

“Abstract Conversations”
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Sharon Abbey

Developing Teacher Candidate Intercultural Competencies: Reflecting on the South African Practicum Experience

To address Brock University’s mission statement on “internationalization”, twelve teacher candidates are selected each year (2007 – 2012) to participate in a three-week teaching practicum in under-resourced school in South Africa. The study of this experience utilizes Darla Deardorff’s Model of Intercultural Competencies (2004) and the NAFSA Self-Awareness Profile to analyze students’ written reflections and self-transformation.

There is little agreement about what ‘intercultural competence’ looks like and if it can be measured accurately (Terenzinin & Upcraft, 1996). While some literature emphasizes the affective domain (cultural sensitivity) and personal traits such as empathy, flexibility, open-mindedness, sociability and language proficiency (Kealy, 1996), others focus on interpersonal relationships, cognitive (cultural awareness) or behavioural components (Lustif & Koester, 2003; Chen & Starosta, 1996). This study focuses on the knowledges, skills and attitudes identified by Deardorff including: knowledge of others, knowledge of self, linguistic competence, skills to interpret and relate, skills to discover and to interact, valuing others’ values, beliefs and behaviours, and relativizing one’s self. Her model focuses initially on the personal level (attitude): respect, openness, curiosity, and tolerance for ambiguity. At a deeper level, the model examines interpersonal knowledge and comprehension: cultural self-awareness, deep understanding of cultural contexts, roles and world views, sociolinguistic awareness and culture-specific information. Skills include: the ability to listen, observe and interpret, as well as to analyze, evaluation and relate.

Participants were encouraged to keep daily written journals. The NAFSA MyCAP Self-Awareness Inventory (Marks & Moss, 2011) was an additional tool used to promote deeper self-reflection. It includes four dimensions: (1) Exploring the Global Context; (2) Learning About Difference Cultures; (3) Knowing Self as Cultural; and (4) Communicating Across Cultural Differences. As well, journal prompts were provided (first impressions, moving out of my comfort zone, assumptions I now question, my biggest challenge/surprise, what I learned about myself, what am I prepared to do without, a person who left an impression, stand-out event, new questions). Students also discussed Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Model and its inherent cultural biases. Noel Entwistle’s Deep Approaches to Thinking (2009) were also considered to encourage students to look for relationships, connect to prior knowledge, reframe, and identify one’s own limits.

Student reflections will be discussed, highlighting several reoccurring themes: initial intentions, disorienting dilemmas, prior assumptions, exploring new roles, culture shock, knowledge of self, and challenging skills and attitudes. Concluding comments

will hopefully provoke engaging discussion: how to help students see themselves as cultural and to see culture across all aspects of their professional practice; how to encourage and promote deeper thinking; how better to prepare students in advance and motivate them to address competencies with greater intent.

Fiona Blaikie

Pinkalicious: An Arts-Informed Inquiry into Mean Girls

The body and clothing are forms of socio-cultural and political capital (Bourdieu, 1985; Lurie, 1981; Butler, 1999). Inspired by Wiseman (2002), I examine the high school subculture “Mean Girls” via arts-informed research (Blaikie, 2007 and 2009; Cahman-Taylor, 2008; Cole and Knowles, 2008) in which art forms and texts reciprocally inform and interconnect. The clothed body reveals/conceals identity, culture, gender, age and a sense of belonging to or exclusion from particular groups, including social classes (Coupland, 1991; Howe and Strauss, 2000; Jackson, 2010, Ulrich, 2003). I asked: “How are your clothing choices determined by your embodied sense of self?” The selected artworks and poems speak viscerally of human being-ness, research-creation, arts-informed research, youth culture, and social theory on the body and clothing as negotiated socially produced expressions of self and visual identity, with the body as mediator (Braziel and LeBesco, 2001; Holliday and Hassard, 2001; Butler, 1993, 1999; Davis, 1997).

Arts-informed research (Cole and Knowles, 2008) provides the framework for this inquiry, drawing upon the idea that art forms (music, theatre, media, the visual arts, dance) and text have inherent meaning, individually and collectively. My female participants were Mean Girls themselves, and/or were affected by the Mean Girl phenomenon by being bullied and/or excluded. My central research question was: “How are your clothing choices determined by your embodied sense of self?”

Transcripts of conversations inspired poems, and photographs inspired visual artworks. The poems and artworks are set in the context of the literature on social theory on the body and clothing, as well as the literature on AIR itself (Blaikie 2009; 2007). In this presentation I select and present artworks and poems focusing on those participants who were Mean Girls themselves, and/or who were affected by the Mean Girl phenomenon by being bullied and/or excluded. I intend the poems and artworks to speak viscerally of human beingness, providing a unique opportunity for audience/participant engagement in research-creation, arts-informed research, social theory on the body and clothing, and youth culture, with a specific focus on the Mean Girls phenomenon.

Mean girls self identify. They make visible a prevalent form of bullying that is evident in schools and beyond through the expensively clothed, managed, accessorized and performed body, knowingly utilizing a policed aesthetic of body and dress. Their aim is to exert economic, sexual and political power and control over others through

subjugating them to believing that they are not as beautiful, popular or powerful as anyone else at school.

