TEACHING ENVISIONMENT: ACTIVITY SETTINGS FOR LEARNING TO TEACH LITERATURE

MASTER’S THESIS

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how preservice English teachers learn to teach literature. Through an activity theory framework, the impact of the literature methods course, field experience in local schools, and backgrounds of the individual preservice teachers are traced to the conceptions and teaching practices of two preservice teachers. Because the activity settings of teacher education often function with different goals and philosophical frameworks, preservice teachers must negotiate through tensions. For one case study, negative opinions of the mentor teacher and positive impressions of the university program led to the appropriation of conceptual tools from the literature methods course. The other preservice teacher, however, had motives for entering the program and future goals which thwarted the appropriation of conceptual tools for teaching literature. Furthermore, the relationship with the mentor teacher was more positive and led to compromises between two teaching styles. As this study suggests, motives of individuals and relationships among activity settings are paramount to the development of a teaching praxis.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Without the enthusiastic and patient assistance of my advisor, George Newell, this thesis would have never reached fruition. I appreciate the time devoted to our lengthy meetings and the number of sources he provided. Dr. Newell was willing to be studied and critiqued with the purpose of a better teacher education program and methods course for future cohorts. The preservice teachers in his classes are truly lucky.

I also need to acknowledge my two case study participants for the extra time they dedicated to this project. They never missed an appointment, were always punctual, and responded to all my requests for artifact collection. The enthusiasm and devotion to students I witnessed was inspiring, and they both have bright futures ahead as educators.

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VITA

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

In my undergraduate education courses, I was inspired with the examples of exemplary practice that we studied. I read Nancie Atwell and Jeffrey Wilhelm, among others, and envisioned my future classroom based on these models. In my philosophy of education statement, I made strong claims about the type of teacher I was becoming: I am a constructivist teacher; I will use workshop approaches; and I will connect the content to my students’ lives. Although my teacher preparation program focused on very practical applications, such as rehearsals of teaching, the theoretical framework of constructivism clearly formed the basis for the coursework as well.

A point of pride of the teacher preparation program was the amount of time preservice teachers spent in schools. I spent a few hours observing in different classrooms during my freshman year. With each following semester, I spent more time in schools and took on more responsibilities, from tutoring students to teaching full lessons, culminating with a semester of full-time student teaching. While I loved being around youth and occasionally trying out methods I learned in my university courses, my strongest memory of these field experiences was the tension between what I was seeing in schools and what I was learning in my university courses.
Of the ten classrooms I encountered during those four years, I only felt that one aligned with the approach of my university courses. In the other classes, teachers operated under a transmission model of instruction, passing their knowledge down to the students through worksheets and lectures. In my teacher preparation program, this teacher-centered model was considered out-dated and ineffective; instead, I learned that classrooms should be student-centered, and students should be constructing their own knowledge with the teacher as acting as a support. In discussions with my undergraduate classmates, it seemed that everyone saw this contradiction. At first, we criticized our mentor teachers and vowed not to follow their poor examples. Over time, however, the discussions focused on why there was such a gap between the secondary schools and the university, and if we could overcome the challenges that we saw wear down our mentor teachers. When observing other student teachers from my program, I saw that some of them eased into the transmission mode of instruction that dominated their mentor teacher’s classrooms. Several years later, I wonder how many others from my classes have abandoned student-centered or constructivist philosophies in order to focus on raising test scores or maintain more classroom control.

The tension I experienced is not isolated to the specific city in which I observed teaching, nor is it relative only to my teacher preparation program. In returning to the field of teacher education, this time as a university supervisor, I see a different cohort of students in a different location grappling with the same dilemmas. In their journal assignments and classroom discussions, these novice educators reflect on the realities of their practicum classrooms, often noting contradictions between their mentor teachers
and their university professors. Even if the students do not feel this tension, they are still faced with a decision-making process in planning lessons. When exposed to a wide range of theoretical concepts and practical applications, preservice teachers must choose which tools are the most valuable and appropriate to their settings. Whether or not they face contradictions in their field experiences, all of the preservice teachers I have worked with reflect positively on the chance to spend time in classrooms and practice their skills. Just as I would not have felt prepared to enter the teaching field with only courses in English, these students also reveal an appreciation for their field experiences.

Despite my belief in the importance of both methods courses and practicum experiences, the role of teacher education programs in the development of effective teachers has been under scrutiny since the Reagan administration and the publication of *A Nation at Risk*. In recent years, the number of alternative certification programs for teachers has continued to rise, most of which greatly decrease the amount of methods coursework and practicum experiences required. Critics of teacher education believe in the importance of content knowledge, such as English or math subject matter; on the other hand, research on teacher education (Grossman, 1990) supports the necessity of pedagogical content knowledge, which is developed through methods courses and field experiences. Pedagogical content knowledge involves not only understanding the content, but understanding how to teach that content to students. For example, most English majors can proofread their writing for grammatical mistakes, but not all can effectively teach a ninth grader how to use a comma or create a parallel structure.
One cause of criticism for teacher education is the difficulty of tracing the effects of methods courses, due to the complex nature of teacher education. Activity theory as a framework, however, offers a way to understand the tensions pulling at preservice teachers from different directions (Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999). This study explores development of preservice English/Language Arts teachers using an activity theory framework, with an emphasis on the appropriation of tools. While there are many areas of English/Language Arts, this study specifically seeks to answer the question, how do preservice English teachers learn to teach literature? As Applebee’s (1993) research supports, English teachers spend more than fifty-percent of their instructional time teaching literature. Additionally, a majority of writing assignments are also based on literature. The pedagogical content knowledge of literature instruction, therefore, is clearly one of the most important aspects of the development of effective English teachers.

Literature is also an elusive area of instruction, less concrete and objective than mathematical theorems or scientific formulas. From selecting what literature is appropriate for students to linking literary works together in thematic cohesive units, there are many open-ended questions in the field of literature teaching. Furthermore, the single correct answer paradigm of high-stakes tests conflicts with most trends in literature study, which promote multiple interpretations and looking for personal and cultural connections in texts. When preservice English teachers enter a literature methods course today, they are looking for answers on how to elicit an engaging discussion, how to select curricular materials, how to teach interpretive strategies, how to reach reluctant readers,
and how to prepare students for standardized tests. Only ten weeks for a quarter-long course, or even less time in programs that combine all English areas into one course, offers very little time for the consideration of these broad and complicated concerns.

Using case study methodology, I sought to ascertain which contexts have the greatest impact on preservice teachers, from existing apprenticeships of observation to university coursework to the field experience classrooms. This study focused on two preservice teachers during one academic quarter, in which all members of the English Education cohort took a literature methods course, observed in a local school, and taught a literature unit of at least three days. This teaching assignment, known as the Multi-Day Teach, served as the focus of the research.

Research Questions

- What beliefs and experiences did the preservice teachers have about the purposes of and pedagogy for teaching literature before entering the program and then just after completing the teacher education coursework?

- What were the tools presented in the university literature methods course? Did these tools appear in the lesson plans created by the preservice teachers?

- What factors supported and thwarted the transfer of tools from the arrangement of settings to teachers? One specific factor to be considered is the relationship between the preservice teacher and cooperating mentor.

To answer these questions, I interviewed the case study participants before their Multi-Day Teaching project to question their lesson planning process, observed their teaching, and interviewed them after each lesson to reflect on the teaching. In addition to
this data, artifacts were collected from the university methods course, such as journal entries and reflections on major concepts in teaching literature. To understand the case study participants’ apprenticeships of observation, I conducted an initial interview with a focus on discussion background as a student. To gain an understanding of the methods course activity setting, I attended all class sessions and took field notes, which were used to create an inventory of tools. The instructor of the methods course was also interviewed to establish the goals and philosophical foundation of the course and university program. In order to collect data from the field experience setting, a three-way conference between the preservice teacher, mentor teacher, and university supervisor was conducted and audio recorded.

**Significance**

Not only does this research project reveal implications for the improvement of the university program and methods instructor studied, but the findings are significant to the field of teacher education in general. The activity settings explored are common to most teacher education programs, and the tensions experienced by the case study participants resonate across teacher education programs. Additionally, the social constructivist framework of the program studied is the current paradigm of the field as a whole.

In addition to general findings about the role that apprenticeships of observation, field experiences, and methods courses play on teacher development, this research specifically reveals the complexities of literature instruction. Previous activity theory research on English preservice teachers has focused on the broad discipline as a whole, while the micro-level focus of this project allows for more depth and specificity.
this study focuses on a practicum experience, rather than student teaching, it allows for more direct tracing of appropriation from methods courses. No time passed between the methods course and the study, unlike research on early career or student teachers. Greater salience and more reliable memories of the courses resulted from the timing of this project.

Although this study focused on only two preservice teachers, the differences between the two reveal the impact of motive, identity, and relationships on the development of a teaching praxis. While Kay appropriated envisionment as a conceptual tool for teaching literature and used this model to guide her planning, Kimberly was unable to define this central concept from the methods course and only appropriated the related tool of frontloading. Because of different motives for enrolling in the teacher education program and contrasting relationships with their mentor teachers, the two successful English majors and education students negotiated through the lesson planning process with different goals and processes. As the cases of Kay and Kimberly illustrate, teacher educators benefit from understanding their students’ backgrounds and appropriately scaffolding the teaching of concepts. Furthermore, education programs must consider the number of factors supporting and thwarting development, implementing components to support the preservice teachers through this process.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Prior to the 1970’s, teacher education research primarily followed the psychological model of behavior modification through control and experimental groups (Clift & Brady, 2005). As interest in cognition emerged, studies began to focus on the beliefs of preservice teachers as related to their university coursework. The last two decades have seen a large increase in teacher education research, particularly subject-specific teacher education. In their overview of research from 1995 to 2001, Clift and Brady (2005) found twenty-four studies specifically focusing on the English content area. Similar to my project, most research in this content area has been short-term, qualitative, self-study, and focused on case studies. While this study shares many of the characteristics of previous teacher education research, the activity theory framework and specific focus on literature instruction allow my work to add to the ongoing discussion about the effects of university programs by deeply considering all facets of a teacher’s development of praxis, from the backgrounds of the preservice teachers to their experiences as students in teacher education programs.

Conceptual Change in Preservice Teachers
According to Lortie (1975), biography is the most important element of teacher socialization. The thousands of hours that preservice teachers spend as students before they ever begin to consider their roles as educators, known as the “apprenticeship of observation,” determine their beliefs about teaching and are difficult to change. Although other studies (Petty & Hogben, 1980) support a similar belief that teacher education courses have little impact on preservice teachers’ conceptions about teaching, more recent research focuses on the complexities involved in pedagogical conceptions and reveal that teacher educators can foster change in their students (Clift & Brady, 2005).

In a study of a literature methods course, Agee (1998) observed a teacher educator who purposefully challenged the beliefs of his students. Although the process was full of resistance, dissonance, and skepticism, the data revealed that some of the students did change their views on what makes literature great and what the literature teacher’s role should be. From Agee’s (1998) observations and the students’ reflections, frequent small group discussions were the most valuable aspect of the course for fostering change. While students who strongly held beliefs from positive experiences as students in English classes resisted new ideas the most, the sharing of unpleasant experiences from other students led to shifts in thought. Despite the effectiveness of small group discussion, Agee (1998) noted that the course was uncomfortable for both students and the instructor. She suggests that teacher educators act with more tolerance and empathy of preservice teacher’s prior experiences in order to reduce debilitating dissonance.

With a similar focus on conceptions about teaching, Grossman’s (1990) study reveals significant differences between beginning teachers who completed a teacher
education and those who did not. While the two of the three teachers without a
background in education focused primarily on textual analysis and believed in teaching
only canonical works, Grossman (1990) found that all three teachers from the teacher
education program incorporated non-canonical works into their curriculum and focused
primarily on English as a means of self-expression. One case study, Steven, specifically
attributes his approach to teaching to his education courses, explaining that before
enrolling he taught in a private school and taught in a very traditional and transmission-
oriented way. After his teacher education courses, Steven entirely shifted his focus to
making connections between the students’ lives and the text, to the point that he
sometimes lost the text all together.

Similar to the case of Steven, Holt-Reynolds (2000) describes a preservice teacher
who makes a major conceptual shift in her views of teaching, but in doing so she
misinterprets the tenets of constructivism. Just as Steven leans away from actually
teaching students to analyze literature but instead just find connections to themselves,
Taylor adopts a belief that the teacher’s role is to get students to talk, regardless if their
analysis is related to the text. Taylor enters the methods course with a high level of
uncertainty and anxiety in her abilities to teach English and misappropriates the
constructivist framework presented in the course in order to ease her fears. She is
enthusiastic about her opportunity to accept all interpretations and never tell a student he/
she is incorrect. Holt-Reynolds (2000) summarizes her findings: “Rather than
understanding constructivist pedagogies as techniques for thinking with learners, for
teaching them, Taylor saw these strategies as ends in themselves” (p.21). Based on
Taylor as an example of many preservice teachers who want practical applications and not theory, Holt-Reynolds (2000) reminds teacher educators of the necessity of teaching all strategies as tools for true meaning-making and carefully monitoring the understanding of the preservice teachers in their classes.

Pedagogical Approaches of Methods Courses

Despite the number of studies on the effects of methods courses on preservice teachers’ attitudes, there is limited research on the pedagogical approaches of methods courses. In an review of research on American methods courses, Grossman (2005) outlines five broad approaches most frequently utilized and documented. The earliest studied approach, according to Grossman (2005) was microteaching. Following this approach, methods courses are structured around targeted skills learned through simplified practice. Although not as common as microteaching, computer simulations are a related laboratory experience incorporated in some methods courses. While laboratory-based pedagogies have been criticized for artificiality and lack of context, Grossman (2005) notes that some research supports that preservice teachers do acquire the target skills.

A major trend that emerged after microteaching and laboratory practice was the use of video technology and hypermedia. As the emphasis in teacher education shifted from behavior modification to cognition, videos allowed repeated viewing for discussion and reflection. Video recordings of preservice teachers, as well as experienced teachers, have become integral parts of some methods courses which emphasis reflective practice. Grossman (2005) points out that the research, however, is limited to studies of preservice
teachers who watch clips of experienced educators. This use of video links with another common pedagogical approach, case methods. Courses utilizing case methods provide written vignettes of different classroom scenarios to promote critical thinking and discussion among the preservice teachers.

While many of the previous approaches are still common, more recent research has focused on the use of portfolios and practitioner research to foster development of teaching skills. Many teacher education programs incorporate one or both of these approaches as capstone projects for their teacher education programs, drawing on recent pushes towards authentic assessment and self-reflection. Although research supports the impact of both approaches, Grossman (2005) urges for more research studies with varying methodology to promote a richer understanding of the benefits and shortcomings of these strategies.

None of the studies reviewed in Grossman’s (2005) piece focused on English specific methods courses, although the five common approaches are certainly utilized across disciplines. Smagorinsky and Whiting’s (1995) *How English Teachers Get Taught* was the first study of English methods courses. Through content analysis of eighty-one syllabi, Smagorinsky and Whiting identified five approaches to the English methods course, which differ from Grossman's (2005) classification by activities. The most common, but also least effective, type of methods course identified was survey. Survey courses cover many topics, often only spending one class period per topic and rarely link the ideas together. The syllabi of survey courses were characterized by numerous and lengthy objectives with broad scopes.
The second most common type of English methods course was the workshop approach, which focuses on participation in teaching activities. The activities in a workshop course build from week to week, usually resulting in a culminating project, such as a unit plan. While workshop approaches encourage mastery of a few specific methods, they often leave preservice teachers unprepared for all aspects of the teaching the discipline. Similar to the workshop approach, experience-based courses include observations and teaching experiences in local schools. While the goal is integrating theory and practice, Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) point out that the mentor teachers play a critical role in the overall effectiveness and learning of the preservice teachers.

Some methods courses do not seek to link theory and practice, but rather focus exclusively on the development of theoretical understanding. Instead of assigning lesson or unit plans, the courses rely on essays and even essay tests. While the theoretical understanding of students in these courses may be stronger than in other types of classes, the preservice teachers enter the field with limited practical resources and ideas.

The fifth approach Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) identified was reflective. The assignments in these courses consist of logs, memoirs, and journals. Although reflection is a key component of effective teaching, courses following this approach often do not prepare preservice teachers to think pedagogically; instead, Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) believe the emphasis is based too heavily on past experiences.

In addition to the five distinct approaches, other syllabi combined one or more pedagogical styles, such as reflective plus workshop or workshop with practicum. Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) also classified the courses by theories represented,
which included Piagetian Natural Development, transactional literary response, instructional scaffolding, sociocultural perspective, and language as a process. Several courses also focused on general issues such as classroom management and curriculum. Despite the comprehensive classification and discussion of English methods courses around the United States, Smagorinsky and Whiting’s (1995) study does not empirically prove the effectiveness of any particular type of course. They posit that a combination of the four styles, other than survey, would be the ideal and leaves room for further studies, such as this one, about the effects of specific types of methods courses.

Field Experiences

In addition to methods coursework, nearly all teacher education programs also include required field experiences in local schools. Gimbert (2001), Weaver and Stanulis (1996), Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981), among others report that the mentor teacher often plays the most significant role in the development of preservice teacher’s practices. However, tension often exists between the model of teaching supported by teacher education programs and that of the mentor teachers in field experiences (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981; Clift & Brady, 2005). When this conflict exists, preservice teachers tend to align themselves with their mentor teachers (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981; Clift & Brady, 2005).

Whereas methods courses are viewed as idealized or without context, preservice teachers see their mentor teachers as providers of practical, survival-oriented advice that they can use right away (Clift & Brady, 2005). During methods coursework the preservice teachers may shift their thinking to correlate with the university program’s
goals, but student teaching often marks a return to previously held, traditional beliefs (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981). This progressive-traditional shift may explain the disconnect between the liberal approaches of teacher education programs that have existed for decades and the lack of progressive change within the field as a whole.

Because of the known divide between university and school settings, Gimbert (2000) and Weaver and Stanulis (1996) propose new paradigms for the mentoring of preservice teachers. In a Professional Development School (PDS) context, Gimbert (2000) studied the relationships of interns and their mentors. She discovered three stages that most of the relationships moved through in this model. First, the intern and mentor developed a trusting relationship of getting to know each other, with the support of a Professional Development Associate. Then the relationships moved into a dialectic phase of the mentors talking aloud about their practices and dialoguing about important decisions with the interns. By the end of the yearlong internship, the mentoring evolved into reciprocal and collegial relationships between the student teacher and mentor.

One difference between the PDS internship model and traditional mentoring of student teaching was the duration, which was a full year in Gimbert’s (2000) study, versus the typical one semester or quarter student teaching experience. Other research (Clift & Brady, 2005; Weaver & Stanulis, 1996) supports that the most significant difference was the partnership between the school placement and university. The PDS was founded with the goal of fostering collaboration between teachers and professors, as well as providing better teacher education opportunities. Additionally, the interns and mentor teachers were purposefully matched up to foster strong interactions.
As Weaver and Stanulis (1996) report, supportive and nurturing three-way relationships can exist between the university, school placement, and preservice teacher without the creation of a special collaborative school. Through frequent contact between university supervisor and mentor teacher, the student teacher in this study worked through the struggles of implementing writing workshop in the classroom. Although the mentor teacher did not use a workshop approach, her overall philosophy aligned with the university program, and she encouraged the student teacher’s use of this model. Because the mentor and university supervisor shared a goal of constantly collaborating and supporting the student teacher, the common tensions and disconnects between the different components of the teacher education program did not hinder the development of this preservice teacher.

**Activity Theory as a Framework for Research**

While numerous research studies have focused on one aspect of teacher education, such as the field experience or methods course, Grossman (2005) criticizes the field for lacking a larger theoretical framework for understanding the complexities of teacher development. In the past ten years, activity theory has emerged as a potentially robust model for understanding the social and cultural factors that impact preservice teachers (Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999; Newell, Gingrich, & Johnson, 2001; Smagorinsky, Cook, & Johnson, 2003). Activity theory is based on the assumption that “a person’s frameworks for thinking are developed through problem-solving action carried out in specific settings whose social structures have been developed through historical, culturally grounded actions” (Grossman et al, 1999).
When studying the settings of learning to teach, the motives and relationships of each setting are paramount. As Grossman, Smagorinsky, and Valencia (1999) assert, participants of the same setting may construe it differently, such as students within a class in comparison with each other or the instructor. Furthermore, preservice teachers often experience tugs in different directions from their mentor teachers, university supervisors, and methods professors, as well as their previously held conceptions of teaching. Activity theory explores how preservice teachers negotiate these tensions.

