

12-17-2010

Barely There Tales: A Phenomenological Study of Stories Told by Pre-service Teachers

Cynthia Ybos
University of New Orleans

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td>

Recommended Citation

Ybos, Cynthia, "Barely There Tales: A Phenomenological Study of Stories Told by Pre-service Teachers" (2010). *University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations*. 1240.
<https://scholarworks.uno.edu/td/1240>

This Dissertation is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by ScholarWorks@UNO with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Dissertation in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself.

This Dissertation has been accepted for inclusion in University of New Orleans Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UNO. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uno.edu.

Barely There Tales: A Phenomenological Study of Stories Told by Pre-service Teachers

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Curriculum and Instruction

by

Cynthia Shank Ybos

B.A. Southeastern Louisiana University, 1977
M.Ed. University of New Orleans, 1990

December, 2010

Table of Contents

List of Tables	iv
Abstract	v
Chapter 1: Once Upon a Time	1
Learning to Teach	2
Using Stories	3
Purpose of the Study.....	4
Research Questions.....	5
Methodology.....	6
Limitations of the Study.....	7
Significance of the Study	7
Chapter 2: In a Time, Neither Now or Then.....	12
Becoming a Teacher	14
Learning to be a Teacher	16
Teaching Teachers	27
Telling Stories of Teaching	29
Chapter 3: In a Place, Neither Here or There	33
Choosing Among Many.....	35
Finding the Questions	40
Finding the Teachers	43
Sharing the Experience.....	47
Finding the Stories	48
Moving from the Individual to the Common	49
Discovering the Themes	54
Other Practical Concerns	54
Chapter 4: There Lived Many Characters.....	58
Studying the Stories	59
Story Discoveries	85

Chapter 5: A Strange Thing Happened.....	88
The Sources	90
The Sharing.....	91
The Conversation.....	100
The Functions	118
The Discoveries	138
Chapter 6: And So It Was, And So It Is.....	142
The Reactions and Relations.....	143
The Impact	147
Acceptance and Rejections	155
The Discoveries	160
Chapter 7: And Now the Story is Yours	162
Purpose of the Study and Research Questions.....	164
The Findings of This Study	165
Implications of the Study for Teacher Educators	180
Suggestions for Further Study	182
Conclusions.....	184
References.....	187
Appendices	198
Appendix A: Study Forms	198
Appendix B: Participant Biographies and Stories	202
Appendix C: Interview Transcripts	219
Appendix D: Summary of Structural Features	229
Appendix E: Summary of Contextual Features.....	231
Appendix F: Summary of Second Personal Interview	232
Vita	246

List of Tables

Table 1: Characteristics of the Participants	46
Table 2: Timeline of the Study	55
Table 3: Events Depicted in the Stories-Part A.....	64
Table 4: Events Depicted in the Stories-Part B.....	66
Table 5: Events Depicted in the Partial Stories.....	70
Table 6: Story Character Classifications	74
Table 7: Gender Identification of Characters in the Stories	76
Table 8: Image of Teacher	77
Table 9: Story Topic	78
Table 10: Story Classification	81
Table 11: Comparison of Fully-formed and Partial Stories	82
Table 12: Context of Story Sharing	92
Table 13: Story Map	101
Table 14: Story Chain One.....	102
Table 15: Story Chain Two.....	104
Table 16: Story Chain Three	107
Table 17: Story Chain Four	108
Table 18: Story Chain Five.....	110
Table 19: Comparison of Identity in Fully-formed and Partial Stories.....	136
Table 20: Identity Performance	137

Abstract

Teacher stories were once relegated to informal gatherings but more recently this aspect of teacher development is being carefully studied in more formalized settings because it is believed to be an important part of teacher development. New ways are being sought to use various aspects of storytelling to help pre-service teachers develop important teaching skills through reflection on experience, dialogue journals, case studies and autobiography. Despite these efforts at the university level, it is especially difficult for pre-service teachers to integrate and apply theories from their methods courses to actual classroom practice. Less effort has been focused on storytelling processes that may occur outside these formal approaches. This study, therefore, looked at how pre-service teachers used stories told in an informal setting to process aspects of learning to teach. This study revealed that pre-service teachers engage in story telling for reasons and in ways that are different from teacher educator intents. Using interviews and private dialogues, patterns of when, how and why six pre-service teachers used oral stories emerged that illuminate challenges to using personal and appropriated stories in coursework. The findings of this study include how oral storytelling is used by pre-service teachers to process emotion and demonstrate specific identities and personal characteristics.

KEYWORDS: Pre-service teacher education; personal narratives; educational experience; teaching methods; reflection; pre-service teachers; reflective teaching; knowledge base for teaching; teacher educator; teacher education; phenomenology; storytelling

Chapter One

Once upon a time

*It's a semi-true story, believe it or not.
I made up a few things and there's some I forgot
But the life and the tellin' are both real to me
And they all run together and turn out to be
A Semi-true Story.*

from *Semi-True Story* by Jimmy Buffet and Mac McAnally (1999)

I'm singing along with Jimmy Buffet and the Coral Reefer Band when it hits me. We are truly surrounded by stories. Bruner maintains "We live in a sea of stories, and like the fish who will be the last to discover water, we have our own difficulties grasping what it is like to swim in stories" (1996, p. 147). When one begins to look for them, stories bombard us in every facet of our life. They are in the songs we sing and the products we buy. While such familiar aspects of life as songs, books, films and plays would not exist without them, stories do more than just entertain. Religions maintain their practices by telling them. Young people learn about the experiences of older generations and culture is transmitted through them. No matter what form they take, stories are an important part of life. We connect, communicate, and teach with them (Reamy, 2002; Swap, Leonard, Shields, & Abrams, 2001). Recently, professionals in many walks of life have come to understand how stories influence countless facets of human behavior, such as purchasing and political decisions (Swap et al., 2001). According to Gardner, "stories constitute a uniquely powerful currency in human relationships" (1995, p. 42). Those that find this surprising should consider the following examples of how the use of stories affects their lives.

We see a young boy looking up at a football player who is walking off the field. The athlete is obviously dejected. The young boy hands this weary player a soft drink and offers a quiet encouraging look. The player in return gives the young boy his sweaty towel. This well-known advertisement featuring "Mean" Joe Green is an example of a story squeezed into the 30-second time frame of a television commercial. This is just one of many storylines that advertisers use to promote their products. Mikey who won't eat anything or the old lady who wonders "Where's the beef?" are cultural icons whose stories first unfolded to us on television advertisements. The belief is that if the consumer buys the story, he or she will buy the product associated with the story (Schank, 1993). Quite often these stories are aimed specifically at the youngest members of the society. The average student today has spent more time

watching television or playing videogames than those just 10 years ago (Lindley, 2005; Castronova, 2006).

Business is not alone in its quest to use stories as a tool. Visitors to a museum might wander through a simulated village home or outdoor area (Vassiliki, 2007). This contrived time capsule enables the visitor to "be there" and learn the story of those who lived at a particular time and place. Many traveling museum exhibits have story-oriented titles and storylines that entice the public to visit (Marshall, 2010). Experts contend that museums are moving from offering collections of items to exhibits that show how artifacts are used in everyday life to help avoid information overload for the public (Goldblum, O'Dowd & Syn, 2007; Marshall, 2010; Vassiliki, 2007).

Similarly many Americans have watched competing stories unfold as high profile cases have been argued in court. Was he an innocent victim of a police frame-up or an angry killer seeking revenge? Defense and prosecution attorneys often present two distinctly different stories in a court of law hoping to persuade the judge and jury of the merits of their version of the truth (Bruner, 2000). The goal of each side is to present the most believable story because as Spence maintains, "The strongest structure for any argument is story" (1995, p. 113). Lawyers who master storytelling principles are more likely to win (Bruner, 2000).

Furthermore, the characteristics of stories align with experiences in a way that makes the study of knowledge construction based on experiences and beliefs possible (Bruner, 1996; Gregory, 2009). Stories change over time making it possible to track changes in knowledge and blend emotion with reason in a way that shows the connection between the two (Bruner, 1996; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Furthermore, stories can store very complex ideas in simple, readily accessible forms (Bruner, 1996). Songwriters, authors, museum directors, business leaders, and many others have discovered that learning lasts longer and is more readily recalled when it is presented in a story (Gregory, 2009; Reamy, 2002; Schank, 1993).

Learning to Teach

Learning to teach offers challenges that are similar to the practice of business and law. Novices in business, law, and education are required to master the efficient transmission of complex ideas to others that must result in deep understanding of those ideas (Bruner, 1996). Professionals, therefore, in

each of these areas must develop skills and talents that will enable them to communicate effectively with others in a way that enables recall and application of those ideas to personal and professional challenges. In order to understand how stories do this, it is important to understand the challenges new teachers face when acquiring knowledge necessary for acceptance by administrators, colleagues, parents, and students.

In order to learn to teach, those entering the teaching profession acquire skills in psychology, pedagogy, and subject knowledge. The actual situation is not that simple, however. Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, and Bransford (2005) contend that there are three “widely documented problems in learning to teach” (p. 359). According to these authors, the three problems beginning teachers face include learning to teach “in ways quite different from what they learned,” applying theoretical understandings to practical action, and dealing with teaching complexity (p. 359). These problems stem from the beginning teachers’ preconceptions about teaching, tacit knowledge, and lack of ability to reflect on teaching actions. Furthermore, teaching is complex because teachers must process overwhelming amounts of information, understand the professional culture in which they work, and understand how to deal with diverse populations of students (Rosenholtz, 1991). Overlaying these conditions is the fact that learning to teach is an emotionally charged task (Britzman, 2003; Bullough, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

These challenges are further complicated by the structure of most university courses. For the beginning teacher, lack of time, variety of experiences and control over their own learning makes reflection and deliberation about teaching challenging (Darling-Hammond & Hammerness, 2005; Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000; Harste, Leland, Schmidt, Vasquez & Ociepka, 2002). Additionally, program fragmentation, lack of a coherent vision and resources, and adequately trained personnel plague teacher preparation programs (Darling-Hammond & Hammerness, 2005).

Using Stories

While the obstacles such as tacit knowledge, ineffective university programs, and overwhelming amounts of information may seem daunting, there is hope that using stories will help. There have been two consistent assertions for helping beginning teachers acquire effective teaching skills: (a) experience as the medium for understanding and (b) reflection on that experience (Butler, Lee & Tippins, 2006; Coia

& Taylor, 2001). Research has also revealed that stories are a communal discourse that greatly affects the professional development of beginning and expert teachers (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Hammerness et al., 2005). Additionally, stories address aspects of learning not typically considered in other methods of teacher preparation. One such aspect is considering how emotion impacts reason. Researchers in many fields are discovering that reason and emotion are closely tied (Bullough, 2008; Polkinghorne, 1988; Schank, 1993). To say that stories integrate emotion and reason is no small point. Gardner maintains that “Stories speak to both parts of the human mind—its reason and emotion” (1995, p. 4). This is especially important for pre-service teachers.

Stories are valuable in other ways as well. They organize experiences in a way that enables educators to communicate more effectively with one another and build knowledge (Bransford et al., 2000; Reamy, 2002; Schank, 1993). As pre-service and novice educators preserve the experience through story, they develop a framework or theme of understanding which can be carefully examined (Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995). These preserved experiences are then integrated into more formal knowledge, especially when shared with others (Bruner, 1996). In order to grasp complex conceptions of teaching, pre-service teachers must first see how these concepts exist in a real-world situation before they can articulate true meaning (Amobi & Irwin, 2009). Jalongo and Isenberg also maintain that “the power and energy gained from the rich exchange of experiences increases teachers’ knowledge, affirms their learning and beliefs, internalizes special vocabulary of teaching and frees teachers from the academic isolation of the classroom” (1995, p. 152-153).

Stories, therefore, come from personal experiences, blend emotion with reason, provide the basis for building knowledge, engage teachers in reflection, and can be shared in a public forum so that others may learn from them. Perhaps Bruner offers the most promising benefit of storytelling in meaning making: “One of the great triumphs of learning (and of teaching) is to get things organized in your head in a way that permits you to know more than you ‘ought’ to” (1996, p. 129). Stories seem to offer such an opportunity.

Purpose of the Study

Teaching is a complex task because it is the result of interacting forces, such as previous experiences, beliefs about learning, the teacher’s knowledge of teaching and students, and the school

culture. These forces make it difficult for pre-service teachers to integrate and apply theories from their methods courses to actual classroom practice despite the use of a variety of practices and techniques in those courses (Horowitz, Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). The purpose of this study, therefore, was to explore the stories that pre-service teachers tell outside of the university methods course. The exploration was done through interview, observation, and description of the stories that were shared among pre-service teachers in an informal setting that contrasts with a formal classroom. This study, consequently, looked at how one particular subset of pre-service teachers used stories to formulate or redefine their knowledge of teaching.

Research Questions

Pre-service teachers are influenced by past experiences and beliefs but are often not able to adequately describe these influences on their practice (Amobi & Irwin, 2009). Most pre-service teachers can, however, tell someone what happened to them during the course of their lives both inside and outside the classroom. These teachers also listen with rapt attention as veteran teachers share descriptions of events in their classrooms. These “war stories” become the “folk pedagogy” of the pre-service teacher (Bruner, 1996).

This study will focus on the following question: What kind of stories do pre-service teachers tell and hear about their experiences as students and their teaching experiences? In order to elaborate upon the answer to this question, this study will look at the following elements:

- What are the sources of these stories?
- How useful do pre-service teachers perceive these stories to be?
- What is it about these stories that make pre-service teachers think they are useful or believable?
- Why do these pre-service teachers choose these stories to tell?
- How often and where do pre-service teachers share these stories with others?
- How do their stories impact actions and perceptions about teaching?
- How do other people’s stories influence their understanding of theory and practice?
- How do they reflect on their stories to integrate theories into their practice?
- What can teacher educators do to influence this process with pre-service teachers?

Methodology

Teaching is personal. It is the result of the teacher's perception of the situation at hand and the application of constructed knowledge to that situation (Hammerness et al., 2005). This study is looking at perceptions and the behaviors that flow from those perceptions. A qualitative research paradigm will be used for this study because as Lareau (1989) states that "qualitative methods ... illuminate the meanings people attach to their words and actions in a way not possible with other methodologies" (p. 213). In a survey of 40 studies of pre-service teachers and their professional growth, Kagan (1992) reports that all 40 studies used interviews, observation, analysis of written documents, and questionnaires to ascertain what growth had occurred. Why are such tools consistently used in trying to understand how knowledge is constructed? Clandinin, Davies, Hogan and Kennard (1993) suggest that because teaching is knowledge that can be observed in action, is constantly being rewritten, and based in a variety of contexts, the knowledge that is produced is best represented in experiential form, such as stories.

Furthermore, stories help the researcher understand teaching from the teacher's perspective. "Narrative as research method is, therefore, less a matter of the application of a scholarly technique to understanding phenomena than it is a matter of 'entering into' the phenomena and partaking of them" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 260). This qualitative approach to "getting inside someone's head" is especially appropriate for pre-service teachers because, as Britzman (2003, p. 5) points out, teaching resides "in the heads and hearts of teachers" and emerges "from their personal and institutional biography" of which the students are unaware.

The qualitative researcher, however, has many options from which to choose. In addition to narrative inquiry, phenomenological studies, phenomenography, naturalistic inquiry, symbolic interactionism, ethnographies, case studies, grounded theory and heuristics are a few of the possible choices of method. Although teacher stories are the focus of this study, the purpose is to understand what these stories mean to these teachers. The story, therefore, is a phenomena or the object of the study. Cresswell (2007) differentiates narrative inquiry from phenomenological research in this way: "Whereas narrative study reports the life of a **single individual**, a *phenomenological study* describes the meaning for several individuals of their ***lived experiences*** of a concept or a phenomenon" (p. 57,

author's emphasis). The use of a phenomenological research method will be discussed more fully in chapter 3.

Limitations of the Study

Stories come from personal experience and expressed knowledge that is unique to the storyteller and situation (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Estes best describes this view: "In the best tellers I know, the stories grow out of their lives like roots grow a tree" (1992, p. 463). Their generalizability, therefore, is limited to that storyteller and that situation.

Moreover, the reader or listener applies his or her own interpretation to a story as Gardner points out: "It can be argued that the meaning and use of stories is chiefly in the ear of the beholder" (1995, p. 63). It is important, therefore, that the researcher is clear about the perspective of the storyteller while keeping personal prejudices and biases from contaminating any interpretation (Bruner, 1996; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This can be accomplished by using the subjects' own words whenever possible to illuminate ideas, verifying interpretations with the subjects of the study, and carefully analyzing any interpretative work by the researcher (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Ely, Vinz, Downing & Anzul, 1997; Reissman, 2008).

There are also concerns about protection of personal identity, story ownership and selective sharing (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Cresswell, 2007; Mishler, 1999). Stories are, after all, a form of self-reporting that suffer the same restraints as other forms of self-reporting (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1998). Besides, teachers take risks when they share stories. There are consequences for telling stories that those who have more power may not like (Bullough, 2008). Clandinin and Connelly (1995) found that teachers construct a variety of stories to protect their identity and situations in institutional settings. All of these concerns are valid for this study as well.

Significance of the Study

This study will attempt to discover how to uncover the preconceptions that pre-service teachers have about teaching so that those who are teaching education methods courses will be able to apply similar methods to their own courses. Professional associations have expressed much concern over how pre-service teachers are prepared for classroom practice (NCATE, 2008). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (2008), for example, offers the following concerns:

Today's society needs a workforce that can apply knowledge, reason analytically, and solve problems. At the same time, American society is becoming more diverse, with students in classrooms drawn from many cultures and ethnic groups. Preparing teachers to teach all students to meet society's demands for high performance has created a new agenda for educators and policymakers. To meet these changing needs, norms in teacher preparation and licensing are changing (p. 3).

Also, many novice teachers leave teaching after a short period of time (Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005c). As a result of these two concerns, researchers are looking at many aspects of teaching including teacher preparation and best practices that will improve teaching skill and professional retention.

Researchers are now looking at how the experiences that occur prior to student teaching shape the pre-service teacher's pedagogic and content knowledge. It is important to consider this because, as Dollase (1992) states, Pre-service teachers' "classroom perspectives and the working knowledge that they employ in the classroom are a composite of diverse elements derived from observation, study, and past practice as students" (p. 69). In doing so, it has become apparent that identifying the exact processes that shape pre-service teachers' knowledge is a formidable task (Darling-Hammond, Banks, Zumwalt, Gomez, Sherin, Griesdorn & Finn, 2005b).

Using stories as the vehicle to study these beliefs and construction of knowledge about teaching is appropriate because these artifacts address many of the concerns and problems associated with understanding how pre-service teachers acquire and integrate knowledge about teaching. "Teaching strategies arise not just from the demands and constraints of the immediate context but also from cultures of teaching: from beliefs, values, habits and assumed ways of doing things among communities of teachers who have had to deal with similar demands and constraints over many years" (Hargreaves, 1992, p. 217).

Armed with these understandings, I begin my journey to investigate the phenomenon of the stories that pre-service teachers tell. Beginning this journey reminds me of the advice that Frodo Baggins recalls Bilbo giving when he begins his journey in *The Fellowship of the Ring*: "It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door, he used to say. You step into the Road, and if you don't keep your feet, there

is no knowing where you might be swept off to” (Tolkien, 1965, p. 82). Stories and journeys are about the business of wandering and exploring. It is with this vision that I choose to tell the story of my wandering through the stories of pre-service teachers.

Because of the type of study and methodology I chose, the tone and structure of this study will be somewhat different than most would expect. First, I have chosen to express my report in the first person because of the personal nature of the study. Researchers such as Reissman (2008), Coffey and Atkinson (1996) and Mishler (1999) have pointed out that qualitative research offers the possibility for such choices in analysis and reporting than quantitative approaches. These assertions are often tempered with warnings not to assume any format will suffice. Clandinin and Connelly (2000), for example, maintain that “As we write ‘I,’ we need to convey a sense of social significance. We need to make sure that when we say ‘I,’ we know that ‘I’ is connecting with ‘they.’ The writer of the research text continually balances a signature and voice with audience” (p. 148-149). My perspective is that this is my story as well as the story of the teachers who participated in this study.

Second, there are seven chapters instead of the usual five. When I began the analysis of the data, the number of observations and analysis became overwhelming. If the entire analysis had been contained in chapter four, it would have been confusing. I chose, therefore, to explain the analysis over three chapters to clarify the process for the reader. This should not be construed to mean that each analysis procedure what conducted isolation, however. Finally, since this is a report of my own journey in understanding how pre-service teachers use stories to learn to teach, I gave each chapter title that marks important story elements. This chapter is titled “Once Upon a Time,” because it is where most good stories begin.

In “In a Time, Neither Now Nor Then,” I look at the writings and findings of those who have also studied beginning teachers and their knowledge. The metaphor of the road is especially appropriate because it can extend in both directions. For many researchers this holds true for knowledge and beliefs as well. Clandinin and Connelly, for example, state that “In narrative thinking, temporality is a central feature. When we see an event as an expression of something happening over time. Any event, or thing, has a past, a present as it appears to us, and an implied future” (2000, p. 29). The title reflects the reality of research being both now and then. What happens now does not exist only in the now but also in the

then. When considering prior research into the complexities of learning to teach, the road extends in many directions. Issues of preconceptions, experience, reflection, efficacy, and identity are central to understanding how teachers develop skills and how university courses are structured.

Next, “In a place, neither here nor there,” I consider the research methods I used and explore the implications of choices made along the way. Where does research really take place? Does it occur when the teachers share their stories or does it occur when someone reads the study? In any study such as this, there are many influences to be considered. Not only are there questions of about where, but also how the events unfolded. By exploring who I am as a researcher, who is participating in this study, and how the study is structured, I hope to demonstrate how the understanding of the experience evolved for me and the teachers who choose to share their insights with me.

In “There Lived Many Characters,” I begin looking at the stories the teachers told in our interviews. Characters and actions drive stories. Stories are about people doing things. In this chapter, I deconstructed the stories to understand what they were about. The methods of this part of exploring the data is more aligned with narrative inquiry than phenomenology, but it was important for me to begin the process here to lay a foundation for understanding the context, function, and meaning of the stories. It was here that my assumptions and preconceptions were challenged. The stories these teachers told revealed surprising aspects concerning the role stories play in how they learn to teach.

In “A Strange Thing Happened,” I began to look beyond the stories themselves to discover how they were situated in the teachers’ conversations. It was here that the strange thing happened; the context of the stories in this study emerged as a prominent feature. Understanding the circumstances that surrounded story telling for these teachers yielded the most insight into how stories are selected and shared with colleagues and family. The context also revealed how these stories functioned for this group of teachers. The awareness of group dynamics and the collaborative nature of story sharing also began to emerge at this point.

In “And So It Was, And So It Is,” I explore what these stories mean to these teachers. Does meaning change for these teachers with each retelling? When they reflect on the experience of sharing their stories, do they feel the same? In this chapter, I share the teachers’ own reflections on their

storytelling experiences and how they think these stories work for them in their pursuit of the title “teacher.”

Some researchers share that a study is never ended but just finished so that others may take up the investigation in their own way (Robinson, 2000). In “And Now the Story is Yours,” I end this study by reflecting the themes that are present throughout the exploration of structure, context, function and meaning. This is not the ending but just the completion of my part of the larger investigation.

I hope that by conducting this study, others will be inspired and challenged to think more deeply about how teachers prepare to move into their own classrooms. As Estes maintains, “Stories do not require that we do, be, act anything—we need only to listen” (1992, p. 15).

Chapter Two

In a Time, Neither Now Nor Then

Few things are harder to put up with than a good example.
Mark Twain

Who will be invited to this party? In advising beginning narrative researchers, Clandinin and Connelly suggest “being awake to all reading preferences” (2000, p. 164). When considering this, I think not of what I have read, but rather about the last essay question on my final examination my senior year of high school. Mrs. Lansing was notorious for asking very hard essay questions and the one on this exam did not disappoint. I was confronted with a large oval surrounded by twelve rectangles. The rectangle at the top of the oval simply stated “you.” The question was neatly typed at the bottom of the page: “You are hosting a dinner party and can invite eleven authors we have studied this year. Write the name of each author you would invite in the rectangles on this page. On separate paper, explain why you would invite each one and the arrangement around your table. Be specific.” Those may not have been her exact words, but, even after 35 years, I think they are pretty close. I don’t remember my answer, but I do remember the question.