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Diane Collier

**Being Tough, Staying Good, and Playing Outside the Box:
An Ethnographic Case Study of One Boy's Multimodal Textmaking**

In an eighteen-month ethnographic study, I followed Kyle, a boy in Grade 3 and then Grade 4, as he constructed texts at home and at school. Kyle lived in a low income neighbourhood in an urban setting on the east coast of Canada, and attended the school where I had taught as a teacher prior to undertaking my doctoral research. I examined Kyle's processes of textmaking in more and less conventional ways. For example, I followed his process of textmaking during a provincially mandated writing assessment and I followed how he constructed and re-constructed the popular culture resources of professional wrestling in texts that he made during different events in different places.

For this study, I define a text as a communicative act that is necessarily multimodal. I include speech, performances, and conversations as potential texts.

In this study I was interested in several questions:

1. What multimodal resources and identities are used by children engaged in text-making across time and space?
2. How do children use resources and identities to produce multimodal texts (i.e., engage in multimodal practices) and textmaking (and social) identities?

I was also particularly interested in what happens to texts and text makers as hybrid forms are created and used the metaphor of a spiral to think through my data.



Today, I will share how Kyle used the popular culture resources of professional wrestling to:

- Create a wrestling match at home that I videotaped
- Produce a wrestling video from the videotaped match
- Rant about classmates during informal conversations/interviews with me
- Use wrestling commentator language to narrate his work at school
- Orally present about his wrestler toy in a formalized classroom setting

I am particularly interested in how Kyle's expertise allows him a range of creative possibilities for textmaking, how creativity might be viewed in everyday terms, and what is visible, if momentarily, when we examine processes of textmaking, alongside texts as final products.

David Hutchison

Writing for What Works? Research into Practice series, a partnership between the Ontario Association of Deans of Education and the Ontario Ministry of Education's Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat

David Hutchison will discuss the experience of writing a monograph for the What Works? Research into Practice series, a partnership between the Ontario Association of Deans of Education and the Ontario Ministry of Education's Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat. David has written two monographs for the series - "Drawing on Children's "Sense of Place": The Starting Point for Teaching Social Studies and Geography" and, more recently, "The Student Filmmaker: Enhancing Literacy Skills through Digital Video Production." Participants will receive a complimentary copy of the latter monograph.

Abstract:

This presentation focuses on the experience of writing a monograph for the What Works? Research into Practice series, a partnership between the Ontario Association of Deans of Education and the Ontario Ministry of Education's Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat. David has written two monographs for the series - "Drawing on Children's "Sense of Place": The Starting Point for Teaching Social Studies and Geography" and, more recently, "The Student Filmmaker: Enhancing Literacy Skills through Digital Video Production." Participants will receive a complementary copy of the latter monograph.

Below is an excerpt from "The Student Filmmaker" monograph:

Increasingly, teachers are being asked to address an ever-broader notion of literacy – one that includes new forms of digital literacy, related to the multimedia technologies students routinely interact with (e.g., blogs, wikis and social networking websites). Yet how can teachers integrate digital literacy with the Ontario curriculum which underscores the importance of traditional forms of print and oral literacy? Student-created videos are one possibility that affords an opportunity to integrate print, oral, and digital literacies into a compelling curriculum unit.

Students draw on and strengthen their print based literacy skills when they engage in well-planned and coordinated video production projects. The reported benefits include: strengthened curricular connections; increased student motivation; and improved student learning. The associated challenges include: managing video production equipment; coordinating logistics; and working within time constraints.

Ruth McQuirter Scott

Apps for spelling: Old wine in new bottles?

This research involves an analysis of over 30 spelling apps currently available for iPad devices. The apps were examined for the complexity of their learning mechanics, the coverage of spelling principles, and features that would appeal to diverse learners. Three of the apps were then presented to three 3rd grade students involved in a

SSHRC-supported research study of iPads in the classroom. The students were interviewed as they used each app.

The study also extends to the development of a spelling app by Ruth McQuirter Scott. This project, still in progress, is in cooperation with a local software developer, and focuses on an app for grade 2/3 students. Ruth will describe the work she has done to-date, and will compare this experience to that of writing traditional hard-copy spelling textbooks.

Trevor Norris

The presentation will discuss research into the teaching and learning of philosophy in Ontario High Schools. Ontario is one of the only jurisdictions in the English speaking world to offer grade 11 and 12 courses in philosophy, in both public and Catholic systems, studied by over 30,000 students a year. The study includes teachers' interviews, student focus groups, and classroom observation. This presentation will briefly discuss its methodology, conceptual framework, and preliminary results of some initial data collection. More specifically: How are students impacted by studying philosophy? How do teachers conceive of philosophy and their aims in teaching philosophy? How are these aims and impacts evident in the classroom?