In their activity theory-framed study of nine student teachers, Newell, Gingrich, and Johnson (2001) identified three modes of participation in the appropriation of instructional scaffolding. Two of the case studies achieved a level of “reflective practice,” demonstrated by a concern for the theory behind their decision-making processes and an ability to apply a theory to multiple situations. Their study found that the most common mode of participation for student teachers was “procedural display,” or an appropriation of surface-level features only. Five of the nine students teachers operated at this level. The other two student teachers practiced “routinization,” focusing only on routine tasks of teaching and showing little concern for theory.

In considering the interplay of activity settings for these nine student teachers, Newell, Gingrich, and Johnson (2001) realized that not only did the two reflective practice participants have backgrounds which aligned with the university program’s model of teaching, they also faced less tension and conflict among settings. The student teachers who felt pulled in opposing directions were less likely to appropriate what they...
learned in the university classes, instead relying on routines observed from their mentor teachers.

Supporting the findings of Newell et al (2001), Smagorinsky, Cook, and Johnson(2003) conducted a study of English teacher education programs and concluded that a lack of concept frequently exists. In other words, the various activity settings of a teacher education program (content area coursework, general education classes, methods, field experiences) should share a common motive and model of effective teaching. Relying on Vygotsky’s notion of concept development, Smagorinsky, Cook, and Johnson (2003) illustrate that graduates of university programs with a conceptual home base are less likely to develop pseudoconcepts or complexes. Whereas concepts are defined by individual elements sharing a clear theme, pseudoconcepts and concepts reveal a lack of complete appropriation. Smagorinsky, Cook, and Johnson (2003) illustrate this point by explaining that someone with a complex of cooperative learning would use this term to describe any group activity. Those holding a pseudoconcept could differentiate some group activities as not cooperative learning, but would still classify activities as such when they were missing an important element. A teacher with a complete concept of cooperative learning, on the other hand, would always use this label appropriately because of a deep understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of the strategy.

The recent research framed with activity theory brings together the findings of separate studies on the role of mentor teachers, methods courses, and previously held beliefs on the development of preservice teachers. Only when considering all of these
contexts in relation to one another can researchers begin to understand the complex,
sociocultural nature of learning to teach. It is a “twisting path,” to use the metaphor of
Smagorinsky et al (2003), consisting of tensions, frustrations, shifts, and evolutions.
Activity theory offers an exciting tool for exploring this path, but recent studies still leave
room for a deeper understanding to emerge.
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Participants

This study included two preservice teachers enrolled in the English education program at a large Midwestern research university. The case study students, Kay and Kimberly (pseudonyms), were both selected from my supervisory group for their dependability and strong academic records. Both participants are female. Kay is European American, and Kimberly is Asian American.

Kay grew up in the same state as the university, but in a rural town. She entered the Masters of Education (M.Ed.) program in the summer after completing an undergraduate degree in English from the same university. In addition to the required field experiences courses for admission to the teacher education program, Kay was also actively involved in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program, in which she served as a Big Sister.

Kimberly grew up in a suburb of the same city of the university and entered the M.Ed. program after one year of teaching English as second language in Russia. She attended the same university as an undergraduate English major and graduated Magna cum laude from the honors program. Before entering the teacher certification program, Kimberly worked with youth as a camp counselor, piano instructor, and after school tutor.

The mentor teachers involved in this study both held Master’s of Arts degrees from
the same university as the preservice teachers. Both mentor teachers are female; one is African American and the other is European American. Kimberly’s mentor teacher had ten years of teaching experience, all in urban settings. Kay’s mentor teacher also had experience teaching exclusively in urban schools, and she had been at the same high school for all six years of her career. Both mentor teachers had worked with student teachers from this program and others for several years in the past.

My relationship with Kay and Kimberly was that of university supervisor. In this role, I met with the two case study participants and five other preservice teachers on a biweekly basis, discussing topics related to their field experiences. Furthermore, I observed and evaluated each intern during two of his/her Multi-Day Teaching project lessons. I was in frequent contact with the preservice teachers in my group, including Kay and Kimberly, through biweekly journal reflections they submitted to me, as well as regular e-mail contact. Through my role as university supervisor, I also met the mentor teachers at the beginning of the academic quarter and discussed general program expectations.

Program Context

Both preservice teachers were part of a thirty-student cohort of Master’s of Education (M.Ed.) students at a national research university. At this university, teacher education is only offered at the graduate level, after students have earned Bachelor’s degrees in the subject area they wish to teach. To be accepted in the English Education M.Ed. program, students must not only complete the requirements for an English major, but also take a course in young adult literature and complete a field-based experience in a
secondary English classroom setting. Admission to the M.Ed. program is competitive, and applicants are also expected to have volunteer or work experiences involving youth.

The M.Ed. program begins in the summer, and students take classes full-time for four consecutive quarters, graduating at the end of spring quarter. The first quarter of coursework is concerned with general teaching knowledge, including courses in classroom management, technology, and child development. During the fall quarter, students take methods courses on the teaching of writing while also completing a sixty-hour practicum experience in a local school. Similarly, students take literature methods coursework during the winter quarter and spend a minimum of sixty hours in a local school. One of the practicum experiences is completed in a suburban school and the other in an urban school. In addition to methods coursework as an entire cohort, the students also meet bi-weekly in small groups with their university supervisors, in an effort to support the process of bringing the theory and practice of the program together. In the spring quarter, the preservice teachers return to one of their practicum placements to complete student-teaching.

The culminating activity in both fall and winter quarters is the Multi-Day Teaching Project, in which the preservice teachers teach an entire class period for at least three consecutive days. The preservice teachers develop the multi-day teaching lesson plans as part of their methods coursework and are evaluated on their instruction by their cooperating mentor teachers and university supervisors. The winter quarter Multi-Day teaching assignment is the focus of this study.
In this English education program, the conceptual framework is based on social constructivist theories of teaching and learning, along with an emphasis on social justice. According to Newell, Gingrich, & Johnson (2001), constructivist theories emphasize the active engagement of students in the learning process and believe that teaching and learning occur in context. One area of interest in this study is if the preservice teachers recognize and can articulate the framework of their program.

**Practicum Experience Placement Contexts**

Both case study participants were placed in urban public schools in the city’s largest district. While Kay taught in a high school and Kimberly in a middle school, both settings included a large percentage of ethnic minority students and students who qualify for free or reduced lunch. Both schools faced low percentages of students who passed the state standardized tests, thus leading to a district-wide emphasis on state standards. From interviews with their mentor teachers, both preservice teachers reported that students’ reading levels were far below grade level. Furthermore, classroom management struggles were reported throughout the quarter both while the preservice teachers observed and taught.

It is worth noting that Kimberly arranged her own placement after the university program manager was unable to find a middle school placement for her. She had previously worked with her mentor teacher in an after school tutoring program, and Kimberly also found arrangements for another intern in the cohort. Also, both Kimberly and Kay had previously observed in this district during prerequisite education courses for admission to the M.Ed. program.
During this quarter, Kay taught three classes, all eleventh graders. American literature was the overall focus of the curriculum, and she taught a unit on the Harlem Renaissance. Kimberly taught three classes of eighth graders in a general English class. The focus of her Multi-Day Teaching project was the book *Life in Prison* by Stanley “Tookie” Williams.

**Procedures**

**Gathering Data**

This study employed case study methodology to investigate the interrelationship of activity settings that influence preservice English teachers’ growth. I played a dual-role as both the researcher and university supervisor of the two participants. As Newell, Gingrich, and Johnson (2001) note, this participation allows me “to trace patterns of influence from the student teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge (Grossman, 1990) back to their academic background and professional course work” (p. 312).

The primary methods of data collection were observation and interview. The first component of observation was the methods course, which I observed each week. I used these observations to develop a framework for understanding the methods course activity setting. I also observed the preservice teachers in the small group setting which I led as a university supervisor. Although I actively participated in this activity setting, I also carefully observed the role the participants played in these meetings. The major component of observation was the Multi-Day teaching project. I observed all class periods taught by the study’s participants and also evaluated two lessons as a supervisor.

The interview process began as the preservice teachers started their lesson plan
process for the Multi-Day teaching project. I interviewed each participant before the teaching began, focusing on the participants’ lesson plans. In this interview, I sought to understand why the preservice teacher chose certain strategies and where these tools came from. Furthermore, I also asked questions about their backgrounds in order to understand their apprenticeships of observation. After each day of the Multi-Day teaching project, I conducted de-briefing meetings with the participants, and during these discussions I also noted their responses to a few scripted questions. Another type of interview was a three-way conference with the mentor teacher, preservice teacher, and me. At the end of the quarter, I also conducted a de-briefing interview with the case study participants to facilitate their reflection on the quarter, specifically asking questions to gauge their level of concept development, as described in Smagorinsky, Cook, & Johnson (2003).

During the spring quarter, after the preservice teachers neared the completion of student teaching, I conducted my final interview. During this interview, I asked the participants to reflect on their teacher education program so far, focusing on what contexts they relied on most during student teaching. Also during this interview, I conducted a card-sort task, as described in Grossman (1990). The participants were given cards with the names of English and education courses they had taken and asked to arrange them in the order that these courses impacted their knowledge and conceptions of teaching English. I asked the participants to explain how and why they made sorting decisions, encouraging reflection on beliefs and instructional knowledge. Figure 3.1 below, outlines the alignment of data sources with the research questions for this study.
Research Question | Data Collected
--- | ---
Beliefs and experiences about teaching literature before and after methods course | - Initial and Final Interviews
- Artifacts from methods course, including pre and post survey
Tools presented in methods course and tools utilized in teaching | - Observation of methods course
- Observation of Multi-Day Teach
- Interview about planning of Multi-Day Teach
Factors that support and thwart appropriation of tools | - Three-way Interview
- Debriefing Interviews
- Artifacts from methods course, including journal entries

Figure 3.1- Alignment of Data Sources and Research Question

Analyzing Data

During the observations, I kept ethnographic notes, as described in Frank (1999). In column format, I recorded everything I saw and heard on the left side of the page and then added reflections and questions on the right side. The reflections were incorporated into interviews with the participants. Using these notes, I compiled a list of the theoretical and practical tools mentioned in the methods course to link with the interview and observation data. The Multi-Day teaching lessons and video tuning session for the inquiry project were also video-recorded. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Additionally, I collected artifacts including reflective journals, lesson plans, written assignments for the methods courses, and portfolio submissions.

The interview data was coded in the following categories: area, attribution, tool, and problem, drawing from the data analysis procedures of Smagorinsky, Cook, and Johnson (2003). Area statements refer to the general aspects of English/Language Arts teaching: for example, vocabulary, speech, reading comprehension, grammar, or literary understanding. Attribution statements refer to where the preservice teachers identify the
sources of their learning. For example, the preservice teacher may explain where he/she first learned of a specific activity. The most common attributions are the methods courses, observation of the mentor teacher, or the preservice teacher’s own apprenticeship of observation. Tool statements are sub-coded as “Conceptual” or “Practical.” These statements refer to the preservice teachers knowledge of theories, strategies, and activities for teaching English. Problem statements refer to the goals of using that particular tool. These problems may focus on learning, such as using context clues, or on classroom management.

Within each case study, the separate interviews, observations, and artifacts were compared for points of similarity and dissonance. Using a constant comparison method (Newell, Gingrich, & Johnson, 2001), I was able to ask participants in the final interview to explain conflicting responses they may have given. The second phase of analysis was to compare the two case studies, looking for common themes and patterns. When considering differences between the cases, I looked for explanations in the academic or personal backgrounds of the participants and the practicum placement contexts.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS: CHANGES IN BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING LITERATURE

When preservice teachers enter a teacher education program, they come with a collection of experiences from the many years they have spent as students. Examples of exemplary and ineffective teaching, memorable lessons, and lasting impressions of how a classroom should be are a part of a preservice teacher’s apprenticeship of observation. As the research of Holt-Reynolds (2000) and Agee (1995) reveals, the conceptions about teaching that preservice teachers hold often conflict with the model presented in university programs and may be resolved in several ways. Some preservice teachers will abandon their previous notions of good teaching and embrace the vision supported by the teacher education program. Other preservice teachers will resist the model presented at the university and teach in the same way they remember being taught. There are variations of these two extremes, and other activity settings will also impact the beliefs and philosophies of the novice teachers.

Through interview data, pre and post surveys, and a collection of written artifacts, this section explores the first research question for the two case study participants: What beliefs and experiences did the preservice teachers have about the purposes of and pedagogy for teaching literature before beginning the methods course and then just after
completing the methods course? I begin with the backgrounds of the case studies, as well as their entries into teaching, and then explore results of interviews and surveys from the beginning and end of Winter Quarter. As the results indicate, belief systems about education are complex and formed through interactions with a number of activity settings. Both Kay and Kimberly hold clear beliefs about teaching before the start of the quarter but make some small shifts in understanding during the time period of study.

KAY

Apprenticeship of Observation

Early Experiences with Literature and Education

Kay’s parents and grandparents instilled her with a love for reading and learning from an early age. She explains that her parents started reading to her before she could even understand what they were saying. Through the literacy practices of her home, Kay learned to read before anyone else in her Kindergarten class. In her portfolio framing statement, she tells of an early memory of reading a book to her class for show and tell because she was so proud of her ability to read. In addition to reading to her, Kay’s parents also tested her spelling skills during dinner. Her grandfather taught her cursive and drilled her on spelling as well. In school, Kay strove for perfection in English/Language Arts and was a very competitive student. Outside of school, she took part in reading clubs and wrote her own stories. Kay also points out that her parents helped her understand the importance of the way you carry yourself and speak. She attributes success in and out of school to these lessons about tone, appropriate code, and body language.
As a high school student, Kay felt nurtured and inspired by one of her English teachers. This teacher told Kay that she was already the best writer in the class but wanted to work with her after school to improve even more. When describing this influential teacher, Kay also states that her teaching practices aligned with the model of effective teaching presented in the M.Ed. program. Specifically, Kay recalls cooperative learning activities, engaging discussions, performing pieces of literature, and book clubs.

Despite her success in school and supportive family, Kay faced difficulty during her high school years. She was a victim of severe bullying for four years, without any teachers or administrators stepping in to support her. She also missed most of her senior year due to illness and had to be homeschooled. These challenges influence her philosophy of teaching as much as her early love for reading and learning.

**Entry Into Teaching**

Initially, Kay was a microbiology major, planning to be a doctor. After failing calculus and chemistry twice, she knew it was time to consider other options. Kay explains that her decision to study biology was her father’s dream, and not her own. She attributes her decision to change her major to English, pre-education track to three factors: her passion for working with youth, her enjoyment of college English courses, and a women’s studies class that led her to think about ethical issues in the world.

Kay also cites her experience as a Big Sister in the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program as a major influence in her decision to teach. Through working with a teenage girl whose parents abandoned her, has been shot, and struggles in school, Kay has learned about the role students’ home lives play in their school performance. Just as she wished
she had a teacher to support and mentor her while she was bullied, Kay’s experience as a Big Sister further causes Kay to believe that teachers must not only teach, but also mentor and advise youth.

Conceptions of Teaching English, Specifically Literature

Beginning of Quarter

When asked in the initial interview to state her biggest goal as a teacher, Kay explained that she wishes to make students “critical consumers of their world.” She sees three main components of English/Language Arts as a discipline: reading, writing, and speaking. From the first two quarters of M.Ed. coursework, Kay also explained that she had come to see the importance of critical and cultural literacy and creating a suitable learning environment. She could not find any points of conflict or tension between her conceptions of teaching and what she had learned in the coursework. In fact, she described herself as “an open book and a blank slate” when she entered the program.

Kay also discussed the importance of student-centeredness. In describing her approach to the first Multi-Day Teaching Project, Kay explained that she let students run the discussion and tried to take herself out the equation. When asked about why she focuses on student-centeredness, Kay referred to previous coursework in the M.Ed. program.

In addition to her general teaching goals, on the first day of the literature methods course, the instructor asked the preservice teachers to write down two goals for literature instruction. Kay’s goals were to help students expand their awareness of the world and to help students become critical thinkers. The professor also asked students to list tools to
help reach these goals, to which Kay responded with “discussion, debate, multicultural
texts, and writing.”

Also on the first day of the methods class, the professor distributed a five question
survey about teaching literature. He redistributed this survey during the last class
meeting and asked students to answer the questions again as a post-test. The answers to
Kay’s pre- and post- survey are included in figure 4.1. Kay’s pre-survey reflected her
belief that there is no set list of books all students should be required to read.
Additionally, she stated goals for her teaching that included both the traditional text-
based skills of applying literary terms and making inferences, as well as using literature
to make students more well-rounded and knowledgeable about the world.

*End of Quarter*

In the debriefing interview at the end of the academic quarter, Kay’s overall goals
and conceptions for teaching English were the same as at the beginning. She once again
focused on the importance of becoming well-rounded and being critical of the world.
There was a noticeable shift, however, in her conception of student-centeredness. When
Kay was asked about the difference between teacher-centered and student-centered
instruction and where she aligned herself, she responded that she wants to be “learning-
centered.” She went on to describe that when teaching a new concept, it is often more
teacher-centered at first. Then, teachers can remove more of the scaffolds and shift into
student-centered activities. Although she did not explicitly state how this idea aligned
with larger conceptual understandings, her discussion of scaffolding clearly aligns with
the M.Ed. program’s social constructivist philosophical base.
In regards to teaching literature, Kay also showed no change in her overall goals. She explained that she still believes teaching literature is less about the text and more about the thinking and analysis skills. The tools she finds most important, however, did change from the initial list. Kay selected writing and frontloading as ways to reach her goals. While Kay mentioned writing as important tool at the beginning of the quarter, the concept of frontloading was a new addition to the list.

In her post-survey responses, as seen transcribed in figure 4.1, Kay again showed no major changes. She did elaborate on most of her responses, however. The post-survey responses reveal a new emphasis on meeting learning objectives, as she added this idea to almost all of her responses. In her response to the fifth question, she also changed her emphasis from a personal experience to a theoretical discussion of finding “an entry point” and making the application authentic.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Pre-Survey Response</th>
<th>Post-Survey Response</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Do you think there are literary works that all students should be required to read? If so, list your top three and briefly state why they ought to be required.</td>
<td>No, not necessarily. While I think that there are many wonderful texts that students should have the opportunity to be exposed to, I do not think that this list should be concrete or required. Students should have choice and texts should be chosen based on interest, ability, label, etc.</td>
<td>Still think the same -&gt; Texts should be chosen depending on your students previous experiences, interests, needs, ability levels, and your learning objectives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2) What do you hope your students will learn about literature? Why is this important to you? Do you think it is important to middle/secondary students? | 1. Literary terms and how to apply them.  
2. How to interpret, make inferences, and connections.  
3. How to use texts to become more well rounded, informed, and critical member of society.  
4. To become informed/knowledgeable about a diverse multitude of issues. -Important for both middle and high school. | 1. How to use/apply literary terms in analysis of texts which serve to better understand the text and concepts important to lesson objectives.  
2. How to interpret, make inferences, and connections amongst texts, in a text, and to real life.  
3. 3 & 4 are the same! And I still think that this is important for middle and secondary.  
Middle schoolers should at least be introduced to these goals/objectives. |
| 3) What does a teacher need to know in order to teach literature in middle and/or secondary school? | 1. Interests and ability levels of students.  
2. Knowledge of the literature terminology.  
3. Knowledge of a multitude of methods that will help students learn intended goals. | Still believe the same things.  
4. What additional resources are available and which ones will help reach goals. |
| 4) Describe middle school and/or high school students’ typical responses to a literature assignment. Why do you think they may respond this way? | Often their responses are of disinterest...groans, complaints, etc. i think this is because the assignments are not engaging and because students have been exposed to so many of these, they think they are all uninteresting and not meaningful. | - Still believe the same thing.  
- -> They do not see the relevance to their lives and futures! |
| 5) Do you think that struggling students can be taught to read, to understand, and to enjoy literature? If so, why do you think this is possible? | Yes, because I have seen it happen. My little sister (BBBS) was a struggling student who has truly flourished in the last year. We worked on her reading skills and I gave her interesting texts and now she loves to read. | Yes, because you can find texts, methods, and activities that will help students find their “entry point” into literature. If you can make it authentic, relevant, and engaging, students can learn to read, comprehend, and enjoy it!!! |

Figure 4. 1- Kay’s Pre- and Post- Survey Responses

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Tracing the Influence of the Literature Methods Course

In the debriefing interview, I asked Kay what she took from the literature methods course. She selected envisionment as the most important concept she learned. Kay’s appropriation of this conceptual tool is revealed in the interview and survey data. When Kay selected frontloading as an important tool for meeting her goals as a literature teacher, she was pulling from the larger concept of envisionment. When the methods professor introduced frontloading, he linked it with envisionment from the start.