Experiences such as these cross time and influence present and future behaviors. This study is placed in a time that is neither now nor then but is both now and then. Where we are today is the result of where we have been. Estes provides a sense of this in her description of how she perceives her role as *cantadora*, or storyteller: “The nurture for telling stories comes from those who have gone before. Telling or hearing stories draws its power from a towering column of humanity joined one to the other across time and space” (1992, p. 19).

What’s more, Clandinin and Connelly’s assertion that a narrative researcher must pay attention to reading preferences points to issues that transcend narrative research (2000). All qualitative research, including phenomenology, seeks to explore the assumptions and preconceptions the researcher may bring to the study. Furthermore, the study must address the needs of those who would use the results to improve some aspect of their lives. This means that any study of quality must grow from what has come before, much as the stories that we tell.

So who would I invite to this party? It's a rather lengthy list but one that can be organized in a sensible way. This study focuses on the preconceptions and processes that occur during the pre-service phase of learning to teach because research has indicated that this is the most critical time for the development of an enhanced understanding of teaching (Hammerness et al., 2005; Harste et al., 2002). As Britzman points out, "The story of learning to teach begins actually much earlier than the time one first decides to become a teacher. The mass experience of public education has made teaching one of the most familiar professions in this culture" (2003, p. 3).

Understanding what pre-service teachers bring to the university and how this impacts what they learn is an important consideration for those who are teaching methods courses. Teaching is a complex task because teachers must synthesize information about and make decisions based on what they know about the subject, students, and school culture in specific, idiosyncratic situations (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2005c). These elements are also reflected in accreditation standards by such organizations as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2008). Capturing glimpses and understanding these multi-dimensional processes is not easy. The methods of study of this phenomenon, therefore, must be as sophisticated and multi-dimensional as the process itself (Shulman, 2004).

Teaching has been carefully scrutinized since the beginning of the twentieth century (Bullough, 2008). The result of this study has been the realization that teaching is not simply a series of skills that can be readily articulated in an ordered checklist (Hammerness et al., 2005). Researchers have found that theory removed from practice in this way becomes incomprehensible to the practitioner (Shulman, 2004). The result of further studies has been an emerging picture of teaching as a complex process that requires the teacher to synthesize a great deal of information about the teaching environment, curriculum and students that is influenced by tacit and explicit knowledge about learning, students, subject matter, and school culture (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005b). It has been hypothesized that this challenge is a contributing factor in the high turnover among beginning teachers (Bransford et al., 2000, p. 203).

Realizing the need to understand how one learns to teach, researchers have investigated a variety of methods of instructing, evaluating, and communicating the processes used in a variety of teacher preparation programs (Harste et al., 2002). Investigations into these models of teacher development have led to the realization that there are some consistent elements that highlight persistent

influences on development of knowledge of teaching (Shulman, 2004). Specifically, these researchers have found that developmental stages, experience, reflection, efficacy and collaboration greatly affect how one learns to teach.

So when considering what body of literature best provides a foundation for this study, there are four overlapping fields of current study that are pertinent. The first is a consideration of what stages of development pre-service teachers might demonstrate as they acquire the necessary knowledge to teach. The second is a set of findings related to the processes for acquiring knowledge and skills that occur when pre-service teachers participate in university courses and field experiences. Findings in this area include understanding how experience influences acquisition of skills; the role of reflection in learning to teach; impact of efficacy on learning to teach; development of teaching identity; and collaboration and community of learners. Next is a review of current methodologies and problems encountered in teacher preparation programs. The last area of research concerns how the use of narrative discourse can bring new insights to helping teachers move from the university to the classroom.

Becoming a Teacher

As Hammerness et al. point out, “Developmental progression—from early concerns with ‘self’ to a gradual focus upon issue related to students and student learning, and, eventually conditions of schools and schooling—has been observed in a number of studies” (2005, p. 370). It is useful for this study, therefore, to consider the historical and current thoughts on the developmental steps pre-service teachers might take.

The principle model of teacher development that has influenced how educators think about professional growth was outlined by Berliner (1991). Berliner maintained that there are five stages of teacher development: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, and expert. According to Berliner, each stage of development is characterized by how teachers perceive and prioritize their actions in the classroom. Novice teachers, for example, follow rules and procedures, seldom consider the consequences of personal actions, and do not use decision-making skills but do what authorities dictate should be done. In contrast, at the competent stage, the teacher plans more carefully, is more thoughtful and deliberate about instructional actions, and becomes more discriminating about what should be given highest priority in the classroom. Interestingly, Berliner claims that the last stage, expert, differs from the

four other stages in that this teacher is intuitive and fluid in teaching but is not able to articulate what processes are used during instruction. Berliner calls these the teacher artists. It is important to note that these teachers can demonstrate these abilities very early in their careers, circumventing the other stages of development (Berliner, 1991). This leads one to suspect that among the novice teachers in university classes, there will also be these teacher artists who may exert some influence over the novices, although to date no such research exists. Berliner asserts that knowing at which stage the teacher is functioning is important in determining what kind of information they will acquire.

Other researchers described teacher development from a "life-cycle" perspective. (Huberman, 1992; Jackson, 1992) Huberman, for example, maintains that teachers progress somewhat sequentially through the following phases: survival/discovery, stabilization, experimentation/activism, taking stock, serenity, conservatism and disengagement. According to Huberman (1992), in the survival/discovery phase, novice teachers must reconcile the "shock" of the initial teaching experience with the enthusiasm of acquiring one's own classroom and students after an apprenticeship period. Huberman further points out that "studies suggest that the survival and discovery dimensions coexist, and that the latter allows the novice teacher to tolerate the former" (1992, p. 124). The next phase, stabilization, is characterized by commitment to the profession and the development of a stable repertoire of instructional strategies. Subsequent stages outline how teachers choose to apply, expand, or refine this initial repertoire of instructional strategies. Conservatism and disengagement occur as teachers are ending their professional careers, usually after twenty or more years of teaching. These are exit stages.

A third model of teacher development focused on teacher concerns (Watzke, 2002). Citing work by Fuller in the 1960's, Watzke described the teacher's progression from concern for self to concern for students. Concern for self includes such factors as "survival in the classroom, receiving good evaluations by administrators, acceptance by peers, and feeling of adequacy" (Watzke, 2002, p. 3). Watzke goes on to explain that the second stage of the model is concern for task. At this stage, the pre-service or beginning teachers becomes focused on "the teaching situation, methods and student performance" (2002, p. 4). The final stage of concern is impact which is characterized by "meeting diverse student needs and adapting teaching methods to meet those needs" (p.4). Ironically, Watzke determined that these stages were not entirely accurate and that task and impact concerns emerged early during teacher

preparation. Additionally self concerns arose within the first year of full-time teaching but then resolved shortly after as the teachers became more proficient in their ability to reflect on their practice (Watzke, 2002).

Other more recent researchers have raised similar concerns about models of teacher development. Hammerness et al. (2005), for example observe that “Many studies describing teacher development in terms of what beginning teachers ‘can’ and ‘cannot’ do were conducted at a time when most teacher education programs were fairly weak interventions” (p. 381). As research on learning in other areas becomes more refined, the understanding of how experience, reflection, collaboration, and personal dispositions impact how pre-service teachers acquire teaching knowledge and skills (Shulman, 2004; Hammerness et al., 2005). Hammerness et al. (2005) offer a pointed explanation of the limits of stages of teacher development:

Stage theories have been useful in describing the trajectory of teachers’ development and the nature of teachers’ expertise. However, they do not tell us as much about the characteristics of the learning experiences that may help teachers progress in their concerns and acquire expert skills (p. 380).

Learning to be a Teacher

While some researchers debate the stages of professional development, others are exploring the various ways one acquires knowledge about teaching. In their attempts, these researchers have found there are many personal and contextual factors which influence how knowledge is acquired. Personal experiences, reflective activities, sense of efficacy, identity performance and collaborative communities are the most prominent topics of this line of research. In order to understand more fully how pre-service teachers transition to beginning and experienced teachers, it is important to consider each of these topics.

Role of experience in acquiring teaching skills and knowledge

The realization that factors such as experience significantly impact how pre-service teachers acquire teaching skills has generated research on this aspect of pre-service teachers’ university activities because as Bransford et al. (2000) point out “All learning involves transfer from previous experience” (p. 236). The work of researchers such as Bransford et al. (2000), Britzman (2003), Clandinin and Connelly

(1995, 2006), Danielewicz (2001), Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) and others has shed light on how experience in particular plays a considerable role in impacting pre-service and beginning teachers. As research on experience has progressed, it has become clear that experience leads to preconceptions which influence subsequent experiences (Bransford et al., 2000; Britzman, 2003). Concepts such as cognitive dissonance (Bruner, 1996), confirmational bias (Downey, 2008), and cultural norms (Bransford et al., 2005) are related to how experience shapes future behavior.

This is important because in the past, many researchers began their study of development of teaching skills at the beginning of student teaching. More recently, however, careful consideration of university experiences prior to student teaching has been studied. When prospective teachers enter universities to begin the study of their profession, they already possess numerous experiences as students and informal educators which impact their beliefs about students and learning. Hammerness et al. (2005) explain that failure to consider these influences may result in pre-service teachers' failure to transfer knowledge acquired in university course to actual classroom practice.

These preconceptions have significant implications for classroom practice because they determine how pre-service teachers deal with diverse students and learn new pedagogy (Downey, 2008). They also impact their sense of efficacy (Brasewell & Cobia, 2000). Moreover, these teachers are unaware that they possess such preconceptions and do not adjust their thinking or actions to accommodate them (Britzman, 2003; Bullough, 2008; Danielewicz, 2001; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). As a result, pre-service teachers find themselves on a collision course with the realities of teaching (Britzman, 2003). As Britzman further states, "For those who enter teacher education, their first culture shock may well occur with the realization of the overwhelming complexity of the teacher's work and the myriad ways this complexity is masked and misunderstood" (2003, p. 4).

Not just any experience will help pre-service teachers become effective teachers, however. Experience, in this context, must be any event or series of events occurring in an individual's environment that causes thought and possibly a change in attitude or belief about related phenomena (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). That experience to which no thought is given does not impact learning or understanding and, therefore, is dismissed. What kinds of experiences will fulfill this need? Fortunately, much work has been done to develop an understanding the nature of these kinds of experiences. Unfortunately, the

news is not often good. Preconceptions and subsequent changes in thoughts about teaching are deeply entrenched and do not give easily (Downey, 2008).

Research has shown that preconceptions are tenacious for a number of reasons. First, most pre-service teachers have not had a variety of experiences that would address the spectrum of needs of class teaching (Shulman, 2004). Having a variety of experiences allows pre-service teachers to develop a "fluid nature to pedagogical knowledge" (Jones & Vesilind, 1996, p. 111). This is important because teachers encounter a wide variety of students, content, and social contexts throughout their careers (Bullough & Baughman, 1997). If the number of students with which pre-service teachers have worked is limited, for example, their understanding of student needs and abilities is limited as well (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005b). This impacts the teacher's perception of what works. Furthermore, teachers' interactions with students in field-based methods courses have been found to be a compelling source of preconceptions which may or may not assist in working with students in subsequent teaching situations (Jones & Vesilind, 1996). This is because these situations are often short and supervised closely by classroom teachers and teacher educators so that problems can be minimized.

Additionally, investigators have determined that preconceptions are persistent because pre-service teachers are driven to do what helps them survive in the classroom (Huberman, 1992). Bullough and Baughman (1997) found that teachers intuitively prioritize problems and seek solutions to those that are most pressing. For example, control is the most important issue for many novice teachers (Harste et al., 2002). When a particular strategy achieves immediate results, the novice teacher continues to use that strategy in future situations in the belief that, since it worked in prior circumstances, it will continue to work regardless of the situation (Dollase, 1992; Harste et al., 2002). How is a pre-service teacher to think productively about such long-term effects when immediate control is the highest priority (Huberman, 1992)?

The last reason researchers have found that preconceptions are so persistent is related to the first two reasons. Pre-service teachers do not always transfer knowledge from one situation to another because they do not understand the similarities and differences among various experiences (Bransford et al., 2000). While some researchers speculate that this may be the result of the lack of a variety of experiences, more researchers believe that this is the result of the fragmented nature of most educational

methods courses (Darling-Hammond & Hammerness, 2005). Pre-service teachers are overwhelmed with data and look for ways to simplify what they are seeing and learning. The subtlety of situations often eludes them (Dollase, 1992; Darling-Hammond & Hammerness, 2005). From this understanding of experience, researchers have concluded that when events turn out as the teacher anticipates, the experience reinforces the preconception. When the events and actions are not what the teacher anticipates, disorientation occurs and time must be spent rethinking those preconceptions (Downey, 2008).

Because teaching takes place in a variety of environments, perceptions of pre-service and novice teachers are also influenced by the social context and culture in which experience takes place (Banks, Cochran-Smith, Moll, Richert, Zeichner, LePage, Darling-Hammond & Duffy, 2005; Hammerness et al., 2005; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Social and cultural factors, such as collegial support, administrative support, interactions with parents, and ethnicity of the students, can reinforce or redefine a teachers' "definition of reality" (Rosenholtz, 1991, p. 2).

This is particularly important for beginning teachers because they often find themselves in teaching situations which may conflict with their preconceptions of teaching (Britzman, 2003; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). The balancing act arises from balancing inconsistencies between personal and cultural goals as well as inconsistencies within the culture itself. This can be quite frustrating for beginning teachers. More importantly beginning teachers may not be aware of these tensions creating more challenges to having them think productively about their experiences (Britzman, 2003).

In summary then, experience leads to preconceptions which influence understandings of subsequent experiences. Beginning teachers are particularly vulnerable to biases and rejection of experiences because of the preconceptions they may hold. This adversely affects the transfer of learning from one experience to the next. This is problematic because teaching presents problems that require knowledge of teaching that is often quite different from what the beginning teacher holds to be true. Teacher educators and researchers, therefore, have sought ways to help beginning teachers confront these preconceptions.

The role of reflection in learning to teach

In order to effectively deal with experience-related preconceptions, it is important for beginning teachers to take time to think about what happened and why (Campoy & Radcliffe, 2002). As Shulman states “We do not learn just by doing; we learn by thinking about what we are doing. Successful students are thinking about what they are doing and why” (2004, p. 514). Johnson goes on to claim that “identifying the ‘active’ beliefs about teaching is one of the steps in developing field experiences that confront the theory laden beliefs within pre-service teachers” (2001, p. 11). This is important because “reflecting on their own learning can also help new teachers take a first step in making their own assumptions about teaching and learning explicit—a key part of them critically examining them” (Bransford, Derry, Berliner & Hammerness, 2005b, p. 85). There has been a great deal of study of reflection and its impact on professional practice (Russell & Munby, 1991; Schon, 1983; Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

One of the most important findings of this research is that getting pre-service teachers to engage in constructive reflection is difficult for a number of reasons. First pre-service and beginning teachers value action over abstract theory (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Studies have shown that the reason many teachers seldom reflect on their classroom practices is that they feel that reflection is abstract and theoretical, having no place in classroom practice (Genor, 2005).

Second, there are specific skills for thinking productively about classroom actions that most pre-service teachers do not possess (Bullough, 2007). Van Es and Conroy (2009), for example, noted that “Pre-service teachers have few skills at observing teaching” making it difficult for them to know what is important to observe and what is not (p. 89). If they do not know what to observe, they will often engage in misguided reflection (van Es & Conroy, 2009; Genor, 2005). In addition to observational skills, pre-service teachers need reasoning skills and understanding of the subject they are teaching (Genor, 2005; Hammerness et al., 2005). In addition to specific reflective skills, researchers have identified certain personal traits known as dispositions that are important in learning to reflect. Hammerness et al., assert that “student teachers need to learn critical dispositions that undergird reflection; the disposition toward an open mind; a sense of responsibility and commitment; and care and respect for children” (2005, p. 439).

Finally, researchers have discovered that novice teachers are overwhelmed by the amount of work that is involved in teaching. Because they are so overwhelmed, pre-service and novice teachers prioritize their energies and put reflection at the bottom of the list because it is seen as being the least useful (Bullough & Baughman, 1997). Novice teachers, in particular, are so focused on survival in the classroom that they function through routine action (Dollase, 1992). In fact, it is the lack of reflective practice that often characterizes the beginning stages of professional development (Watzke, 2005). This is an ironic contradiction of values among these professionals who value experience over abstract learning (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

Reflective practice is complex, however. Schon (1983) defined two types of reflective practices: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Russell and Munby (1991, p. 164) offer the following distinction between these two practices:

Reflection-in-action is a process with non-logical features, a process that is prompted by experience and over which we have limited control. Reflection-on-action refers to the ordered, deliberate, and systematic application of logic to a problem in order to resolve it; the process is very much within our control.

For pre-service teachers, reflection-on-action is preferred (Hammerness et al., 2005). The process, however, is not the only concern.

Investigations have also demonstrated that the content of the reflection is as important as the process of reflection. Zeichner and Liston (1996) contend that any professional can engage in one of three types of reflection: technical rationality, practical action and critical reflection. Technical rationality is the type of inquiry that focuses on the best way to achieve a predetermined goal and practical reflection is described as thinking about the means as well as the purpose of the instruction. Critical reflection, on the other hand, is what "happens when teachers raise issues that have to do with ethical and moral dimensions of teaching that aren't necessarily explicit within the other forms of reflection" (Zeichner & Liston, 1987, p. 25). These researchers contend that true professional development occurs only when professionals engage in critical reflection.

Researchers maintain that any of these reflective practices are important to professional development because they make the learning that occurs with any experience explicit rather than implicit.

The energy put into externalizing the information prompts the teacher to resolve instructional dilemmas that occur in teaching. If the teacher does not spend time thinking about the experience, inconsistencies and important generalizations tend to be overlooked (Bullough & Baughman, 1997).

Investigators have also found that the link between theory and practice is made explicit in the process of reflection. Osterman and Kottkamp found that traditional approaches to learning to teach in which "knowledge transmission was a means toward improved practice" made the link between theory and practice implicit (2004, p. 34). Consistent with findings in other studies, these researchers found that novice teachers often missed this point and, therefore, failed to address the issues of "formerly unrecognized assumptions, lying in the theory-in-use, unrecognized habitual behaviors, and unrecognized negative outcomes of these behaviors" (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004, p. 34). Using reflective strategies, the teacher develops such awareness and "Change is begun not by learning a new idea from an expert but by recognition that something is not exactly 'right' in one's own professional practice" (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004, p. 34).

Osterman and Kottkamp (2004) concluded that reflection, therefore, taps into the same preconceptions that teachers have about teaching that serve as filters for meaning making in experiential learning. In the literature on reflective practice, these preconceptions are called theories-in-use as opposed to espoused theories, or those theories that we say we think and believe (Schon, 1983). Osterman and Kottkamp (2004) maintain that theories-in-use are characterized by the depth of ingrainedness and resistance to change. These researchers contend that these characteristics exist because "they build up and solidify over a long period of time through acculturation and are reinforced by ongoing experience in the culture" (2004, p. 10). Furthermore, according to Osterman and Kottkamp, espoused theories can be readily modified while theories-in-use cannot because the teachers are often unaware that a discrepancy between the two exists or that their unexamined beliefs result in specific actions.

Moreover, research has shown that reflective practice also serves the purpose of dealing with the emotional aspects of teaching that are not addressed in knowledge transmission methods of professional development. As Osterman and Kottkamp point out "Reflective practice assumes centrality of emotion along with cognition. It strives to recognize, work with, and support the emotional aspect of behavioral

change” (2004, p. 34). Investigators have discovered that emotion is an important aspect of teaching. Teachers must deal with such feelings as isolation, incompetency, stress and ambiguity among others (Britzman, 2003; Bullough & Baughman, 1997). Connelly and Clandinin (1995) maintain that feelings that teachers have toward knowledge and events are a type of knowledge that is as important as what they actually know.

It has been found that teachers are often reluctant to address these feelings, however. Rosenholtz (1991) discovered, for example, that the school’s definition of success determined how “risky” it would be for a teacher to admit feelings of inadequacy and seek assistance from colleagues and administrators. Rosenholtz further maintains that there are consequences to admitting inadequacies that teachers, especially beginning teachers, are hesitant to face.

More recent studies have shown that, despite these obstacles and the complexity of the process, many educators are implementing reflective practice into their professional growth plans (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). As a result of this, reflective practice has taken many forms in recent years: journals, circles of dialogue, case studies and personal narratives are just a few examples of reflective practice strategies being used to tap into this level of understanding teaching (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Researchers call these methods discursive practices (Britzman, 2003). A common occurrence in these reflective practices is that they tend to take the form of stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995). As a result of this impetus to implement reflective practice in methods courses, new understandings of the relational aspects of reflection have been enhanced.

The role of collaboration and communities of learners in learning to teach

As teacher educators and researchers began to carefully consider reflective practices, they realized that reflections are the result of interactions with others (Rosenholtz, 1991). Clandinin and Connelly (1995) have stated that “Everyone exists in a situation, and situations are defined, in part, by individuals in interaction with one another” (p. 79). Shulman (2004) suggests that this is important because “There are difficult intellectual and professional challenges that are nearly impossible to accomplish alone but are readily addressed in the company of others” (p. 514-515).

Researchers have also come to understand that such collaboration can only occur when a community of learners is established (Hammerness, et al., 2005; Rosenholtz, 1991; Shulman, 2004). This

is challenging for all teachers because many do not see such communities as desirable or necessary (Britzman, 2003; Bullough, 2008; Rosenholtz, 1991). For example, Bullough (2008) contends that “There is a belief that to teach is to work in isolation,... but that is a recognized and major impediment to educational renewal” (p. 220).

One would assume, however, that pre-service teachers function in a community of learners in their university classes. Many have found this is not the case, however. Darling-Hammond, Pacheco, Michelli, LePage & Hammerness (2005d) contend that “Although the importance of developing professional community in schools has been widely addressed in the research literature, scholars and practitioners in higher education have not always paid attention to the importance of community-building in universities as well as schools” (p 453-454). Danielewicz (2001) supports this contention: “There is a good deal of research supporting the conclusion that collaboration ...can affect teaching practice. However, this aim has proven to be extremely difficult to realize” (p. 86). It is important that teacher educators consider collaboration as part of reflection because this has been found to impact efficacy which has been discovered to impact growth of teacher knowledge acquired through experience.

Impact of efficacy on learning to teach

Efficacy is defined as one’s perception of personal ability to accomplish a given task (Dollase, 1992). A teacher’s sense of efficacy has been found to be an important factor in how teachers approach instruction and whether they stay in the teaching profession (Brasewell & Cobia, 2000; Danielewicz, 2001; Dollase, 1992; Wingfield & Nath, 2000). Additionally, the characteristics of efficacy portrayed by beginning teachers have been well documented (Brasewell & Cobia, 2000; Dollase, 1992; Hay & White, 2005; Wingfield & Nath, 2000; Witcher, Onwuegbuzie, Collins, Witcher, Minor & James, 2002). Many of the factors that impact efficacy have already been discussed, namely thirteen or more years as observers of teaching as students, experiences that do not match their preconceptions, focus on personal performance rather than student achievement, lack of transfer of knowledge from university courses to classroom practice, and unrealistic assessments of their own abilities (Marks, 2007; Brasewell & Cobia, 2000).

Bandura (1986) identified four sources of efficacy beliefs: performance or mastery, vicarious experiences, verbal or social persuasion, and physiological and/or emotional states. Each of these

sources of efficacy is experienced in some form or other as pre-service teachers participate in university courses or field experiences (Marks, 2007). Because of their developmental characteristics, performance or mastery in particular is important for beginning teachers (Philippou, Charalambous, & Kyriakides, 2003). Mastery refers to a teacher's perception of the success or failure of a given experience. Success builds self-efficacy beliefs; failure undermines them. If success is too easily achieved, failure may seem devastating and result in discouragement (Witcher et al., 2002).