Mary Saudelli, Katia Ciampa, Donna Dortmans

Design Literacy in Action: Explorations in Ipad Language Arts Classrooms Mary Gene Saudelli, Katia Ciampa, Donna Dortmans

This manuscript describes a pilot case study project wherein elementary teachers in a suburban Canadian city use tablets and design literacy lesson plans in their language arts classrooms. Archambault and Crippen (2009) argue that teachers must have specific expertise in order to integrate technology effectively in an educational event. But, what form does this expertise take and how is it used in an elementary school language arts classroom? Currently, little case study research has been conducted in the classroom to discover the teacher's knowledge and learning from incorporation of iPad technology into their language arts class. In order to address this gap, this study explored the use of iPad technology and web 2.0 worlds (Wohlwend, 2010) used by Deanna, a grade 3 teacher and Natasha, a grade 6 teacher as they used iPad technology for guided reading, word study, and literacy development during a 5 month time frame. A Technological, Pedagogical, and Content Knowledge (TPACK) (Koehler, & Mishra, 2008) theoretical framework was used to analyze data collected from observations of four specific language arts lessons in practice in the classroom, field notes, interviews with the teachers and ten students, and reflections from a web blog where teachers contributed their thoughts on a weekly basis. Four primary findings were revealed: 1. children's responses to the learning through the app and the task at hand had the potential to be subversive (the hidden curriculum is the learning – research and design skills); 2. children have the ability to critique app's for quality and learning potential; and 3. Print and digital media can both pedagogically emphasize

reading and language arts skills and differentiated instruction can be pedagogically incorporated; and 4. collaboration problematic – not all children engaged.

Nicola Simmons

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Impactful or Illicit Practice?

Brief overview:

In the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), post-secondary educators across all disciplines conduct research about post-secondary teaching and learning. While this work allows such scholars to pursue personally meaningful inquiry into their teaching, questions and challenges that arise include: What implications does SoTL have for academic identity? Can pursuit of SoTL and dissemination of its findings be shown to positively impact teaching and learning quality? I'm interested in facilitating an open discussion on these and other questions.

Abstract:

Much of my work focuses on issues and policy in higher education; one area is the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). In SoTL, post-secondary educators across all disciplines conduct what are in effect action research studies about their teaching and their students' learning. For many, this work informs their scholarly teaching practice, but for some who make it public beyond their classrooms, it builds pedagogical knowledge in and across the disciplines. In many institutions this work is supported by grants, staff, and collaborative groups - but questions remain as to what kind of impact it has in affecting institutional teaching and learning quality, its impact on individual professors (and their students), and how these SoTL scholars navigate their roles to include this 'add-on' for which they typically have little or no background. I am currently engaged in the following studies on these and related questions:

1. SoTL Scholar Identity - how do those who engage in this work create and navigate the academic role; what supports and barriers do they encounter? (paper in progress based on qualitative data from interviews with SoTL scholars)
2. Making SoTL work public - where do scholars share the results, and where do they not? What opportunities remain for a field whose aim is to 'improve student learning'? (presented as conference plenary; grant being sought for prototype creation of a searchable database)
3. In what ways do educational developers (those working in teaching and learning centres) act as SoTL conversation catalysts across liminal spaces in the academy? What impact do these efforts have? (national and international conference sessions to collect data - looking at findings now, co-authoring with colleague Dr. Lynn Taylor at U. Calgary – Vice-Provost (Teaching and Learning))

4. To what extent does SoTL improve institutional quality? (thus far, an exploratory international mixed methods survey with colleague Dr. Gary Poole, Senior Scholar, School of Population and Public Health, UBC). (book chapter in press; looking further at qualitative data from 90 participants)

To these we will add your own questions and critiques to explore the potential impact of SoT

Susan Sydor

How Critical Is Teacher Candidate Thinking?

Teachers who know and understand pupils' rights and the relationship of rights to public education are more likely to create classroom cultures that encourage the habits of democracy. An exploratory project which began in the fall of 2009 continues to gather data to determine teachers' literacy in civil liberties. Preliminary analysis was published in 2011 (Sydor, McLaughlin, VanNuland CAPSLE, 2011). More data continues to be gathered with the intention of gaining some clarity on the question. The broad question of the study is, do teacher candidates approach the topic of Charter Rights and civil liberties with a critical mind?

Teacher candidates completed a survey of questions about their knowledge and understanding of rights and civil liberties before and after a workshop in civil liberties presented by the Canadian Civil Liberties Trust. In the research we were looking for two things: 1) how teacher candidates think about the questions and, 2) whether there was a change in their thinking after instruction. This presentation reports on the results of thirty-nine pairs of responses that were analyzed.

Kari-Lynn Winters

This presentation draws on Social Symbolic Mediation Theory, Social Semiotics, and Discursive Positioning Theories to explore a theoretical model I call "Authorship as Assemblage." This model considers authorship broadly, suggesting some of the ways multimodal authorship can be theorized and explored within and across social contexts, including out-of-school environments, in children's literature, and through drama. Findings include that authorship cannot be thought of as an isolated or stable phenomenon, for it is bound up with semiotic, social, and critical meanings that interrelate with and interanimate each other.