Furthermore, Kay’s post-survey includes a few references to envisionment as an instructional framework. Twice in the post-survey, Kay added to her initial responses with the idea of relevance or making connections to real life, which aligns with discussions in the methods class about the third and fourth stages of envisionment. Also, Kay’s reference to an “entry point” in the fifth question directly relates to the first stage of the envisionment model.

Although not specifically related to literature, student-centered and teacher-centered instruction marks another change in Kay’s thinking about teaching. As described previously, Kay changed the label on her instructional style from student-centered to learning-centered. The literature methods professor discussed differences between teacher-centered and student-centered instruction in one of the last weeks of the course, pointing out that sometimes both styles are needed. The new term, “learning-centered,” was appropriated from another education methods course during the second quarter.
Another way that the methods course influenced Kay’s thinking was through modeling. She stated that this course differed from others because of the amount of modeling the instructor utilized. Kay reflected on a specific modeling activity from the course, which she explained was really beneficial to her thinking about how to making meaning and the importance of repetition. This activity occurred during the second class meeting and consisted of reading through a poem multiple times, rating your personal understanding, and then engaging in small and large group discussion. Although she did not directly incorporate this strategy into her Multi-Day Teaching Project, Kay expressed a desire to include this model in future teaching.

Overall, Kay felt little tension between her conception of teaching English and literature and the teacher education program’s conception. While her overarching goals and conceptions did not change during the quarter, her pedagogical content knowledge developed through the introduction of envisionment, as well as instructional modeling by the professor. Even the lingering questions she felt at the end of the quarter, which were about the role of the cannon in curriculum and how to make texts relevant, related to ongoing discussions led by the methods professor.

KIMBERLY

Apprenticeship of Observation

Early Experiences with Literature and Education

In her portfolio framing statement, Kimberly explains that her parents instilled the Asian ethic of discipline in her from a very early age, including a belief in the importance of education. Kimberly does not feel, however, that her parents were able to help her
appreciate learning. They told her to read books, but could not tell her why. Kimberly also notes that her parents wanted her to become a doctor.

Kimberly describes herself as a hard working student who was always very shy in school. She most enjoyed school when she had the chance to be creative. English became her favorite subject because she felt there were more opportunities for creativity in this discipline than others, although she primarily remembers completing worksheets of skills and drills during her elementary school years.

The most influential teacher for Kimberly was her senior AP English teacher. In an interview, she cited this teacher as the reason she decided to teach English. When describing this teacher, Kimberly focuses on his sense of humor and his ability to always make the class interesting. She also found the discussions to be very powerful and said that he often surprised the students with unexpected activities or antics.

Kimberly also discussed an influential college professor in our interview, explaining that his class was not the traditional lecture-based style of many college courses. She remembers him reenacting events and always keeping the class exciting. She also liked that this professor was humble, despite his great depth of knowledge. This professor taught Hebrew, but he stands out among of all Kimberly’s college instructors as the most influential on her beliefs about good teaching.

**Entry Into Teaching**

Kimberly declared English, pre-education as her major during her second quarter as an undergraduate student, although she did not tell her parents for several months. She explains that she knew before starting college that she wanted to be a teacher, but her
parents still had dreams of a medical career. In interviews, Kimberly explained that she is drawn more to teaching in general than just teaching English. Because of her experiences in English classes as a student, however, she selected this subject area as the best avenue for allowing her to bring creativity into her classroom.

Kimberly speaks passionately about her belief that teachers need to play a mentorship role in young people’s lives. She draws from a range of experiences with youth, including prerequisite field experience, tutoring, working at an after-school program, teaching piano lessons, babysitting, and teaching religious education at her church. Before entering the M.Ed. program, she taught English as a second language in Russia for ten months.

From the very beginning of the program, Kimberly did not see herself as a traditional English teacher. In our first interview, she explained that she may never teach in a traditional English classroom, but instead use her educational knowledge in a missionary setting or teaching English as a Second Language (ESL). After student teaching, Kimberly maintained her position that she would probably not teach English, but planned to pursue ESL licensure in the near future. In the upcoming year after the program, she will substitute teach and tutor an autistic adolescent before enrolling in a Bible certificate program.

Conceptions of Teaching English, specifically Literature

Beginning of Quarter

In our initial interview, Kimberly described the kind of teacher she wants to be: “someone who inspires students to think deeply;” someone who is sympathetic,
respected, and plays a bigger role than just instruction. She sees communication as the primary purpose of English, explaining that students need to be able to “read, write, and express ideas.” She believes that critical thinking skills are the most important things students can learn in an English class. Kimberly also thinks grammar is important, but hopes secondary students “would already have a foundation in those skills.”

From the education courses prior to Winter Quarter, Kimberly felt that cooperative learning was the most important idea about teaching she had learned. She stated that when her professors explained cooperative learning, “it really clicked with me.” She did not feel any tension between her conceptions of teaching and the program’s, although she mentioned that she may not use all that she learned. In describing her first Multi-Day Teaching unit, Kimberly focused on the “cool activities” she did in relation to *The Tempest*. Just as in the classrooms of the influential teachers in her life, Kimberly thinks of teaching in terms of activities. She mentioned including a lot of cooperative learning, and also acting exercises and jigsaw. Kimberly sees herself as student-centered and believes this is also what the program values.

When asked on the first day of the literature methods course to set two goals for literature instruction, Kimberly wrote: “for students to make genuine, personal connections to literature” and “for students to enjoy analyzing literature, beyond just plot.” She listed tools for reaching these goals, including freewrites, parodies, discussions, small groups, snap and thought-shots, and text variety.

On the pre-survey, as described in Kay’s data, Kimberly’s belief in the importance of making education enjoyable was a clear theme, as was her focus on critical thinking.
Kimberly wrote, “I hope literature will be a means for students to expand their thinking,” and “It is important that students to [sic] enjoy learning and grow as individuals.” A complete list of her responses is included in figure 4.2. In response to the first question, about if texts should be required for all students, Kay responded that certain texts need to be read for one to be considered education. Then she wrote “testing” in parenthesis and added a line with “unfortunately” coming out to the side. When asked to clarify what she meant at a later time, Kimberly explained that students need to read the works that will prepare them for the tests, even though she does not necessarily agree with the tests.

End of Quarter

Kimberly showed very little change of her conceptions of teaching literature from the beginning of the quarter to the end. Her two primary goals for literature teaching remained the same, and the only tool she wanted to add to her list of supports was journal writing. Kimberly summarized her philosophy as wanting students not just to learn, but to actually enjoy learning. On the post-survey, she simply wrote “same” for all questions except one, as seen in figure 4.2. The one question she responded to was the first one, which was previously discussed for its ambiguity. Kimberly does not discuss the importance of testing on her post-survey, but rather the importance of choosing texts that will make students think.

One shift in her interview responses from the beginning of the quarter, was that Kimberly decided she was “learning-centered,” rather than student-centered. Notably, Kay made the same shift. Kimberly attributed her choice of term to a graduate associate,
but also cited that she learned from watching her mentor teacher that the students need more support and structure than she realized they would.

Despite the change in terminology she used to describe her style, Kimberly continued to value activities in her planning and believe in the importance of cooperative learning. Her favorite aspect of the literature methods course was when students worked in groups to talk about readings or apply what they read about through activities. In Kimberly’s Multi-Day Teaching unit for the Winter Quarter, she again focused on the activities more than the objectives or essential questions.
<table>
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<th>Post-Survey Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Do you think there are literary works that all students should be required to read? If so, list your top three and briefly state why they ought to be required.</td>
<td>Yes: They ought to be required because that is what is needed to be considered an educated individual (testing.) - unfortunately No particular texts, but canon authors such as Shakespeare should not be overlooked. I also think students really need to have exposure to minority writers - this is of equal importance.</td>
<td>I may slightly modify my view on this. I think teachers should teach texts because they they [sic] contain something that teaches students to think - many of these will be “canonical,” but they don't have to be. Personally, I like a lot of the canonical lit and would probably teach it, but be open to other texts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2) What do you hope your students will learn about literature? Why is this important to you? Do you think it is important to middle/secondary students? | - I hope literature will be a means for students to expand their thinking, connect, and find expression for thinking.  
- It is important that students to enjoy learning and grow as individuals (with sometimes [sic] requires encountering texts to which they are unfamiliar) - same for students | same answers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 3) What does a teacher need to know in order to teach literature in middle and/or secondary school? | - how to invite students into texts  
- how to help students enjoy learning  
- how to prompt students to use higher-level thought and critical thinking skills | same answers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 4) Describe middle school and/or high school students’ typical responses to a literature assignment. Why do you think they may respond this way? | - A typical response is to get the reading done (with help of Cliffnotes), figure out the plot, and move on.  
- I think most students are not often used to being involved in their learning process - they expect to simply be told what is right/wrong. | same answers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 5) Do you think that struggling students can be taught to read, to understand, and to enjoy literature? If so, why do you think this is possible? | - Yes!  
- because I used to be one of those students until I encountered some great teachers. | same answers                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

Figure 4.2 - Kimberly’s Pre- And Post- Survey Responses
When asked about the most important concepts of the literature methods course, Kimberly struggled to pinpoint a central focus. She explained that the final evaluation asked about the key points, but she skipped it because it was difficult to summarize. After pausing to consider, Kimberly decided on frontloading as something “there was a lot of talk about.” She defines frontloading as “how to get students to a point where they can experience authentic learning.” Despite her selection of this framework, there are no references to it in her goals, survey responses, or interviews. When asked about the larger related concept of envisionment, Kimberly stated that she had not “wrapped her mind around it yet” and believed it had to do with multiple perspectives. While the concept of envisionment will be explored further in the next section, it is worth noting that Kimberly’s understanding of this framework is limited and lacking.

Overall there are very few changes in Kimberly’s data from the beginning of the quarter to the end that can be attributed to the literature methods course activity setting. Journal writing, the tool that Kimberly added to her list of tools to support her goals did not come from the methods course specifically. Kimberly’s lack of response on the post-survey suggests that she put little effort into reflection on the role of the methods course or on her own conceptions of teaching. When asked about the one question she did change, Kimberly cited discussion in the literature methods class as well as her mentor teacher’s decision to teach non-canonical works as the reasons for her shift in thinking.

Similar to Kay, Kimberly changed the way she self-identified her teaching style from student-centered to learning-centered. She did not cite the methods course as her
only reason for making this shift, however. Kimberly connected the idea to her mentor teacher, while Kay focused on the discussion led by the methods professor. Kimberly also never shifted from her activity-focused style of planning, and at the end of the year selected “activity-centered” as her true style of teaching, which did not come from the methods course or the overall conceptual framework of the university program.

**Comparison and Discussion**

Kay and Kimberly share a common primary goal for teaching literature, which is the importance of using texts to teach critical thinking skills. Other than this stated goal, the two preservice teachers differ in their approaches. Kay stresses the necessity of using literature to expand students’ worlds and believes in cultural literacy, while Kimberly focuses on making learning enjoyable and incorporating cooperative learning. Consideration of the backgrounds of these preservice teachers reveals potential sources of their differing motivations. Kay’s experience as a victim of bullying fosters her belief in social justice, and her experience as a mentor to a student with a very different background from her own encourages a desire for cultural literacy. Kimberly, on the other hand, reports that her parents never made learning seem fun and it took a few specific teachers to pique her interest in learning; thus, Kimberly strives to give her students the enjoyable experience that she missed during most of her education. Kimberly’s teaching experience in Russia also impacted her goals because she found little value in the individual-only of the educational system, feeling students needed social interaction as well.
Not only did their goals for teaching differ, but the two case studies also showed variance in their appropriation of concepts from the literature methods course. As discussed in Grossman, Smagorinsky, and Valencia (1999), motives and identity are key factors in this comparison. Kay’s motive for entering the M.Ed. program was to become an English teacher, and she identified herself as a preservice English teacher. In contrast, Kimberly did not plan to teach English, and in my opinion entered the M.Ed. program in order to eventually earn ESL certification. The teaching of literature is something Kay expects to be a major part of her life for many years to come, while Kimberly does not plan to use these skills unless they are related to language acquisition. Although I cannot claim that Kay’s conception of literature teaching was completely transformed, the data indicates some small shifts in her thinking, specifically in regards to envisionment.

One factor in the relatively small overall change for both participants may be that they entered the winter quarter with progressive and somewhat social constructivist notions of teachings. Neither participant reported feelings of tension between her beliefs and what was presented in the literature methods course, and their pre-surveys revealed no major conflict between the methods instructor’s goals. The nature of this study does not reveal if the previous M.Ed. coursework helped create these frameworks, or if both preservice teachers entered the program with these beliefs. Based on their descriptions of effective and influential teachers, however, both Kay and Kimberly identify teachers who value discussion and cooperative learning. These surface features of social constructivism reveal an inclination on the part of both participants to value the type of
teaching promoted in the M.Ed. program. For further consideration of the impact of the methods course, a preservice teacher with beliefs that strongly conflict with the university program should be studied.
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS: TOOLS FROM THE METHODS COURSE

While measuring change in beliefs is one assessment of the role of a methods course in the development of teaching practices, the coding and counting of tools offers another measure. In education activity settings, tools are all of the strategies, activities, and theories of how to teach that are a part of that setting. Tools may be conceptual or practical. Grossman et al (1999) defines conceptual tools as “principles, frameworks, and ideas about teaching, learning, and English/ language arts acquisition that teachers use as heuristics to guide decisions about teaching and learning” (p. 14). Practical tools, on the other hand, are not guiding frameworks, but rather immediately accessible strategies to implement.

Lesson plans, observations of instruction, and interview data provide data to answer the second research question: What are the tools presented in the university literature methods course? Do these tools appear in the lesson plans created by the preservice teachers? On the surface, it would seem that the more tools appropriated from a particular setting, the more impact that setting has had on the teacher’s development. However, as the data in this study reveals, the transfer of conceptual tools has a deeper
effect on the teaching than a series of practical tools. Even more than in the previous chapter, the results of the two case study participants vary significantly.

University Methods Course

First Day of Class

Before the first class meeting of Teaching Literature in the Secondary School, the instructor posted the course syllabus and required readings on the school’s electronic course management system. Students had three reading assignments to complete before coming to class: the first two chapters in Beach et. al’s (2006) *Teaching Literature to Adolescents*, “Getting the Interpretation Right” (Wagner & Larson, 1995.), and “Background for Reform: (Applebee, 1992). While the normal meeting time was Mondays from 1:00 to 3:18pm, the first class session met on a Friday due to school scheduling constraints. The first session started with the instructor distributing index cards and surveys about teaching literature. While the students filled out the information cards and surveys, the instructor projected the class agenda on a screen and circulated an attendance list.

One of the instructor’s first comments about the course provided a rationale for the opening activities, as well as what would be coming throughout the quarter: “I try to do as many things with you as I ask you do with your students.” After a brief overview of the agenda, he allowed for students to ask him questions, which ranged from how long he taught high school to what he does besides teaching this course. The first forty-five minutes of the class period focused on the overall aims and assignments of the course, while the instructor also introduced his beliefs and professional stance. For example, he
recommended that students become members of the National Council of Teachers of
English right away and told them, “you should be as actively involves as you can
possibly be in your profession.”

The instructor explained that the purpose of the first class was to talk generally
about experiences with literature. He went on to describe the concept of envisionment,
and stated directly that envisionment was the central concept of the course. Later, after
the break, he restated this point again, pointing out that it is a conceptual tool and there
will be many practical tools to go along with it.

After the initial introduction, there were three major activities, beginning with a
quick-write in which the students wrote down their two primary goals for literature
instruction, as well as tools that would support these goals. In groups of five, students
also discussed their literature surveys. Additionally, the instructor asked questions about
both required articles and asked students to mark and share important passages from the
Applebee piece. Through these activities and the discussions in between, the instructor
explained some of the major challenges of teaching literature, such as the tension
between what students want to read and what their parents and school board think they
should read. General advice about teaching was interspersed with personal anecdotes,
such as when the instructor forced his son to take an elective reading course in high
school that turned out to be full of the worst kids in school and no books. He also
addressed the importance of authority and intention in relation to Wagner’s piece. As the
clock reached 3:18pm, the instructor dismissed students with the closing remarks: “You
know a lot. You’re probably really excited to teach literature. You’ve been building up to this since you started decoding.”

In this introductory class, the instructor prepared students both practically and conceptually for what would come in the weeks ahead. As promised, the idea of envisionment formed the central construct, and the class format often looked the same: agenda projected on board, modeling, discussion, group work, and a mix of larger theoretical and personal commentary. The instructor also worked to establish students’ apprenticeships of observation, specifically the notions of how to teach literature that they brought to the course.

*Conceptual Framework*

In a debriefing interview after the quarter, the instructor explained that his overall goal for the course was to develop a central concept of how to teach literature and what it means to teach literature through Judith Langer’s (1992) envisionment model. Not only did he see this model as “an analogue for the process approach to writing” which students learn in the fall, but also as a framework for lesson planning. For example the concept of frontloading, which was discussed in four class periods, was introduced with the intention of providing a way to help students start the envisionment process.

Envisionment, which has roots in Louise Rosenblatt’s transactional reader-response literary theory begins with the assumption that students are thinkers. One reason for the selection of envisionment as the conceptual home is that this model provides a framework for teaching literature in alignment with social constructivist theories of learning. In his PowerPoint introduction, the instructor focused on specific
scaffolding strategies to support envisionment and encouraged teachers to ask open-ended questions. The ultimate goal is achieving whole class discussions in which students question and defend perspectives about literature. Small group discussions function as an important scaffold to the development of independent literary analysis skills. Central to envisionment are four stages, detailed in figure 5.1 below.

Figure 5.1, quoted from Langer (1992)

To teach envisionment during the second class session, the instructor assigned Langer’s (1992) piece and discussed it with students. He also adapted a workshop from Blau (2003), focusing on rereading a poem multiple times and rating your own understanding, linking this to the envisionment model. During this same class period, he presented a PowerPoint presentation on the principles of envisionment.

The following week, the instructor led students through a lesson on “Everyday Use” by Alice Walker, which clearly outlined eight steps. Beginning with a frontloading
activity, the instructor also asked students to sequence key events, complete several graphic organizers, and write a short response. While the stages of envisionment were considered in the planning, there was no discussion after that linked this lesson back to the central construct.

Envisionment was only referenced in four of the ten class periods, although the conceptual and practical tools introduced throughout the quarter could be aligned with this model. After the conclusion of the course, the instructor reflected that he added this concept, “rather than integrated it,” specifically pointing out that the textbooks did not mention envisionment at all, even though they followed a similar paradigm. Furthermore, he mentioned the tension between over-saturating the students with the word “envisionment” versus continually making the connections explicit. He has been teaching the literature methods course for nearly twenty years, but this was the first time he framed the course around envisionment.

In explaining the purpose for grounding the course in envisionment, the instructor outlined his two main criteria for deciding what to teach: things that the students will need to do right away as teachers and what the field of English/Language Arts values. He acknowledged that the preservice teachers may not practically need to understand envisionment, but it is an example of what the larger field believes is important for fostering student learning. He also cited assessment, interpretive authority, and writing about literature as major concepts of the course. The instructor noted that the purpose of his almost weekly reading quizzes was not only to assess students’ understanding, but
also to help them pick out the most important concepts. The quizzes always focused on a conceptual tool from the readings, such as envisionment or assessment.

Another piece of the overall framework for the literature methods course was the conjoining of it with the inquiry course. The same instructor taught both classes and made their connection clear from the beginning. The inquiry course forced the students to study their teaching of literature through an inquiry report based around the Multi-Day Teaching Project. Although the students had choice in designing their research questions, a pre and post assessment of student learning was required as a source of data. Ideally, the inquiry reports would focus on elements of teaching learned in the literature methods course, but after the quarter the instructor reflected on the need for making the link to envisionment more important in the future. Through these two courses, the instructor sought to integrate theory and practice through teaching students how to be reflective practitioners and how to think procedurally about teaching. The syllabi of both courses are included as Appendixes A and B for further consideration of goals and course readings.