This is important for pre-service teachers because their efficacy peaks during the beginning of their pre-service experiences only to be seriously challenged during later pre-service experiences and during their first year of teaching for reasons described earlier. When their efficacy is challenged, teachers react in specific ways. For example, when pre-service teachers encounter frustrating or overwhelming teaching situations, Henson (2003) offers that "there exists a tendency to attribute that failure to external factors, thereby making the outcome less threatening to the self" (p. 25). Wingfield and Nath (2000) add that "when self-efficacy is low, a person is likely to give up easily or avoid tasks altogether" (p. 11). This avoidance usually results in the teacher reverting to more comfortable methods of teaching (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Henson, 2003; Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Hay and White (2005) found that beginning teachers "commonly told 'disaster stories' or 'war stories' in which they were positioned as either the hero or the victim" in order to maintain their sense of efficacy (p. 6).

It is possible to challenge pre-service teachers' understanding of teaching without posing threats to their efficacy, however. Osterman and Kottkamp (2004) as well as Wingfield and Nath (2000), for example, claim that when such experiences occur in environments in which mentors are supportive and capable of guiding productive reflection, pre-service teachers develop a higher sense of efficacy that is more realistic and can be sustained through the first years of teaching. Danielewicz advances this point by saying:

The first thing we need to cultivate in our students is belief in their abilities to act. But belief without evidence is frail and easily undone. To go forward, students must know through experience that they are acting for real and that their actions have meaning and impact, *now, in the present—and later*, in the future. (2001, p. 167, emphasis by author)

Finally, efficacy is closely related to the identity that beginning teachers are trying to establish. Hammerness et al. (2005) suggest that “As teachers develop a vision for what teachers do, what good teaching is, and what they hope to accomplish as a teacher, they begin to forge an identity that will guide them in their work” (p. 383). What is teacher identity and how does it impact what pre-service teachers learn about teaching?

Development of a teaching identity

Identity is “how individuals know and name themselves” (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 3). Researchers have discovered that “In addition to developing knowledge and skills, teachers are developing many other dimensions. Teachers are developing as professionals; as scholars and practitioners within a subject matter; as change agents, as nurturers and child advocates; and as moral agents” (Hammerness et al., 2005, p. 383). Each of these dimensions directly influences how pre-service teachers acquire and transfer knowledge to their practice (Bullough, 2008). Furthermore, Danielewicz discovered that there are individual and collective identities which grow through various forms of affiliation: “Identities are the result of dynamic interplay between discursive processes that are internal to the individual and external involving everyone else” (2001, p.11).

Identity, therefore, is formed in three overlapping ways: through personal actions (Danielewicz, 2001), dialogue and affiliation with others (Danielewicz, 2001; Nevin, Bradshaw, Cardelle-Elawar & Diaz-Greenburg, 2009), and context of experience (Danielewicz, 2001; Hammerness et al. 2005; Nevin et al., 2009). For example, Danielewicz identified three personal actions which contribute to identity formation: “classification (she is a teacher), association (I am like her), and identification (I want to be like her)” (2001, p. 35). Danielewicz further maintains that while beginning teachers do not necessarily choose specific identities, they do possess “some agency in the matter of which identities we gravitate toward and cling to as opposed to those we ignore.” Similarly, Nevin et al. (2009) maintain that “...identity may seem in part to be derived from those we teach” (p. 14).

What is important is that pre-service teachers learn to teach in multiple contexts which may create the need for multiple identities (Britzman, 2003; Bullough, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Danielewicz, 2001). Danielewicz found that “School contexts are equally significant as university contexts in forming identities” (p. 37). Hammerness et al. (2005) offers a more complete explanation:

Preparation programs deliberately and inadvertently reinforce the development of different kinds of teaching identities as they emphasize various aspects of what it means to be a teacher and as they place student teachers in different environments where they will see certain kinds of norms modeled. Though not always explicitly considered, this aspect of preparation is critically important as the identities teachers develop shape their dispositions, where they place their effort, whether and how they seek out professional development opportunities and what obligations they as intrinsic to their role (p. 384).

This means that while all teachers are constantly creating, discarding and recreating who they are as teachers throughout their careers, this process is most active during the pre-service and beginning teacher phase. This is important because as Bullough points out, “Teachers’ conceptions of themselves are crucial to their performance in the classroom” (2008, p. 127). Bullough goes on to assert that as teachers deal with complex issues in classrooms, they use and modify various identities to make “teaching meaningful” (p.127). The growing understanding of identity, as well as efficacy, collaboration, reflection and experience has, therefore, has led universities and organizations such as NCATE to prescribe best practice methodologies for working with pre-service teachers (NCATE, 2008).

Teaching Teachers

Teachers acquire teaching knowledge and skills in a variety of ways. For example, some may learn to teach in undergraduate or graduate programs. Others may hold a degree in another field and seek only certification for teaching in that field. In rare cases, some teachers teach without the benefit of any professional schooling (Bransford et al., 2000). In the literature those who are learning to teach through more traditional programs such as undergraduate university programs are designated pre-service teachers while those who are actually student teaching are designated novice teachers. This is important because the university usually plays a larger role in influencing what pre-service teachers learn about teaching while schools and related school authorities are more influential for novice teachers (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

The typical teacher preparation program usually includes “...some subject-matter preparation, a series of foundational courses, methods, and a sequence of field experiences” (Bransford et al., 2000, p. 200). While this listing seems unremarkable, researchers are finding that preparation programs using

such curriculum do help novice teachers teach more effectively, despite the perception held by many pre-service teachers, classroom teachers, and the general public that they do not. Darling-Hammond et al., (2005c), for example, found that students taught by teachers who had participated in a traditional and alternative certification program generally scored higher on standardized tests. These researchers concluded that it was participation in the university programs that resulted in higher student achievement.

This is not to say, however, that all teacher preparation programs are equally effective. In particular programs that are fragmented, do not allow enough time for field placements, are lacking in personnel and other resources, and do not have a clear vision of purposes and outcomes are not useful for pre-service teachers (Darling-Hammond & Hammerness, 2005; Bransford et al., 2000; Harste et al., 2002) Darling-Hammond and Hammerness (2005), for example, offer that “teacher education programs that have coherent visions of teaching and learning, and that integrate related strategies across courses and field placements, have a greater impact on the initial conceptions and practices of prospective teachers than those do not” (p. 392).

In accordance with “significant emergent research,” organizations such as NCATE have instituted standards which reflect commitment to these ideals (2008, p. 10). For example, NCATE Standard Three is devoted specifically to clinical experiences: “The unit and its school partners design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn” (NCATE, 2008, p. 29). Explanation of this standard goes on to emphasize variety of experiences, reflection and collaboration that should be integrated into field experiences and clinical practice.

Specifically, methods such as microteaching, performance assessment, portfolios, observations, autobiographies, case studies, and action research have been recommended as especially effective in meeting these standards (Darling-Hammond & Hammerness, 2005). So it is with this understanding that narrative has been explored as a tool for helping pre-service and novice teachers acquire the knowledge they need to positively influence students for whom they are responsible for teaching.

Telling Stories of Teaching

What is it about stories that make many teacher educators and researchers think that they would be useful as a method of teacher preparation? Stories capture experiences in a way that most people find interesting (Schank, 1993). Gregory states that “The features of story make it so much more compelling than any other form of learning...(because of) it’s capacity to vivify and identify those issues about which human beings tend to be a perpetual froth of concern” (2009, page 62). Furthermore, they make events memorable and manageable as Schank points out: “We tell stories in order to create records in memory that will coalesce a complex experience in to a coherent whole” (1993, p. 140-141).

Some researchers offer a more direct view of how narrative relates to teaching. Clandinin and Connelly (1995), for example, maintain that to effectively interpret any narrative, the narrative inquirer must consider the narrative’s placement in each of three dimensions. The three dimensions are temporality (past, present, and future), personal and social interactions and situation or place of the story. These three dimensions take into account the issues most often cited as being central to constructivist learning in general and preparation of teachers in specific. Temporality, for example, concerns itself with the influence of past experiences on present and future actions in a manner consistent with constructivist’s emphasis on past experiences as a predecessor for future actions. This is important because these three dimensions are consistent with prior discussions of experience-based preconceptions and the social context of learning. According to researchers such as Connelly and Clandinin (1999), narrative inquiry can bring together the elements of learning to teach that many contend are essential to the process: past experiences, tacit beliefs, and social and cultural influences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Furthermore, stories address the need for pre-service teachers to be reflective (Bruner, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995). Stories can also reveal efficacy and identity (Danielewicz, 2001; Mishler, 1999). In short, stories bring the previously discussed elements of developing teacher knowledge through experiences to the forefront: preconceptions, reflection, collaboration, efficacy, and identity (Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995). Because of this, Jalongo and Isenberg point out that “teachers’ stories are much more than charming anecdotes. Rather, they are experiences that evoke stories from others, encapsulate professional perspectives, and lead to professional insights about the meaning of teaching” (1995, p. 10). In order to more clearly

understand how stories do it, it is important to consider each component in more depth.

Stories as a tool for uncovering preconceptions

As discussed earlier, preconceptions derived from previous experience shapes the knowledge that professionals develop about their practice. For teachers, these experiences are classroom based, either as a student or “the” teacher. Accessing these experiences and uncovering underlying preconceptions are crucial to positive professional growth (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Hay & White, 2005). Stories make these tacit “theories-in-use” accessible for study because they are easy to remember (Bruner, 2000; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Additionally, studies such as those conducted by Bullough (2008), Coia and Taylor (2001), and Watzke (2002) have shown that stories enhance the ability to uncover these preconceptions because of the developmental characteristics pre-service and novice teacher possess. As Berliner (2001) maintains, novice teachers are simultaneously self-absorbed and self-unaware. Their focus on teaching behavior tends toward the superficial acts of being a teacher with no reflective consideration of what drives their actions or what effect their actions have on student learning (Britzman, 2003). However, telling stories of personal experiences uses this self-absorption to make these teachers aware of the preconceptions. No prior awareness is needed when crafting the story (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). After the story is shared, then preconceptions can be explored (Hay & White, 2005).

Stories are a form of reflection and collaboration

In addition to the above mentioned ways that stories make knowledge accessible to practitioners and teacher educators, investigations have found that stories are a form of reflection with which educators are most comfortable (Hay & White, 2005; Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995). Teachers, especially novice teachers, value the practicality of stories as a tool for understanding teaching (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Also, stories must be shared in order to be a story. Without the listener, the storyteller does not give any thought to the experience (Gregory, 2009). Stories also determine if a relationship will be established with the listener or if members of the group will be marginalized by the stories they tell (Mishler, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1988; Schank, 1993).

Stories demonstrate identities and efficacy

As discussed previously, identity and efficacy are an important part of the process pre-service teachers tap into when learning to teach. The question becomes, therefore, how do teacher educators identify the identity and efficacy their students are demonstrating. While there are assessment tools that researchers may use to identify efficacy, identity is somewhat more complex. Furthermore, surveys and other types of assessments are often expensive, time-consuming and may not yield accurate results. Stories, on the other hand, demonstrate both of these characteristics easily and with more depth than quantitative assessments (Bullough, 2008; Danielewicz, 2001). In previous research, it has been demonstrated that teachers are quite comfortable with using stories to explore their identities. In their study of identity, for example, Connelly and Clandinin explain that “Teachers were more inclined to ask questions along the line of ‘Who am I in this situation?’ than ‘What do I know in this situation?’” (1999, p. 3).

Challenges to Using Stories

One does not just start eliciting stories from teachers, however. Studies have shown that there are perceived dangers that the storytellers have in revealing “the truth” of the situation (Britzman, 2003; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Clandinin and Connelly (1995) found that teachers often devise “cover stories” that allow them to reconcile their own personal story with the official story in order to avoid conflict with those who hold more power in the school culture.

Rosenholtz (1991) contends that some school environments may not be the best place in which to share stories about teaching. When teachers are not used to thinking of their practice in narrative form, the initial attempts at story telling result in gripe sessions and blame placing such as Rosenholtz found in a study of the social organization of schools and school culture:

A story is constitutive; it makes for collective identification. It bonds less accomplished teachers, giving them something to live by, if they can only keep telling their stories. In stories that finesse the burden of responsibility for classroom problems from teachers onto students and parents, teachers seldom falter in their own esteem or that of their colleagues. Beginning teachers often tell the most revealing tales in this regard.

Veterans, needing to keep their stories alive, offer preparatory comfort and forewarning to new teaching recruits (1991, p. 125).

Finally, research has shown that such reflective processes are time-consuming (Harste et al., 2002). When dealing with pre-service teachers, in particular, this is a critical factor. As pointed out earlier, pre-service and novice teachers are overwhelmed with information and experiences that must be sorted and catalogued (Dollase, 1992). They may have only a few course opportunities in which to accomplish this (Harste et al., 2002). The majority of their “reflective” time is spent in the company of others who have no more knowledge and reflective capability than they do (Downey, 2008). This influence is not only other beginning teachers but veteran teachers who are seeking to perpetuate face-saving teaching folklore (Britzman, 2003).

To summarize, therefore, a review of the research has shown that pre-service and novice teachers have characteristics that are uniquely different than teachers at other stages of development. How they change as they progress through their initial teaching experiences are influenced by their preconceptions, collaboration, sense of efficacy, and identity. Which reflective practice, if any, they may be required to use in conjunction with their university experiences is also very important.

Stories are good ways to address these needs. Stories capture both the simplicity and complexity of teaching: “Although stories appear simple and are often taken for granted, narrative is well suited to capturing the complexities of what it means to teach” (Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995, p. 8). Researchers can readily use stories as a tool to detect preconceptions, assumptions and changes in knowledge about teaching as long as they recognize the cultural influences and personal biases that are imposed upon these stories.

While there have been limited study of the stories these pre-service teachers tell and how the stories impact what they learn, few have focused on stories that are told outside of the university. Where do the pre-service teachers get these stories about teaching? Are they primarily drawn from their own experiences or do they rely on the “war stories” of veteran teachers with whom they come in contact? Do they value the stories they hear outside the university setting more than the ones at the university? More importantly, how can stories be used to identify and deal with preconceptions and cultural contexts as well as enhance reflective practice?

Chapter Three

In a Place, Neither Here Nor There

Older and wiser voices can always help you find the right path, if you are only willing to listen.
Jimmy Buffet

You read all the warnings by those more experienced than you, and you say, “Oh, I’ll know better.” But then it happens. It’s hard to find people who are willing to participate in the study. You begin your analysis thinking that one thing will emerge but something completely different materializes. The data are not what you expected and you puzzle over them. You read and reread your interview transcripts to develop plausible explanations.

But this is how the journey goes. It’s a journey that takes place neither here or there because it is both here and there. The events take place in the quiet coffee shop off campus and in various locations with each retelling, writing, and reading as postulated by philosophers such as Husserl and Heidegger (van Manen, 1990). Many qualitative researchers propose that reality exists separate from the physical world in which we exist (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). The stories of these teachers’ realities, therefore, exist in a place both here and there.

There was never a question about the choice between quantitative and qualitative research methods for studying these pre-service teachers. Teachers, like many other people, love a good story and many teacher education researchers are beginning to appreciate the potential these stories have for understanding how teachers acquire and understand the many aspects of learning to teach. Quantitative methods, on the other hand, have demonstrated a lack of such potential.

Quantitative studies have been unsatisfying for understanding how pre-service teachers learn to teach for many reasons. Primarily, there is no clear connection between pre-service teachers’ performance on objective tests such as the NTE or Praxis and their teaching performance or length of career (Horowitz et al., 2005). Furthermore, pre-service teachers have not yet made long-term connections with students in classroom settings and, therefore, there is no student achievement to quantify on standardized tests (Horowitz et al., 2005; Watzke, 2002). Teacher educators have also learned that teaching cannot be reduced to a certain number of items on a checklist. Learning to effectively teach students is more complex than those processes imply (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993;

Horowitz et al., 2005). Moreover, researchers have begun to realize that even numeric scores on “objective tests” are a reflection of context and personal perceptions. Results of such quantitative studies have to be “explained” in a qualitative way (Reissman, 2008). Finally, quantitative studies fail to recognize that learning to teach is heavily influenced by factors such as prior experiences, teaching contexts, and culture. The influence these factors exert on how pre-service teachers attend to and modify knowledge about teaching is significant (Britzman, 2003; Bullough, 2008; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Post-modern thinking, however, has helped researchers realize that the phenomena can sometimes be better understood by seeing it from the “inside out” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993).

As discussed previously, all teachers, but especially pre-service teachers, must synthesize knowledge derived from indirect as well as direct experiences concerning learner characteristics, content, pedagogy, and managerial routines to create and implement lessons (Shulman, 2004). For an individual teacher, the amount of data generated during such processes is overwhelming and to cope with this overload, teachers tend to generalize and simplify (Bullough, 2008; Shulman, 2004).

The importance of simplification of overwhelming amounts of information is of special interest in this study because pre-service teachers are strongly influenced by the portrait of teaching that is presented by a larger culture, particularly the images passed to them by their peers and more experienced teachers. The representation of teaching that the larger culture holds is simplistic and guides the pre-service teacher’s practice in ways often unknown to the pre-service teacher or teacher educator (Hammerness et al., 2005). The simplicity of the culture’s view of teaching appeals to the pre-service teacher who feels frustrated by the perceived contradictory, tentative, theory-based image of teaching presented by the university (Britzman, 2003). These stories and images become incorporated as tacit beliefs and teaching identity which subsequently influence the teacher’s instructional behavior (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). The representation of teaching that is presented through both personal and appropriated stories about teaching has many inconsistencies and inaccuracies for which the pre-service teachers cannot account (Britzman, 2003; Bullough, 2008). The reconciling of actual classroom practice with these “cultural myths” of teaching becomes the heart of the process of learning to teach (Britzman, 2003, p. 6).

The reconciling process begins when the marginalized novice teacher is accepted into the profession in “real schools” after leaving the university and the stories circulated among the professionals are shared with the novice. The myths of the larger culture, such as “Don’t smile until Christmas,” are accepted or rejected by the novice teacher and become part of their personal practical knowledge (Britzman, 2003; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Pre-service teachers must glean from the “war stories” of these more experienced teachers what useful knowledge they can and incorporate that knowledge into their own practice. As personal classroom experiences accumulate for the pre-service teacher, appropriated stories become blended with personal stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

This process is not automatic or consistent nor does it necessarily take place in schools, however. Pre-service and other teachers are sometimes reluctant to share their stories in formal settings. The reasons for this reluctance include conflicts with administrative authority (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995), not understanding the value of stories in learning to teach (Schubert & Ayers, 1992), and generally undervaluing their ability to produce valuable knowledge from class experience (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Compounding the problem is the fact that there are competing definitions of what is successful or effective teaching and tensions between what is expected and what must actually happen in a classroom (Britzman, 2003; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Pre-service teachers, therefore, are often left to acquire these random stories in whatever way possible (Bullough, 2008).

Interviews and observation can address these concerns because they can offer the researcher an opportunity to establish a positive rapport with the participants and tap into the exchange of ideas that may occur outside the formal professional arena (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Rosenholtz, 1991). This experience is often known as negotiating entry into the field (Reissman, 2008). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) refer to this as negotiating relationships. Regardless of the label, the search for pre-service teacher stories begins with the conversations pre-service teachers have outside their university courses.

Choosing Among Many

Choosing to find what pre-service teachers understand about their stories and learning to teach through qualitative methods, however, presents the most difficult challenge for the researcher. That challenge is deciding which qualitative method to choose. Cresswell (2007), for example, states that any qualitative researcher must consider the “philosophical, paradigmatic, and interpretive frameworks” brings

to the study (p. 30). Additionally, Cresswell goes on to state “This field has many different individuals with different perspectives...who are creating the fabric of qualitative research” (p. 35). One would think that since the focus of this study is stories, a narrative inquiry approach would suffice. That is not the case. Due to its emergent characteristics, a researcher may begin a study with one intent but change as dictated by the data. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) maintain that this is typical of most narrative research.

I began this study with the serious intent of pursuing a narrative inquiry. This line of research seemed to be a natural fit for the setting and circumstances of the study. In most basic terms, narrative inquiry involves having someone give a first-person account about an event that has “significance for the narrator and her audience” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 55). The story may emerge as a natural part of conversation to illustrate an important point or may be solicited by the listener. Stories may also be written in archival sources such as journals, letters, field notes, or other documents (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Beyond this simple definition, however, there are many terms, methods, and philosophical foundations for story and the storytelling process as there are qualitative researchers. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) offer that the methodology of narrative inquiry rests on works in such diverse fields such as anthropology, psychology, psychotherapy, medicine, and business and these offer narrative inquirers “adaptations from other fields” that create the possibility of “homegrown, indigenous narrative concepts” (p. 17). Consequentially, terms such as narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), case methods (Shulman, 2004), teacher lore (Schubert & Ayers, 1992), folk pedagogy (Bruner, 1996), and cultural myths (Britzman, 2003) are expressed with ease throughout the literature. Complicating the fact even further is the reality that many other types of qualitative approaches such as ethnographies, phenomenological and case study also rely on stories from participants.

The question then became which qualitative method would best discover the meaning and context of these stories. When comparing ethnography, narrative inquiry, phenomenology, and case studies, Cresswell maintains that “At a most fundamental level, these differ in what they are trying to accomplish—their foci or the primary objectives of the studies” (2007, p. 77). Ely et al. (1997, p. 33) maintain that, among qualitative researchers, there is “a belief that one’s research stance...must be a

conscious choice; at the same time, there is room as one goes along to alter one's stance...to select another and begin all over again."

Cresswell (2007) goes on to offer the practical advice of assessing "the central purpose or focus of each approach" and compare it to your purpose and research question to find a match (p. 93). The focus of this study is the stories that pre-service teachers tell outside of their methods courses. The stories are a phenomenon that this group of teachers is sharing. Phenomenological studies "are especially interested in what happens when the everyday flow of lived experience takes on a particular significance for people" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 1). In contrast, narrative inquiry would focus on a single individual and the attending narrative of that individual (Cresswell, 2007). Osborne (1994), on the other hand, contends that "The majority of qualitative methods have a phenomenological component."

So the dilemma is which best suits this particular study. As stated before, my original intent was to conduct a narrative study, but as the analysis progressed, it soon became apparent that the philosophical foundations and practical application of phenomenology were more appropriate. Phenomenology shares many characteristics with narrative inquiry making the transition somewhat easy. Both methods are concerned with how individuals interpret their experiences, both use interviews as data collection techniques, and both use narrative discourse to answer research questions.

Phenomenology differs from narrative in that it attempts to describe the salient features, or essence, of the experience while narrative tells the stories of an individual's experience. Furthermore, phenomenology does not rely on chronology of the experience, while narrative often does. There are specific aspects of phenomenology that have to be considered before one chooses it as a research methodology.

Phenomenology has a complex history and philosophical foundation. Like narrative, the term phenomenology can be used to mean many things. Byrne (2001, p. 1), for example, noted that "Phenomenology has been described as a philosophy, methodology, and method." Of these three descriptions, the philosophy of phenomenology overshadows and directs the others (Cresswell, 2007). Most credit Edward Husserl with the development of phenomenology and acknowledge the work of those that followed in further refining or expanding on his ideas, including Heidegger, Sarte, and Merleau-Ponty (Smith et al., 2009). More recently authors such as Moustakas (1994) and van Manen (1990) have

contributed their own suggestions concerning the nature and procedures of phenomenological research (Groenewald, 2004). From these writings, many forms of phenomenology such as reflective/transcendental phenomenology, dialogical phenomenology, empirical phenomenology, existential phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology and social phenomenology, to name a few have developed (Imel, Kerka & Wonacott, 2002; van Manen, 1990). More recently phenomenography and interpretative phenomenological analysis have also been introduced (Smith et al., 2009). In order to make phenomenology more accessible to novice researchers, Giorgi (1997) offered that there are four consistent features that mark phenomenological research methods: extensive description, use of reduction, establishment of intentional relationships between the person and the phenomenon, and the evolution of essences or structures of meaning.

So to implement this approach to this study, I sought to understand how this method would apply to the data I had collected. Groenewald (2004) points out that “The operative word in phenomenological research is ‘describe.’ The aim of the researcher is to describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon, refraining from any pre-given framework, but remaining true to the facts” (p. 5). So this is where I began. Since I was focusing on stories, however, I soon discovered that it was still necessary to use much of the literature developed by narrative researchers in order to understand the stories.

Throughout the study, I am choosing to name the phenomenon stories rather than narrative to differentiate it from narrative inquiry and analysis techniques. Literature from narrative inquiry, however, will play an important part of the analysis of these stories. So while the study itself is phenomenological, the foundational understandings will be drawn from both narrative inquiry and phenomenology.

