers with regard to the nature of the curriculum. The lack of English teacher ownership of the textbook was an
example that did not seem to be in harmony with the stated reform mandate of the school. In many cases, the textbook did not support the recently developed instructional objectives stated in the *State of Ohio's Model Competency-Based Language Arts Program* (1996). For example, the state mandates that students have the ability to use reference books, style guides and explore genres and tones used in writing, but no style guides or books organized by genre were made available. In many cases I have seen texts explore tone, which can be a subtle device for students to understand, by placing prime samples which are of student interest side-by-side in a section devoted to tone. There were no such arrangements in the English curriculum with which Dave and I worked. Clearly, the resources need to be available to support the mandated curriculum, and ideally, teachers would have some ownership in the choice of literary texts.

If a greater sense of ownership could be felt by English teachers in their selection of literary texts, this might support a greater alignment between the kinds of teaching they would like to do with their students and the kinds of teaching they actually do. In the case of Dave and I, I perceived there was a disconnect between the kinds of teaching philosophies we articulated and the kinds of teaching practices we undertook. In my case, I hoped that the students would engage with social issues represented in literary texts through the medium of drama. I found that instead, I was usually trying to think of activities that would “cover” the literary selection in the textbook. Perhaps if English teachers could empower themselves by increasing their role in the articulation of curriculum, they could unite their teaching philosophy and their teaching practice.
Although attention needs to be paid to what is taught, this study clearly indicates that attention also needs to be paid to how the teacher conceptualizes teaching. This study suggests that the development of a teacher repertoire for representing content requires texts, time to read and interpret those texts, and support for implementing an array of teaching strategies that will make the texts accessible to students.

This study also illustrates that teachers rely on established routines even when they are learning a new teaching strategy, and that the development of new routines is a time consuming process. These findings challenge the current school practices of a time-pressured world where increasing demands are placed on teachers. Clearly, use-of-time and a long-term view of assigning teacher duties needs to be considered if school districts are to support collaborative professional development.

Finally, this study suggests that process-oriented drama strategies are demanding for English teachers to use. Perhaps the strategies are demanding because the activities are so complex and powerful. They offer a reservoir of potential for those who are interested in developing their teaching repertoire. The power of drama strategies lies not in the activities, but in the interaction between the activities, the students’ life experiences, and the teacher’s ability to frame the drama and to lead students through the drama. The complexity of this interaction between drama as a teaching medium, student response, and a teacher’s skill suggests that drama offers a rich, but demanding way for professional developers to explore the development of teacher repertoire.
Limitations and recommendations for further research

This study is not meant to characterize the teaching that Dave typically would provide to all of the students he teaches. While I attempted to gather a rich picture of the way Dave and I worked with students regarding process-oriented drama approaches, it is certainly not a complete picture of all of Dave’s teaching practices. A critical reminder that should be noted in this section is that all of the events that I have described have been filtered through my interpretive lenses and since I have been doing the describing, I have controlled the tale.

In this study I used a case study approach and an action research methodology to work collaboratively with a teacher. With Dave’s help, I investigated our developing understandings using an approach to a process-oriented teaching approach which was largely new to us. Multiple sources of data were collected and coded during the entire life cycle of a grade twelve English class located in an American inner city located in the Midwest. Themes emerged from the data and the relationship of these themes was described. Finally, the themes and the developing understandings were discussed in terms of professional development. The approach and the findings suggest a number of possibilities for future research. I will describe some of these possibilities by discussing how I would redesign my research methodology if I were to conduct a similar study.

I have learned that I need to more carefully consider the amount of time that I spend in the field for future studies. In this case, I initially chose one trimester because I would have an opportunity to see the entire “life cycle” of the class. Since reform can be a lengthy process and since some studies in my chapter two literature review found that
significant changes occurred in teacher’s practices in the second year (Edwards and Cooper, 1996; Phillips and Glickman, 1991), I believe that it might be beneficial for me to conduct future studies over a longer time frame. This does not necessarily mean that I would spend more time at the field site but rather conduct occasional visits over an extended time period.

If I were to think about designing another study I would want to more carefully consider the time that I spent at the site so that it would reflect an opportunity to work jointly on areas of the curriculum in which Dave and I were both interested. I would certainly want to explore schools that have 45 minute class sessions rather than 120 minute sessions because these schools might assist me in making a more optimal use of time for visiting and co-teaching. This would be a practical change that one researcher could make.

If I was successful in obtaining substantial funds to sustain this kind of research, multiple teacher and teacher-researcher pairs working in multiple classrooms, in multiple schools in various content areas might be a viable possibility as a way of investigating process-oriented teaching strategies. The benefit of research with multiple participants in multiple sites is that educators can understand a variety of contexts in which teacher education might take place. Indeed, the Urban Network to Improve Teacher Education (UNITE), which is a part of the Holmes Partnership, has already begun to conduct this kind of extensive research within the context of urban school-university partnerships (Howey, 1999). UNITE supports a cadre of committed school and university personnel in generating materials useful for urban educators and documenting the usefulness of these
materials. Additionally, UNITE participants acknowledge the need to examine the impact of partnerships on student learning through multiple measures at multiple sites over extended time periods. Although UNITE had begun this work, there is still much to be researched.

If I were to design another study I would want to explore other ways that Dave and I could learn from each other. I believe that a modification of the Joyce and Showers (1980, 1995) model may in some way give Dave the clearly defined skills that he was interested in developing and also give me an opportunity to maintain a more “process-centered” model of coaching. One possibility, for example, might be to plan more carefully at the beginning of the year. We might decide where we could implement a series of trials of one particular process-oriented drama activity so that Dave could have a better opportunity to develop his skills. This repeated rehearsal of an activity is similar to the Joyce and Showers model. Clearly, the use of drama as a medium that offers alternatives to traditional teacher education needs further research. I also think that Dave would need to devise his own research questions to bring to the study if he is to gain ownership over the research. In this study I have frequently discussed the need for teacher ownership of the curriculum and the same is certainly true of the need for teacher ownership over the research questions and findings.

Teacher ownership dramatically changes the way teacher education research can be represented. In addition to focusing research on traditional teacher education issues, in the future teams of teacher and researchers will need to study what happens when they
mutually construct research questions, when they overlap teaching and researching responsibilities, and when they consider multiple ways of representing data.

For future research, I would consider a number of different forms of analysis. I could, for example, attempt to categorize videotapes that I had collected by themes rather than by chronology. I would also consider the use of more formally structured student interviews rather than the classroom debriefings that are described in this dissertation, and I would explore the possibility of employing the students as observers. This line of research may lead to multiple measures of the impact of collaborative professional development on student learning. All of these possibilities would offer additional perspectives from which the data might be viewed.

Conclusion

For the past several years some Americans have expressed concern regarding the quality of public schools. The quality of initial and ongoing teacher preparation, and the quality of the teachers themselves, are always one focus of that concern. It is therefore essential that teachers and teacher-researchers work together to address these concerns.

Although collaborative professional development conducted in classroom contexts can be demanding because of the myriad of factors which challenge the participants, it can also be a powerful vehicle to explore changing teaching practices. Visionary, and collaborative reform is difficult to sustain and the participants must be cautious, but rewards in the way of solutions to old problems and the discovery of interesting new problems await collaborative professional development participants.
Although this form of professional development is complex on multiple levels, it also can act as a powerful medium for change because it operates on multiple levels.
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