*Catalogue of Tools - Conceptual*

The activity theory construct of a tool offers a way to capture the content of the course throughout the quarter. The conceptual tools actually included in the instruction reveal the extent to which the instructor’s conceptual framework was carried out, as well as other philosophical and theoretical models that may have emerged. In addition to the conceptual tool of envisionment, four other conceptual tools were referenced more than once in the methods course. First, the larger conceptual area of writing about literature
was grounded in argumentation. This conceptual tool was included in three class periods through discussion and modeling. Additionally, students wrote essays following an argumentative template and also assessed student examples of writing. The instructor also include the text *Writing about Literature* (Kahn et al, 1986) in the course to further support the development of this concept. The idea of holistic assessment was also mentioned and discussed in relation to writing about literature. The professor modeled this practice in his grading for the course as well.

Another conceptual tool featured in more than one class period was literary theory, specifically with a focus on looking at literature through multiple perspectives. Aligning with a chapter in Beach, Appleman, Hynds, and Wilhelm (2006), the instructor devoted portions of two class periods to discussing and practicing the use of literary theories as lenses for building interpretation. In groups, students designed short presentations to explain a story they would teach through a particular lens. For this assignment, students also wrote learning objectives and designed a frontloading activity for the theory-based units. Examples ranged from teaching *Lord of the Flies* through a postcolonial lens to teaching *The Three Little Pigs* with a Marxist perspective.

In alignment with the third required text, *Reading in the Dark* (Golden, 2001), film as a framework for teaching literature was another conceptual tool of the course. Two class periods focused on practical applications of this tool through storyboarding, and there was an initial discussion about the reasons to use film techniques in relation to literature and how these activities may engage students and deepen interpretative skills.
Other conceptual tools were discussed throughout the quarter, although only once. For a complete list, reference figure 5.2. This chart is arranged with the tools in order of the number of class periods they were part of and also includes a description of how the tools were presented (discussion, modeling, providing examples, or mentioning). Of these conceptual tools, the class period in which the instructor discussed constructivism, teacher-centeredness, and student-centeredness was notable for its impact on the thinking of the case study interns, as discussed in the data from the first research question.

Overall, envisionment loosely links the conceptual tools of the course, but the students may not see these links because they were not made explicit. While a slight tension exists between envisionment’s reader response roots and the other literary theories presented, there is a possible link between the fourth stage of envisionment, stepping out and objectifying, and all of the theories. Additionally, through requiring a frontloading activity in the conceptualization of a theory-based unit, the instructor scaffolded a link. The teacher vs. student-centered instruction discussion is also clearly pertinent to envisionment, as the preservice teachers struggled to determine their role in the teaching of literature though this model. Through the discussion, the instructor revealed how to find a balance of power, which is also supported in envisionment. Furthermore, the instructor explained to me that he sees writing about literature as a way to capture an envisionment of the text; this link was not made explicitly to the students of the course, however. Similarly, the use of film offered another way to capture students’ envisionments in a visual form, although again, the connection was not made outright.
In considering the catalogue of conceptual tools for the course in relation to the central construct, both supports and gaps exist.

The catalogue of tools presented in the literature methods course does not offer a complete picture of the university program’s framework for teaching literature, however. Assessment of literary understanding was a focal point of the inquiry course, although in the literature course it was only discussed in relation to writing. Other forms of assessment, such as through question types, were part of the inquiry curriculum and other courses, rather than the specific literature methods course. Another type of assessment, that of the teacher’s self-reflection, was also a component of the inquiry course.

*Catalogue of Tools - Practical*

As the instructor discussed on the first day of the course, there were many practical tools that supported the conceptual tools. During the quarter, twenty-one practical tools were introduced in the literature methods course, as described in figure 5.2 below. Because of the instructional style of the professor, three practical tools were modeled in almost every class period: a posted agenda, cooperative learning, and visual representation of content. Of these practical tools, only the idea of visually supporting learning was explicitly discussed. The instructor showed outlines of the class, presented content through PowerPoint slides, and provided all instructions on a projector screen, and he also drew graphic organizers and other visual elements on the chalkboard to relate to content. When drawing a timeline of a story, for example, he explicitly pointed out the importance of visual cues for learners.
Other than these tools used in the daily routines of the class, the most central practical tool was storyboarding. Not only did the instructor lead discussion and briefly model the strategy, he also provided examples and asked students to create their own storyboards in groups. This practical tool aligned with his practice of visual representations and also offered a form of multimodal composition, which the instructor encourages.

Similar to storyboarding, many of the practical tools of the course were modeled, often asking the preservice teachers to take on the role as secondary students. These tools included rereading, making inferences, sequencing, pre and post assessments, K-W-L charts, double-entry journals, exit slips, writing from a template, self-assessment, quick writes, and question types. A majority of the modeling related to specific works of literature that the preservice teachers read, as the instructor presented the different tools in mini-workshops.

Multimodal composition was one tool that the instructor discussed in two class periods, but never modeled. He referenced a time he would suggest using this tool, in response to a literary work. In our debriefing interview, the instructor discussed the lack of time for multimodal composition as a major frustration for the course. Similarly, the instructor highly recommended independent reading programs, but neither modeled nor provided concrete examples. When he introduced this tool, there were many practical questions from the preservice teachers, showing their interest in learning more.

When considering the complete catalogue of tools from the methods course, it is clear that the instructor did not fall into the trap of the “mentioning approach” to
teaching. Only two practical tools out of twenty-one were simply mentioned, while the rest were discussed, modeled, or both. Instead of trying to introduce as many tools as possible, the instructor attempted to ground the class through modeled examples of practical tools which supported the overall conceptual framework of the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool Type</th>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Dates of Reference</th>
<th>Types of Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Envisionment</td>
<td>1/4, 1/7, 1/28, 2/18</td>
<td>Explanation, Discussion, Modeling, Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Frontloading</td>
<td>1/7, 1/14, 2/4, 2/11</td>
<td>Modeled, Discussed, Practiced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Argumentation</td>
<td>1/14, 1/28, 2/4</td>
<td>Mentioned, Discussed, Modeled, Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Holistic Assessment</td>
<td>1/7, 2/4</td>
<td>Modeled, Discussed, Mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Literary Theories</td>
<td>2/11, 2/18</td>
<td>Discussed, Modeled, Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Film Techniques</td>
<td>2/18, 2/25</td>
<td>Discussed, Modeled, Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Intertextual Literacy</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Scaffolding</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Discussed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Student-Centered Instruction</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Teacher-Centered Instruction</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual</td>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Discussed</td>
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<td>Practical</td>
<td>Agenda</td>
<td>1/4, 1/7, 1/14, 1/28, 2/4, 2/11, 2/18, 2/25</td>
<td>Modeled</td>
</tr>
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<td>Practical</td>
<td>Cooperative Learning</td>
<td>1/4, 1/11, 2/4, 2/11, 2/18, 2/25</td>
<td>Modeled, Mentioned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Graphic Organizers/ Visual Representations</td>
<td>1/14, 2/4, 2/11, 3/2</td>
<td>Modeled, Discussed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Multimodal Composition</td>
<td>1/7, 2/25</td>
<td>Discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Storyboard</td>
<td>2/18, 2/25</td>
<td>Discussed, Modeled, Examples</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.2 - Catalogue of Tools from Methods Course
### Tool Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool Type</th>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Dates of Reference</th>
<th>Types of Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Independent Reading Program</td>
<td>1/7</td>
<td>Discussed</td>
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<td>Practical</td>
<td>Rereading</td>
<td>1/7</td>
<td>Modeled, Discussed</td>
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<td>Practical</td>
<td>Making Inferences</td>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>Modeled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Sequencing</td>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>Modeled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Pre and Post Test</td>
<td>1/4</td>
<td>Modeled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>K-W-L Chart</td>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>Modeled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Double-Entry Journal</td>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>Modeled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Think-Aloud</td>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>Mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Exit Slip</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Modeled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Writing from a Template</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Modeled, Discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Self-Assessment</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Modeled, Discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Quick Write</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Modeled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Question Types</td>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Modeled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Mentioned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Kay’s Multi-Day Teach

**Discussion of Lesson Plan in Advance**

Kay’s Multi-Day Teach unit was an introduction to the poetry of the Harlem Renaissance, which she viewed as frontloading for her mentor teacher’s upcoming unit on *A Raisin in the Sun*. A few days before beginning her unit, we sat down to discuss her lesson plans. Kay began with the essential questions that framed her unit, which all
focused on dreams: What is a dream? What is the American Dream? What was the American Dream during the Harlem Renaissance? What are your dreams? She explained that through a conversation with the instructor of the literature methods course, she had realized the importance of first focusing on the different meanings of the word “dream.”

In her discussion of the overall goals and approach of the unit, Kay linked her lessons to the envision model, without prompting. “I want to focus on the first two stages of envisionment,” she stated, “because that’s where my mentor teacher said they tend to struggle the most.” Upon further questioning, she explained that her mentor teacher was not familiar with the envisionment model, but based on her assessment of the students’ weaknesses, Kay was able to link to the framework herself.

For the three day unit, Kay planned to begin with an introduction of the time period through a K-W-L chart. She explained that any “W” questions that she did not have the answer to, she would go home and look up for the next day. The first day of the unit would also include Langston Hughes’ poem “A Dream Deferred.” On the second day, she planned for students to work in literature circles to analyze poems and present them. Then the third day would be “a multi-genre” approach to the time period, in which she wanted to focus on making connections to students’ lives. She was still working on her plans for the third day when we met, but mentioned the possibility of using learning stations, which she learned about in a previous M.Ed. course.

*Catalogue of Tools Utilized*
In Kay’s actual teaching, she faced many classroom management concerns, which resulted in a slower pace and some changes from her lesson plans. She did utilize most of the tools from her lesson plans of the first two days, however. A chart of practical tools is featured below as figure 5.3. In this chart, the “area” category refers to which larger area of English as a discipline was being taught, the “attribution” column reveals where Kay learned the tool, and the “problem” boxes indicate the goal of using the tool. The last column classifies whether Kay planned to use the tool but did not, implemented it without planning, or both planned and taught the tool.

As planned, the unit began with a K-W-L chart, which Kay first experienced in her Young Adult Literature course as an undergraduate. Kay planned to read the Hughes poem through multiple times, citing her literature methods course as where she learned the tool. Due to behavior problems and resistance, the majority of the class only read the poem one time, however.

The first literary interpretation tool utilized was an activity in which students wrote three questions or responses on a note card, switched with a partner, and then responded to the partner’s response. Kay cited the source of this tool as a book she received from her university supervisor during autumn quarter. While the goal of this activity was for students to interpret the text, most students who wrote anything on their cards asked comprehension or vocabulary questions. Based on her observations of the students’ difficulties with the text, Kay strayed from her lesson plans to lead the class in line by line discussion and questioning. When asked about this tool later, Kay cited a high school teacher as the source. Her goal was checking for understanding and aiding
interpretation, specifically focusing on the first two stages of envisionment. Kay’s lesson ended with a journal writing prompt about students’ dreams.

The second day of Kay’s unit began with a cooperative learning interpretation activity. Each group received a different poem to read, and then individuals wrote a response. In their groups of four, students passed around their responses in a round-table format, writing new responses to each other. This response activity connected with the literature circle tool, which Kay learned of through her reading across the curriculum university course. After the responses, Kay passed out discussion questions for each group. She chose not to assign specific roles, but planned for students to present the key points of their poem. With the use of the tool, she hoped to foster both comprehension and interpretation of the poetry. Kay also mentioned that one of her reasons for using this tool was increasing students’ exposure to poems from the time period within a short time frame.

Although Kay expected students to complete the literature circle activity and present, they did not finish in one class period. Kay modified her third lesson to begin with a discussion of artwork from the time period, followed by group discussions of the poems. She ended the class period by passing out a discussion guide of questions, with the goal of making connections between the time period studied and students’ lives. While her goal was to focus on the fourth stage of envisionment, stepping out and objectifying, she was not satisfied with students’ engagement level and did not feel that they actually reached this stage.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Attribution</th>
<th>Problem (if known)</th>
<th>Planned or Taught</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-W-L Chart</td>
<td>Literature-Background</td>
<td>University Course - YA Lit</td>
<td>Frontloading (visually represent learning about the background)</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write 3 questions about text and switch with partner</td>
<td>Literature-Poetry</td>
<td>University Course - previous university supervisor</td>
<td>Check for understanding</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line-by-Line questioning</td>
<td>Literature-Poetry</td>
<td>Apprenticeship of Observation</td>
<td>Check for understanding</td>
<td>Taught</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Writing</td>
<td>Literature-Poetry</td>
<td>Apprenticeship of Observation</td>
<td>Making Connections</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative Learning</td>
<td>Literature-Poetry</td>
<td>This particular structure - Reading Course</td>
<td>Respond to literature</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Circle</td>
<td>Literature-Poetry</td>
<td>University Course-Reading</td>
<td>Respond to literature</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporating Music and Art</td>
<td>Literature-Background</td>
<td>Apprenticeship of Observation</td>
<td>Making Connections</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetitive Reading</td>
<td>Reading Strategy</td>
<td>Literature Methods Course</td>
<td>Start to move through envisionment</td>
<td>Planned</td>
</tr>
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<td>Stations</td>
<td>Literature-Background</td>
<td>University course- can’t recall</td>
<td>Making connections</td>
<td>Planned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5.3 - Catalogue of Practical Tools from Kay’s Lesson Plans

**Tracing the Teaching Back to the Methods Course**

While Kay attributed few practical tools of her unit to the literature methods course, she did cite envisionment as the primary conceptual framework of her planning. Her lesson planning revealed careful consideration of the four stages, as she began with helping students step in through background knowledge and hoped to end the unit by stepping out and objectifying through connections to the present time period. Due to her
mentor teacher’s assessment of the students, Kay focused primarily on the first two stages of the model, and in my observations she was correct that they did seem to struggle the most with these stages.

Despite Kay’s mindfulness of the envisionment model in her planning, the actual instruction did not fully support the model. Specifically, due to off-task behavior and disruptions, less time was spent actually engaged with the literature than she planned. As the literature methods instructor pointed out in our debriefing interview, it takes time for literary understandings to unfold. Reading the Langston Hughes poem only once on the first day did not allow for students to interact with the text enough. Similarly, the discussion of music and art from the time period moved quickly and did not result in high levels of understanding.

The literature circle activity, however, was the most effective component of the unit in terms of literary understanding because students actually did have time to move more through the process. Although Kay was frustrated with some behavior in the groups, the actual presentations revealed that most students gained at least a basic understanding of the poem’s meaning. One group in the class I observed clearly moved into the third stage of envisionment in their analysis. For example, they discussed the meaning of symbols they found and how they believed these symbols represented aspects of the poet’s dreams. I also noticed that the groups approached their analysis in different ways: some worked line by line, others focused on the overall themes, and a few groups pointed out the author’s purpose. The range of interpretative styles revealed the social construction of knowledge at the core of this activity, as well as a level of student-
centeredness. When reflecting on the lesson, Kay said she tried to balance the teacher-led and student-led instruction.

The literature circle tool did not stem from the literature methods course, but Kay did draw on the envisionment model as she designed her discussion guide. She specifically asked a few questions for each stage of the model, with the most questions focused on the second stage. Although the presentations did not reflect a complete literary understanding of all four stages, I did observe some groups objectifying the poem in their group discussions.

Kay’s Multi-Day Teach reveals the complexities of what is planned versus what actually occurs. She clearly relied on the envisionment process as her base in planning, but made instructional changes that sometimes distracted from the fostering of literary understanding. She did not rely on the literature methods course for practical tools, but it reveals a higher level of appropriation that she made the link from the conceptual tool of the methods course to practical tools she learned elsewhere. Furthermore, Kay’s planning of the unit exemplified many of the core concepts of the M.Ed. program as a whole, specifically the social constructivist stance and framing of essential questions.

Kimberly’s Multi-Day Teach

Discussion of Lesson Plan in Advance

For her Multi-Day Teaching Project, Kimberly was continuing her mentor teacher’s unit on *Life in Prison* by Stanley Tookie Williams. She planned to teach one chapter each day of her unit, specifically chapters five through seven. Kimberly began her discussion of her lesson plans by stating her overall objectives for the unit. She stated
that her primary goal was for “students to know that learning is enjoyable, that they can really be engaged in thinking and interacting, and it’s fun too.” When prompted to share her more academic-oriented goals, she selected critical thinking as the primary objective, and also mentioned that she wanted students to have “the cooperative learning experience.”

As she planned her lessons, Kimberly continually sought feedback from her mentor teacher, sharing ideas and the actual plans. Although she stated that her mentor teacher gave her freedom and really liked what she was planning, Kimberly did mention that her mentor teacher provided her with a list of grade-level indicators, a form of state standards, to meet throughout the lessons. Kimberly used some of these standards to focus particular activities, but also explained that she would weave some of the other standards into discussion and the questions she asked in relation to the text.

While her mentor teacher’s suggestions and suggested standards formed one aspect of her planning framework, Kimberly also focused on cooperative learning and frontloading. She planned to begin each lesson with at least one frontloading activity, often two, and also included cooperative learning elements each day. On the first day of her unit, Kimberly planned to have students debate if the writing of the book redeems Stanley Tookie Williams. The format of the debate would follow a clip from the movie *Hook*, which she would show as the bell-ringer. The second day of the unit would cover a chapter in the book on rules. Kimberly planned for students to make predictions, read the chapter, and then create skits of specific sections in small groups. Then on the third day she would utilize silent reading to mimic the restrictiveness of “the hole,” or solitary
confinement, because this was the focus of the next chapter. The third day would end with an opportunity for students to complete character head graphic organizers, in which students would fill the shape of a head with words and images to represent what would be going through the character’s mind. Kimberly planned teacher role playing frontloading activities for the second and third day of the unit, as well. Specifically, she would write new class rules and strictly enforce them for the first few minutes of class on day two, and would place students in solitary confinement through creating masking tape handcuffs and limiting what could be on their desks during the start of the third day.

Catalogue of Tools Utilized

As Kimberly predicted when discussing her lesson plans, she did not have time to get through all the activities she planned. Figure 5.4 shows a complete catalogue of the tools from her Multi-Day Teaching, with a column noting whether she actually implemented the tool in her instruction. Her unit lasted more than the scheduled three days, but I was not able to observe the final lesson. The tools she utilized during this lesson are noted in the last column as well.

During all of Kimberly’s lessons, an agenda was posted on the chalkboard, which she learned the value of from M.Ed. courses. She also began each lesson with a bell-ringer, a practical tool appropriated from her classroom management course. The bell-ringer for the first day was not the video clip that she originally planned, but instead consisted of a list of sentences from the book that students had to identify as facts or opinions. This practical tool was appropriated from her mentor teacher with a goal of meeting a state academic standard.
During the first lesson, Kimberly asked students to read using the “bump method,” which she learned about from another M.Ed. preservice teacher. Kimberly explained that she wanted to involve all students, but liked this method because students could read as much or little as they chose. While reading an article together as a class, Kimberly also included the think-aloud or “pop-up” reading strategy. Her mentor teacher specifically asked Kimberly to use this method as a way to annotate and check for students’ understanding. The pop-ups continued during the next activity, a partner read, which was a tool Kimberly selected for student engagement.

As students read an article with partners, Kimberly realized there would not be enough time for a debate. She ended the class period by drawing a vocabulary graphic organizer on the board for the word “redemption.” Lines coming out from this word included the definition, examples, and synonyms. Kimberly learned this tool in a university course, although she could not recall which one. She also chose to include it because I had encouraged her to add more visual support to her lessons. Kimberly used the discussion of this term to introduce the homework assignment, in which students had to write their opinion on whether someone who commits murder can be redeemed. This was her post-test for the inquiry project, as she had already asked the question on a previous day.

After her lesson, Kimberly decided she would use the video clip and debate on the next day, as well as include one more article. School was cancelled due to snow, however, so when Kimberly returned for her second day, she decided to move on to the second lesson she planned. Once again, Kimberly did not get through her entire lesson
plan by the end of the class period. She did follow her lesson plan more closely than on
the first day, though. As planned, Kimberly began with a role playing activity, which she
said just came from her own mind and not a previous experience. Through her drama,
Kimberly tried to help students experience the strict environment and lack of freedom
that prisoners face. She walked around and passed out popsicle sticks to students
breaking the rules, stating that two sticks equalled detention. During this time, the bell-
ringer asked students to make a list of all the school rules they could think of. After
explaining her purpose with the role playing, Kimberly told them they would be reading
about the rules in prison.