In this study, I chose to elicit stories through interviews with the participants. When stories are elicited in this way, it became important to determine how to pick them out from the rest of the oral dialogue. Fortunately, the literature is very specific in how stories may be identified. According to the narrative analysis literature, stories can be identified in discourse because of the structural features they possess. Polkinghorne (1988) and Ely et al., (1997) contend that stories are more than just relating a series of events. Polkinghorne, for example, states that “narratives are to be differentiated from chronicles, which simply list events according to their place on a time line. Narrative provides a symbolized account of actions that includes a temporal dimension” (p. 18). Jalongo and Isenberg point

out that stories are constructed to give meaning to events and actions, present these events as “episodic units,” and relate past events to future events (1995, p. 4). Furthermore, the story must mean something to the teller (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). These characteristics of narrative are echoed in other works on identifying narratives in oral and written discourse as well (Bruner, 1996; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1988; Riessman, 2008; Shulman, 2004).

Mishler (1999) proposes that when the narrative itself is the object of study, it can be studied in one of three ways: by the temporal order in which the relationship between the order of events in real time and the order of events in the narrative are compared; textual coherence and structure which looks at the linguistic and narrative strategies for the construction of the story; and narrative functions in which the social and cultural context of the story are considered. Coffey and Atkinson (1996), on the other hand, offer that, in addition to structure, narratives can be studied in terms of function or for meaning. Riessman (2008) contends that quality narrative research consists of considering the structure, function and meaning of the story through repeated readings of the narrative text. Finally, Labov (2001) and Mishler (1999) contend that the context of the story is necessary to understand it. It is easy to see that there are many factors to consider when studying stories that teachers tell.

For this study, Riessman's suggestion to consider structure, form, and meaning were used (2008). This is because it is believed that the narrative is a representation of teaching that has been synthesized from personal past experiences, tacit beliefs, and social and cultural influences. Only by considering structure, function and meaning were these representations illuminated.

In order to be consistent with this decision, therefore, the stories collected during this study were analyzed for structure, function, context, and meaning. This means that once the story was identified in the data, it was analyzed to see how it was organized, what events were described in the story, what marked the beginning and end of the story and what purpose the story served. Important concepts, themes and patterns were coded and compared among the stories gathered during this study. Meaning was explored by observing the language these pre-service teachers used (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Additionally, the context of the story was constructed during interviews by asking the pre-service teachers to explain their backgrounds in relation to their teaching careers, describe how they acquired these stories, and tell when and with whom they share these stories

Once “inside” the participant’s head through the identification of story within the dialogue, the researcher then works with the participant to accurately provide an interpretation for others (Smith et al., 2009). Riessman states that this is important because “Narratives are interpretive and, in turn, require interpretation: They do not speak for themselves or provide direct access to other times, places, or cultures” (2008, p. 22).

The focus of this study, therefore, was on what these stories mean for these pre-service teachers and how they use them to learn to teach. Additionally, the purpose of this study was to investigate what tacit beliefs may be represented in the stories pre-service teachers tell. I believed that the stories that this group of teachers recounted represented what they deem to be important and their understanding of classroom practice at a particular place and time on their “professional landscape” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). By using phenomenological inquiry to explore the stories pre-service teachers tell, I began to construct a portrait of what they know about teaching. The goal of any qualitative inquiry, after all, is to understand the situation or event from the participant's perspective.

Finding the Questions

Van Manen (1990) offered six research activities in which a researcher should engage when conducting hermeneutical phenomenological research and the first is to choose a phenomenon of personal interest. The decision to study teacher stories was a natural result of my own teaching practices. I have always used stories to teach. From teaching fourth graders to pre-service teachers, when I presented information to the class, it usually began with “Well, there was this one time when...” The pre-service teachers seemed to respond positively to my stories and often shared their own stories. My colleagues and I had disparagingly referred to these as the “war stories” veteran teachers often told in teacher’s lounges and when the principal wasn’t around but no further thought was given to the topic. I became intrigued by these stories, however, as more and more literature emerged on this qualitative approach to understanding how teachers move through various stages of development.

A common concern in phenomenological study is researcher bias that may occur because of preconceptions. Husserl suggested bracketing what the researcher knew about the phenomenon in order to set these preconceptions aside to “...objectively describe the phenomena under study” (Bryne, 2001, p. 1). Heidegger, on the other hand, maintained that the researcher could not fully set such

preconceptions aside but should instead acknowledge them and explain how they inform the understanding of the phenomenon “through authentic reflection” (Bryne, 2001, p. 1). This concern is echoed in narrative research as well. Clandinin and Connelly, for example, state, “As narrative inquirers...we must become visible with our own lived and told stories” (2000, pp. 61). Ely et al. (1997) point out, qualitative researchers cannot be “value free” but rather should be “value conscious” and, therefore, the research must recognize and acknowledge it.

To initiate this process, therefore, I began by writing my own autobiography and keeping a journal of observations. This was based on the suggestion offered by both phenomenological and narrative researchers. Clandinin and Connelly, for example, state that “...narrative inquirers need to reconstruct their own narrative and to be alert to possible tensions between those narrative histories and the narrative research they undertake” (2000, p. 46). My own journal of observations provided an opportunity for me to “step back” from the interactive moments in the study and detect my own biases and projections (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). It was also handy for remembering what happened because I soon learned memory can be a bias in its own right. By reviewing the journal and reflecting on the comments made, I felt comfortable that I was able to identify when my own subjectivity interfered with accurate representations of the participants’ perceptions.

The purpose of this study was to explore the stories that pre-service teachers tell to discover the representations of teaching that they may portray and the awareness pre-service teachers have of such stories. These representations arise from the experiences the pre-service teachers have actually had or may have appropriated from others through shared stories as well as the tacit beliefs the pre-service teachers hold about teaching. Additionally, I sought to understand how these representations of previous experience and tacit beliefs represented in their stories influence instructional decisions and practice. It is my contention that, because they result from prior knowledge and tacit beliefs, pre-service teachers’ representations of teaching, as documented in the stories they tell, influence what they learn about teaching and guide their instructional decisions. These representations hold clues concerning what pre-service teachers understand about the nature of teaching and how one learns to teach. Additionally, I contend that the stories that pre-service teachers tell outside the methods courses hold more clues about their understanding of teaching because specific types of stories present inconsistencies about teaching

of which the pre-service teacher is unaware. Stories told in university courses are greatly influenced by trust, authority and other environmental issues. By looking at and exploring these teachers' representations of teaching expressed in the stories they tell outside their university experiences, light was shed on how they construct knowledge about teaching.

In order to discover these representations and to explore the relationship between these representations and construction of knowledge, this study centered on the following question: What stories do pre-service teachers tell about their teaching experiences? In order to elaborate upon the answer to this question, this study looked at the following elements:

- What function do these stories serve?
- How do the stories these teachers tell influence their instructional decisions?
- How do personal stories differ from appropriated stories?
- What images, events, and characters appear in these stories?
- How are events ordered in these stories?
- What pedagogic processes are described in these stories?
- What emotions are described in these stories?
- Why is the story important to the teller?
- How are stories selected and prioritized?
- What is left out of the stories?
- How does the teller feel about the events in the story?
- What words does the teller use to tell the story?
- What are the sources of the stories?
- What are the teller's prior experiences?
- With whom and where are these stories shared and why?

The answers to these questions were derived from interview data and notes in a field journal. Some of these questions, such as "Why is this story important to you," were asked directly during the interview. Other questions, such as "What images, events or characters appear in this story," were answered by looking closely at the story itself. Still more questions, such as "How does the narrator feel about this story or situation" were taken from the interview transcript and supported with data recorded in

the field journal. The field journal consisted of observations made by the researcher during the interview as well as reflective remarks made after the interview.

Finding the Teachers

The selection process

I determined that pre-service teachers participating in this study must have met specific criteria. These criteria included having

1. chosen teaching as an initial career,
2. participated in at least one methods course that included a field experience, and
3. little teaching experience that directly matches what they are currently studying.

In addition, the participants needed to be available to meet with the researcher for approximately 6 hours over a six week period outside of their university courses and often away from the building in which these classes were held. This stipulation excluded some pre-service teachers who were parents, had long distances to commute, or worked at full-time jobs outside of class.

These types of pre-service teachers were chosen for specific reasons. First, participants who have chosen teaching as an initial career and who have had little or no direct teaching experience have prior knowledge that is based on being a student rather a teacher. Although in any university education course there are a variety of backgrounds represented, it is this type of pre-service teacher that is particularly challenging. Older, more experienced pre-service teachers are more likely to have other life experiences from which preconceptions are developed. While these preconceptions may be interesting and probably influence their teaching in very strong ways, non-teaching influences are the focus of this study.

Second, it was important that these participants be involved in courses in which they have at least some contact with students. These pre-service teachers were involved in actually teaching students, rather than just observing. Through contact with students, other classroom teachers, and education university faculty, stories can potentially be generated. These were the stories that I wanted to hear.

Possible candidates were approached directly and asked if they would be interested in participating. In all, 25 students were asked to participate in this study. I began with students I knew from prior teaching and then branched out to students they recommended. In all, fifteen students agreed to

participate. Seven of these were students with whom I had worked during various methods courses. All fifteen completed a data sheet to be sure they met the established criteria (see Appendix A for sample data sheet). Of these fifteen, two were eliminated because they did not meet the necessary criteria and three more were eliminated because they would not be available for the required amount of time needed to complete the study. These students were contacted and thanked for their offer to participate. From the pool of the remaining ten students, six were randomly selected. One of these six participants had to drop out because of conflicting personal commitments so a seventh participant was pulled from the remaining four unselected participants. All six of these participants completed all three interviews.

To clarify the purpose, scope, and process of the study for the participants, each participant was given a written abstract of the study (see appendix A). In this abstract, I stated that the study was designed to share stories about teaching and talk about how they think these stories help them learn to teach. The participants were also made aware that findings of this study would be used to highlight the role these stories play in how knowledge about teaching and learning is acquired in methods courses.

Additionally, in initial contacts with perspective participants, I made it clear that I would be doing all that I could to maintain anonymity for them and not divulge any positive or negative comments to any university teachers or administrators. I also made it very clear that the results of this study were for academic purposes only and not part of any university-sponsored curriculum or program review. Most of the participants indicated in this initial contact that the only reason they were participating was that they either knew through direct experience or by assurance by other pre-service teachers that I could be trusted. They also indicated that they felt they could be honest with me and that I would not judge their opinions. Sally, for example, in her initial interview said, "I heard you were very fair about people's opinions" (personal interview, line 10).

Furthermore, the abstract outlined how privacy and confidentiality would be maintained. Since students were selected randomly from a pool of possible participants and contacted privately, other class and faculty members would not know who was participating in the study unless the participant decided to disclose this information. To the best of my knowledge, no participant disclosed this to any faculty member. However, many participants did confide that they had shared the experience with other pre-

service teachers or family members. There did not seem to be any negative consequences of this for the study.

In addition to these steps, the standard practice of using pseudonyms instead of the participants' real names was used in this study. All identifying information within the stories themselves was also altered to conceal participant identity. Participants were asked to pick their own pseudonym in the initial interview. Four declined to do so and I selected one for each of those participants. All pseudonyms were known only to me and the participant. At no time during the group interview or subsequent contact with the participants did I use their pseudonym.

During the data analysis, it became quite clear that information about particular courses would have to be altered to conceal participant identity as well. Whenever practical, I eliminated the specific course content or identifying features of the university educators. For example, if the participant mentioned that the university educator taught a particular course by its university designated number, I stated a general course topic.

I felt that confidentiality and privacy were important because university students are particularly vulnerable and influenced by their fellow students, professors and professorial colleagues. It was important to me, therefore, to assure the students those rights of expression and privacy would be protected as much as possible.

Participant demographics

Since the pre-service teachers all came from elementary certification programs, it was expected that the sample would be predominantly female and all participants in this study were. There were no male pre-service teachers who were willing to participate in this study. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the study participants to make comparisons among participants easier. Qualitative researchers maintain that participants of any sample group should be similar enough to make comparisons among their experiences possible. Table 1 demonstrates that these participants are very similar.

Table 1: Characteristics of the Participants

Name*	age/ marital status	Children / currently working	Type of school attended prior to the university	Relatives who are teachers	Teaching exp.	Non- education exp.	How many education courses taken	When expecting to student teach
Alice	24/not	none/ yes	public	none	none	retail	Foundations and most methods	Next semester
Betty	24/not	1/ yes	public	none	none	Billing specialist for a medical co	Foundations and most methods	Next semester
Cheryl	23/not	none/ yes	public	none	Day care	Waitress; bartender	Foundations and most methods	Next semester
Donna	23/ married	None/ no	public	none	daycare	none	Foundations and most methods	Next semester
Hannah	23/ married	2/ yes	public	aunt	none	Media tech, clerk for insurance company	Foundation and 2 methods	Two more semesters
Sally	23/not	none/ yes	private	Aunt and uncle	High school tutor	none	Foundation and 2 methods	Two more semesters

*all names are pseudonyms to protect the participant's identity

As can be observed from the above table, the participants in this group were similar in age, ethnicity, and experience. The assertion that these participants were of similar ethnicity derived from observation rather than stated identity. Only Hannah identified herself as being of French and Native American heritage. The rest of the participants were Caucasian but offered no other ethnic affiliation. Finding participants who had absolutely no teaching experience was problematic. I chose to include Donna and Cheryl in this study because they had worked in a day care part time for a short period of time. Additionally, neither participant was working toward certification in early elementary education. Similarly, Sally had tutored fellow students when she was in high school but was not currently engaged in any teaching activities. She was not working toward certification in secondary education. I decided that these limited experiences would not affect the stories they told in any significant way.

The most important characteristic that these participants possessed was that they were in similar courses and participating in actual field experiences with those courses. Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Donna were actually in the exact same courses and were already friends. All of these participants shared that teaching was their first choice of study since coming to the university. Each chose teaching for different reasons, however.

The reasons given for choosing teaching varied from just knowing teaching was a desired career to the practical opportunities it offered women who want to raise a family. Hannah and Sally were inspired by former teachers while Cheryl and Donna were influenced by their experiences working at a daycare. Additionally, all the participants had friends and extended family members who were teachers who also influenced their decision to become teachers. When I started this study, I was concerned that these influences might overwhelm the types of stories these participants told, but this did not occur. Reasons for this outcome will be discussed later.

Sharing the Experience

The interviews were conducted at the university. A room located in the education building would have been problematic because so many fellow students and course instructors were in the area at various times of the day. Noise and lack of privacy would have made interviews impractical in this setting. Student lounge areas within the building also lacked the privacy necessary to make participant feel comfortable in sharing their views. Making clear tape recordings from which meaningful transcripts could be developed would have been unrealistic in such a setting.

The library on the campus, however, offered conference rooms that were available for conducting the interviews. The library was located within walking distance of the Teacher Education Building and the conference rooms offered a quiet, secure setting in which to conduct the interviews. Additionally, it was convenient for the participants. After the first individual interview, however, the participants indicated that they wanted to have the group interview at a local coffee shop off campus. Upon visiting the coffee shop and finding it suitably quiet and comfortable, the interviews were moved to that location. The relaxed atmosphere of the coffee shop appeared to have a calming effect for the participants. The second individual interview was also conducted at this coffee shop.

Finding the Stories

I used interviewing strategies to discover how pre-service teachers used stories to learn about teaching. The data for this study, therefore, consisted of transcripts of dialogues of and about the stories that pre-service teachers told during group and individual interviews. For the rest of this study, I will use the term personal interview to differentiate interviews conducted privately with individual participants from the group interview. Additionally, for much of the discussion of the interview data, I refer to the participants as teachers. This is because it became evident quite early that these participants considered themselves to be teachers and to describe these participants in this way seemed appropriate. The dialogues from these interviews were preserved through tapes, transcripts, and researcher's journal. Observations occurred during the interviews and in reflective moments throughout the interviewing, transcribing and coding processes.

The first interview was conducted to establish a positive rapport with the participants and learn their background. During this interview, I spent time reiterating the purpose of the study and my role as researcher. I also encouraged the participants to share their concerns and hopes with me. A good deal of time was spent getting to know these participants. I also shared with each participant that I would be keeping a journal and she could keep one as well. None of the participants chose to do this, however. This information gleaned from the information sheet and this interview was written as an individual profile for each participant (see Appendix B).

Then the group interview was conducted. Before the tape recorder was turned on, I allowed the participants to chat for a bit to become more comfortable in their conversations. Each participant introduced herself and told the group what courses she was currently taking. After this, the tape recorder was turned on and the interview began. I recorded observations in my journal before, during and after the interview.

After the group concluded the interview, the beginning teachers stayed for a few minutes and discussed the experience. All of the participants stated that they enjoyed doing the interview and would be happy to do it again if I needed it.

A rough analysis was performed prior to conducting the second personal interview. This rough analysis consisted of extracting each story and writing it as a short story format as opposed to an

interview transcript format. These stories were copied and given to each participant prior to the interview. In further preparation for the second personal interview, I reviewed the group interview transcript and refined questions. In some cases, this refinement included questions especially tailored for each participant. I then scheduled an interview with each participant.

I began the second personal interview by reviewing the stories with each participant to make sure she had read and thought about them. Each participant responded that she had read them but had not spent time thinking about them. I proceeded with the rest of the interview as planned. First I asked a set of generalized questions that were the same for each participant and then delved into the specific questions about stories and their experience tailored for each participant.

For each stage of the study, I wrote in my observation journal. Also, as analysis proceeded, I would periodically provide rough drafts of some comments I was making about these stories with the participant that told that story to see if I was portraying it correctly. Often these exchanges took place via e-mail because the participants indicated that this was the most comfortable method for them. This was also efficient for me. After all the personal interviews were transcribed, a more thorough analysis of this data began.

Moving from the Individual to the Common

The qualitative research literature consistently states that the steps in analyzing this data include transcribing, coding, sorting, and integrating the data (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Cresswell, 2007; Smith et al., 2009; Ely et al, 1997). This is how I conducted the analysis of the data.

Transcribing and coding

I personally transcribed all interviews. Using suggestions offered by Smith et al. (2009), I wrote every nuance of the speech patterns from the tape recording. This is important because these researchers maintain that this is important because it ensures that "...the participant becomes the focus of the analysis" (p. 82). I applied careful listening, reading and noting personal observations and rereading steps to the group and personal interviews. Since the first interview was more to establish rapport and get background information, I felt that the group and second personal interview were more valuable sources of information. During the retranscribing process, I often referred to my journal. This

initial rough transcription was then refined and selected portions were moved to other formats such as charts as analysis warranted. A copy of the group interview transcript is included in Appendix C.

When beginning analysis, most narrative researchers recommend starting the process by looking at the structure of the narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1988; Riessman, 2008). As narrative structure is examined, more of the essence of the story becomes evident (Polkinghorne, 1988). Fruitful analysis, however, does not stop there. Clandinin and Connelly point out that while one begins with the structure “such as character, place, scene, plot, tension, end point, narrator, context, and tone, these matters become increasingly complex as an inquirer pursues this relentless rereading” (2000. p. 111). It is through such interrogation of the narrative that the meaning emerges. So following these researchers’ suggestions, I moved to the next step of the analysis.

Structure of the story

For the first analysis, I began by looking at the structural features of the stories themselves. No consideration was given to the context, storyteller (other than labeling who told the story) or other factors (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Reissman, 2008). By studying the structure of the narratives, I hoped to learn why the teller is choosing to tell that story in that particular way. In this study, I was using the term structure to mean the sequence of events in the story and an understanding of how the events relate to one another within the story. Characters, images, emotions and pedagogic processes were also an important part of this structure. Some narrative researchers have sorted and classified basic narrative structures that consistently show up in stories that people tell (Bruner, 1996; Polkinghorne, 1988; Schank, 1993). This is important because as Bruner explains, “...there are few of them (story structures). Yet stories are endlessly varied” (1996, p.95). Bruner (1996) goes on to propose that the structure of the narrative, therefore, helps the listener to understand the cognitive processes the teller is using. Furthermore, Lieblich et al. (1998) maintain that this is a good approach because “the structural aspects of a narrative are more attuned to the deeper levels of personality, less easy to manipulate, and perhaps more revealing” (p. 168).

Discussion of genre and structure of a story are tools long used in literary theory. Subsequently, many narrative typologies and elements have developed. Types of narrative such as tragedy, romance, comedy, mythology, fairy tales, and irony are most often used when studying narrative structure but there

are alternative methods of categorizing narratives. Gergen and Gergen (1986), for example, propose that all narratives follow one of only three prototypical narrative forms: progressive, regressive and stability. These structures refer to how the protagonist in the story is able or not able to move toward the goal set in the story introduction. This narrative structure was helpful in understanding how pre-service teachers perceived their progress toward acquiring teaching skills. When pre-service teachers, for example, told regressive stories whereby they moved further away from their goal of learning how to teach, I was able to conclude that these pre-service teachers viewed their experiences as counter-productive. Likewise, when they structured their stories in a stability narrative form, then I was able to conclude that their experiences had no impact on their perception of their teaching ability.

Using these frameworks and labels, a summary sheet was created for each story (see Appendix B). These notes were sorted, categorized, and transferred to charts. Using the summary sheets and charts, further analysis of the data was begun by carefully looking for patterns or themes that might emerge within the structure of the story.

Story function and context

For the next rereading of the narratives, I began to consider the connection between the dialogue and the stories themselves. To do this, I explored how the narrative functions for the teller hoping to understand *why* the teller was choosing to tell *that particular story*? Some narrative analysts maintain that function can be individual as in the construction of knowledge or broad as transmission of culture (Polkinghorne, 1998). Accordingly, Coffey and Atkinson (1996) offer that the study of narrative function “emphasizes the idea that individual narratives are situated within particular interactions and within specific social, cultural, and institutional discourses” (p. 63). This is important because many researchers have proposed that the stories teachers tell are greatly influenced by individual concerns of survival in the classroom as well as culture bias (Britzman, 2003; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Understanding the function of the narrative, therefore, helps the story listener understand how these concerns and culture shape the teacher’s thinking about teaching.

An example of narrative function is Clandinin and Connelly’s (1995) discovery that teachers told stories that protected their classroom practice. According to these researchers, these “cover” stories served to keep secret practices that ran counter to the “sacred stories” of the school system. The

function of these stories was to make it appear that the teachers were complying with the sacred story. Likewise, Rosenholtz (1991) found that “experience swapping” was told to perpetuate a particular school culture by shifting responsibility to lack of student achievement to other parties, usually the students or parents. Cortazzi (1993) offered that occupational narratives could function as cautionary tales of disaster that would forewarn novices of potential problems or creations of self and cultural identity.

In this study, I was initially looking to classify these stories according to function as well. In order to determine this, I looked for phrases, such as “You’re going to love this.” I verified the intent of the story by asking the participant during the second personal interview and in follow-up communication.

By looking at the function of the story, I soon discovered, however, that it was heavily influenced by the context and the meaning. The function arose as the result of statements by other participants. For example, statements made by one participant jogged memories or signaled that it was a good time to interject a confirmational or oppositional story. The same situation occurred for meaning. A story only had meaning because of the way it functioned in the discourse. In the analysis discussion, therefore, I combined function with context.

Because function seemed closely related to context, I looked at the discourse that surrounded each story. I was hoping to discover what influenced *why and how* this story was being told. To do this, I returned to the transcripts and removed all dialogue that was not narrative in nature. These bits of dialogue were then separated into “chunks of meaning” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, Smith et al., 2009). These chunks of meaning were sorted and classified. From this classification process, I was able to create a summation of what the participants were saying. I created a chart with three columns. The first column contained comments that occurred prior to the story, the second column was the story itself and the third column contained comments that occurred immediately after the story. These charts are included in Chapter Five. These comments were then analyzed.

In doing this it became apparent that a new way to look at the comments was needed. Going back to the interview transcripts, story chains, clusters, and story categorization that differed from those identified for the structural analysis were discovered. I created a simplified list of the stories and recoded them with these characteristics to look for patterns.

Personal meaning

I revisited the transcripts yet again to discover what the story *meant* to the teller and listener and conducted a second personal interview. One might argue that all of the ways described above contribute to meaning and wonder why there is a separate category devoted to meaning. Meaning in this context refers to what a story signified to a participant at time it was told. By looking at the meaning in this context, it became possible to explain the essence of the experience. There are ways, besides being a mind reader, in which meaning can be deduced. Spradley (1979), for example, contends that comparing symbolic representations used in participant language helps the researcher understand the meaning of a passage. Identifying metaphors or “folk” language used in dialogue are two ways in which meaning of qualitative data, especially interview data, can be explored. These methods illuminate the language used in the story in a way that helps the researcher determine what the experience means for the participant.

In rereading the transcript, however, it became apparent that these participants used no metaphors, limited cultural categories, and no direct comments concerning the stories (“that’s a good one,” for example). In fact, during the group interview, there was little reaction to the stories. Occasionally the participants would laugh at a story but few other reactions were observed. This meant that I had to ask the participants directly during the second personal interview what the story meant to her. These comments were then indexed in a chart for review (see Appendix F).

Integrating and reduction

Throughout the extraction and analysis of these stories, I kept asking myself “So what?” Connecting the data to the concepts introduced by the research questions helped answer this question. Also useful was using Miles and Huberman’s method of “stacking comparable cases” as described in the following way:

You write each of a series of cases, using more or less standard sets of variables. Then you use matrices and other displays to analyze each case in depth. After each case is understood, you ‘stack’ the case-level display into a ‘meta-matrix,’ which is then further condensed, permitting systematic comparison. (1994, p. 176)

Applying this method to the data provided quite useful when looking at structures, linguistic features and different types of stories. This process is described by Smith et al. (2009): “The original

whole of the interview becomes a set of parts as you conduct your analysis, but these then come together in another new whole at the end of the analysis" (p. 91).

When considering the context, functions, and meaning, however, other methods had to be employed. Often, chunks of the data were simply placed side by side and then compared. For example, when considering which these teachers found most useful, I created a format that allowed me to place each response next to one another and looked for common phrases and meanings. This became the basis of the emergent themes found in the data.

Discovering the Themes

Clandinin and Connelly state that "Although in some people's minds, inquiry is merely a process of telling and writing down a story with perhaps some reflective comment by researchers and participants, the process of moving from field texts to research texts is far more complex" (2000, p. 131). As each level of analysis progressed, certain themes became apparent. These themes became more pronounced and refined with each level of analysis until a clear picture began to come forward of what these teachers considered to be important features of their experiences both inside and outside the university courses in which they participated. These findings highlighted what the experience of sharing stories meant for these teachers.

Other Practical Concerns

Timeline

The data for this study was collected over a twelve-week period during the course of one semester. Limited data analysis also began during this time period. During the first two weeks of the study, I spoke with students at various times on campus to share what I was doing for the study and to see if anyone was interested. These conversations often took place in the hallways of the education building. Occasionally I contacted students by phone. During the third week, I collected personal data sheets and screened potential participants for the study.

Once the six participants were selected, the first personal interview was conducted during the fifth week of the study. No more than two interviews were conducted in any one day and these interviews were transcribed within two days of conducting the interview. Data analysis was restricted to reviewing

the transcripts to be sure they were accurate and that all participants would be able to successfully participate in the study.

The group interview was delayed because some of the participants were involved in class activities that required too much of their time. During the seventh week, however, the group interview was conducted. I transcribed this interview shortly after the interview to assure accuracy of the data. Questions regarding this interview were directed to the participants by e-mail or phone conversations.

The eighth and ninth weeks were devoted to coding the group interview and preparing for the second personal interviews. The second personal interviews were spread out over the tenth and eleventh weeks because the participants were again committed to completing class requirements.

Within two days of completing the second personal interview, I transcribed each and began the initial data analysis. Most of the member checks were conducted within four weeks of the group interview but as more time passed, I observed that the participants were less likely to remember what they were feeling or what they had said during the group or personal interviews. All member checks were discontinued 8 weeks after the group interview.

Table 2: Timeline for the Study

Weeks 1 and 2	Met with students and recruited 15 pre-service teachers to participate in the study.
Week 3	Collected and reviewed completed data sheets. Contacted 8 students to participate in the study.
Week 4	Scheduled and prepared for personal interviews
Week 5	Conducted personal interviews with possible participants
Week 6	Transcribed personal interviews and prepared for the group interview
Week 7	Conducted group interview and transcribed it
Week 8 and 9	Coded group interview and prepared for second personal interviews
Week 10 and 11	Conducted second personal interviews. All interviews transcribed and initial data analysis began.
Weeks 12 and beyond	Data analysis and interpretation including member checks. All member checks were completed by week 18.

Ethics

As with all forms of qualitative research, many ethical considerations must be examined. These included, but were not limited to, the researcher's obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and concerns of the participants. Potential problems with confidentiality and privacy have already been discussed, but ethical considerations do not stop there. Qualitative inquiry, by its very nature, is

relational. This means that positive relationships that are mutually beneficial, or at least not harmful, must be established (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

These issues were particularly important in this narrative inquiry. As Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 173-174) point out “we need to be thoughtful of our research participants as our first audience and, indeed, our most important audience, for it is to them that we owe our care to compose a text that does not rupture life stories that sustain them.” These researchers go on to offer that novice researchers must realize the relational responsibility that is inherent in narrative inquiry. They state that “researchers, perhaps more aware of how texts may ultimately be read, may find themselves being more cautious about how participants are represented than are the participants themselves” (2000, p. 177). At every point in the study, I attempted to be considerate of the participants and how they felt. Feedback from the participants indicated that they felt that I had respected their wishes.

Validity

Validity is problematic in qualitative research. Polkinghorne states that “The researcher presents evidence to support the conclusions and shows why alternative conclusions are not as likely, presenting the reasoning by means of which the results were derived. This reasoning does not produce certainty; it produces likelihood” (1988, p. 17). Huberman and Miles (1994, p. 262) caution that “Qualitative analysis can be evocative, illuminating, masterful—and wrong.” More recently, researchers have suggested a variety of practices that work to assure that qualitative research indeed does have quality to it.

Concepts such as wakefulness (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), verisimilitude (Bruner, 1996), and transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 2000) have been suggested as ways to assure rigorously conducted, quality research. Rodriguez and Katarba (2009) suggest the use of the concept of intersubjectivity because it “...assumes that people cannot be objective.” They go on to explain that “Intersubjectivity refers to the perceptions which can be agreed upon by the perceiving parties as representing the object of their perceptions” (p. 3). These broad concepts have given way to specific suggestions on how to produce quality research.

Cresswell (2007) suggests “auditing the research process” (p. 204). Careful thought in the planning, gathering and interpretation of data is also often recommended as a way of striving for valid conclusions drawn from qualitative data (Lieblich et al., 1998; Riessman, 2008). Beyond this general

advice, however, opinions greatly diverge. Cresswell (2007), for example, contend that triangulating the data provides stronger support for conclusions derived from qualitative data. On the other hand, some qualitative researchers contend that reliance on triangulation is not useful for qualitative research. Ely et al., for example, maintain that “we do not triangulate; we *crystallize*” (1997, p.35). These researchers suggest that the metaphor of the crystal is more appropriate for any qualitative study because written documents produced through qualitative study “reflects the complex, partial and multiple perspectives that refract meaning for and from the reader.” In other words, these researchers contend that there are more than three sides to any interpretation of qualitative data. Furthermore, Smith et al. (2009) caution against using “easy-to-use checklists” because “The danger here is that the assessment procedures become simplistic and prescriptive and that the more subtle features of qualitative work get missed out” (p. 180). Instead, these researchers suggest using Yardley’s “four broad principles for assessing the quality of the research” (p. 180). These principles include demonstrated sensitivity to the participant and the information they offer, commitment and rigor through thorough and systematic analysis, transparency and coherence, and description of the importance and impact of the study.

For this study, I attempted to maintain the integrity of the findings by keeping a personal journal in which I recorded my own story and feeling (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), conducting member checks from the participants (Cresswell, 2007), and providing transcripts and exact participant quotes within analysis and conclusions made throughout the study (Cresswell, 2007; Smith et al., 2009). This is supported by Weiss's contention that “For the most part we must rely on the quality of our interviewing for the validity of our material” (1994, p. 150). My analysis was also guided by my research questions.

Additionally, I used the participant’s actual wording and phrases when describing findings or patterns as well as using language nuances to determine intention. This study was not intended to produce highly generalizable results so techniques of consistency and dependability of the data was used instead of traditional conceptions of reliability. Other commonly acknowledged methods of validation and reliability such as rich, thick description of the participant’s experiences (Geertz, 1977), clear description of the methodology (Cresswell, 2007), and acknowledgement of my own bias and subjectivity (Reissman, 2008) are also used to establish validity and reliability. With this foundation established, I began to think about the teachers with whom I was working and the stories they chose to share.

Chapter Four

There Lived Many Characters

*"I've learned, the hard way, that some poems don't rhyme
and some stories don't have a clear beginning, middle, and end."
Gilda Radner*

As I look over the transcript and prepare for the second personal interview, I begin to wonder if I have made a terrible mistake. Where are the stories? Where are the descriptions of what is happening in these classrooms? Why is there so little here? After picking through the transcript, I begin to find the bits and pieces of stories but they are only skeletons. These stories are populated with many characters but they are shadowy and sketchy. There are so many characters with many stories in classrooms, why are the stories so hard to find?

This study was designed to look at the stories pre-service teachers tell and these teachers had given me their stories. The stories were not what I expected, however. Nevertheless, these stories are important because of their relation to how this group of teachers makes sense of being a teacher (Britzman, 2003; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Using practices proposed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), Coffey and Atkinson (1996), Ely et al. (1997), Lieblich et al. (1998), and Reissman (2008), these stories and other narrative discourse were studied to discover their structure, function, context, and meaning. As the interview transcripts were revisited and reread, the stories and "chunks of meaning" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) were coded, sorted, and arranged in various matrices, charts or other formats to discern patterns and themes.

Once the stories were extracted, managing them became an issue. Because it would be cumbersome to repeat the story during discussion of findings, each story had to be given a title. The most practical method of naming the stories was to take key phrases that reflected the character of the story as well as make it unique enough to clarify discussions.

Furthermore, when writing about the stories' characters and events, another issue arose. What was the best way to be clear about who were the characters in the stories? Sometimes the participants were the teacher, sometimes they were the students. Using these simple designations became confusing. To clarify this, I chose to designate the participants as beginning teachers. Teachers at schools became the classroom teachers. Those responsible for teaching university courses were

designated university teachers and the students in the schools became the children. I also realized at this point that referring to the people who were sharing their stories with me as participants was too impersonal. I quickly recognized in meeting with each that they considered themselves teachers. They were not becoming, but rather were just passing through this phase of their teaching careers.

Once these issues were settled, initial investigations could begin. This required the creation of a data sheet for each story because, while I started with structural analysis, often I would note an emotional feel, have an observational memo to add, or see a nuance for a particular story that might not pertain to what I was considering for the stories at that time. For example, I might be looking at the language of the story and notice something interesting about the image of the teacher in that story. I would then record this observation on the data sheet. This emerged as a tool itself. By placing a participant biography with the stories that the participant told, I was able to move between structures, context, and functions more easily. The results of this approach are in Appendix B. I returned to the data sheets throughout the analysis to revise and enhance my observations of each story.

The presentation of what I discovered that follows does not represent the actual process I used to understand what these stories represent. Many times during the process, I jumped from structure to meaning to context and back again as I reread the stories, transcript and my journal. Insights from the participants themselves also helped clarify and refine this data.

Studying the Stories

Give a toy to some children and they immediately begin taking it apart. This is how they come to know how it works. This is how I began looking at these stories. By looking at the more typical story components such as characters, sequence of events, location or setting, and whether the problem presented in the story was solved, I hoped to discover the function, context and meaning of these stories for these participants (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Reissman, 2008). As mentioned in Chapter One, each aspect of the study of the story will be discussed in separate chapters. In this chapter, I will consider the structural components of the stories these teachers shared in the group interview. In chapter Five, I will look at the context and function of these stories in the group interview and supplement my observations with information from the personal interviews. Chapter Six will focus on what these stories mean for these teachers and will draw its conclusions more heavily from the personal interviews.

In addition to these more traditional components, the language or semantics of the stories were also examined because at their heart stories are composed of words and phrases. The words or phrases become the basis for deciding what the emotional feel and meaning of the story might be. Lieblich et al. offer that "...events evoke emotions, so human beings attempt to deal with those emotions, and their coping mechanisms are reflected in the linguistic features of their discourse" (1998, p. 155). These researchers go on to offer an illustrative list of formal linguistic features that may be tied to emotion. This list includes such features as the use of adverbs to demonstrate unexpectedness, transitions between temporal verbs (past, present or future), transitions in person (first, second or third), intensifiers such as *really* or *very*, deintensifiers such as *maybe*, word or phrase repetitions, and changes in chronology. These researchers also point out that using these types of analysis can identify emotion "...even when a speaker is unaware of, or denies, the emotional weight of the experience" (Lieblich et al, 1998, p. 162). I looked for these and other linguistic features that may signal emotional ties to the story topic.

Next I looked more holistically at each story to decide what kind of story it was. This later enhanced my findings when I began to look at context, function and meaning. There are many ways to classify stories (Britzman, 2003; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Lieblich et al, 1998), but for the purposes of this study, the stories are classified as personal or appropriated and optimistic, horror, or neutral. I chose these designations because they most closely aligned with my research purpose and the questions I was trying to answer. In laying out the foundations for this study, I wanted to know the source of stories, what kinds of experiences were included in the stories, and what kinds of knowledge the teller was representing. Therefore, personal stories are those that relate events the beginning teacher personally experienced while appropriated stories are those that the beginning teacher heard from others and had chosen to share in this setting. This helps explore the source of the story. Horror stories are those in which something went terribly wrong and there was no effective resolution to the dilemma. These types of stories are important because as Reissman points out that "Respondents narrativize particular experiences in their lives where there has been a breach between ideal and real" (1993, p. 3). Optimistic stories, on the other hand, are those in which something went right. The main character in optimistic stories, which was often the participant, was satisfied with the outcome. Neutral stories are those in which there is neither events that go wrong or especially right but the events just happened. There may

or may not be a resolution to the neutral story dilemma. This also begins to illuminate what kinds of experiences the teller is having and what kinds of knowledge might be gained from telling or hearing the story. For example, if the horror story is about inappropriate student behavior, the story may demonstrate something about student behavior that a teacher should know when planning a lesson, a kind of knowledge. An optimistic story, on the other hand, might show that the participant was able to successfully apply a principle learned at the university or from a classroom teacher.

From this structural analysis, I wanted to learn what images, events, and characters were included in the stories as well as the linguistic aspects of the stories. Narrative researchers have discovered that these images, events and characters are more easily remembered and are more likely to guide future behavior (Schank, 1993; Swap et al., 2001). In total, twenty-one stories were told in the group interview.

As discussed earlier, finding the stories in the transcript presented some challenges. It was important to find the stories. Defining the sequence of events and dilemma resolution were critical in finding them, so it is discussed first. Then other aspects such as characters, topic, setting and image of teacher were considered more fully.

Sequence of events

It is important to consider the events and how the characters act in these stories because they provide insights into what the storyteller thinks is important (Ely et al., 1997). Coffey and Atkinson (1996, p. 56) share the fact that Propp was able to identify the functions and meaning of fairy tales using the fact that “the events in a fairy tale are limited, and the sequence of events is always identical.” They go on to point out that such classifications are not an end unto themselves but are rather show how they shape the story to perform its function and provide meaning.

Since a cursory review of the stories revealed that the characters in these stories are teachers and students, most of the settings are classrooms, and topics deal with instructional and management issues, I began this analysis expecting the events would consistently be those of a typical lesson. In typical lessons, there are exchanges between teachers and students within a short time frame, such as within a lesson.

Because of this assumption, I focused on the eighteen stories that took place in a classroom first. Of these, eleven take place within the time frame of a single lesson in an elementary classroom. Since I am particularly interested in what pedagogic processes are described in these stories, I chose to focus on the sequence of events in those eleven stories first. Using Labov's evaluation model of narrative organization model, I created a chart to more closely examine the sequence of events in these stories (see table 3). I chose Labov's model because it uses "structures to identify how people tell stories the way they do" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1993, p. 58). Coffey and Atkinson (1993, p. 58) go on to point out that "it is not necessary to maintain strong claims for the pervasiveness of the elements..." but they claim that this analysis offers the opportunity to think about the functions of the story.

What is interesting about this analysis is that, although all of the stories have an orientation and a complication, there are fewer of the other elements. Abstraction and resolution occurred in 73% of the stories, evaluation occurred in 36% of the stories and coda (returning the story back to the reason it is being told) occurs 27% of the time. No story in this set had all six elements. This analysis was repeated with the remaining ten stories (see table 4).

As with the first set of stories, none of these stories had all six elements. Also like the first set of stories, all of these had a complication. The two sets of stories had a similar number of abstraction (73% and 70% respectively) and coda (27% and 30%) The two sets of stories differed more dramatically in orientation (100% and 60% respectively), evaluation (73% and 50% respectively), and resolution (73% and 50% respectively).

According to Labov (2001), therefore, these stories are not "fully formed" narratives because they do not contain all six elements. This could be related to the tentative nature of development of knowledge and understanding for these participants or the context in which the story is told. According to Clandinin and Connelly (1995, 2000, 2006), stories develop on the narrative landscape that comes together and is shaped by three-dimensions: personal and social interactions, continuity from past to present and into the future, and the physical or emotional place of the storyteller. The incompleteness of the narrative structure could mean that these participants are still trying to position themselves on the narrative landscape. At least four of these participants are posed to move from the university to the classroom when they enter student teaching. These could all be factors that cause their narratives to be incomplete.

As with other narrative components explored so far, this will be discussed more thoroughly when considering context, function and meaning.

Table 3: Events Depicted in the Stories-Part A
(Table continued)

	Abstract	Orientation	Complication	Evaluation	Result	Coda
Do You Speak Chinese		I was doing an activity yesterday; they had to write a good wish	Cause we're doing a study of Chinese New Year, one boy asked me if he had to write it in Chinese; I asked him if he knew how to write in Chinese; he said no		I said then you don't have to write it in Chinese	
Be prepared	I have one that goes along with "Show No Fear"	You walk in classroom	you're listening to them read and doing activities three times; boy looks at us and says you're not prepared; is that why we're reading today?			
Scary kids	To go along with reading and language arts, not necessarily the kids in my group	They had to draw a picture for one of the other teachers	a couple of students drew guns like killing Spiderman and Superman cause they don't like that kind of hero; I had a child discuss what would happen if you start a fire in the air conditioner; we discussed it with the teacher; she showed the papers to the teacher	That's kind of scary	the teacher talked to them about what was appropriate to do in school and what wasn't	
Ant bites	I also have a child who likes body parts	He decided to draw ant bites as like the little boy's chest	he drew them and called them ant bites; he was excited cause the little boy (in the book) didn't have a shirt on;		he showed it to the teacher	
Please, Not Today		I have a little boy in my group that has Tourette's syndrome	He shakes his head a lot; I had a visitor Monday; all of a sudden we're doing something and you this little voice say shut up; I looked around and was like okay; my two kids almost got into a fight because the little boy couldn't stop his shut up		I was like Oh god! This is all I need. Please, not today.	
I had cookies	I had that in my group too	I had the little ones;	I did an activity where they were digging for bones and fossils in the cookies; my thing was to split up the kids between me and another girl; that group wanted to come with me because I had cookies; she didn't have that		so we had to work it around that	

Table 3: Events Depicted in the Stories-Part A
(Table continued)

	Abstract	Orientation	Complication	Evaluation	Result	Coda
Creating Suspense	I had the same experience with a sword	he wanted to put the sword in somebody's heart; he wanted to have a dead body in his world	But it was all about suspense, we were creating suspense; he had this whole horror movie thing in his head; he talked about horror movies	it didn't startle me; it wasn't like he wants to do it	he thought it was cool	
The Social Guy	We were in reading and language	he's telling me about these girls who were in my fifth grade group	He was best friends with one of them last year but they got into an argument; she got mad at him; they're not talking right now; the two girls plotted together; they told him they were going to make up; they didn't want to make up; they said he doesn't listen to their needs	I'm like what are ya'll twenty year olds?		
Unexpected Behavior		One boy she really adored	he always made straight a's and never had a b; she had a behavior log; when you do something bad, you have to sign the behavior log; she was talking to someone else this kid belches in the other kid's face she goes just go sign the book		the kids drops to the floor	she said that happens sometimes
No Help	I've learned what not to do by watching some of the teachers in the classroom	A student would not behave	A student would not behave so I sent him to sit with the teacher ; when we were reviewing with the class; the teacher was telling the kid the answers; he would shout them out they both would laugh and cut up	I was mad		We couldn't get over it
The Fish Died	Sometimes we talk about what happened while we were teaching	We were supposed to have the students observe fish	We worked hard to bring these fish to class; they had been alive all weekend; during the lesson they started floating to the top and turning upside down; the kids just sat there and watched the fish die; the person teaching kept going and asking questions; the students kept poking the fish		By the end of the lesson every fish was dead	we couldn't wait to talk it over outside of class

Table 4: Events Depicted in the Stories-Part B
(Table continued)

	Abstract	Orientation	Complication	Evaluation	Result Resolution	Coda
Now They Respect Her	My teacher had the same problem	She was thrown in, she took the position	This is her first time ever teaching; no one ever offered her any kind of help; the kids try to walk all over her; she took it upon herself to be strong	It's just kind of scary	Now they respect her	
Stupid Things	We're getting those kind of answer too		We're getting points taken off for stupid things; one person had staple marks on her paper; she circled the staple marks and took 2 points off; she took points off mine because my heading was double-spaced instead of single spaced; not just a few points but lots of points	She rips apart all of your stuff but never tells you how to do it better		
Funner	And they want to do what everyone else is doing		If somebody else is doing something funner that what you're doing, they want to do that; if the other group is making a flag and your group's writing, they don't want to write; they want to make a flag			
Just Thrown In		My teacher just told me that she had just got thrown in there	She just became the teacher; someone else was supposed to come help her; she never showed up so she had to do it all on her own; the class was chaotic; she has no classroom managements; she's trying like not but they are just out of control	She needs that first before she can even get to teaching		
Different Formats	All the different teachers have different formats		I learned in principles one way to write objectives and goal but now I'm learning in all my other classes, a totally different way; I never learned that; now I'm not used to that; I have to follow this format; my neighbor says that's not what we do; you do this little check in a little bitty box	It's a long drawn out think; it's like pointless		You spend most of the time writing all this out.
What Works		My kids are at what I thought was a lower level	That teacher that I have gives them a lower level; my neighbor gives me the suggestion don't give them a lower level; give them a higher level and push them;	They were bored with that lower level stuff' it actually got them motivated	so that's what I did and they wound up like the higher level	

Table 4: Events Depicted in the Stories-Part B
(Table continued)

	Abstract	Orientation	Complication	Evaluation	Result	Coda
An Issue of Security	I remember a story our teacher told us in principles Cheryl: it's a story she told us	Betty: Somebody was getting beat up at a bus stop Cheryl: it was a predominantly white school and they had a little black child that was going there	Betty: the parent came to class and wanted to beat up the child for beating up her kid Cheryl: he got beat up at the bus stop; his parent went to go beat up the child that beat him up		Cheryl: It created this whole issue of security	
Answer My Question	No but she likes her lesson plans	She wants us to break up into groups for the first day of assessment	So I raised my hand and said are we going to be split up into groups in the classroom for assessment or for the whole time we're there; she said everyday should be an assessment; I asked are we all going to be broken up into groups; another girl says are we going to be broken every day or just for the first day;	That doesn't answer my question; Everything is always up in the air about everything.	Then she clarified it	
You Don't Know What You Know		My aunt was here the other day and we were talking about school and the classroom	She was telling me that none of this was going to help; I said no this is going to help; I have great teachers with experience; I'm sure this is going to help me some where along the way when I get out; She was telling me, "No it isn't going to help; I was asking her what are you attention getters; she said I don't think I have that; I said I was researching it for a class; the only one I really liked was blurting out a funny word and then raising my hand; that was one that always works; she said I really like that; then she told me something that she did;	I guess when you get your own classroom you think of things your own way and you may not even realize it	I said that's your attention getter	She using the stuff she learned she just doesn't realize it
Sometimes It's Not the Kids	Sometimes the teacher causes more problems than the students		One teacher at school talked on the cell phone the whole time; we were really mad about it; other teachers would just walk in the class and just start talking and interrupting what we were doing	It was rude		We didn't know how to get them to stop it

Resolution of dilemmas

One of the critical elements of a story concerns whether or not the problem in the story is resolved. As discussed earlier, Gergen and Gergen (1986) outlined three prototypical narrative forms based on the resolution of dilemmas in the story: progressive, those that move toward the goal set in the story; regressive, those that move away from the goal set in the story; and stable, those that show no movement. In most of these stories, the problem is not solved possibly indicating the participants do not feel that they are making progress toward the goal established in the story.