In groups, students completed a prediction guide, which asked them to guess what
the rule would be for different aspects of life, from showering to clothing. Kimberly
chose to focus on prediction skills because her mentor teacher asked her to, but she
explained that she designed the prediction guide herself. Another task for students to
complete in their groups was to design a skit based on one section of rules. While all of
the groups at least started working, no groups finished before the end of the period.
Kimberly told the class they would present skits on the next day and passed out cookies
in honor of Valentine’s Day as students left the classroom.

Because students did not have time to present their skits as Kimberly had planned,
she decided to continue the lesson during the next class period. She did not include a
bell-ringer, but began by asking students to review the previous day. She also asked the
class to generate a list of traits that make a good skit before giving them time to work.
Kimberly decided to add more game-like elements to the activity by instructing groups
not to share which rules they had, but rather allowing the class to guess. She also decided
to include a class vote at the end of the period for the best skit.

After the groups performed their skits, Kimberly returned to the prediction guides from the previous day. The class scored them together as a way to review the actual rules. Kimberly also attempted to engage the learners in a metadiscourse about how they make correct predictions. Kimberly linked to the first day of the lesson by asking if students relied on facts or opinions, but the student had trouble answering the question. Kimberly ended the class by asking students to reflect on if the rules in prison are fair, and what determines if rules are fair. In explaining her purpose for this discussion, Kimberly connected her decisions with the state standards her mentor teacher wanted her to cover, as well as hoping to help students become critical thinkers.

Although I was not able to observe her in the following week because of other university supervisory duties, Kimberly met with me to briefly share how she ended the unit. While Kimberly chose not to include the dramatic activity of handcuffing students, she did teach one more chapter in the book and gave students the character head assignment. Kimberly explained that the students worked on multiple drafts of their character heads, and this became an ongoing assignment as students continued the book with the mentor teacher. This practical tool came from a small group session that I led as university supervisor, during which I shared several of my favorite graphic organizers from Jim Burke’s *Tools for Thought*. Kimberly selected this strategy as a way to provide student choice, allow students to use their talents, and also encourage analysis of the main character.
Overall, Kimberly felt that she met the goals of her unit and stated that she learned a lot about the importance of timing. She felt that students did enjoy the activities and also showed that they understood the text. The character head graphic organizer in particular was a highlight for Kimberly because of the creative element that she values and the students’ high level of interest in the task. While Kimberly’s primary goal of enjoyment was met, her unit generally lacked an emphasis on higher-level thought and also included little theoretical thought in the planning.
<table>
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<th>Area</th>
<th>Attribution</th>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Planned or Taught?</th>
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<td>university courses</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Both</td>
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<td>General</td>
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<td>State Standard</td>
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<td>Involve more students</td>
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<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>University Course- small group</td>
<td>Concept Development</td>
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<td>herself</td>
<td>Frontloading</td>
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Figure 5.4 - Catalogue of Practical Tools from Kimberly’s Lesson Plans
Whereas Kay frequently linked her lesson plans to the literature methods’ course conceptual framework of envisionment, Kimberly could not support her decision-making beyond the incorporation of frontloading. She never mentioned envisionment, but when I asked she said that she was “pretty sure all the stages are in there.” From my assessment, I believe she did plan activities that could support students in all four stages; however, she did not always implement these strategies, nor did she clearly help students’ interpretations unfold. For example, while the debate activity would have encouraged stepping out and objectifying of the text, Kimberly omitted this activity from her instruction. She spent more time helping students enter the text through dramatic activities and checking for reading comprehension through skits than she did engaging students in discussion or analysis. In Kimberly’s opinion, the most effective practical tool was the character head graphic organizer, which she believed achieved some level of success in helping students analyze the text for characterization.

While the overall envisionment framework was not a major factor in Kimberly’s planning or instruction, she did appropriate frontloading as an influential tool. Not only did she cite this tool as the most important concept of the literature methods course, it is the only conceptual tool she specifically attributes to this setting. Her other major construct for planning, cooperative learning, aligns with the M.Ed. program as a whole. Kimberly’s use of cooperative learning does not always show a strong social constructivist framework, however, which is how the tool fits into the program’s
theoretical framework. Activities such as reading a text with a partner may be engaging, but do not necessarily promote the social construction of knowledge. The skit project was an example of a cooperative learning activity that did rely on student interaction and led to student-generated products.

In addition to appropriating few conceptual tools from the literature methods course, Kimberly did not utilize any practical tools modeled or discussed in the course either. She did attribute many of her activities to other activity settings within the teacher education program, but none to this course. Unlike Kay, she also incorporated many practical tools from her mentor teacher and also explained that some of the tools “just came from [her] head.” Kimberly’s activity-centeredness is clear in the number of different practical tools she planned to include, particularly those with game-like or dramatic elements.

Overall, Kimberly’s unit was successful in meeting her objective of student enjoyment. She also helped students really enter the world of the text and checked their understanding of the content through dramatic activities. What was missing from her unit, however, was a true push for students’ understandings to unfold over time. Although the literature methods instructor would certainly not say that it is inappropriate to want learning to be fun, a tension exists between making this the primary goal, as Kimberly did, and anchoring a unit with a clear design for student learning.

Comparison and Discussion

The appropriation of envisionment marks the largest difference between Kay and Kimberly’s lesson planning and instruction. Just as Kay’s conceptual understanding of
teaching literature shifted after learning about envisionment, she followed this model in her lesson planning. Kimberly, on the other hand, appropriated the related tool of frontloading without considering other stages of envisionment in her planning. Neither case study utilized practical tools from the literature methods course, while they did draw on many other courses from the teacher education program.

Although only three days of teaching does not provide enough data for a full analysis of concept development, Kay’s interview and lesson plans support that she is moving towards reflective practice, as described in Newell, Gingrich, and Johnson (2001). Not only does Kay apply the appropriate label of envisionment on supporting activities, but also reflects on the effectiveness of her instruction in meeting these practices. She used envisionment to link together practical tools from a number of activity settings as well. Kay’s overall focus on classroom management in many reflections, however, reveals that she is still participating in the procedural display (Newell et al, 2001) mode at times.

In contrast, while Kimberly could not appropriately define the conceptual tool of envisionment, her lesson plans included activities that would support all four stages of the model. Without further observation, I cannot claim with assurance that she naturally teaches literature in a way that supports envisionment, but her Multi-Day Teach suggests a level of unconscious appropriation. Tenets of envisionment, such as teaching through asking open-ended questions and viewing students as thinkers were apparent in her plans, as well. Kimberly’s mode of participation for the conceptual tool of frontloading is more clear because she explicitly discussed the importance of this concept. Due to her lack of
reflection about the conceptual underpinnings and effectiveness of her frontloading activities, however, I would categorize her mode of participation as procedural display. She selected frontloading activities with the goal of enjoyment, instead of seeking to foster the unfolding of envisionments.

The differences in level of tool appropriation are once again related to issues of motive and identity. Without planning to teach literature in the future, Kimberly most likely feels less motivation to carefully consider and reflect on her specific framework and practices for this area of teaching. Additionally, while Kay was drawn to teaching in part due to a love for English, Kimberly’s lack of self-identification as an English teacher leads her to focus more on general teaching strategies and less on conceptual tools for teaching literature. As the next research question will explore, a number of other factors are also at play. After all, the literature methods course is just one of the many activity settings involved in learning to teach.
CHAPTER 6

RESULTS: SUPPORTING AND THWARTING FACTORS

Missing from the discussion of Kay and Kimberly up to this point is the interrelationship among activity settings and how those settings combine to create the path of teacher development. The preservice teachers were not only attending classes, but also observing and engaging in practicum experiences in local schools under the supervision of university teacher associates. As the title of Zeichner and Tabanick’s 1981 article, “Are University...Washed Out by School Experiences?” suggests, some preservice teachers abandon the theories and methods of the university and adopt those of their mentor teachers. Newell et al’s (2001) research reveals that within the same cohort of preservice teachers, all with strong academic backgrounds and good grades in education coursework, some preservice teachers will approach teaching through mimicking routines they have observed from mentor teachers while others will attempt to integrate theories and practices from university courses.

Through analyzing three-way interviews with mentor teachers, interviews with the case studies alone, written reflections of the activity settings, and my own role as a university supervisor, I approach the question: what factors support and thwart the transfer of tools from the arrangement of settings to the teaching? “Transfer” in this
context refers to tools that appear in the preservice teachers lesson plans or interviews which they were introduced to in the university methods course, thus operationalizing the process of learning to teach literature. Because previous research supports the influential role of mentor teachers (Gimbert, 2001; Weaver & Stanulis, 1996), this relationship is central to my discussion. The activity settings discussed are the relationships between the preservice teacher and the students, mentor teacher, and university supervisor. Additionally, the preservice teacher’s impressions of the methods course and the role of the inquiry course requirements on the Multi-Day teaching project are also pertinent factors.

KAY

Field Placement Activity Setting

Relationship with the Students

From the beginning of the quarter, Kay reported both positive and concerning observations of the classes she would be teaching. While in her first journal entry, she enthusiastically described the level of analysis students demonstrated during a cooperative learning activity around important quotations, Kay also questioned the amount of off-task behavior exhibited. When planning her Multi-Day Teaching unit, Kay was primarily concerned with classroom management and student resistance. On more than one occasion, she observed students criticize activities and refuse to do the work assigned.

In this urban high school, the mobility rate was high and the attendance percentage low. Over 80% of students were African-American, and 75% of the student
population qualified for free and reduced lunch. The demographics of the school and her classes, as well as students’ responses to surveys were important to Kay in planning her lessons. While her mentor teacher assigned the time period, Kay purposefully chose to focus on African-American poetry because of its relevance to her students’ lives. Furthermore, in her third day of the unit Kay wanted to focus on how the American Dream may differ for people of different races and backgrounds.

Kay’s impression of her students also impacted her lesson plans through her decisions to incorporate many cooperative learning activities, as well as art and music. Not only had she observed students work in groups, most also reported that they liked this style of learning. Because of her previous observations of off-task behavior, however, Kay knew the cooperative learning activities would need structure and close observation on her part.

In reflecting on her teaching, Kay felt tension during the first two days of the lesson between her expectations and the reality of how students’ envisionments unfolded. Not only did students struggle with comprehending the language, Kay also felt that they did not put in effort to make meaning themselves. Her spur of the moment decision to approach the poem line-by-line stemmed from her realization that students needed more teacher-direction and structure. In her assessment of the situation, students needed additional scaffolds to even begin the envisionment process. Similarly, during the literature circles, Kay was at first frustrated with what she perceived as a lack of effort. Through circulating and questioning groups one at a time, Kay noticed that once she helped students enter the text, they seemed to then be prepared to work on their own.
After the first two days of teaching, Kay felt very frustrated with the students and dissatisfied with her instruction. By the end of the unit, however, she was pleased with the analysis of poems in literature circle groups. She focused her self-reflections on classroom management, believing that student learning and engagement would have been higher from the beginning if she would have structured the procedures of her lesson more carefully and given consequences to students who disrupted the learning process.

**Relationship with the Mentor Teacher**

Just as Kay focused her Multi-Day Teaching project reflections on classroom management, many of her journal entries and interview comments regarding her mentor teacher also centered on management. She described her mentor’s management style as “Laissez-Faire,” explaining that she rarely left her desk and even graded papers or read magazines while students worked. Furthermore, Kay stated that her mentor teacher often made the “shhh” sound to quiet down students, but provided no other redirection or consequences. In a journal entry after her Multi-Day Teaching unit, Kay reflected that many of her difficulties were caused by the poor classroom control of her mentor teacher.

In addition to her concern with her mentor teacher’s classroom management, Kay also felt that she gave very little support throughout the quarter. Kay stated that her mentor provided few opportunities for her to interact with students or take on responsibilities in the classroom prior to teaching. In the planning of Kay’s unit, her mentor teacher assigned the time period and suggested one poem. Kay reflected that her mentor did not suggest any activities, discuss possible themes, or “really offer any guidance.” When Kay shared her lesson plans with her mentor teacher the week before
the unit, Kay said that her mentor’s only suggestion was to provide a self-assessment for
the group work. The self-assessment was the only tool appropriated from her mentor
teacher, although Kay stated that she was already considering the inclusion of the
strategy.

Not only did Kay express dissatisfaction with the support of her mentor teacher,
she also felt constrained by the lack of instructional variety she observed in this
classroom. In more than one journal, Kay reflected on the number of worksheets she saw
in her mentor teacher’s class, as well as other classes she observed in the same school.
She noted that even cooperative learning activities seemed to focus on the completion of
worksheets. The amount of time Kay considered off-task was another concern for her as
she planned her unit. Kay worried that students would be very resistant to her efforts to
not only make them think at a higher level, but also use all of class time on academic
activities. She was determined to avoid off-task time, as well as include higher-level
thinking questions, but Kay also explained that she felt her activities were “a little plain
and boring” because she was trying not to do too many new things at once.

Prior to Kay’s third day of teaching, I suggested a three-way conference between
her mentor teacher, Kay, and myself. In this discussion, her mentor gave two specific
suggestions for Kay’s instruction. First, she stated that with “this group of kids, they
want points for everything,” suggesting that Kay assign point values to all parts of the
lesson, make these known to students, and collect all work. In previous journals, Kay
had questioned the purpose of her mentor teacher’s tendency to give points for every part
of a lesson, regardless of whether it demonstrated any true learning. Although she
accepted this suggestion, after the conference Kay told me that she did not want to “fall into the trap of just slapping points on everything.”

The mentor teacher’s other suggestion was regarding Kay’s plan for the final lesson. She suggested that Kay show art images to the whole class on the overhead instead of passing around art books. The mentor explained that she had a binder of Harlem Renaissance art transparencies in the classroom that Kay could use. Along with this suggestion, the mentor told Kay that it would be more effective to begin the class period with the art and music, rather than end with it. She explained that it would get the students’ attention and might help with classroom management in the beginning.

After teaching her third lesson, Kay expressed frustration that her mentor teacher did not suggest or offer the art images until that morning. Furthermore, Kay felt that the discussion was not successful during the first class period because she was unfamiliar with the images and did not have time to prepare questions or commentary. Kay also reflected that although the art and music may have piqued students’ interests momentarily at the beginning of class, she did not feel that it flowed with the sequence of her lesson overall.

At the end of winter quarter, Kay chose not to student teach in this placement, but instead return to her fall quarter classroom. In explaining this decision, Kay spoke positively about the students and stated a desire to work with this more diverse population. She cited her relationship with the mentor teacher, however, as the main factor in her decision. Kay worried that her mentor would give no support during student teaching. She also noted that her mentor provided very little feedback on her teaching,
until telling her during the last week of the quarter that “she saw something special” in Kay. Although Kay was glad to finally hear a form of praise, she questioned whether the mentor teacher was simply trying to encourage her to stay for student teaching because it would be less work for her.

Teacher Education Program Activity Settings

*University Supervisor’s Support of the Multi-Day Teaching Project*

Kay stayed after a small group meeting and a methods course to talk with me about her lesson plans, asking for suggestions about what to teach. Because of my familiarity with *A Raisin in the Sun*, which Kay had not read, she relied on my description of themes and plot in choosing how to focus her unit, which she wanted to specifically link to the play that would be following her unit. Her decision to begin with Langston Hughes’ “A Dream Deferred,” resulted from my suggestion that this poem would help tie the two units together, as it is included as an epilogue to the play. During these preliminary discussions, Kay was focused on content more than strategies, and I believe her content choices were linked to the this activity setting, but not her specific tool choices.

During our interview to discuss Kay’s lesson plans, I took on both the role of the researcher and the university supervisor. First, I asked for her overview and went through the plans activity-by-activity, asking about the source and purpose of each tool. Then, I told her that I would switch to my university supervisor role. In the preliminary discussion of Kay’s lesson plans, my questions and suggestions were almost entirely focused on the procedural level. In retrospect, I realize that I should have started with
probing deeper about Kay’s overall goals and exactly how she saw the lesson aligning with envisionment. At the time, however, I believed that Kay had well-developed and thoughtful lesson plans, and I wanted to focus on her primary anxiety, which was the management. Some of my advice was geared towards helping Kay see unnecessary additional work that she was taking on, such as labeling “side 1” and “side 2” on all the notecards. I also stressed the importance of backing up all instructions and important points visually.

One of my goals for discussing lesson plans with my preservice teachers, including Kay, was also helping them see how the same practical activities could be utilized in other ways or in alignment with other objectives. For example, I shared with Kay that one way to make the “What I have Learned” column on the K-W-L chart more student-generated in the future would be to design a webquest or other mini-research project around the student-generated “W” questions. The other questions I typically asked the preservice teachers such as Kay, were about modifications and adaptations for students with special needs or language barriers. Although Kay did not build in any specific modifications, she did explain that the cooperative learning activities should provide students opportunities to utilize their strengths and learn from one another. She discussed that if the unit included a larger project or individual assignment, she would like to make modifications, although she had never seen her mentor teacher do so and did not know which students had IEPs.

Because Kay taught two periods back to back, I did not have much time to debrief with her after teaching. I left her notes with a few suggestions after each observation, and
also e-mailed her a formal evaluation each evening. I rated Kay “Outstanding” in the domains of planning and professionalism for all of her lessons. Most of my suggestions for improvement were focused on the areas of the classroom environment and instruction. While there were more procedural level comments than conceptual, in my second evaluation I discussed that the groups needed more scaffolding to help them find an entry point to the poems. After the conclusion of the Multi-Day Teaching Project, I tried to help Kay see that some of the management problems could have been solved through stronger instruction. Kay over-estimated what most of her students would be ready to do on their own, and on the first day she did modify her plans to provide more support. In the literature circles, however, off-task behavior was often the result of students who were struggling to understand the literature and needed additional teacher scaffolding.

Overall, I supported Kay’s development more strongly after her teaching than before it. I purposefully wanted to give the preservice teachers freedom to create and try their own plans, but I realized through watching Kay and others teach that there were specific practical supports needed. Based on these observations, I focused our remaining small group sessions on practical tools to improve instruction. Drawing from principles of Kagan Cooperative Learning, I shared sample lesson plans and idea cards with the preservice teachers and asked them to reflect on how some of these structures may have benefited their Multi-Day Teaching lessons. I also passed out samples of graphic organizers and discussed my favorite uses of these tools. I am not surprised that Kay did not include any tools from my small group sessions in her lesson plans because the
meetings held before her Multi-Day Teaching Project did not feature as many tool suggestions as later meetings.

At the conceptual level, I offered little support for Kay. She was comfortable using the envisionment framework in her lesson plans and asked for little help in this area. I was still developing this concept along with the preservice teachers because I learned about through my observations of the methods course. In my assessment, Kay had the strongest conceptual grasp of teaching of any preservice teachers I worked with. For this reason, as well as my own lack of self-confidence in the tool, I never probed Kay to reach a deeper level of understanding. My personal philosophy of teaching aligns with the university program’s model, however, so I do not believe I created tension for Kay in her concept development of learning to teach literature.

**Impressions of and Attitude Towards the Literature Methods Course**

Just as with the program in general, Kay reported positive opinions of the literature methods course. She did not experience tensions between her previously held notions of teaching literature and the course, nor did she feel that any aspects contradicted other courses of the teacher education program. While Kay did not feel that her field experience aligned with the methods course, her criticisms were reserved for her mentor teacher and not her university instructor. Kay cited envisionment and modeling as the two most important elements of the course for her, and I have previously discussed her appropriation of practical and conceptual tools from the course.

Despite Kay’s positive impressions, she ranked the literature methods course as the seventh most influential course in her development as an English/Language Arts
teacher when I conducted the card-sort task described in Grossman (1990). For a complete report on Kay’s rankings, see appendix x. As she described her sorting decisions, Kay pointed out that the sequence of courses was important. For example, she found the writing methods course as more influential overall, explaining that she felt many of the larger ideas about teaching were similar to the methods course, and that the writing course introduced her to these concepts first. Specifically, the writing methods course helped Kay think about new conceptions of literacy and the process of learning over the products. In her rationale of the ranking decisions, Kay focused on how courses early in her college education helped her “start to think like a teacher,” such as the course on young adult literature, or expanded her understanding of the world, in the case of several English courses.

When reflecting on the literature methods course, Kay acknowledged that she had a more positive attitude than many of her peers in the cohort program. Whereas she found the modeling activities helpful and engaging, many of the other preservice teachers did not like this approach. Although Kay did not discuss it, I noticed in my observations of the cohort that many of the students valued the practical applications presented to them more than the theoretical discussions. When considering the literature methods instructor’s devotion to focusing the course on theories, perhaps some of the the negative impressions stemmed from a perceived lack of practical suggestions. Unlike other members of the cohort, Kay appreciated learning the theory behind the practice, and therefore find the course rewarding.