More specifically, in this set of stories, resolution of the dilemma was described in seven stories (33%) of the stories. Resolution of the story problem was not clear in “Be Prepared” and “The Social Guy.” In all, the story problem is not resolved in twelve of the stories (57%). Again, this could be due to the tentative nature of the participants’ developmental stage of learning to teach and the developing awareness of classroom issues. It could also be the result of the setting in which the stories were told. The participants could, for example, be offering the story in hopes that others will suggest solutions. The participants may be using a story formula that they often use during discussions in their university classes rather than engaging in personal reflection.

This finding of lack of story resolution is consistent, however, with the persistent tone of frustration that permeates much of the non-narrative discourse in the group interview. The discussion of the dialogue that surrounds these stories will be discussed more fully later but it is important at this point to note that these stories were often told to illustrate points made at other times during the interviews.

Partial stories

In rereading the transcript, I discovered statements that seemed to be stories that were even less fully formed than the set previously identified. This intrigued me so I collected, sorted and carefully considered them to see if they shed any more light on what kinds of stories are possibly still lingering on the edges of the group interview. I began by being sure that they were not whole stories that I had missed in my initial reading of the story. To do this, I created a chart (see Table 5) similar to the one used to evaluate the sequence of events in the other stories. While these stories did not necessarily need other components, they did have to have a complicating action because as Bruner states “For there to be

a story, something unforeseen must happen” (2000, p. 15). Additionally, statements were rearranged because often the participants did not tell the parts of the story in the sequence indicated on table 5.

None of these stories had complicating actions; therefore, they are not considered actual stories. However, they could have been expanded to more fully formed stories. Therefore, I classified these as partial stories and considered them separately from the more fully formed ones to see if there were consistent themes and presentation of ideas.

Consistent with more fully formed stories, these partial stories often do not offer a resolution to the dilemma presented. Resolutions to the story dilemma occurred 17% of the time as opposed non-resolutions of 75%. It wasn't clear in “Show No Fear” whether the dilemma was resolved or not. In the more fully formed stories, problems were resolved in 33% of the stories and not resolved in 57% of them. While there were more story resolutions in the more fully formed stories, the other overall characteristics of these partial stories, such as tone of frustration, are consistent with the more fully formed stories. These characteristics will be discussed more fully in subsequent analysis of the stories. Next I looked more closely at settings, characters and story topic in the more fully formed stories to find what was revealed.

Table 5: Events Depicted in Partial Stories
(Table continued)

Partial Story	Story beginning	Establish who and what action is taking place	Complicating action	What happened as a result	Story conclusion
Donna: it didn't happen Who: university teacher When/where: during university class on campus What: teacher didn't deliver on promises Personal experience; horror story; learning to teach problem was not solved		she was promising us things that were going to happen		then they didn't happen til we all found ourselves kind of screwed because we needed things that were going to be offered	
Donna: We go crazy who: beginning teacher, unidentified other when/where: in unspecified classroom what: how beginning teacher's actions are affected by others personal experience; optimistic story; instruction problem not solved		When I'm in my class by myself, we go crazy but		when if somebody's there, I feel more reserved.	
Cheryl: It's hard Who: beginning teacher when/where: in classroom related to field experience what: certain students are hard to control personal experience; horror story; management problem not solved		I like the fact that I only have three kids to a group	.	But those three kids, you have to constantly get on them and say pay attention. Wesley, stop trying to shoot me with your pen	It's hard
Alice: same things over and over Who: beginning teacher When/where: in classroom related to field experience What: observation isn't as good as other things personal experience; optimistic story; learning to teach problem not solved		Once I'm there like a few hours		the same things just happen over and over again, no matter how long you're there.	I'd rather talk to the teacher and talk to someone rather than just sit there and observe.

Table 5: Events Depicted in Partial Stories
(Table continued)

Partial Story	Story beginning	Establish who and what action is taking place	Complicating action	What happened as a result	Story conclusion
Cheryl: no way to keep up Who: beginning teacher When/where: at the university What: workload was too heavy personal experience; optimistic story; learning to teach problem solved		because I had too many hours and there was no way I would have been able to keep up.		I had to drop math methods	
Cheryl: show no fear Who: beginning teacher, classroom teacher When/where: in classroom related to field experience What: classroom teacher gives beginning teacher advice personal experience; optimistic story; learning to teach no problem stated		I had went on an observation		and the teacher told me, "Show no fear." Don't let them know that you're scared.	
Cheryl: had a rough day Who: beginning teacher, mom When/where: after field experiences What: mom allows beginning teacher to vent personal experience; optimistic story; learning to teach problem solved		Like usually when I leave (the teaching experience)		I've had a rough day, I call my mom. I tell everything to my mom and she says, okay, you're better now? And I say yeah	
Cheryl: He doesn't check it Who: beginning teacher, university teacher When/where: during university class on campus What: university teacher doesn't go over work with students personal experience; horror story; learning to teach problem not solved	like for instance,	with Dr. Smith, he doesn't explain it a lot, like he wants you to figure it all out on your own.		But if it's not right when you figure it out, he doesn't check it. He doesn't go over it with you.	

Table 5: Events Depicted in Partial Stories
(Table continued)

Partial Story	Story beginning	Establish who and what action is taking place	Complicating action	What happened as a result	Story conclusion
Alice: nothing to do with nothing Who: university teacher When/where: during university class on campus What: doesn't make sense why she's telling story personal experience; horror story; learning to teach problem not solved		in one class she stopped us in the middle of stuff to tell us stories that have nothing to do with nothing.		We don't know why she started talking about them.	
Sally: binders and binders Who: beginning teacher When/where: during student teaching at a school What: does lots of work that isn't reviewed appropriated experience; horror story; learning to teach problem not solved		She had binders and binders of paperwork from the university to fill out.		She said she had to spend all of her time doing this paperwork and they didn't even look at it.	
Hannah: completely emotional Who: beginning teacher, university teacher When/where: during university class on campus What: university teacher tries to help beginning teacher personal experience; horror story; learning to teach problem not solved		One girl gets really completely emotional about it and she's talking and she's fussing.		Our classroom management teacher tries to tell her how she can talk to her teacher.	
Alice: the argument Who: classroom teacher (?); university teacher When/where: on visit to school What: classroom teacher questions need to do paperwork appropriated experience; horror story; learning to teach problem not solved		we learned from my cousin who works in schools, she sort of got into an argument with the teacher from the university who came to observe her student teacher.		Why were they doing so much paperwork, useless paperwork?	

Setting

Not surprisingly, the stories most often took place in classrooms (76%). The rest of the stories took place at the university or in a non-school setting. Since beginning teachers are most concerned about their own teaching and feel that working with children is held as the best way to learn to teach (Britzman, 2003), it is not surprising that most of the stories these beginning teachers told occurred in a classroom setting. It is also possible that the way I worded the question could have elicited these responses as well. The question that elicited the initial stories was “If someone asked you to describe the most important teaching experience you personally have had or that someone else told you, what story would you tell?” Other questions I asked in the group interview that initiated stories include

- What other stories do you have about teaching?
- Are there any stories that you hear other students in classes tell about classroom experiences?
- Do any of your college professors share stories about teaching with you in class?
- Do any particular stories stand out?
- What are some of the other stories in science? What other stories are you hearing there?
- Do any of the teachers with whom you work with in the schools ever share stories with you?

The surprising thing about the location is that two of the stories took place at the participant's home: “What Works” and “You Don't Know What You Know.” It is possible that more stories of “things I learned outside of the classroom” could have been elicited if the researcher had chosen to pursue it. This idea surfaces again in the contextual analysis and will be explored more thoroughly there.

Characters

Not surprisingly, students and teachers were characters in most of the stories. In only two stories were teachers not characters: “An Issue of Security” and “Funner.” There were no student characters in “You Don't Know What You Know.” University teachers were characters in three stories: “Stupid Things,” “Different Formats,” and “Answer My Question.” It is difficult to find patterns in so few stories. Since only one parent was a character in one story, for example, there would be no reliable way to

ascertain what these participants might think of parents. I decided, therefore, to look more closely at the sixteen stories that included students, beginning teachers and/or classroom teachers for emerging patterns. The results of this analysis is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Story Character Classification

Stories with no teacher characters	Stories with no beginning teacher characters*	Stories with university teachers	Stories with no classroom teachers*	Stories with no students*	Stories with classroom teachers, beginning teachers and students*
<i>An Issue of Security</i> <i>Funner</i>	<i>Now They Respect Her</i> <i>Just Thrown In</i> <i>Unexpected Behavior</i>	<i>Stupid Things</i> <i>Different Formats</i> <i>Answer My Question</i>	<i>Do You Speak Chinese?</i> <i>Be Prepared</i> <i>Please, Not Today</i> <i>I Had Cookies</i> <i>Creating Suspense</i> <i>The Social Guy</i> <i>The Fish Died</i>	<i>You Don't Know What You Know</i>	<i>Scary Kids</i> <i>Ant Bites</i> <i>What Works</i> <i>Sometimes It's Not the Kids</i> <i>No Help</i>

*Stories considered when looking at student, beginning teacher and classroom teacher characterizations.

The beginning and/or classroom teachers were characters in sixteen of these stories. These beginning teacher characters were “the” teacher in eight of the sixteen stories. In other words, in “Do You Speak Chinese,” Alice told a story of her interaction with a student. She did not consult or collaborate with any other teacher to decide how to handle the student’s question. She was the only teacher character in that story. In eight of the stories, on the other hand, although the beginning teacher was “a” teacher, there were other beginning or classroom teachers with whom she had to directly or indirectly interact. In all there were nine such interactions (“What Works” describes two separate interactions).

In looking at these interactions, I classified them as negative, positive, or neutral. Positive interactions were those in which the beginning teacher interacted in a way with another beginning teacher or classroom teacher that led to successful resolution of the story problem, while negative interactions did not. The only exception to this was “Ant Bites.” In this story, the student shows pictures he has drawn for the beginning teacher to the classroom teacher. There is no indication that this shared experience was

positive or negative so it was classified as neutral. Cheryl simply states “He showed it to the teacher.” By contrast, in “What Works,” Betty has a positive and negative sharing of experience with two different classroom teachers. One classroom teacher does not challenge her students (“the teacher that I have gives them a lower level”) and another classroom teacher gives Betty the advice to challenge the students (“Give them a higher level and push them”). The advice from the second classroom teacher proves to be correct (“That’s what I did and they wound up liking it; it actually got them motivated”). It is assumed that the actions of the first classroom teacher did not produce such positive results, therefore it is classified as negative. In all there were one neutral teacher interaction story, three positive teacher interaction stories, and five negative teacher interaction stories.

In looking at the student and teacher interactions, a similar trend was noted: three neutral interactions, three positive interactions, and six negative interactions. So it appears that negative interactions with other teachers and/or children were described more often in these stories than positive or neutral. This will be an important factor in considering what kind of stories and the emotional feel of the story in later analysis.

I next considered how these participants described the characters in their stories. Upon examination of this, it became apparent that most of the characters in the stories were not given names or many identifying characteristics. Ethnicity, physical features, or ages of the classroom teachers, university teachers, or children in the stories were seldom mentioned. In most of the stories, the participants focused on what the characters did more often rather than describing the social, physical or emotional characteristics of the characters. There were three exceptions to this trend: Cheryl's mention of the student with Tourette's syndrome in “Please, Not Today”; Donna's mentioning that her students were in a fifth-sixth grade class in “The Social Guy”; and Betty and Cheryl's mentioning an African-American population in “An Issue of Security.”

The character gender, on the other hand, was identified in many of the stories. The gender most often identified with the children was male (9 out of 17 times). Female gender of the children was identified only twice and no gender was indicated six times. Among the characters in the stories identified as university teachers, two were female and one had no gender indicated. For classroom teachers, nine were identified as female and two had no gender indicated for the character. In all thirty-

two characters were identified in the stories: nine were male, thirteen were female, and ten had no gender indicated. The most interesting contrast is that most of the children were identified as male and most of the classroom teachers were identified as female. This may be the result of the fact that most elementary school teachers are female and that beginning teachers perceive that male students act out more often than female students.

Table 7: Gender Identification of Characters in the Stories

	Classroom teachers	University teachers	Children	Parents	Total
Males	0	0	9	0	9
Female	9	2	2	0	13
No gender indicated	2	1	6	1	10
Total	11	3	17	1	32

Image of teacher in the stories

Since initial examination of these stories reveals that most of them take place in classrooms and present teachers dealing with technical teaching issues, I began to wonder what image of teacher is portrayed in these stories. To do this, I looked for language clues that might illuminate these images. Image, in this case, does not necessarily mean visual portrayals of teachers but more of a mental construction. Do these participants tell stories of teachers who are strong or weak? Are the teachers able to successfully influence their students or do they just go through the motions of teaching? I was particularly interested in the emotional characteristics and technical skills that these participants portrayed in their stories. It soon became evident that emotional characteristics were not portrayed but teacher's technical skills were.

Two images of technical skill seemed to emerge: competent teacher and incompetent teacher. The competent teacher is one that is able to successfully negotiate the situation while the incompetent teacher does not. The issue of competency is judged from the teller's point of view. Four stories presented no image of teachers. In these stories, the main characters were students and presented no descriptive language concerning teachers. These stories included "Scary Kids," "Funner," "Ant Bites," and "An Issue of Security."

In the remaining seventeen stories under consideration, twenty-three separate teachers emerged as main characters in the stories. Eleven characters were the participants themselves and twelve were the classroom or university teachers.

Competent self and incompetent other were portrayed in 35% of the characters in each case. (See table 8) In all, 57% of the characters presented by these participants present the teacher as competent although there were no strong descriptors for these teachers. Only one description of competent teachers seemed to be more intense than others. In “Now They Respect Her,” Alice uses the phrases such as “she wasn’t thrown in, she took the position”; “she took it upon herself to be strong”; and “she didn’t get any help in the beginning, now they respect her”. This is consistent with Rosenholtz’s contention that the stories teachers tell outside of their classrooms are those in which “they are portrayed as certain, expert professionals” (1991, p. 15).

On the other hand, 44% of the characters in these stories were portrayed as incompetent teachers and, in contrast to descriptions of competent teachers, these seemed to use more intense language. The stories of the university teachers were particularly intense and unflattering in “Stupid Things” and “Answer My Question.” Two of Sally’s stories, “Sometimes It’s Not the Kids” and “No Help,” are marked by “intensifiers” (Lieblich et al, 1998) such as *anything*, *very*, *really* and *all*. These researchers state that these intensifiers may be “markers of the magnitude” of the experience.

So, for this set of stories, these teachers told stories in which there was an equal number competent teacher as incompetent ones. They were more likely to use stronger words to describe the incompetent teachers, however. These participants described themselves almost as many times as they described others (eleven and twelve respectively).

Table 8: Image of Teacher

N=23	competent	incompetent
self	8 (35%)	2 (9%)
other	5 (22%)	8 (35%)

Story topic

Initial reading revealed that the stories dealt with instructional and management issues. Upon rereading the stories, however, a third kind of story topic emerged: learning to teach. This third group were those that dealt with the trials or successes the beginning teacher faced in learning to become a teacher. Therefore, the following classifications for story topics emerged:

Instruction: Those topics that described interactions that involved answering student questions, implementing a particular instructional strategy or evaluating student work.

Management: Those topics that described student behavior and its impact on instruction.

Learning to teach: Those topics that described what was happening to the beginning teachers in their university classes as they were learning to teach.

Not surprisingly more stories dealt with management than instruction and this was verified by the stories that these teachers told: 66% of the stories dealt with management while 14% dealt with instruction.

What was surprising, however, was that the third category accounted for 19% of the stories. This will be analyzed more closely in the discussion of contextual findings.

Table 9: Story Topic

Management	Instruction	Learning to Teach
<i>Scary Kids</i> <i>Creating Suspense</i> <i>Ant Bites</i> <i>Be Prepared</i> <i>Funner</i> <i>I Had Cookies</i> <i>It's Not the Kids</i> <i>Unexpected Behavior</i> <i>Just Thrown In</i> <i>Now They Respect Her</i> <i>No Help</i> <i>The Social Guy</i> <i>Please, Not Today</i> <i>An Issue of Security</i>	<i>Do You Speak Chinese?</i> <i>The Fish Died</i> <i>What Works</i>	<i>Answer My Question</i> <i>Stupid Things</i> <i>Different Formats</i> <i>You Don't Know What You Know</i>

Semantics-Language used in the stories

In reviewing the basic linguistic features of these stories, certain consistencies were demonstrated. They were told with action verbs, mostly in the past tense and used first and third person representations. There were no phrases illustrating surprise, twists or turns, or digression in any of these stories. Some stories began with phrases indicating that they were related to previously mentioned ideas or previously told stories:

Be Prepared: I have one that *goes along* with "Show no fear." (group interview, line 7)

Now They Respect Her: My teacher there had *the same* problem... (group interview, line 225)

Stupid Things: We're getting those kinds of answers *too* (group interview, line 136)

Scary Kids: *To go along* with reading and language arts (group interview, line 43)

Ant Bites: I *also* have a child who likes body parts (group interview, line 65)

I Had Cookies: I had that in my group *too* (group interview, line 81)

Creating Suspense: I *also* had the same experience (group interview, line 60)

The Social Guy: *Like I was telling ya'* (group interview, line 247)

In a sense, all of these stories are elicited in that these participants knew they were there to share stories, but these are the phrases that linguistically indicated that they were a direct response to information previously given in the group interview by other participants.

The most outstanding feature of these stories is the use of absolute words. Words such as *never, ever, everybody, everything* and *anything* were used quite often in these stories. These words could be sorted into two groups: inclusive and exclusive. Inclusive words were those that the participants used to indicate that all examples, instances, or objects are included in the object of discussions. Inclusive words used included *all, ever, any, anything, everybody, everything, always, and every*. Exclusive words were those that excluded all examples, instances, or objects being considered. *Never* and *none* were the only exclusive words used in these stories. In total, inclusive words were used more than twice as many times as exclusive words. It is interesting that these beginning teachers with admittedly limited experiences used inclusive words more often than exclusive. This is interesting because it seems to indicate that these teachers are generalizing in a way to cover all experiences rather

than separate these experiences from others. In later analysis, these teachers contend that these experiences are not realistic but the language they use seems to contradict this.

As has been discussed earlier, what is as important as what is present in the stories is what is missing. There are no words offering any descriptive detail of the events or characters in the stories. There are no adjectives relating to images and only four adverbs of significance (*not necessarily, supposedly, actually, and constantly*). The verbs were action-oriented but in most cases did not evoke images of radical behavior.

Finally, these beginning teachers did not use metaphors in any of their stories. Although words such as *like* and *as* were used often, they were not metaphorical but rather gave elaboration on concepts given. This is particularly evident in Betty's story "Thrown In." So semantic analysis leads to the question of what exactly did these participants feel about the characters, events, and problems in the stories. Only two things stood out in this analysis: stories were connected to other stories being related during the interview and these participants used absolute words and intensifiers more often than any other linguistic feature. These ideas will be explored more fully in the contextual and functional analysis.

Type of stories

As discussed earlier, these stories were assigned the categories of personal or appropriated and optimistic, horror, or neutral. These category labels were chosen prior to the collection of data.

Personal/appropriated: A story is personal if it relates what the teller personally experienced firsthand. It is a story that the teller originated to share the experience with others. A story is appropriated if it relates what the teller has heard from someone else and is now retelling in her own words. Pronouns are the important clue to this classification. Personal stories include the pronoun "I" while appropriated stories use third person presentation "she".

optimistic/horror/other: A story is a horror story if it is told to warn others about unexpected happenings that are not pleasant occurrences. These stories have the "be careful or this could happen to you too" quality to them. A story is an optimistic story if it is told to warn others about unexpected happenings that may be pleasant in nature.

These stories have a "you won't believe what these kids will do" quality to them. The

other stories are those that describe occurrences that were neither surprising nor pleasant or unpleasant.

Table 10: Story Classification

	personal	appropriated
optimistic	Do You Speak Chinese? Be Prepared I Had Cookies What Works Creating Suspense The Social Guy You Don't Know What You Know (7)	Now They Respect Her (1)
horror	Stupid Things Scary Kids Funner Ant Bites Please Not Today Different Teachers, different forms Answer My Question Sometimes It's Not the Kids No Help The Fish Died (10)	Just Thrown In An Issue of Security Unexpected Behavior (3)
neutral		

There were no neutral stories in this study. Personal stories outnumbered appropriated stories (17 versus 4) and horror stories outnumbered optimistic stories (13 versus 8). This is not surprising given the current research on characteristics of beginning teachers (Watzke, 2002).

There are other ways to characterize stories, however. Lieblich et al (1998) offer that stories can be classified as romance, comedy, tragedy and satire. Clandinin and Connelly (1995) propose that secret, cover, and sacred stories exist as definitions of teacher's placement on the professional landscape. Each of these is problematic for this study because of the type of story that has emerged.

Using romance, comedy, tragedy and satire is problematic because there is often not enough story structure present to make classification accurate. In order to elicit sacred, cover and secret stories, Clandinin and Connelly (1995) point out that the researcher must situate herself on the actual landscape and negotiate a sustained relationship with the participant. That was not possible for this study.

Rosenholtz, on the other hand, maintained that in certain teaching situations, teachers engaged in “experience swapping” (1991, p. 135). In particular, Rosenholtz observed that classroom teachers in “routine technical schools” used “experience-swapping” to “buffer themselves from feelings of personal inadequacy and elicit sympathy and support instead of helpful assistance.” She found that “experience-swapping” was also used by these teachers in these schools to initiate beginning teachers to “keep their stories alive” as they “offer preparatory comfort and forewarning to new teaching recruits” (p. 135). According to Rosenholtz, “In technically nonroutine schools, teachers spoke in the eloquence of hope, illumination, and progress” (p. 135).

Do these stories represent experience swapping? In order to answer this question, I took a careful look at the stories to see if any of the stories expressed feelings of personal inadequacy, elicit sympathy, offer support, or forewarn. This issue will be addressed more fully in contextual and functional analysis.

Analysis of partial stories

Although they are not complete narratives, I decided to look at the partial stories to see if the components that were present were similar to or different from the more fully formed stories.

Table 11: Comparison of fully formed and partial stories

	Type of story Personal/ appropriated Optimistic/ horror/neither					Setting university/field experience/ other			Topic Instruction/ management/ learning to teach			Problem solved		
	Personal	Appropriated	Optimistic	Horror	Neither	University	Field exp.	Other	Instruct	Manage	Learn to teach	Yes	no	don't know
Fully formed stories	81%	19%	38%	62%	0%	14%	73%	13%	14%	67%	19%	33%	57%	10%
Partial stories	75%	25%	25%	75%	0%	50%	42%	8%	9%	18%	73%	25%	67%	8%

There were twelve of these partial stories noted in the group interview. These stories have the following characteristics: predominantly personal experiences with more horror partial stories than optimistic ones; took place in university classes or classrooms affiliated with university field experiences more often than other places; dealt with learning to teach more than other issues; and had very few problems solved. The fact that there were more personal and horror stories than other types and had few problems solved is consistent with the characteristics of the other stories these participants told. What is different about these stories, however, is that they take place in university classes more often than the other stories and they dealt with learning to teach more often than classroom management or instruction.

Schank (1993) offers some interesting points about story telling that may help illuminate why these participants are telling these partial stories. In describing why and how people tell stories, Schank differentiates between observational and advisory stories. He maintains that people tell more complete advisory stories than observational ones because advisory stories illustrate important points to be learned while observational ones do not. He also maintains that since observational stories do not have lessons, "we have difficulty remembering. We can tell a story of what happened to us yesterday, for example, but if we didn't learn a lesson from what happened to us, we won't remember a year later what we said or much of what occurred" (p. 99).