Requirements of the Teacher Inquiry Project
Another piece of the teacher education program activity setting was the course on teacher inquiry. As previously discussed, this course was taught by the same professor as the literature methods course and the two were conjoined through major assignments. In the planning of the Multi-Day Teaching Project, requirements of the inquiry course had to be considered. At the beginning of the quarter, the preservice teachers had to conduct a survey of their students about their literacy practices and attitudes towards English, as well as conduct an interview with the mentor teacher. In the above discussion of Kay’s impressions of her students, she was predominately drawing on the survey and the interview to inform her views.

To prepare for the final inquiry report, the preservice teachers were also required to give students a pre- and post-assessment. The initial assignment asked them to ask questions three types of questions: literary engagement, reading comprehension, and literary understanding. When actually implementing this instrument, the preservice teachers did not have to include all of the original questions. During our interview before Kay’s lessons, she was still struggling with how to use this required assessment. At first she planned to give students an exit slip to gauge their literary understanding of “A Dream Deferred” on the first day, and then another exit slip to gauge their literary understanding of a second poem on the next day. As she described this process, Kay realized that it would be more effective to measure students’ understanding before and after instruction of the same poem than two different texts. I suggested asking students to answer a few questions before discussion, and then to ask students at the end of the period to explain what they learned or how their understanding changed. Kay followed
this advice, but she chose only to include this instrument in one class, which I did not observe. Kay shared with me that most students did not answer the pre-test questions at all, saying they did not understand any of it. They did complete the post-test question, however, providing some data.

Other than the assessment piece in her focal class, Kay did not feel her lesson plans were influenced by the inquiry course. In our interview at the end of the quarter, she stated that through the other requirements of that course, she learned a lot about her own teaching. Because of the inquiry project, Kay videotaped herself teaching. For the video tuning session component of the inquiry course, Kay selected a section of her tape, transcribed it, and wrote a conceptual memo with specific questions about her own teaching. For this assignment, Kay focused on her skills in leading discussion. The following were her focus questions:

• How could I have better expressed my expectations for class discussion, verbally as well as through my responses and actions?
• How could I have better structured the large group discussion so that all students were engaged and so that it was student led?
• Throughout the entire discussion I almost always repeated student’s responses, at [sic] occasionally would elaborate on them too, this seemed to contribute to the more “teacher centered discussion.” Does repeating answers help other students who may not have heard the student, or does this just bring the discussion back to the teacher, thus making the teacher the center of discussion? If you have students who will not speak up, how can you avoid this?
• In previous experience, if you ask a student to elaborate on their answer they are often unsure of what you mean or how to do this. What can teachers do to ‘teach’ students how to do this in discussion?

In response to questioning about how the inquiry project impacted her teaching, Kay explained that it helped her reflection skills. She also stated that the transcription exercise was “probably the most beneficial part of the assignment” because it really made
her consider the questions she was asking and how she responded to students. When Kay shared her final inquiry report with me after the quarter, I noticed that her reflection finally shifted away from the classroom management concerns of our debriefings, instead focusing specifically on her questioning and responding skills. She noted that many of her first questions did not appropriately help students enter the text; in other words, Kay realized that her plan to help their envisionments unfold was not supported through her actual instruction.

Although the effects of the inquiry course were not clearly evident in Kay’s Multi-Day Teaching Project, when we met to discuss her student teaching experience, the role of the inquiry course on her teaching of literature was more explicit. She stated that her discussion-leading skills grew throughout spring quarter. Kay still believes that she needs to work on making discussions authentic and relevant to students’ lives, however. These themes of her inquiry report strongly ran through her student teaching experience, revealing that Kay appropriated the course’s conceptual framework for teacher reflection. When considering the overall influence of the inquiry course on her development as a teacher in the card-sort task, however, Kay placed this course in the bottom 50%, with only one M.Ed. subject-specific course below it.

**Supporting and Thwarting Factors**

Kay’s positive attitude towards the methods course, as well as her negative impression of her mentor teacher, supported the transfer of conceptual tools from the methods course. Kay resolved the tension between these two activity settings through following the model she believed to be more effective. The university supervisor
supported the transfer of tools to an extent, although like the inquiry course, this activity setting proved more beneficial to Kay’s development after she completed her teaching. Kay felt tension between her students’ performance and the model of literature instruction presented in the methods course, but she resolved this conflict through pinpointing the actual problem as her own enactment of the conceptual tools, not the actual tools.

From the data, it appears that the most supportive factor for Kay’s development as a literature teacher was the teacher education program overall. Kay did not cite the literature methods course as the most influential, nor did she appropriate many practical tools from this setting. Many of Kay’s decisions in planning and instruction resulted from a combination of the conceptual tool of envisionment with other tools that Kay appropriated from the program. In fact, when asked about what she considers the ideal approach to teaching literature, Kay stated that she would like to combine envisionment with Bloom’s taxonomy, which she learned in a summer quarter education course. It was Kay’s attitude towards the teacher education program, as well as the program’s consistency in philosophical approach that truly supported her development, including the transfer of tools from the literature methods course. Similar to Smagorinsky et al’s (2003) findings, the conceptual home base of the M.Ed. program supported Kay’s development of a teaching framework, coupled with her aversion to the model of her mentor teacher.

**KIMBERLY**

**Field Placement Activity Setting**

*Relationship with Students*
Similar to Kay, Kimberly’s Winter Quarter field placement involved the teaching of students with backgrounds different from her own. The middle school population was predominately African-American and lower socioeconomic status. When reflecting on her students, Kimberly most frequently discussed their energy and “attractiveness bluntness.” In her portfolio framing statement, Kimberly described her urban middle school students in this way:

In class, I found students to be bolder about speaking out, letting the teacher know when something was confusing or engaging. At least students do not pretend to get something when they simply do not, and they carry themselves with pride when they are able to grasp a previously convoluted concept. The students are playful and friendly at times and harsh and outright rude at other times, but they are real and their blunt honesty is refreshing.

While Kimberly viewed the students as honest and bold, she was taken aback by the number of restrictions placed on them, and especially the lack of resistance to these rules. In one of her first journal entries, Kimberly expressed surprise over her observations in the lunch room, in which students were separated by sex, limited to the number of students per table, and carefully monitored for noise level and movement. Kimberly also noted that students rarely had the opportunity to work in groups or engage in interactive activities in her practicum classroom or the others she observed in the school. When planning her Multi-Day Teaching unit, Kimberly specifically sought to make the classroom less restrictive and more interactive because of her belief in making education enjoyable and social. She also pointed out that the students’ survey responses revealed that they liked working in groups and also enjoyed playing educational games, and she drew on this information in her planning.
The age of her students also greatly impacted Kimberly’s planning. In her first journal entry of winter quarter, she commented, “I will have to put myself more and more in the role again of a 12-year-old student.” Throughout the quarter she consistently commented that middle school teaching is different from high school and looked for advice specific to her students’ developmental level. When I mentioned that graphic organizers were especially appropriate for this age group because many of them are still operating in the concrete thinking stage, Kimberly took note and specifically included this tool in her lesson plan. She also reflected in journals and small group discussions that the amount of scaffolding middle school students need surprised her. She struggled with the timing of her lessons because students always needed more assistance, time, or clearer instructions than she anticipated.

Kimberly’s Multi-Day Teaching project benefited from careful consideration of her students’ needs and interests. Her students were engaged and responsive, and many of them made positive comments towards the activities and her teaching style. Because of the interactive lessons and reduced restrictions, she did face some classroom management problems that her mentor teacher typically did not. Kimberly also did not know many of her students’ names, and she reflected that knowing names is really important for dealing with discipline problems and building relationships.

Kimberly’s favorite part of the Multi-Day teaching project was seeing the effort students put into their character head graphic organizers. She believed that the open-ended nature and creativity of the activity worked well for her students. While Kimberly expressed satisfaction with the unit overall, she realized that areas of weakness included
her sense of authority and the timing of her lessons. Kimberly reflected that the lesson plan for her first day alone could have spanned three class periods and realized that this probably implied that she was planning too many activities and should pare down the lessons.

Relationship with Mentor Teacher

In contrast to Kay’s opinions about her mentor teacher, Kimberly consistently stated that she had an outstanding mentor teacher. Kimberly arranged the placement herself and already had an established relationship with her mentor from an after-school tutoring program. Kimberly was always positive about the support and feedback of her mentor, although she questioned some of her discipline decisions. Kimberly cited the written feedback of her mentor teacher as one prime example of her strong mentoring skills. Early in the quarter, Kimberly’s mentor provided her with an opportunity to teach an impromptu lesson based on a provided lesson plan. While Kimberly taught, the mentor observed and wrote a series of notes and comments, which she shared with Kimberly after the lesson. She primarily asked thought-provoking questions, focusing on other ways Kimberly could address the same content or behavior.

Despite her satisfaction with the level of support her mentor provided, several of Kimberly’s journal entries focused on her concerns or criticisms of this teacher. The first thing Kimberly noticed in the practicum classroom was that the room was cluttered “with posters and notes and signs and reminders of things to do and instructions on how to do them.” Kimberly’s initial sense was that the classroom created a message that “learning is not fun, it’s business.” She also questioned some of her teacher’s discipline
procedures, calling her response to a group of sixth grade boys at lunch “cruel and unusual.” Kimberly also was uncomfortable when her mentor teacher answered her cell phone during class time and when she forced a few students to stand at the front of the room and call their parents to say they were not using class time wisely. Because of her observations of her mentor teacher, Kimberly often reflected on teacher authority and appropriate behavior. Kimberly struggled to decide whether her mentor teacher demonstrated tough love or dictatorship.

As Kimberly prepared for the Multi-Day Teaching project, her mentor teacher played an active role in helping shape the instruction. In an interview, Kimberly stated that she really designed the unit all by herself, but then mentioned the list of state standards and strategies her teacher provided. The catalogue of tools from her lessons also includes several practical tools attributed to the mentor teacher. Similar to the written feedback during the impromptu teaching, Kimberly’s mentor gave her written notes after each lesson. This feedback included many questions, such as “How will you monitor comprehension?” as well as specific advice about how to handle classroom management concerns.

During a three-way conference with the mentor teacher, Kimberly, and me, the mentor teacher again focused on state standards and discipline as the two focal areas. She told Kimberly that she did a great job incorporating the standards, but that she really needed to start with the standard as her base for instruction and then plan activities to reach these standards and teach the students strategies for understanding on their own. She also discussed the importance of tone, word choice, and demeanor in establishing
authority in the classroom and encouraged Kimberly to always “think up front” about how she will handle students’ off-task behavior.

In our three-way discussion, the mentor teacher also suggested how Kimberly could structure the third lesson of her unit. She encouraged her to begin with the skits and then return to the prediction guides, explaining that predicting is a higher level cognitive skill and is measured on the state achievement test. Not only did Kimberly follow this advice on the next day, she also shared with me other tips she had appropriated from her mentor teacher throughout the week, such as providing students with name tags, greeting students at the door with instructions, and incorporating fewer cooperative learning activities with one class that tends to misbehave the most.

Because of the support Kimberly received from her mentor teacher and her enjoyment of the students, she chose to return to this setting for student teaching. When we met for a final interview, she shared with me that student teaching was very different from her Multi-Day teaching unit because the students were less engaged and enthusiastic, and her mentor teacher was also more critical. Kimberly felt that her mentor teacher was an important part of her growth, however, and in her portfolio framing statement she described her mentor very positively. For example, she writes, “[Mentor Teacher] is a tough-love kind of teacher, who is clear and dedicated to reaching her students and placing them on a path towards success.” Kimberly explained that her mentor teacher understood the philosophy of the M.Ed. program and agreed with it, but felt that the theories did not always transfer into practice effectively with her students. When asked where she aligned herself, Kimberly stated that she probably felt closer
agreement to the M.Ed. program than her mentor teacher’s philosophy of education, but she found value in both.

Teacher Education Activity Settings

*University Supervisor’s Support of the Multi-Day Teaching Project*

Kimberly did not consult me for advice or feedback before our initial interview to discuss our lesson plans, unlike Kay and many of the other preservice teachers I supervised. When she shared her plans, they were already complete and had been approved by her mentor teacher. As we discussed her unit, I primarily asked questions to probe her thinking a little further. For example, when she stated that her primary objective was to show students that learning was fun, I followed up by asking about objectives specific to literature. Furthermore, as she discussed all of the activities she designed, I asked her the purpose and goals. When I looked at her lesson plans, I knew right away that she would not get through all of the activities she had planned, so I also asked her to prioritize what she would skip or move to another day. Due to cancelled days and the advice of her mentor teacher, however, the changes she actually made differed from what we discussed.

As in the case of Kay, much of my advice was procedural and practical before and during Kimberly’s Multi-Day Teaching unit. I provided logistical suggestions for how to make assigning groups more smooth and how to help students debate. In my written evaluations, I scored Kimberly as “outstanding” in planning and professional, between “outstanding” and “competent” in learning environment, and “competent” in instruction. My evaluations were very positive, primarily praising her interactions with students and
enthusiasm. In the second evaluation, I did point out that the predicting activity did not really teach predicting skills or help students learn to make better predictions in the future. In addition to practical advice about wait time and circulating, I also encouraged Kimberly to balance the fun with meaningful learning, making learning the true priority of her instruction.

In retrospect, I see that Kimberly needed more theoretical and conceptual support than I provided her. I was immediately impressed with how natural she appeared in the classroom, specifically with her ability to communicate with students in a supportive and positive manner. Kimberly also showed a great deal of creativity and willingness to take risks in her teaching, which I respected. I knew that Kimberly was receiving significantly more support from her mentor than Kay, but I did not take advantage of the opportunity to focus my support on the conceptual side of teaching. Through her involvement with this research project, however, Kimberly reflected that it was really beneficial to meet with me so often. She stated that the questions I asked really forced her to think about teaching differently and to realize what she was learning. Although I did not foster deeper conceptual understanding of envisionment, as her university supervisor, I believe that I did assist Kimberly’s development of reflective practices.

*Impressions of and Attitude Towards the Literature Methods Course*

During Winter Quarter, Kimberly was generally positive towards the literature methods course. In our debriefing interview after the last class meeting, she reflected that she learned “some things she would like to try” and that it was really helpful when the methods instructor asked the preservice teachers to apply the theories they were learning
about. Kimberly stated that she really valued the emphasis on encouraging multiple perspectives and thought that frontloading was an integral part to teaching literature. At the end of the Winter Quarter, Kimberly explained that she had not wrapped her mind around envisionment yet, but her opinions shifted during student teaching, and she came to see this lack of understanding as a weakness of the literature methods course.

In her portfolio framing statement, Kimberly discussed that the program as a whole focused too heavily on idealized situations and that she felt the necessary scaffolding steps for helping students learn to discuss and engage in learning were never taught. She went on to write, “In a similar way, although our class acknowledged the importance of endorsing the envisionment concept in our [literature methods course], we only briefly touched on the practical how-to’s of moving students through these stages.” Kimberly had previously explained that she felt most of the theories of the literature course were supported practically through the reading across the curriculum course, but this statement shows the important link to envisionment was missing, in her opinion.

In the card-sort task, Kimberly ranked the literature methods course ninth, which is two spots lower than Kay’s ranking. A complete list of results from Kimberly’s card-sort is located in appendix D. Like Kay, Kimberly selected young adult literature as the most important course in her development as a teacher. She also ranked the writing methods course as more influential than the literature course. A distinct difference between the two case study’s lists is the location of most English classes, which Kay ranked very high and Kimberly ranked low. Kimberly’s focus on teaching, rather than specifically teaching English, most likely contributes to this discrepancy.
When asked about the placement of the writing methods course above the literature methods, Kimberly provided additional insight to her attitude towards teaching literature in general. She explained that she always felt more comfortable with writing and enjoyed it more than reading literature. While she especially enjoyed creative writing as a young student, Kimberly also expressed more joy over writing than reading at the collegiate level. Kimberly’s plans to teach English as a second language potentially reveal an additional reason she would find more value in writing methods, as writing is more often a central component of the ESL curriculum than literature.

Requirements of the Teacher Inquiry Project

In Kimberly’s mind, the literature methods course and inquiry course were virtually inseparable. Because the same instructor taught both and they were in the same classroom, Kimberly did not see a clear difference between the content and goals of the courses. While on one hand, the instructor wanted the link between the two courses to be evident, Kimberly’s opinion of the literature methods course was greatly impacted by her views on the inquiry project. Kimberly explained that she did not understand the purpose of the inquiry project up front and that a lack of organization led to confusion. Because she was unclear on the project, she stated that she did not take much from it. For Kimberly, the most valuable part of the inquiry report was learning the format of what is expected in an inquiry report, not what she actually learned about her own teaching.

Even though she did not consider the inquiry report to be very beneficial to her development as a teacher, Kimberly did find more value in the video tuning session. She explained that she was really nervous to let others see a video of her teaching, but that it
turned out to be helpful. Her favorite part of the tuning session was the practical feedback she received from her peers, such as about how to structure group work and class discussions. The process of transcribing dialogue from her teaching was also helpful in promoting better questioning skills, Kimberly believed.

To meet the requirements of the pre and post survey for the project, Kimberly utilized two separate tools. Kimberly designed a survey to assess students’ enjoyment of learning, since that was her primary objective. Kimberly stated that she used results to help plan the instruction and also noticed that the students’ level of enjoyment increased after her unit. From this measurement tool, Kimberly stated that her belief in cooperative learning was supported because the students reflected positively about their experiences working in groups. The second tool was a pre and post writing prompt about redemption to assess if students’ opinions on a controversial topic changed after instruction, or were at least supported in a new way. Kimberly did not find this assessment as helpful because the post-assessment was assigned as homework, so many students did not complete it. Furthermore, Kimberly noticed that because students only had time to read one article, many of the changes in their responses related directly to just the one opinion piece they read.

Although Kimberly’s reflections on the requirements of the inquiry course reveal that she found little value in the process and did not make any discoveries about her own teaching, there is evidence in her written work that her development as a teacher of literature did actually benefit from the inquiry report and tuning session. A specific example comes in the shift from focusing on engagement to really considering student
learning. Unlike Kimberly’s interview responses and journals after the Multi-Day Teaching project, her conceptual memo for the video tuning session reveals reflections on her instruction for student learning. She points out that in the selected video clip, she misses opportunities for “teachable moments” and asks what a teacher can do to be sure these opportunities are not overlooked. Kimberly’s tuning session also focused on how to measure participation and bring more students into class discussions.

Kimberly’s card-sort results also show that the inquiry course may have been more valuable to her than she initially stated. She lumped this course with the literature methods course, but she decided to rank the inquiry course as the higher of the two. Although her initial response to the inquiry report and related assignments was not strongly positive, looking back a few months later Kimberly realized that she had learned about her own teaching. She explained that some of the questions that came up from watching the video were things she kept working on during student teaching.

**Supporting and Thwarting Factors**

Drawing on data from the previous two questions as well, I do not believe Kimberly’s teaching of literature revealed a strong transfer of tools from the literature methods course, and her relationship with the mentor teacher is one thwarting factor. Throughout Winter Quarter, Kimberly felt pulls of tension between the framework for literature instruction taught in the methods course and her mentor teacher’s style of teaching. Although Kimberly believes that the underlying values of social justice and preparing students for success are the same, her mentor teacher’s emphasis on state standards and teacher-centered instruction did not always align with the social
construction of knowledge that formed the base of the teacher education program. Although I agree with Kimberly that her mentor teacher provided strong support, I saw little evidence of a true link between her philosophy and that of the university’s. Kimberly’s mentor teacher did support her development of classroom management skills, daily teaching procedures, and standards-based instruction. Her teaching of literature, however, was based more on a model of reading comprehension than the envisionment process. Due to pressure for higher test scores, as well as students’ age, the mentor teacher was more concerned with students’ abilities to answer objective questions than to step out of a text and objectify it. I believe the divergence of these two activity settings was deeper than Kimberly acknowledged, which resulted in negotiations on how to learn to teach literature.