The fact that more of the stories were located in university classes on campus than field experience based classrooms might mean that these participants are more focused on classroom experiences to illustrate important points than what happens at the university. Although they are frustrated by university experiences, these participants do not consider them worthy of integrating into their mental organization of teaching knowledge. Cheryl makes this exact point in her second personal interview:

Not really. Cause usually when we talk about the stories, it's like right after the situation has happened. So memory is pretty good on it. Now give me a couple of days and I probably won't remember too much of what's happened, but when we tell stories, it's usually, like we're waiting for each other after class and we'll talk about everything that just happened in class (personal interview, lines 50-53).

This possible explanation becomes more pertinent when considering prior discussions on the stories these participants are telling. In initial consideration of the stories, it was clear that most of the stories focused on instructional and management issues and took place in university related field experiences. It is possible that these are the topics and settings in which actual learning is occurring and experiences in various methods courses are just events that are to be endured and not necessarily instructive. In the second personal interview, I asked students what was the best way to learn to teach. Their responses are as follows:

Alice: *Watch others do it and then try it yourself.* I learn a lot by watching someone else teach but after a while, I just want to try it myself. (personal interview, lines 20-21)

Betty: *Go to the classroom and actually teach.* That's the only way you're gonna know what works and doesn't for you. You have to do it and think about it...I'd rather teach the kids. Like I said earlier, I'd rather teach the kids than teach my peers. It's not realistic at all (personal interview, lines 36-38).

Cheryl: *Direct instruction.* There are some things that you can learn from an experience but sometimes, the teachers just need to tell you what to do and you go do it (personal interview, lines 86-87).

Donna: I think so much of our teaching is just learning from experience. *From being there and doing it...*Peer teaching even though I don't like it and field experiences.

Second is reflections and portfolios and then case studies. Case studies are pretty good because you get to hear how other people would handle the situation (personal interview, lines 71-73).

Hannah: *Teaching and then thinking about what you did,* reflection I guess...It's good to be out there figuring out what you have to do. And see other teachers interact with kids. It's better to see for yourself, but it's also good to hear it (personal interview, lines 67-69).

Sally: *Actually doing it and then talking to the other people about it.* I think sharing is important (personal interview, line 56).

All participants, except Cheryl, clearly indicate that actual teaching coupled with observation or reflection are the best ways to learn to teach. It appears, therefore, that the complete stories are the ones

that illustrate what these participants think is instructive and the partial stories are simply observations of events. Cheryl's assertion that "sometimes, the teachers just need to tell you what to do and you go do it," is particularly interesting because it marks a sharp deviation from the other participants. This point will be revisited later as well.

Story Discoveries

Despite the fact that these stories were difficult to locate within the group interview transcript, once they were found, interesting patterns began to emerge. I began looking at these stories because I wanted to know specific things about the structural features these participants might have in their stories such as characterization, sequence, setting, and type of story. Not surprisingly, certain structural features occurred more often than others. Most stories took place in classrooms. The main characters were "the" teacher in the classroom less often than they were collaborative teachers. Teachers were portrayed themselves as competent more often than incompetent. Other teachers were portrayed as incompetent more often than competent. Most of the stories dealt with management issues and the events in the story took place within a short time frame. The participants told more personal than appropriated and more horror than optimistic stories.

These characteristics are important because they provide clues concerning the function and meaning of these stories for these participants (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Reissman, 2008). What type of story, for example, provides insight into whether the story is a warning to others or instructive in nature (Rosenholtz, 1991). The fact that most of the student characters in these stories are male may mean that these participants find male student more challenging to handle or may reflect the reality that a particular teaching situation may have a higher ratio of male to female students (Watzke, 2002). By identifying the structural characteristics of the story, one can begin to unravel the deeper meaning of the story.

In addition to wanting to identify specific structural features of the story to aid further analysis, I also wanted to answer some specific questions about the kinds of stories pre-service and beginning teachers tell. First, at the beginning of this study, I wanted to know how personal stories differed from appropriated stories. I expected that personal stories would be more positive than appropriated stories but this was not the case. However, there were more personal horror stories than personal optimistic ones. Not surprisingly, there were more appropriated horror stories than optimistic horror stories. There

were no other notable differences between personal and appropriated stories, however. All were not fully formed and lacked descriptive detail.

I also wanted to know what images, events, and characters were portrayed in these stories. Since many of these stories were not fully formed, images and descriptive details were not available. These participants provided only the barest essence of a story. Events and characters were distilled to just enough information to make the conversation a story. Despite this, there was enough information to make some tentative observations about the events and characters these teachers portrayed in their stories. I expected university teachers would not be characters or play only minor roles. In the three stories in which university teachers were characters, however, they were the main characters. Beginning teachers, classroom teachers, and children were the predominate characters in these stories. There was only one story in which a parent was mentioned briefly. I expected to find that events would center on lessons and interactions with children rather than university classes. For the most part this was true but there were three fully formed stories that focused on events in university classes. Many of the partial stories, however, focused on characters and events that occurred in university classes.

Next, I wanted to know what order the events occurred in these stories. I expected the stories would follow the same structure as tragedies, dramas or comedies. They did not. In fact, the structure of the narratives was often incomplete. Most notably, problems were often unresolved. These stories seldom showed positive progression to becoming a teacher.

Last, I wanted to know what pedagogic processes were represented in these stories. I expected to find that classroom management and the pre-service teacher's behavior will be described more often than student characteristics, instructional strategies or theory. In fact, in this particular set of stories, management overwhelmed instruction as the focus. Strategies were often hinted at in the stories, but the focus was management and the participant's behavior in most of the stories. This is similar to Watzke's (2002) contention that "One of the implications of these results is the recognition that task concerns such as class management emerge early and remain at least at a moderate level of concern throughout the beginning teacher phase" (p. 13).

Perhaps the most surprising finding was that these stories are very condensed. This could be a function that Schank (1993) has described as economy of exchange. He points out that "some stories get

told in their least detailed form to be understandable only to those who already know them. What is understandable to one person may not be understandable to another, so it is clear that 'story' is a relative term" (p.39).

When these participants told these stories, there was little detail given to the setting, characters, or resolution. The focus seems to be on the actions in which characters engage. This could be related to Rosenholtz's contention that some stories are based in technical routine (1991). This would be consistent with reports that pre-service and novice teacher do not engage in reflective practice. According to Zeichner and Liston (1987), these stories represent practical reflection rather than critical reflection.

It would be interesting to compare written accounts of these stories with their oral representations. As discussed earlier, writing a story is more engaging but also takes more effort, (Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995; Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004) but they may produce more detailed stories (Delamont, 1992). It is also possible that these teachers would be less likely to share as many stories because of the effort it would take to write them down. What is obvious is that these teachers have many stories that can be rapidly shared and discarded.

So in conclusion, these brief stories are stories of the classroom and the characters that reside there. They seem to be formulated for quick exchange and little processing. These

characteristics lay the foundation for considering the context, function and meaning these stories have for these teachers.

Chapter Five

A Strange Thing Happened

*Do not look back in anger, or forward in fear,
but around in awareness.*
James Thurber

In some ways the group interview feels just like I am teaching a class. Do these teachers see this setting in this way? It's a smaller group, it's in an informal setting, and I don't have any particular learning objectives to accomplish but the sense of authority is still there. According to many researchers, authority is just one tension that can infuse the relationship the researcher has with the participants. Besides the issues of authority (Mishler, 1999; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), consideration must be given to group dynamics (Grossman et al., 2000), each participant's personal goals for participating in the study (Weiss, 1994) and confidence the participant has in the researcher (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995).

With these concerns in mind, I carefully watch and record my observations throughout the interview. Everyone seems relaxed and congenial. I feel more nervous than the participants seem to be. Will this relaxed mood last or will tensions rise? While everyone is getting refreshments and settling in, we spend time chatting. These teachers know one another, having seen each other in hallways and classes so introductions are informal and comfortable. For a group of teachers who are similar in age, ethnicity, and cultural backgrounds, they are each unique and different. Alice is always smiling and optimistic. Sally is quiet and withdrawn from the group. Betty, Cheryl and Donna seem confident in what they know about teaching. As the group interview more formally begins, these teachers do not seem uncomfortable or unduly concerned about the information they share.

How do these teachers choose to tell their stories in this situation? Do the stories these beginning teachers tell inform their practice in any way or do they serve some other function? As discussed previously, this is the second phase of the analysis. Looking at the structural components of the story began to reveal hints as to why these teachers chose to tell the stories and opinions that were somewhat speculative in the structural analysis can be supported or refuted with contextual clues from surrounding dialogue. Looking at the statements and actions that surround the story, as well as considering the sources and contexts of the story, will yield a deeper understanding of why the teller is telling that story in that particular way (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Reissman, 2008).

I began by looking at the story sources and where the teachers indicated that they told these stories. In formulating the study, I had guessed that most of the stories would come from classroom teachers or personal experience. I had also hypothesized that more of these stories would be shared with other people outside the university or classroom or other pre-service teachers. I sought to verify this by searching remarks made during the group and second personal interview.

Next I looked at where the stories were embedded in the group interview to find out how the group interactions in this particular instance may have shaped the stories being told. As this analysis progressed, certain patterns of discourse emerged. The first observation was that the stories often occurred in a sequence with one participant's story sparking another one from another participant. In many cases, the teachers related one story after another with little or no dialogue between the stories. This is consistent with Schank's observation that "People love to match stories" (1993, p. 44). I designated these as story chains and examined each closely. Within the story chains, other patterns emerged. For example, I noticed that certain stories seemed to confirm or contradict the previous story or shift the focus of the conversation. Furthermore, the stories within each chain often used similar structures. These patterns were fully examined.

There were three stories, however, that did not occur in any of the story chains. While they related to the conversation among the teachers, they did not evoke other stories that either confirmed or contradicted them. I called these isolated stories and examined the context of these to see what insights they could yield.

I next considered how the stories functioned. Were these stories that were given as warnings or told for some other purpose? As I examined the stories, I noticed that they served both explicit and implicit functions for the tellers and listeners. The most explicit function was that the story functioned as conversational conventions. As pointed out earlier, story matching occurs in normal conversations and these teachers used stories to communicate with one another and the interviewer. However, there were more implicit functions for these stories as well. Some of the stories served as warnings to others or allowed the storyteller to "vent." Some stories shared what other teachers had told these teachers about teaching. Unlike the conversational function, the stories that fulfilled these more implicit functions may or may not appear within the same chain. In all, four functions became apparent; these stories directed the

flow of the conversation; provided emotional relief from the frustrations of learning to teach; warned others that teaching was hard; and demonstrated the identities these teachers were choosing to portray. Most stories fulfilled more than one function.

Additionally, when deciding how these stories might function, I also looked at the partial stories identified during the structural analysis to see if they fulfilled the same functions. While they were not considered fully formed narratives, they were useful in providing additional insight into why these teachers were telling these stories. With this overview in mind, therefore, I will explain each more fully.

The Sources

Not surprisingly, as discovered in the structural analysis, the primary source of these stories was personal experience. What was surprising, however, was how many of these stories were about things that had happened in the immediate past as opposed to personal experiences of a time before they began learning to teach. Of the twenty-one stories these teachers told, only four did not come from immediate personal experience. Two stories came from classroom teachers and two came from university teachers. Rereading the group interview transcript indicated that these teachers had heard stories from other sources on a regular basis but did not, or could not, recall details of those stories. This is a typical description of the lack of detail recalled of these stories:

Interviewer: Do you talk to your neighbor very much?

Betty: Yeah, I go to her for stories too...Yeah, she gives me a lot of stories of whenever I have things to say. You know, like when I say I have to do this, she'll say well maybe you might not want to do this because of this. She gives me help and, you know, suggestions and stuff because she's experienced. (group interview, lines 426-431)

Upon further prompting by the interviewer, however, Betty was able to give a more detailed account of these interactions in her story, "What Works." This was not always the case, however, as evidenced by the following conversation:

Interviewer: So this venting, I mean, is it stories particularly that you tell to vent or is it just "I can't believe they're doing this to us kind of thing?"

Cheryl: It's both

Donna: Both. Teacher experiences, scheduling experiences, both.

Interviewer: How do these stories guide your future decisions about teaching? Like what do you think you will do as a result of hearing these stories? (group interview, lines 337-340)

At this point in the interview, the teachers move the conversation in another direction. Maybe with more prompting from the interviewer, the teachers might have elaborated on these ideas and eventually related a full story.

The Sharing

In reviewing the transcripts, it became apparent that these teachers do not give much thought as to when, where, and with whom they share their stories in general, but they were clear about where and with whom they cannot share stories. Throughout the interviews, the teachers indicated that there were particular university teachers and school settings in which negative stories could not be shared. When asked about this, the replies were usually short. The passage below describes how these teachers typically shared how and with whom they shared their stories.

Interviewer: Do you all get a chance to share that in class?

Alice, Donna, and Cheryl: no

Hannah: Yeah, in classroom management, she lets us vent. Mostly everyone has issues with the language arts class.

Cheryl: We talk about it a little bit in our science methods class. It's not about the children, it's about the teachers.

Alice: and the course in general.

Cheryl: yeah, we talk about the course in general. We get to vent a little bit with her.

(group interview, lines 278-284)

A review of the group and second personal interviews, however, did reveal the following information about where, when and with whom these teachers shared stories.

Table 12: Context of Story Sharing
Table continued

	When and where	With whom
Alice	<p>Especially <i>right after it happens</i>.</p> <p>Usually <i>after class or on the way to another class or we'll go eat lunch...</i> (outside of class)</p> <p><i>Every day</i>. We share <i>right after class</i>, as soon as possible. And <i>usually several times</i> if you don't catch everyone at once.</p>	<p><i>The first person you see</i>, you need to go tell.</p> <p>I would <i>be afraid to tell the teachers in reading and language arts</i> any of the stories of the kids.</p> <p>We usually share them with the <i>same little group of people or the people who were in the room that day</i>.</p> <p><i>Co-workers</i> also hear them, the stories. They can give you another way to look at it. If you're feeling that what you did was wrong, they can give you another way to look at it so that you feel better. Since they weren't there, they can help you look at it another way.</p>
Betty	<p>We kind of had that <i>in 3100</i>. The teacher wanted to hear the things we had to complain about. (during class/removed from event)</p> <p><i>Every day when I'm in class</i>. I don't really see a lot of the students unless I'm either in class or we're working on a project together.</p>	<p>Interviewer: Do you talk to your <i>neighbor</i> very much? Betty: Yeah, I go to her with stories too. (classroom teacher not related to experience)</p> <p>I tell <i>the people who I work with</i>. They like to hear about the things that I'm doing but they don't tell me anything about what I should do or how to make things better. They just listen.</p>
Cheryl	<p>It's <i>right after</i> the situation has happened...it's usually, like we're <i>waiting for each other after class...</i> (outside of class)</p> <p>We talk about it a little bit <i>in our science methods</i> class. It's not about the children, it's about the teachers. (during class/removed from event/not related to field experience)</p> <p><i>All the time</i>. Every day, usually <i>after class or on the way to another class or we'll go eat lunch</i> and that's all we'll talk about is what happened that day in reading and language arts or what happened in math methods. I mean <i>every day</i>.</p>	<p>I've had a rough day, I call <i>my mom</i></p> <p>I told <i>the teacher</i>, like we discussed it with the teacher. (classroom teacher in field experience)</p> <p>Interviewer: Have you talked with anybody that has had those kinds of experiences? (pause) Cheryl: Only <i>other students who have had the same class</i>. They warned you about it ahead of time.</p>
Donna	<p>We talk with each other a lot <i>outside of class</i></p> <p><i>On a daily basis</i>. I try to share with my husband but he just doesn't get it. But I am with all these people every day, so <i>every day</i> we swap ideas.</p>	<p>We talk with <i>each other</i> a lot outside of class</p> <p>Donna: I tell <i>my mother</i> about stuff too.</p> <p>I try to share with <i>my husband</i> but he just doesn't get it.</p>

Table 12: Context of Story Sharing Table continued		
	When and where	With whom
Hannah	<p>mostly <i>every class</i>, we just sit there and talk. It's really hard to determine where we finish talking and where we start learning. (during class/removed from event/not related to field experience)</p> <p>We share those kinds of things <i>in class</i> all the time. (not sure if related to field experience or not)</p> <p><i>in classroom management</i>, she lets us vent. (not related to field experience)</p> <p><i>Every class period</i>. Everybody sits and talks <i>before the teacher walks in or when we think the teacher isn't listening</i> (during class/ removed from event/not sure if related to field experience or not)</p>	<p>Besides the <i>other people</i> in my class, I usually tell <i>my aunt or my husband</i>; the (university) <i>science teacher</i> (because) she is so interested (university teacher not related to the field experience) <i>One of my cousins</i> is going to be a mom so she really wants to hear the stories.</p>
Sally	<p><i>Just about everyday</i>. We talk a lot <i>during class or if we go to lunch together or something</i>.</p>	<p>Usually we tell it over and over <i>to everybody we see</i>; (not sure if related to field experience or not)</p> <p>I would go to my (former classroom) <i>science teacher</i> because she's a good listener (not related to field experience)</p> <p>Sometimes I tell <i>my family</i>. <i>My sister</i> is still in high school and she likes to hear the funny things or some of the scary things that happens.</p>
	Observed pattern: immediately after outside of class or after some unspecified time during other classes	Observed pattern: other pre-service teachers (4), classroom teachers (3), family (3) and university teacher (1)

According to what these teachers said in the interviews, they tell their stories mainly on two separate occasions: immediately after the event happens with other pre-service teachers or during their university courses after an unspecified period of time from which the event happened. According to the biographies for these teachers that were developed at the beginning of the study, they were all taking more than one methods course at the time of this study. So one might read into these comments that what happens in one methods course runs over into other methods courses they are taking at the same time.

There is also some indication that these teachers do not share their experiences with university teachers unless they feel safe. Hannah states that she and other pre-service teachers share their stories “before the teacher walks in or when we think the teacher isn’t listening.” This is also evident when Alice says that she would be afraid to say anything to anyone teaching her language arts methods course.

Alice: I would be afraid to tell the teachers in reading and language arts any of the stories of the kids.

Cheryl: Yeah, they might not like that.

Betty: They already told us they didn’t want to hear anything bad about their teachers.

(agreement from others)

Donna: And because their thing, I think they’re trying to push their whole method of their school on you, like their method that they’re using in their school is the best and that you should go teach there. You should try to adapt your style to their style. And I don’t think that’s right. I mean, if you don’t agree with a certain teaching style (Alice: yeah) like I said before, you even shouldn’t go fool with a school like that (group interview , lines 286-295).

This fear of sharing concerns is consistent with the findings of many other researchers (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Grossman et al., 2000; Schoen, 2005) that sharing stories does not occur unless the narrator feels that the listener is trustworthy or that the environment is safe for sharing.

While Benita spoke of her fears openly and honestly in the safety of my living room, she told me she would not talk in this way with her school staff—administrators in particular.

Benita’s uncertainty will probably remain hidden from her new colleagues until trust is established (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995, p. 62).

It’s important to know that, for this particular study, the university teachers who seem to be most problematic are part-time instructors. I found this out by asking the teachers outside of the interview sessions and noting it in my journal. They were reluctant to share specific names with me during the interview for fear the information would “get back” to the university teacher. This further substantiates the point that trust plays a big part in how and with whom these teachers choose to share their stories.

On many occasions during private conversations, these teachers indicated that they were confident that I would protect their identities and not allow the university teachers to find out what they were saying.

It should also be pointed out that this is one set of beginning teachers who are pretty much in the same classes. If these teachers' stories were collected over a longer period of time, these perspectives might change as faculty changes occur or as the teachers had more field experiences to contrast with the ones they were presently having. As pointed out often in the literature on teacher preparation, this is a time in professional development when knowledge, perception, and identity changes rapidly (Britzman, 2003; Bullough, 2008; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Danielewicz, 2001). Additionally, the issues arising in these courses may not be typical of that particular university teacher's teaching style. These stories do not support any conclusions about how effective this particular set of university courses might be in teacher preparation.

It is also important to note that these teachers indicated that not all their university teachers were so intolerant of differing opinions. Discussions, like the one that follows, indicate that some university teachers are more willing and able to generate more open discussions concerning teaching than others:

Hannah: I think out of all teaching classes and experiences I've had so far, I have liked science the best. And I wasn't really a science person. I was more like the reading/language arts person but I'm liking science more than anything that I've done.

Interviewer: What is it about science that you like?

Hannah: The teacher. She is so interested and involved in science and she explains things. If we have questions about it, it's not like going to class in reading and language arts and somebody jumping down your throat about the question. And calling you closed minded. (group interview, lines 157-164)

There were other examples from the group interview as well:

Betty: You know, I had a really good teacher in math. I really didn't like math but he made it fun. (group interview, lines 152-153)

Cheryl: Just stories about how she was taught science and we discussed how we were taught science. How it's so much different now. Science is all about trying to be inquiry based and hands on and not vocabulary like we all were taught. She has a lot of stories

about that and she talks about some of her student teachers, some of the stuff they do. And she gives a lot of examples about things that she, like if we do a lesson on something, she'll say for instance, like assessment, this is on the Praxis, for you to focus something on. She's very energetic and she loves science and it makes you interested in it because she so energetic about it. (group interview, lines 189-195)

Donna: Dr. Smith is the same way. He loves doing all kind of fun activities where you actually discover what it is and not just feeding it to you. You actually discover it on your own. (group interview, lines 196-197)

Hannah: Well half of them are in the reading/language arts class so we just sit and laugh and say wow, cause my language arts teacher is completely different. (group interview, lines 297-298)

The concept of with whom they would share stories was explored more thoroughly in the second personal interview. In that interview, I specifically asked these teachers if they shared their stories with university teachers and got the following responses:

Cheryl: No, we do not share stories. Science methods would probably be the only course where we would share the stories of teaching with the teacher. (The science teacher) is more active and involved. She wants to hear all about what happened in our experiences. (personal interview, lines 32-33)

Betty: No, we don't. In some of our classes I won't share even if the teacher asked us to. I don't think some of the really want to hear our stories. (Interviewer: What makes you say that?) Some of the teachers just tell you they don't want to hear anything. Then some teachers really don't listen when you ask things in class so they probably won't listen to your stories either. (personal interview, lines 42-44)

Sally: In some, in some we don't, it depends on the teacher. (personal interview, line 21)

In her personal interview, Alice offers a positive contrast to these comments:

yes, especially when there's a field experience. Before we had experiences, we really didn't have any stories. We had heard things from other people and we really didn't know if they were true or not. It could have been a fictional story. But once we're in the

classroom, we pretty much stick to that. But sometimes the teachers tell us, we don't want to hear anything about it. In science, I'm sure we'll be sharing our experiences.

Interviewer: Why do you think you share stories with that teacher and not others?

Alice: She's more open to discussion. In other classes, they lecture and then we go teach. In science class, we can tell her what we don't like and it's okay. She never says that we can't complain but in other classes we can't have our own opinion. (personal interview, lines 52-57)

With whom these teachers share offers some puzzling questions that are connected to the issues raised by where these teachers choose to share their stories. Since the teachers indicated that they most often share their stories immediately after having the class experience or in university classes, one would expect that other pre-service teachers, university teachers and classroom teachers would be the people with whom they share their stories. In reviewing the group and second personal interview, however, this proved to be only partially true. In all, five groups of people with whom the teachers shared their stories emerged: other pre-service teachers, classroom teachers, university teachers, family members and coworkers. Family members and coworkers are cited almost twice as much as university and classroom teachers and significantly more often than other pre-service teachers in spite of the fact that the university was cited as being where they shared their experiences at least half of the time. This seems contradictory. It may be related to the fact that pre-service teachers spend more time outside of the classroom and university than they do in it or that families and coworkers offer a supportive role that the university and classroom personnel do not. Families and coworkers do not evaluate these teachers and sharing concerns and mistakes is less risky than sharing such issues with people who will assign the grades.

Furthermore, given the trust issues described earlier, one does wonder why the university teachers are mentioned more often than the classroom teachers associated with the field experience. In only one instance does a participant state that she shares a story with a classroom teacher directly connected to the field experience. Besides Cheryl saying that she told her classroom teacher about the students who were drawing guns and talking about fires in air conditioners, the only other people directly associated with the experience with which the teachers shared stories were other pre-service teachers.