The M.Ed. program’s lesson plan template illustrates the dissonance between the approach of the two activity settings [see Appendix E.] While the university program also required the preservice teachers to identify the state standards related to their lessons, this was not the first step of the lesson planning process, as it was in the eyes of Kimberly’s mentor teacher. The lesson plan template of the M.Ed. program begins with stating objectives, while Kimberly’s mentor encouraged Kimberly to use the state standards as her instructional objectives. State standards took a prominent role in the feedback of Kimberly’s mentor teacher, but they were only included in the methods course in relation to the required lesson plan format. In a debriefing discussion, the literature methods instructor explained that he does not view the state standards as always in line with literature instruction through the envisionment model. Just as Kimberly’s
mentor followed a reading comprehension model, many of the state standards are based in this approach. Although Kimberly did not directly discuss the tensions between the viewpoints of these two activity settings, the role of the state standards in lesson planning clearly reveals contrasting aims and philosophical bases.

When considering the activity setting of Kimberly’s field experience classroom, I quickly see how this setting is embedded within the larger context of the school, district, and state level educational activity settings. Kimberly’s mentor teacher felt pressure from her school and district for students to improve their scores on the state standardized test. In fact, the middle schools of this district were at risk of closing if they did not begin to make Adequate Yearly Progress. Just as numerous activity settings impact the development of preservice teachers, the case of Kimberly’s mentor teacher reveals that activity settings continue to interplay through teaching careers, leading to shifts in praxis.

In contrast to Kay, Kimberly held a positive view of her mentor teacher, which made the process of completely adopting the M.Ed. program’s framework even more difficult. Kimberly attempted to find a balance between the tensions by incorporating both cooperative learning and specific standards-driven instruction into her lessons, representing the most important elements of each setting to her. Further complicating the transfer of tools was Kimberly’s belief that middle and high school teaching should be fundamentally different. Because she did not feel that the literature methods course was designed for middle school instruction, she relied on her mentor teacher’s belief of the necessary skills and appropriate activities.
As her university supervisor, I did not push Kimberly to appropriate the conceptual tools of the methods course, except through asking questions about the definition and importance of these tools. Kimberly found my support most helpful when it dealt specifically with middle school activities, such as graphic organizers, or procedural advice for cooperative learning. Just as with the literature methods course, in our small group and individual meetings, Kimberly was looking for specific practical tools she could use right away and found little value in the other elements.

Although Kimberly did not teach literature during her Multi-Day Teaching project in alignment with the envisionment model or utilizing any practical tools from the literature methods course, she did rely on many other practical and a few conceptual tools from the teacher education program as a whole. Similar to Kay, some of her activities aligned with social constructivist theories of teaching. She believes that the M.Ed. program has helped her understand good teaching in a new way, and that she will draw from these ideas in any type of teaching she undertakes in the future.

Comparison and Discussion

Although motive and identity remain important factors in explaining the differences between Kay and Kimberly, the field experience activity setting offers another great area of contrast. Whereas Kay considered her mentor teacher to be an ineffective classroom manager and uncreative in lesson planning, Kimberly respected her mentor’s level of authority, despite occasional questions about appropriateness. More importantly, Kay expressed frustration with her mentor teacher’s lack of support, while Kimberly felt that she had “an outstanding mentor teacher.” Both case studies expressed some level of
tension between the university program’s practices and those of their mentor teachers, but Kay found the disconnect to be much stronger. Kimberly attributed some of the differences, such as the emphasis on teacher-centered structure, to the different needs of middle school students, which she felt were often overlooked in her university courses.

Although previous research (Newell et al, 2001; Gimbert 2001; Weaver & Stanulis, 1996) supports that alignment of all activity settings leads to higher levels of concept development and tool appropriation, the case of Kay reveals that even when dissonance exists among settings, some preservice teachers will choose to teach in a model supported by their university program. Because Kay held a negative view of her mentor teacher and a positive view of the literature methods course and program overall, she chose to follow the theories and practices encouraged by her instructors and university supervisor. As previously discussed, Kay’s apprenticeship of observation and motives further supported her appropriation of the M.Ed, program’s pedagogy.

In the case of Kimberly, the interrelationships among activity settings were more complex. Kimberly held a mostly positive view of her mentor teacher, further supported by their preexisting relationship before the winter quarter. While her feelings towards the literature methods course were fairly positive as well, she did not always feel it was preparing her for the experiences in her field placement. An additional consideration was that she planned to return to this setting for student teaching, which may have added another motive to her decision-making. To negotiate through these relationships, Kimberly chose to think of herself as a teacher in between the two models. In her Multi-Day Teaching lesson plans, Kimberly included many group activities (all of which she
called “cooperative learning”) and specific frontloading plans, which aligned with what she viewed as most important from the university courses. At the same time, she specifically included grade level indicators and correlating activities that her mentor teacher asked her to include.

Not only did the relationships with their mentor teachers vary significantly, Kay and Kimberly found different value in the support of their university supervisor and the inquiry project. While Kay utilized content advice from individual conversations with me, Kimberly drew on practical tools from small group sessions. Kay expressed that she found value in our debriefings, as it fostered more reflection. Kimberly stated that participating in the research project encouraged her to think more deeply about teaching, but she found the most value in discussing procedural concerns prior to her lessons. Similarly, Kay found the reflection and critical self-study pieces of the inquiry project to be the most beneficial, but Kimberly saw little value beyond the procedure of writing an inquiry report.

It is worthy to note that both case study participants received positive evaluations from their mentor teachers and university supervisors, as well as high grades in the literature methods and inquiry courses. Although Kimberly did not appropriate a complete conceptual framework for teaching literature from the university program, her lessons were thorough, detailed, and engaging. Furthermore, Kimberly stood out for her ability to give clear directions and make connections with students. Kimberly was more successful than Kay in terms of student engagement, building rapport, and classroom management. Despite the frustrations and difficulties Kay experienced, mostly due to her
relationship with her mentor teacher, her high level of reflection and theoretical thinking resulted in a successful Multi-Day teaching project for her as well. This study reveals that course grades and even evaluations of teaching do not necessarily reveal levels of appropriation or alignment with endorsed models of teaching.
CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings

*Appropriation of Envisionment as a Framework for Literature Teaching*

Kay and Kimberly entered the M.Ed. English Education program with excellent grades as English majors and several experiences working with youth. After the fall quarter, they were both identified as strong candidates for this study because of their success during the Multi-Day Teaching project and general conscientiousness towards meeting expectations. During the winter quarter, specifically the Multi-Day Teaching Project on literature, these two preservice teachers appropriated conceptual tools from the literature methods course differently, however. Kay embraced envisionment as her framework for literature instruction, planned her lessons in alignment with this model, and reflected on how her teaching supported this theory. Kimberly, on the other hand, planned activity-centered lessons with frontloading as the only trace of the methods course. While Kimberly’s lessons did support envisionment, she was unable to articulate the links between the model and her activities, beyond frontloading.

The differences between Kay and Kimberly cannot be attributed to a single factor; instead, it is necessary to consider the interrelationships among activity settings. Kay’s
apprenticeship of observation prepared her to think about teaching in terms of social 
construction of knowledge and understanding literature through the unfolding of 
envisionments. While her mentor teacher did not teach in a model that aligned to the 
university program’s ideal, Kay’s negative opinion of the mentor allowed her to reject the 
practices she observed. Additional factors in Kay’s appropriation of envisionment 
include her positive impression of the methods course, her identity as a literature teacher, 
and the reflective practices encouraged by the inquiry project.

Kimberly’s apprenticeship of observation also prepared her to accept social 
constructivist theories of learning and realize the importance of discussion in fostering 
literary understanding. Her positive relationship with her mentor teacher, however, 
created tension between the envisionment model and teaching literature through reading 
comprehension strategies in line with state tests. Furthermore, Kimberly’s motive for 
entering the M.Ed. program and her self-identification as a non-English teacher led to 
distance between her practices and the literature-specific model of envisionment.

In addition to the tensions Kimberly faced, the data on the literature methods 
course and my role as university supervisor reveals that the teacher education activity 
settings could have provided more scaffolding. As the instructor of the methods course 
admits, envisionment was added, rather than integrated into the course curriculum. He 
frontloaded the course with explicit instruction on envisionment, but then did not mention 
the major conceptual tool in the last six weeks of class. Based on his assessments of 
student learning, he realized that changes would need to be made in the future because 
many of the students struggled to appropriate the concept.
An opportunity to support concept development was missed in the small group sessions led by university supervisors, such as myself. Although I knew that envisionment was the central concept of the methods course, I did not devote time in small group sessions to clarifying the preservice teacher’s understandings or providing more practical examples of enacting this theory. Even in my interviews and debriefings with the case study participants, I did not push them to explore the concept in more depth. Additionally, another missed opportunity for support was explicitly linking envisionment to the inquiry report. Although the preservice teachers had more autonomy in choosing their own direction, focusing one required section on envisionment would have fostered reflection and appropriation of this tool.

In the final interview, conducted near the end of student teaching, Kay and Kimberly showed little change in their understanding of envisionment. Kay stated that she was still keeping the model in mind when she planned literature instruction; however, Kay’s student teaching assignment included only one literature class, while the rest were speech. Her reflections on student teaching focused more on the speech classes because she felt less prepared to teach these courses, and therefore learned the most from the experience. Kimberly completed her student teaching in the same setting as winter quarter, and she taught a short story collection for the duration of her placement. She did not reference envisionment in our discussion of her teaching, but frontloading remained a frequently utilized conceptual tool. In their reflections, both preservice teachers described procedural concerns, such as classroom management, more frequently than instructional or theoretical lingering questions.
Because the instructor of the literature methods course purposefully structured the course around the central construct of envisionment, this conceptual tool was the primary measure of influence. There were other conceptual and practical tools in the course, however. Despite the difference in concept development of envisionment, Kay and Kimberly’s data looks similar in the consideration of other tools. Neither case study participant included any argumentative writing about literature, holistic assessment, literary theory, or film technique in their Multi-Day teaching plans. While the three-day duration of this teaching assignment does not allow for a preservice teacher to try out all of the tools they are learning, Kay reported only utilizing one of these tools during student teaching, and Kimberly tried none. The one tool Kay applied was film technique through storyboarding. Notably, she used this tool in the speech classes, so her application of it was practically related to speech and not conceptually linked to literary understanding. Again, several factors impact the preservice teachers’ decisions not to enact the conceptual tools, including the contexts of their placements. Kay and Kimberly both reported that their mentor teachers had systems in place for writing and assessing essays, which did not following the claims and warrants approach of the methods course. Kimberly’s middle school setting and own discomfort with literary theories limited her from incorporating this tool into her teaching, while Kay discussed that she would like to use theories more in the future.

Appropriation of General Teaching Practices from the University Program
While teaching an approach to literature instruction, the methods course also supported the program-wide conceptual framework of social constructivist teaching. Kay and Kimberly’s data supports that this concept was more central to their teaching than any specific related tool in the literature methods course. Both preservice teachers revealed appropriation through cooperative learning activities, student-centered strategies, and their support of multiple interpretations of a text. While neither participant could identify “social constructivism” as the philosophy of the program, both discussed scaffolding and the belief that classes should not focus on just finding right answers as central to their education instructors’ views of good teaching.

Learning to teach as a social constructivist teacher is complex, as discussed in the research of Holt-Reynolds (2000) and Newell, Gingrich, and Johnson (2001). By the beginning of winter quarter, however, Kay and Kimberly were both already on the path to teach in this framework, drawing on the first two quarters of classes and their memories of influential teachers. The literature methods course further supported this development through the modeling of practices which support social construction of knowledge. As in their appropriation of envisionment, Kay’s planning and teaching revealed a deeper level of concept development than Kimberly’s unit. While both preservice teachers included many group activities, Kay’s structures were truly cooperative learning. Some of Kimberly’s group activities were included just for more participation and engagement, but she was unable to differentiate between the purposes of different strategies. Furthermore, Kay planned for whole class discussions as a central piece of her unit, although her goals for these discussions were not met. In her whole class teaching,
Kimberly focused on the standards identified by her mentor teacher, asking few open-ended questions. Classroom management and procedural concerns overshadowed both of their reflections of the social activities, revealing that at the end of the quarter neither had reached a deep level of reflective practice with this framework.

Comparison of Case Studies to the Cohort

Kay and Kimberly do not tell the complete story of the cohort they were a part of, but they do represent some larger common themes. Based on pre and post surveys of the cohort, as well as reports of teaching practices from other university supervisors, and my own observations of other preservice teachers, I have a sense of the entire group’s appropriation of tools from the methods course. The students with positive attitudes towards the program and the methods course, such as Kay, tended to include conceptual tools in their lesson plan rationales and attempt to find links between their teaching and the envisionment model. Like Kimberly, some of the preservice teachers were focused on activities and practical tools. In their teaching, these preservice teachers included some practical tools observed in the methods course, but did not necessarily hold high impressions of the course.

A trend also emerged in the relationship between preservice teachers and mentor teachers and how this impacted tool appropriation. Other preservice teachers who held negative opinions of their mentor teachers’ practices were more likely to try methods from their university courses and avoid following the models they observed. The preservice teachers with more positive relationships whose mentors did not always align
with the M.Ed. program felt more tension and often looked for ways to draw tools from each setting into their frameworks for teaching.

Although I believe Kay held an above-average understanding and appropriation of envisionment, I observed other preservice teachers utilizing a wider range of conceptual tools from the methods course. In my student teaching supervisory group, which did not include Kay or Kimberly, three student teachers incorporated storyboarding in their teaching of literature. Additionally, one student teacher based a unit around literary theory, and one taught argumentative writing about literature through the same model as the methods course. Of the seven student teachers in my supervisory group, five followed social constructivist practices to a level of procedural display or higher. From these observations, I realized there were members of the cohort who did not enact social constructivist practices, or who taught at a level of routinization, devoid of theoretical consideration, unlike the case studies. Overall, Kimberly and Kay may only represent two possible scenarios of the many paths towards teacher development, but neither case study was an outlier of the cohort. From studying these two preservice teachers in-depth, I gained a greater understanding of the cohort, and believe the findings extend beyond this teacher education program to subject-specific teacher education across the country.

Evaluation of Research Practices

Validity

To ensure valid and transferable results, this research included member checks and checks of coding. In the final interview, I presented both case studies with a summary of my impressions. For Kay, this included her positive attitude towards the
methods course and negative view of her mentor teacher, as well as her effort to appropriate envisionment and teach in ways encouraged by the M.Ed. program. The impression I shared with Kimberly included the importance of her motive for enrolling in the program and her positive relationship with her mentor teacher as factors that resulted in a lack of interest towards envisionment and other literature-specific models. Both participants agreed with my assessment.

A member check was also conducted with the instructor of the methods course. In his dual role as my advisor, I asked him to look over the written portion of my research about his teaching and asked for agreement with my presentation of him and the course. Furthermore, he checked the inventory of tools I created of the methods course. Together we coded an example of interview data to serve as a model, as well.

In addition to the member checks, this report of research promotes validity through relying on direct data sources whenever possible. The three results chapters focus on direct quotations and paraphrases of interview data, artifacts, and observation notes. Judgments and evaluative commentary are reserved for summary and synthesis sections of the results chapters to separate my inferences from the direct data sources.

*Shortcomings*

Despite the checks for validity and comparison of case studies to data from the entire cohort, the design and implementation of this research project features a few shortcomings. One activity setting absent from the discussion is the course component of the field experience. Five times per quarter, alternating with the small group sessions, the entire cohort meets for a course focused on issues related to the field experiences. I did
not analyze the role of this activity setting for two reasons: neither case study participant mentioned this course in relation to planning lessons or learning to teach literature; and the emphasis of the course was not on literature instruction, but general methods. The course meetings included discussion of portfolio requirements, panels of local teachers to discuss specific topics, and emphasis on general lesson planning procedures. Although no data specifically links to this activity setting, it is important to note that this activity setting could have affected the preservice teachers’ decision-making.

Another potential weakness of my discussion is that I was not able to attend and observe the inquiry course. This class met seven times during the quarter, but I had other commitments during the time slot. I relied on artifacts from the course, in addition to reports from the instructor and case study participants to gain an understanding of the goals and tools of this setting. As in the case of the field experience course, this activity setting did not relate specifically to learning how to teach literature, but rather to the process of reflection and practitioner research.

Implications

For Future Research

While Kay and Kimberly offer two rich and complex examples of the paths towards learning to teach literature, additional studies are needed to offer a more comprehensive understanding. Observation of all courses during a quarter, for example, would provide additional relationships and settings to consider, potentially revealing how non-subject specific courses impact tool appropriation. To build on this micro-level study, a longitudinal project following the case studies through student teaching and into
their careers as educators would reveal the effects of the earliest activity settings on long-term development, as well as show how newly encountered activity settings support or thwart specific teaching practices. Another option for expansion would be a study of the entire cohort, focusing on the analysis of artifact collection, specifically lesson plans.

Kimberly’s motive to enter the M.Ed. program as a step towards ESL licensure offers another avenue for future study. In teacher education programs around the country, sit students with little or no intention of teaching the subjects or grade levels they are studying. How do the motives of these students impact their learning in methods courses? How do they draw on their teacher education programs in their future work? Considering the number of teachers who leave the profession in the first few years, the answers to these questions could also reveal the value of education coursework on careers other than teaching.

As this research supports, activity theory is the strongest framework to date for exploring teacher development. This study, like its predecessors, leaves room for additional consideration of culture’s role in teacher development, however. Left unexplored is how Kimberly’s Asian-American heritage or suburban upbringing plays a role in her development as a teacher. While both of these case studies taught students with backgrounds and cultures very different from their own, further research should explore teachers in contexts that match their apprenticeships of observation for comparison. Activity theory posits the importance of the social and cultural on explaining development, and the field should consider the cultural more closely through case study research with a focus on these issues.
For Teacher Educators

Implications for improving the effectiveness of literature methods course are revealed through Kay and Kimberly. Through a combination of workshop and theory (Smagorinsky & Whiting, 1995), in conjunction with a practitioner-research and reflective course, the literature methods instructor modeled and presented a framework for teaching literature. The emphasis on a single conceptual construct, envisionment, separated this course from the popular hodge-podge approach of survey courses (Smagorinsky & Whiting, 1995) Although not fully achieved, the course presented in this study encourages teacher educators to frame their methods courses with a strong theory and a series of practical tools to enact that concept. If university supervisors and the instructors of other education courses support the concept development, which did not occur at this university, the possibilities of a student like Kimberly appropriating the framework is much stronger. Selecting mentor teachers who support the concept development would increase the rate and mode of appropriation even more significantly, as supported by the findings of Gimbert (2001) and Weaver and Stanulis (1996).

Similar to the methods course, Smagorinsky, Cook, and Johnson (2003) would applaud the M.Ed. program studied for having a clear conceptual home base; however, the specific courses in the program, such as the literature methods course, could have supported the appropriation of the concept further. The fact that neither Kay nor Kimberly could identify the term social constructivism, or even constructivism, as an approach to teaching reveals a lack of metadiscourse about teaching philosophies. In my own teacher education program, I remember much more explicit discussions about
constructivist teaching practices, including watching videos of exemplary teaching and practicing our skills as facilitators of constructivist discussions. Just as the program encourages critical conversations around issues of social justice or teaching non-canonical literature, the preservice teachers would benefit from more direct discussion about social construction of knowledge and what it means in the classroom.

Another suggestion for this particular teacher education program is to consider the limitations of the Multi-Day Teaching project on the development of effective teaching practices. While the envisionment model posits that literary understandings evolve over time, the Multi-Day Teaching project only allows three days for this understanding to evolve. Frustration, such as that felt by Kay, is common when time constraints limit learning. One potential way to improve the effectiveness of the Multi-Day Teaching project would be to discuss explicitly how the duration of the units may not allow for students to move through all four stages of envisionment. If the methods instructor and university supervisors make this known and help the preservice teachers write manageable objectives, the preservice teachers may face less tension between the goals of envisionment and the constraints of the Multi-Day Teaching project. Based on studies such as this one and the feedback from preservice teachers, the teacher educators in this program and others should consider if the benefits of the Multi-Day Teaching project structure outweigh the limitations, or if better models for field experiences exist.

This study also reveals the importance of motivation and identity in teacher development. Understanding students’ backgrounds and reasons for teaching allows teacher educators and university supervisors to differentiate scaffolds appropriate to the
individual. When considering students such as Kimberly, questions arise, such as how important it is that he/she develops a conceptual framework for something he/she will not teach? Should assignments or activities vary to meet the goals of these preservice teachers, or is that beyond the bounds of subject-specific teacher education programs? As Kimberly’s example proves, the individual construction of an activity setting, caused by backgrounds and motives, is often the most important factor in determining the learning that will occur.

Conclusion

Learning to teach, particularly something as elusive as literature, is a complex and messy task. It is not solitary or free of context, but a sociocultural practice. Selecting mentor teachers who support program goals, focusing on a conceptual base for a course, or teaching how to investigate one’s own practices are not always enough in isolation to support the development of an effective praxis. Teacher education programs with cohesive program goals and models for teaching will assist preservice teachers in appropriation, but only when the individual backgrounds, motives, and identities of those preservice teachers align with the program. Through activity theory, researchers and educators can gain a better grasp of the tensions which pull preservice teachers in different directions and begin to engage these novices in critical discussions about their negotiations through the tension. In the examples of Kay and Kimberly, not all university goals are washed out by field experiences, just as grades and written work in methods courses do not necessarily prove the level of pedagogical content knowledge achieved, particularly at the theoretical level. Despite the shortcomings revealed in this study, Kay
and Kimberly both have bright careers ahead of them, even if it does not include secondary English instruction. Their enthusiasm for working with youth and conscientiousness as students and professionals will support the gaining of new insights and concept development from the activity settings they will encounter.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX A

SYLLABUS FOR LITERATURE METHODS COURSE
(identifying information removed)

Required Texts

Textbooks are available at any of the four bookstores associated with the university. All other readings are available through the CARMEN site. We will also use the State of Ohio Content Standards for English language arts—see the CARMEN site under “Relevant Websites and Other Resources.”

Related Web Site: See “Teaching Literature” on the CARMEN site under “Relevant Websites and Other Resources.”
Clicking on a Chapter link gives you one of four chapter resources:
- Chapter activities: further activities that you can use with your students.
- Further reading: bibliographies of further reading on the chapter topics.
- Web links: links to resource sites.
- Literary texts: literary texts for use with students (not included with all chapters).

Course Summary
Learning to teach literature is important to your preparation as an English teacher for at least two reasons. Secondary English teachers devote about half of their instructional time to literature; and, more importantly, literature offers a vast array of imaginative and intellectual experiences, including a means for self-understanding as well as an understanding of the cultural communities in which we live. After considering some of the challenges of teaching literature and comparing our own reading experiences and strategies with the adolescents we teach, we will learn how instruction can support all adolescents’ literary understanding by considering four useful instructional activities and their underlying principles: (a) leading discussions of literature in large and small groups in ways that foster literary understanding, (b) teaching personal and formal analytic writing about literature, (c) planning and critiquing instructional units; and (d) developing lesson plans for literature instruction, including the use of both textual and visual (film and movies) narratives. Finally, we will also explore various ways of evaluating literary understanding from social constructivist, transactional, and reader-based perspectives. This course is a companion to [inquiry course] for which you will complete your inquiry project.

Content Standards (What English language arts teachers should know)
- To value a reading, listening, and viewing community where adolescents respond, interpret, think critically and contrast ideas with others;
- To understand and value the ways adolescent readers respond to literary works, especially in light of the communities they belong to and identify with;
To understand learners’ transactions with literary works (print and visual) as a means for examining our personal lives as well as the cultural communities that shape how and what we believe;
- To promote classroom discourse in which adolescent thinking is both respected and challenged by the teacher and other adolescents;
- To evaluate curriculum materials as a way to know what is an appropriate sequences of activities and experiences that responsive to adolescents’ interests, needs, and abilities;
- To view assessment outcomes as ways of improving instruction and foster further learning;
- To employ authentic, credible (e.g., based on State of Ohio content standards), instructionally worthy, and user-friendly ways of supporting and assessing adolescents’ literary understanding.

Performance Standards (What English Language Arts teachers should be able to do)
- To work collaboratively to learn about literature instruction and to support one another’s learning as English teachers;
- To develop and enact a lesson plan and assessment designed for a specific group of adolescents in your field setting to enable them to understand a literary text;
- To analyze and critique curriculum materials as a way of considering how and why we make instructional decisions;
- To create assessment tasks that are authentic and educative;
- To observe and provide peer response to teaching of at least one classmate in your field setting.

Essential Questions
- Why do we read literature?
- What is the role of literature in adolescents’ lives, in schooling, and in the culture at large?
- What do successful readers (of literary texts) know and do?
- How do our own literary educations shape how we think about reading and teaching literature?

Course-Specific Questions
- How might teachers provide support and direction for adolescents’ envisionments (Langer, 1992) of complex texts?
- What kinds of literary experiences might we offer our adolescents to motivate them to read now and in the future?
- How can teachers develop curriculum and instruction that are responsive to adolescents’ ideas, experiences, and abilities?
- How can we, as teachers, support adolescent readers of various backgrounds and motivations in becoming part of a community of practice whose members acquire practices associated with thoughtful reading and interpreting literature?
- What do we, as teachers, value about literary education and how do we assess what we value?

Course Requirements and Evaluation
Attendance and Participation. I expect that everyone will come to class prepared to discuss the readings and assignments—I will take attendance at each session. In order to participate fully in this course, attendance is mandatory. It is very important to come to every class on time. If you must miss any class or any part of a class, please see, call or email me in advance. (O points -- however, you may lose points if you habitually miss class, come late to class, or come unprepared.)
Details regarding the following projects will be distributed separately via the CARMEN site for this course.

- Reading Quizzes (15 points)
- Report on Survey and Lesson Plan with Rationale (45 points)
- Critique and Analysis of Curriculum Materials (40 points).

**Grading Distribution**

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Evaluation is based upon my judgment as to whether you have satisfied the stated objectives of the course. The university bulletin has stated guidelines for marking (grading) that indicate that the above quality determinations are based upon a comparison with other students in the course, and/or with students who have taken the course previously, and/or the instructor’s personal expectations relative to the stated objectives of the course based in the instructor’s experience and expertise.

**Policies**

**Late Assignments**, in most cases, will be penalized 20 percent of the points per class.

**Attendance** is expected. If you do have to miss class, you are responsible for making up work. To report off, either call me or give me a written note with your signature. A written note is required even when you report off in person. If you are notably irregular in attendance, you may be asked to withdraw from the course.

**Incompletes** are given in only extreme circumstances. Adolescents are expected to complete all work on the dates given above. Failure to do so may result in a lower grade.

*It is expected that you will complete all assignments with fairness and honesty, according to the university’s Code of Student Conduct.*

**NOTE**: Any students with a documented disability who may require special accommodations should self-identify to the instructor as early as possible to receive effective and timely accommodations.

**Web Resources for English Language Arts Instruction**

*Sites with Curriculum Materials*

Virtual Library of Conceptual Unit Plans

[http://www.coe.uga.edu/~smago/VirtualLibrary/index.html](http://www.coe.uga.edu/~smago/VirtualLibrary/index.html)

Pacesetter English

[http://staff.edmonds.wednet.edu/ewhs/English/pacesetter/assign.htm](http://staff.edmonds.wednet.edu/ewhs/English/pacesetter/assign.htm)

*The English Web Channel*


*Understanding Unreliable Narrators* by Michael Smith

**Professional Organizations on the Web**

International Reading Association [http://wwwира.org/](http://wwwира.org/)

**Software for Teaching English Language Arts**

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<td>Examining Our Assumptions about Teaching Literature in Middle and</td>
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<td>How and Why Adolescents Read Literature</td>
<td>A Sample Poetry Lesson</td>
<td>Applebee, “Background for Reform”</td>
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<td>The Process of Literary Understanding—Envisionment</td>
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APPENDIX B

SYLLABUS FOR INQUIRY COURSE
(identifying information removed)

Required Texts

Course Overview
This course prepares you to bring an inquiry orientation to your English language arts practices: to see reflective inquiry as part of teaching and to study the quality of your teaching practices in terms of what students learn. The purpose of this course is to meet the unique demands of preparing teachers with the skills and habits of mind necessary to engage in disciplined inquiry and reflection, especially around issues of how instruction shapes students’ literary understanding and engagement. This course will present multiple perspectives on teacher research by focusing on the ways in which an inquiry orientation may permeate all aspects of pedagogy and foster reflection. Specifically, [this course] provides the foundation for an inquiry orientation to your work in methods courses, in the development of a Capstone Portfolio, and in your field experiences and student teaching. This course is a companion to other Winter Quarter courses in that the teaching methods and learning assessments presented in [literature methods course] (and other courses) are enacted in field work and the effects of these methods on student learning are considered in [this course]

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes
• To articulate the assumptions that underlie your beliefs about teaching and learning, especially as these relate to the teaching and learning of literature;

• To use inquiry techniques grounded in ethnographic research methods to advance the quality of your own knowledge and the effectiveness of your professional practice in terms of student growth and achievement;

• To develop the skills, knowledge, and disposition to conduct classroom-based inquiry, from a teacher-research perspective, as a means for continued reflection on practice;

• To develop the teacher inquiry skills to work collaboratively with your teacher colleagues.

• To learn how to assess students’ engagement with and understanding of literary texts, especially within the context of a specific English language arts classrooms with its own ground rules for what counts as doing and knowing literature.

Cross-Course Connections, Lecture, Research Groups and the Teacher Inquiry Report

• Concurrent with this course, you will have a classroom-based field experience in local schools during winter quarter. The classroom discussion that you will analyze will be collected (video and audio-recorded) during that field experience. Your school field site will provide an opportunity for you to practice the teacher-research methods that you are learning and will provide much of the data for your inquiry project. In addition, your presentation of a draft of your Survey and Lesson Plan assignment for [literature methods course] should help you prepare for the teaching you will study.

• Lecture will be used, primarily, to introduce key concepts and techniques and address the readings with discussion used as a way to extend and elaborate your ideas and to answer questions.

• Research groups will be led by Graduate Associates (GAs). These sessions, which will begin about mid-quarter, will be used to support your lesson planning as you prepare to teach your multi-day lessons on a literary work as part of your Winter Quarter field placement. In addition, this group work will enable you in applying techniques from the lectures in the context of specific teacher-research projects that you will be conducting and to allow everyone to participate in discussions and raise questions about course readings and issues.

• Small-scale projects such as interviewing teachers and students and classroom observations will be used to introduce you to data collection and analytic methods, that is, to support your teacher inquiry project.
You will be asked to write a teacher inquiry report of what you learned about your teaching and your students’ learning about a literary work during the multi-day teaching project.

Materials and Supplies
The following list of materials and supplies will be useful to you during the quarter as you engage in your group inquiry projects:
• notebook(s) to use for keeping research journal, field notes, etc.
• folder or binder for keeping collected research artifacts
• access to an video camera with external or good built-in microphone

Evaluation and Assignments
Grades for the course will be determined in the following way:
Class Attendance and Participation—XX points
Due: 1/16: Notemaking/Notetaking from one classroom observation and classroom map (10 points)
Due: 1/23: Draft of engagement, understanding, and reading comprehension measures (5 points)
Due: 1/30: Notemaking/Notetaking from interview of mentor-teacher and one student (10 points)
Due: 2/6 or 2/13 or 2/20— Transcript of a Literature Discussion/ 15 Minute Video / Lesson Plan and Memo (25 points)
Due: 3/5—Multi-Day Teaching Report (50 points)

Total Points: 100

Policies
Late Assignments, in most cases, will be penalized 20 percent of the points per class. Attendance is expected. If you do have to miss class, you are responsible for making up work. To report off, either call me or give me a written note with your signature. A written note is required even when you report off in person. If you are notably irregular in attendance, you may be asked to withdraw from the course. Incompletes are given in only extreme circumstances. Adolescents are expected to complete all work on the dates given above. Failure to do so may result in a lower grade.

Grading Distribution
100-95 = A  69-65 = C
94-90 = A-  64-60 = C-
Evaluation is based upon my judgment as to whether you have satisfied the stated objectives of the course. The University Bulletin has stated guidelines for marking (grading) that indicate that the above quality determinations are based upon a comparison with other interns in the course, and/or with students who have taken the course previously, and/or the instructor’s personal expectations relative to the stated objectives of the course, based in the instructor’s experience and expertise. It is expected that you will complete all assignments with fairness and honesty, according to the university’s Code of Student Conduct.

NOTE: Any students with a documented disability who may require special accommodations should self-identify to the instructor as early as possible to receive effective and timely accommodations.

Class Attendance and Participation

In order to participate fully in this course, attendance is mandatory. It is very important to come to every class on time. This is especially critical since we will be devoting many of our later class sessions to working in groups formed as part of [field experience methods course]. If you must miss any class or any part of a class, please see or call me in advance. (O points -- however, you may lose points if you habitually miss class, come late to class, or come unprepared.)

Homework/Fieldwork Exercises—See CARMEN for details.

Across the quarter, you will be asked to complete a variety of short, in and/or out-of-class exercises in order to reflect on the ideas presented in class, respond to readings, and practice the research skills you are learning in this course. These will be assigned at each class meeting and will be due the following week. Each of these exercises is intended to support your development of teacher-inquiry report that is due at the end of the course.

The Teacher Inquiry Report—See CARMEN for details.

During Winter Quarter you will complete a teacher inquiry project (and written report) based on your multi-day teaching as part of your field experience. This project will enable you to apply the inquiry skills you learn in this course such as development effective teaching practices, evaluating student learning, analyzing data, and writing a teacher inquiry report.

Although much of your plan will be based on the same research questions and design, there will be some features that will be idiosyncratic to each. For example, your plan will be shaped by what you are teaching, to whom, and for what purposes.

In addition to using sources that I provide for this course, you can use many of the readings for [literature methods course #] that are relevant to your question—see
especially the Beach et al. chapter 5 “Leading Classroom Discussions of Literature” and chapter 12 “Assessing and Evaluating Student Learning.”

After collecting data, you will complete a preliminary analysis during “Tuning Sessions” in order to consider the strengths and limitations of your approach, the meaning you are beginning to make from your data, and the validity and ethical issues surrounding your study.

Finally, by the end of the quarter the report will include a revision of the previous parts as well as a discussion of the affects of your study on your own thinking about teaching and learning.

**Topical Outline for T&L 865, Winter 2008**

1/9: **What is Teacher-Research? Discussion as a Teaching Tool**

During this session we will review the course syllabus, consider the role of discussion in literature teaching, and prepare for the classroom observation assignment due 1/16.

**Readings:**

Frank, Forward (by Green & Dixon) and chapters 1, 4, 6, & 7 in *Ethnographic eyes: A teacher’s guide to classroom observation.*

Beach et al. chapter 5

McCann et al. chapters 1, 2, & 3

*Tip: Talk with your mentor-teacher about a time frame and plan for your Multi-Day Teaching Project.*

1/16: **Planning Classroom Inquiry and Assessment of Learning and Engagement**

During this session we will be introduced to the inquiry project and how to assess literary understanding. Your draft of measures of engagement, literary understanding, and reading comprehension are due 1/23.

**Readings:**

Sample Teacher Inquiry Project—on CARMEN

Guidelines for Teacher Inquiry Report—on CARMEN

McCann et al. chapter 13 (see Table 9.1, Taxonomy of Learning Objectives, p. 103.)

Beach, et al. chapter 12

Kahn, et al. “Theory” (generating questions for assessment)

**Due: Notemaking/notetaking and brief report from one observation of literature instruction in your cooperating teacher’s classroom, including context description and classroom map.**
Tip: By today you should know when you will do your Multi-Day Teaching Project. Be sure to arrange an interview with your cooperating teacher and one student.

1/23: Why Reflective Inquiry? Using Discussion to Support Literary Understanding

During this session we will consider how discussion fosters learning and we will learn how to conduct interviews due 1/30. We will discuss your draft of engagement and learning measures. Four interns from each research group present their survey and lesson plan developed for T&L 646.

Readings:
McCann et al. chapters 4, 5, 6, 7
Frank, chapter 3 & 5

Due: Draft of engagement, literary understanding and reading comprehension measures.

Tip: By today you should have your Multi-Day Teaching plan approved, your video equipment rented and available, and your GA informed of your teaching schedule.

1/30: Planning for Discussing Literature

During this session we will make summary remarks about literary discussions and complete your small group presentation of your teaching plans. Three interns from each research group present their survey and lesson plan developed for T&L 646. We will also discuss procedures for the Tuning Sessions

Readings:
McCann et al., chapters 8 & 9

Due: Notemaking/notetaking and brief report from interview of mentor-teacher and one student.

Tip: By today you should either be teaching or have your teaching scheduled.

*2/6: Tuning Sessions: In Class-Discussion of Transcripts, Video, and Memo Writing

These Tuning Sessions will meet from 1:30 to 3:48 PM.

Due: Transcript of a Literature Discussion/ 15 Minute Video / Lesson Plan and Memo

*2/13: Tuning Sessions: In Class-Discussion of Transcripts, Video, and Memo Writing

These Tuning Sessions will meet from 1:30 to 3:48 PM.

Due: Transcript of a Literature Discussion / 15 Minute Video / Lesson Plan and Memo
2/20: Tuning Sessions: In Class-Discussion of Transcripts, Video, and Memo Writing

These Tuning Sessions will meet from 1:30 to 3:48 PM.
Due: Transcript of a Literature Discussion/ 15 Minute Video / Lesson Plan and Memo

2/27: No Session—Work on Teacher Inquiry Report

3/5: Wrapping Up
Course Evaluation
Due: Teacher Inquiry Report

Related Works


APPENDIX C

RESULTS OF KAY’S CARD-SORT TASK

(Listed in order of influence on development as a teacher, with the most influential first)

Young Adult Literature
Linguistics
Women’s Literature (African-American focus)
Minority Literature (Native American focus)
Teaching Writing
Film/Media Study
Teaching Literature
Teaching Reading Across the Curriculum
Issues in Language, Literacy and Culture
Teaching Journalism
American Literature
World Literature (focus on India)
Teaching Inquiry
Teaching Exceptional Children
Teaching Grammar
Classroom Management
School Issues Related to Growth and Development
Pre-requisite Field Experience in English Education
Introduction to English
Social Issues
British Literature

Note: The course titles are general descriptors, based on required blocks of courses.
APPENDIX D

RESULTS OF KIMBERLY’S CARD-SORT TASK

(Listed in order of influence on development as a teacher, with the most influential first)

Young Adult Literature
Intro to English
Pre-requisite Field Experience in English Education
Classroom Management
Issues in Language, Literacy, and Culture
Teaching Writing
Linguistics
Teacher Inquiry
Teaching Literature
Film/Media Study
Shakespeare
Teaching Reading Across the Curriculum
World Literature
American Literature
Minority Literature
British Literature
Teaching Journalism
School Issues Related to Growth and Development
Teaching Grammar
Teaching Exceptional Children
APPENDIX E

LESSON PLAN TEMPLATE

Teacher(s):
Date:
Title/Topic:
Suggested Grade Level(s):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives:</th>
<th>What do you want your students to know and be able to do? Share your reason(s) for this lesson. Your objectives may include a “grand question,” parallel the standards, and/or offer considerations of students' attitudinal development. Please refer to Beach et al. pages 46–47 for learning objectives for literature instruction.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State Standards:</td>
<td>Cite state standards directly related to this lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials Needed:</td>
<td>What texts, materials, websites, and equipment will you need to implement your plans? Please include materials that students and teachers may need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context:</td>
<td>What comes before and after this lesson? e.g., a poetry lesson may be integrated with Steinbeck’s The Pearl—following a class reading. After the lesson, students may participate in a poetry revision lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about Students' Learning</td>
<td>After you review results from a student survey and other sources (observations, cooperating teacher, student conferences, etc.), how will you adjust instructional materials, activities, and sequencing given what you have learned about students' academic skills and attitudes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures including:</td>
<td>How will you move your students to the point of knowing and doing what you want them to? What will you do? How will you move them through the lesson – invite them to learn? engage them in the activity(ies)? bring the lesson to a close? Throughout, indicate whether students are engaged in individualized, paired, small group (recommended number in each), and/or whole-class instruction. Provide basic “step-by-step” directions for implementing these three areas of the lesson. Please be explicit, yet concise. See Beach et al. pages 45–56 for a Planning Model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opening</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activities</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Closure</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Assessment:** How will you know that your students know what you want them to know and can do what you want them to do? Suggest (a) form(s) of assessment that are directly related to the lesson’s objectives and standards. Provide a copy of rubrics or evaluation sheets. See Beach et al. 219–227 for assessment criteria and scales.

| Justification and Reflection: | Why are you teaching what you're teaching in the way that you're teaching it? Why this topic? How does lesson relate to your students? How are you demonstrating an understanding and responsiveness in terms of race, culture, gender, class, sexuality, and other differences? How does this lesson relate to past and future lessons and fit within the overall discipline? List any resources that helped guide the construction of the lesson. For example, Beach et al. may be the foundation for a lesson on using a feminist lens. |

**Notes:**