Both Betty and Sally stated that they share their experiences with classroom teachers who are not directly connected to the experiences. One would think that these stories would be shared more often with classroom teachers associated with the field experience which generated the story but, in fact, they are shared more often with other pre-service teachers or people not associated with the experience.

Could the trust issues carry over to the classroom teachers with whom they work? One possible explanation may be that these teachers view the classroom teachers in field experiences to be part of the university authority which is involved in evaluating their performance. Although there were no such comments made during the group interview and follow-up conversations, the teachers may have not been aware of this relationship.

Additionally, field experiences may be forced upon classroom teachers who do not necessarily appreciate the intrusion into their classrooms. Bullough (2008), for example, noted that “good teachers are not necessarily good teacher educators...because good teachers know remarkably little about beginning teacher development” (p. 70). Because of this, the classroom teacher may not try to establish the type of relationship these beginning teachers need to develop teaching skills. The beginning teacher may not be aware of the way the classroom teacher feels or be afraid to share that information with others. Since beginning teachers can not choose the classroom teachers with whom they work during field experiences, there may be personality conflicts or such drastic differences in teaching styles that a positive collegial relationship cannot be easily established.

In addition to trust being an issue, these teachers may not share their experiences with classroom teachers for another reason. One could suggest that the only time these teachers have had to interact with the classroom teacher is during the field experience. It is highly likely that any conversation between the classroom and pre-service teachers would have to be short and pointed. The classroom and pre-service teachers would have to be task oriented to keep management issues that might arise from transition between teachers to a minimum. This is consistent with findings by Harste et al.(2002) and Doecke and McKnight (2002). Doecke and McKnight, for example, offer this explanation: “The main opportunity students have for dialogue with each other is in informal settings ...or when they snatch conversations with sympathetic teachers in staff rounds during teaching” (2002, page 9).

What is also interesting is that none of these teachers describe a process often known as debriefing. In most models of teaching, debriefing is conducted at the end of the lesson to help students integrate new knowledge with their understanding of the subject (Williams & Watson, 2004). Researchers have long contended that debriefing is an important component in developing reflective skills for pre-service teachers (Amobi & Irwin, 2009; Richards & Gipe, 1998; Williams & Watson, 2004). Furthermore, many researchers in teacher education emphasize the need to engage in this reflective activity in order for preservice teachers to confront preconceptions and explore their beliefs about teaching and learning (Amobi & Irwin, 2009; Baker & Shahid, 2003; Butler et al., 2006; Gudwin, 2002; Sottile & Brozik, 2004). Bransford et al. (2005) contend that teacher educators should pay attention to this process because "Student teachers will reflect on what they have encountered whether invited to or not, and they will draw implicit conclusions from their experience" (page 86).

It cannot be determined from this data whether the teachers participated in debriefing sessions as part of their university required field experiences. The debriefing sessions may have occurred after the interviews, the teachers may not have realized that they were participating in debriefing sessions, or they may not have considered these debriefing procedures important because of the constraints put upon them about what they could or could not say. Johnston, for example, found that "prospective teachers are often asked to reflect on teaching cases or isolated field experiences that are never read or appreciated by the teacher educator that has made the assignment" (2001, p. 14). Richards and Gipe (1998) found that the teacher educators' skill at guiding post experience reflection greatly impacted the quality of the pre-service teachers' reflection. What is important is that these teachers did not perceive it to be an important process for them.

From this analysis, therefore, it appears that sharing these stories most often takes place in what the teachers consider to be "safe" places such as informal university settings with other pre-service teachers or outside of the university with family members, friends or co-workers. There seems to be little formal interaction concerning experiences in the field experience portion of their courses and what little there is seems haphazard and focused on solving immediate university related problems rather than having the pre-service teacher think more globally about teaching and learning. It possible, however, that these teachers do indeed engage in reflective activities such as journal writing or discourse within in the

actual methods courses in which the experiences that generate the stories occurs, but there seem to be issues of trust, priority, and time that block productive use of stories as a reflective process.

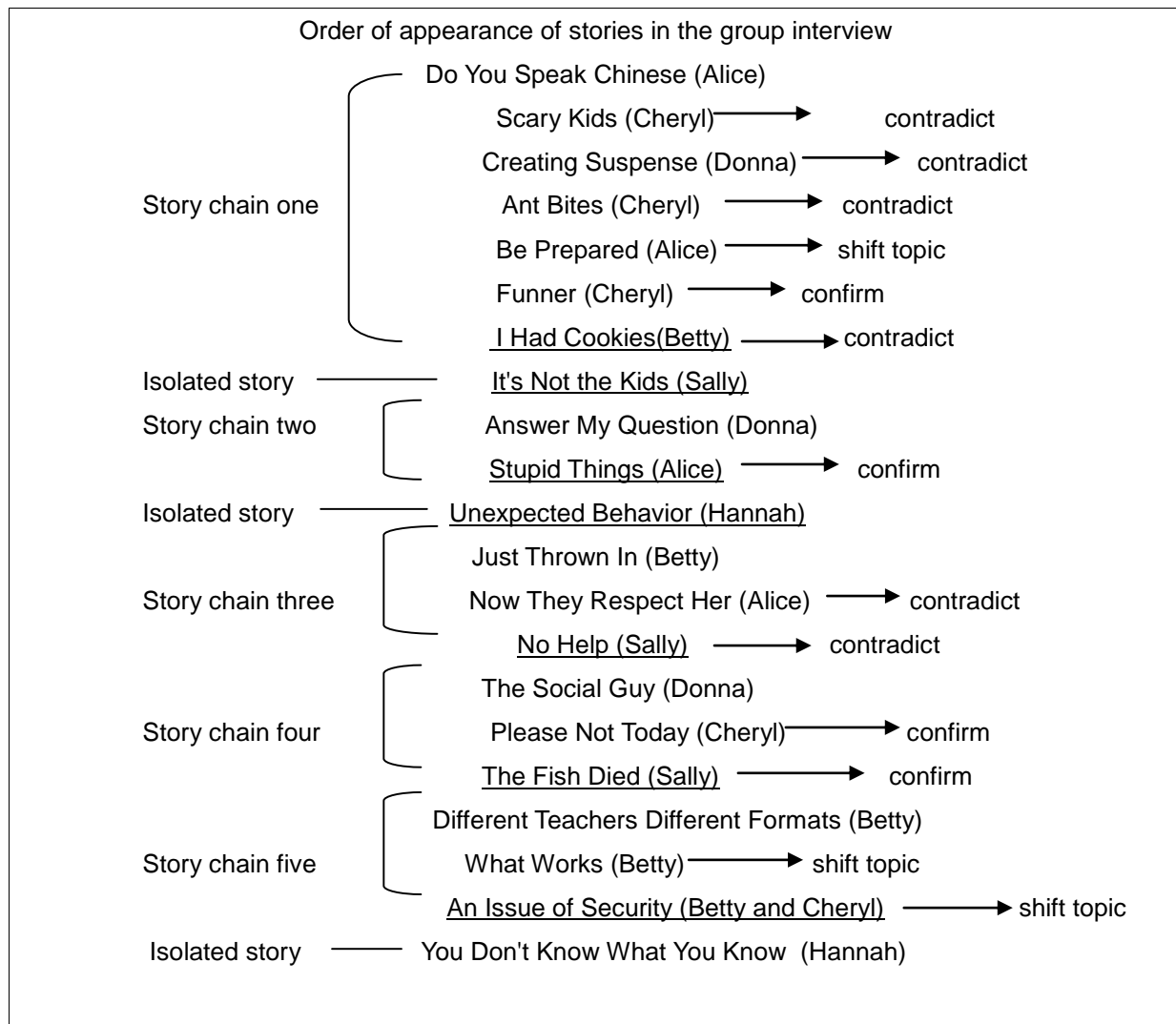
The Conversation

To delve deeper into the data, I focused on the context of the stories in the group interview. I soon realized that I could not consider the context without also considering the function. In other words, the context provided the reason for the participant to be telling the story. As my rereading of the interview transcripts continued, I also began to realize that the stories were conversation. This is consistent with Schank's contention that stories are a form of conversation: "When someone tells a story, he or she expects conversational politeness, a response of some sort" (1993, p. 51). With that in mind, I examined the sequence of the stories and surrounding conversation more closely. In doing so, I assigned the labels story chains and isolated stories to the data I was examining.

The concept of story chains emerged when I realized that one story often seemed to spark another one. Although one story may have sparked another, the topics easily meandered and emotional feel of the stories within that sequence may have differed. Sometimes discussions occurred between the stories, but often there were none. In some cases, the participant offered transitional statements at the beginning of their stories but in others, there were none. In order to understand context and function of these stories, I looked at each story chain carefully and studied the isolated stories to look for differences and similarities. The basic outline of the sequence of the stories and their relationship with one another is outlined in Table 12. Each story chain is separated by a line and indicated by the bracket. The stories in each chain contradicted, confirmed, or shifted topic in relation to the previous story, as indicated after each story title.

After Table 12, each story chain will be considered separately and then collective observations will be discussed. Furthermore, a table is given for each story chain in which dialogue that occurred immediately before, in between and after the stories is included to illuminate the contextual details of how the stories were shared.

Table 13: Story Map



Story chain one (lines 43-103)

This is the longest string of stories shared in the group interview and occurred at the beginning. In all, it contained seven stories and focused on student behavior, a subset of the management topics discussed in the structural analysis. These stories were given in response to the interviewer's initiating question. These are all stories of personal experience that take place in classrooms that are part of a field experience for a methods course. Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Donna are all in this course together so that is why they are the only ones contributing to this chain of stories. Hannah and Sally say very little during this time in the interview.

Table 14: Story Chain One
Table continued

STORY TITLE	Comments made before the participant began telling the story	STORY
Do you speak Chinese?/ Alice	I: What stories do you have about teaching	Alice: <i>I was doing an activity yesterday in reading and language arts, and they had to write this, like a good wish, almost like a fortune cookie kind of thing on this piece of paper. Cause we're doing a study of Chinese New Year, and one boy asked me if he had to write it in Chinese. I asked if him if he knew how to write in Chinese and he said no. And I said, then you don't have to write it in Chinese.</i>
Scary kids/Cheryl	No comments	Cheryl: <i>To go along with reading and language arts, not necessarily the kids in my group but the kids that noticed that were in the same range as the kids in my group, they're like pyro-maniacs, they like fire. They like guns. They had to draw a picture for one of the other teachers of like their fantasy world and a couple of the students drew guns like killing Spiderman and Superman cause they didn't like that kind of hero. Like that is kind of scary and I had a child discuss what would happen if you start a fire in the air conditioner. It was kind of scary. I told the teacher, like we discussed it with the teacher. And the other person that had the gun group, she showed the papers to the teacher and actually they had another child today in another group that did the gun thing. The teacher talked to them about what was appropriate to do in school and what wasn't appropriate. But to tell them do their fantasy world and then they draw a big gun shooting somebody, that's kind of scary.</i>
Creating suspense/ Donna	Sally: good grief Hannah: Yeah, that makes you think Cheryl: Yeah, that's kind of scary Betty: Mine just draw pictures of body functions	Donna: <i>I also had the same experience with a sword. He wanted to put a sword in somebody's heart and he wanted to have a dead body in his world. But it was all about suspense, we were creating suspense so he had this whole horror movie thing in his head. It wasn't something that startled me because he talked about scary movies the whole time so it wasn't like he wants to do it. He thought it was cool.</i>
Ant bites/Cheryl	No comments	Cheryl: <i>I also have a child who likes body parts. He decided to draw ant bites on the little boy in the book as like the little boy's chest. He drew them on the little boy's chest, he drew them and called them ant bites. (everyone laughs) And he was so excited because he got to draw ant bites cause the little boy didn't have a shirt on in the book and he got to draw ant bites. He showed it to the teacher and everything. He's like, Look ant bites. (everyone laughs)</i>
Be prepared/Alice	No comments but everyone laughs	Alice: <i>I have one that goes along with "Show no fear" is don't let them know that you're not prepared, even if you're not. They think that in reading and language arts, when you walk into the classroom and you're listening to them read and doing activities with them three times, and one boy looks at us and says you're not prepared? Is that why we're reading today?</i>

Table 14: Story Chain One Table continued		
STORY TITLE	Comments made before the participant began telling the story	STORY
Funner/Cheryl	I: Cause you couldn't think of anything else to do huh? (everyone laughs) Alice: Yeah, they say you're making read because you didn't do something	Cheryl: <i>And they want to do what everybody else is doing. Like if somebody else is doing something funner than what you're doing, like candy, they want to do that. If the other group is making a flag and your group's writing, no, no, no, they don't want to write. They want to do what that group's doing. They want to make a flag.</i>
I had cookies/Betty	No comments	Betty: <i>I had that in my group too. I had the little ones in reading and language arts and I had did like a little activity to where they were digging for bones and fossils in the cookies. And like my thing was to split up the kids between me and another girl so that group wanted to come with me because I had cookies and it was more motivating. And she didn't really have that. So we had to work around that.</i>

After Betty shares “I Had Cookies” the teachers go on to discuss problems associated with doing field experiences in methods courses which eventually leads to discussion of events in university classes that become the second story chain. In this story chain, Alice, Donna and Betty all seem to indicate that, although the students’ behavior is unexpected, they can handle it. Cheryl, on the other hand, offers messages of being unable to handle the unexpected behavior for each positive story the other teachers share. Jalongo and Isenberg contends that “During those early experiences, both pre-service and in-service, novices use story as a temporary theory about the world of teaching and a scaffold upon which to build expertise” (1995, p. 40). This exchange of stories could be an example of how these temporary theories are built and examined. This will be examined more closely in later discussions.

In the beginning of this story chain, Cheryl and Donna are continuing a trend that Alice started about what students are doing in specific lessons, but then Alice shifts the focus to what students do in general. Cheryl confirms Alice’s point about student perception of what these teachers are doing in the classes but Betty offers a contradictory view. The fact that so many of these stories are offered in contradiction to the one prior to it is an important characteristic of the relationship among the narrators that will be discussed in more detail later.

Story chain two (lines 144-162)

This short story chain begins when the teachers are discussing various teachers they have for methods courses and are voicing some of their frustrations about learning to teach.

Table 15: Story Chain Two

STORY TITLE	Comments made before the participant began telling the story	STORY BEGINNING
Answer my question/ Donna	Sally: But see you're complaining and Donna has the other teacher and she's complaining too so either way you're still messed up	<i>Donna: No but she likes her lesson plans, she wants us to break up into groups the first day of assessment. And so I raised my hand and I said, are we going to be split up into groups in the classroom for assessment or for the whole time that we're there and she said, well, everyday should be an assessment. You should constantly be assessing kids. Kind of like well, that doesn't answer my question. I asked are we all going to be broken up into groups. Answer my question. Don't tell me we're going to be assessing every day. So another girl says well are we going to be broken every day or just for the first day. So then she clarified it. Everything is always up in the air about everything.</i>
Stupid things/ Alice	No comments	<i>Alice: See, we're getting those kind of answers too but we're getting just a, points taken off for stupid things. Like one person had staple marks in their paper like where she had actually stapled it but she doesn't want anything stapled so she circled the staple marks and took 2 points off. She just taking points off mine because my heading was double-spaced instead of single spaced; not just a few points but lots of points. She rips apart all of your stuff but never tells you how to do it better.</i>

Again, Alice and Donna are in similar courses so have more to say about this topic than the other teachers. Unlike the first story chain, Alice is confirming what Donna is saying. There is no back and forth. These stories are also supported by other conversation in the group interview and reiterated in other story chains. Throughout the group personal interview, it became clear that Alice, Betty, Cheryl, Donna and Sally were frustrated with their university courses.

Group Interview, lines 198-211

Interviewer: How does that (sharing stories) help you become a better teacher?

Donna: Because, for me I enjoy it more that way and it stays in my head better. If you're experiencing it and you're finding out for yourself you remember it longer. And I think for kids it's the same way. If they're experiencing it and they're finding it out on their own, then they're more apt to remember it.

Cheryl: There needs to some experience and some explanation as well. Because, like for instance, with Dr. Smith, he doesn't explain it a lot like he wants you to figure it all out on your own. But if it's not right when you figure it out, he doesn't check it. He doesn't go over it with you. And that's a concept I think we're having a hard time with. Because it's like we want to know, I just need a little more direction. Like I'm fine with doing the experiments. I love doing the experiments, it's great. And I think that kids need to do more experiments in elementary schools because when I grew up, we never did experiments in elementary school, at all. It was all vocabulary out of the science book. But I think there needs to be some kind of understanding of what they're doing before they can do it.

Group Interview, lines 391-416

Sally: ...he had a student teacher from here and she's secondary and she said, "Get out." I said what are you talking about and she had binders and binders of paperwork from the university to fill out. She thought she had to hand it in but then she didn't. She said she had to spend all of her time doing this paperwork and they didn't even look at it.

Interviewer: That's interesting.

Sally: That's secondary. I don't know if it's any different from elementary.

Alice: It's not any different. We learned that from my cousin who works in schools. When we, when Betty and I went to observe, and she told us the same thing, that she sort of got into an argument with the teacher from the university who came to observe her student teacher. Why were they doing so much paperwork, useless paperwork? You know the lesson plans format, it's not how you, it's not realistic. You don't write a lesson plan that way. And all this time was being taken on all this paperwork stuff and they

weren't having enough time to plan good lessons because the university has you doing all this paperwork.

Donna: I think all the lesson plan idea is pushed on us, like in classroom management, you weren't allowed to, no it wasn't classroom management (Alice: principles), principles, it was, you could not get any kind of idea off the internet. You just had to come up with a lesson out of your head. I mean in teaching, you never have to come up with a lesson out of your head. You're given a subject, you're given you know, what you have to accomplish and then you make it up. And rarely have to make it up, there's so many ideas everywhere for lesson plans and lessons. I think it's ridiculous that you have to come up with something off the top of your head when you're teaching. And honestly, I never follow a lesson plan. I mean, I know the activities to where I'll stand up, and then there's teachers that want you to write out word for word what you're going to say, what you're going to ask. And you never know what you're going to say, what you're going to ask. In all pertains to the kids that day, to you that day, to what's going on in the classroom.

There is more non-narrative discourse on this topic. Given the emotional feel of these stories and the non-narrative discourse on the topic, it is surprising that more stories are not dedicated to it. Similar aspects of this are revisited in story chain five.

Story chain three (lines 244-272)

This series of stories were offered when the interviewer asked about stories that other teachers tell them. It also is short.

Table 16: Story Chain Three

STORY TITLE	Comments made before the participant began telling the story	STORY
Just thrown in/ Betty	I: What about teachers that you work with in the schools? Do any of them ever share stories with you? (pause)	Betty: <i>My teacher for reading and language arts, she had just told me that she had just got thrown in there like just in January, like as a substitute or something and she just became the teacher. And that someone else was like head of the school or whatever, supposedly, and was supposed to come help her, like set up her room because the room that she's in was like a storage room or whatever. And they, she never showed up so she had to do it all on her own and she's never come in there to observe the students or do anything to help her out or anything. She's just on her own. So she's really just like thrown in, don't know what to do. The class is chaotic. She has no classroom management at all. I mean, she's trying like now. But they are just out of control and she needs that first before she can even get to teaching. You know what I mean.</i>
Now they respect her/ Alice	No comments	Alice: <i>My teacher there had the same problem when she was thrown in, well she wasn't thrown in, she took the position, but this is her first time ever teaching and no one ever offered her any kind of help as a first time teacher. The kids try to walk all over her and she took it upon herself to be strong with the kids and now they respect her a lot more for it. But she didn't get any help in the beginning either. And it's just kind of scary.</i>
No help/ Sally	I: Did you ask her to share that information or did she just give it to you? Alice: She just gave it to us.	Sally: <i>I've learned what not to do by watching some of the teachers in the classrooms. They don't tell me anything, I just see, watch what they're doing. Like one time, a student would not behave so I sent him to sit with the teacher. Then when we were reviewing with the class, the teacher was telling the kid the answers and he would shout them out loud. Then they both would laugh and cut up about it. I was really mad about that. We all just couldn't get over it.</i>

These stories focus on what you can expect when you begin teaching. Unlike the second story chain, however, this is a series of stories that are told to contradict the one that came before it. Betty is telling a story of survival in a classroom in which the classroom teacher is not doing well. Alice counters with a story of a teacher who has to face the exact same situation but survives and gains the respect of the students in the process. At this point, Sally tells a story of how other classroom teachers offer no help to beginning teachers, a contradiction to what Alice hoped to impart in her story. The interesting point of

these stories is that Alice seems to be saying that the classroom teacher really doesn't need help while Betty and Sally seem to imply that others should help them. This may be an indication of what Betty and Sally hope will happen when they enter their own classroom. The idea of the loner in the classroom does not seem to be a prospect that either relishes. This contrasts with Britzman's (2003) contention that one of the predominate cultural myths that surrounds teaching is the myth of "rugged individualism" (p. 236). Rosenholtz also found that this happens in some schools: "Isolated settings often compel teachers toward norms of self-reliance. In fact, in settings where strong norms of self-reliance inhere, unsolicited help typically elicits responses that derogate both the donor and the advice" (1991, page 44). Cheryl, Donna and Hannah have nothing to contribute to this discussion. There is no other discussion of this topic in the group or second personal interview.

Story chain four (lines 282-316)

This series of stories begins with a story that does not seem connected to the discussion in progress. The group is discussing when and where they share stories and Donna begins "The Social Guy."

Table 17: Story Chain Four
(Table continued)

STORY TITLE	Comments made before the participant began telling the story	STORY
The social guy/ Donna	Cheryl: I tell everything to my mom and she says okay, you're better now? And I say yeah.	Donna: <i>Like I was telling ya' when we were in reading and language, this boy that I have in my group, he's, I guess, he's a social guy, he's a woman lover of the 5th-6th grade class. But he's telling me about these two girls who were in my fifth grade group that are his friends and he was best friends with one of them last year but she, they got in an argument, she got mad at him so they're not talking right now. So the two girls plotted together that they, they told him that they were going to make up with him and it's all a big trip. They didn't want to make up with him and they said that he doesn't listen to their needs so they can't be friends. I'm like, what are ya'll twenty year olds? They sound like they're old people!</i>
Please, not today/ Cheryl	No comments	Cheryl: <i>I have a little boy in my group for reading and language arts that has Tourette's syndrome and he shakes his head a lot. It's not outgoing but I had a visitor Monday that came in and he has verbal Tourette's and I wasn't told until after. And I told everybody that story because all of a sudden we're doing something and you hear this little voice say shut up. And like, I just kind of looked around and I was like okay. And my two kids</i>

Table 17: Story Chain Four (Table continued)		
STORY TITLE	Comments made before the participant began telling the story	STORY
Please, not today/ Cheryl (continued)		<i>almost got into a fight because the little boy couldn't stop, controlling his shut up and my other little Tourette's child was shaking his head. And they were like going at it and I was like, Oh god! This is all I need. Please, not today.</i>
The fish died/Sally	<p>Donna: So I mean it's mainly just about students, funny things or bad things that happen.</p> <p>Cheryl: We discuss our students. Especially from reading and language arts.</p> <p>Donna: They're funny</p> <p>Cheryl: They're definitely an interesting bunch.</p>	<i>Sally: Sometimes we talk about what happened while we were teaching. In one of our lessons, we were supposed to have the students observe fish and we worked hard to bring these fish to class. They seemed okay when we brought them, they had been alive all weekend but during the lesson they started floating up to the top of the water and turning upside down and we just couldn't believe it. The kids just sat there and watched the fish die, one by one. The person in our group who was teaching just kept going right on and asking questions about the fish and the students just kept poking at the fish. By the end of the lesson every fish was dead. We couldn't wait to talk it over outside of class. We couldn't believe it.</i>

The implication of these stories seems to be that unexpected things can happen in lessons. Cheryl and Sally are confirming the point made by Donna in the initiating story that students behave in unexpected ways. Cheryl and Sally's stories, however, have a different feel to them than Donna's story. Everyone was laughing at Donna's story but do not respond so positively to Cheryl's and Sally's stories (notes from personal journal). This chain of stories seems to reiterate points made during the first story chain about student behavior and management.

Story chain five (lines 405-458)

This is another series of stories that began as a general discussion of learning to teach in methods courses. Like the stories in story chain two, the issues that are raised are not related to field-based experiences for methods courses but are focused, instead, on events in the university-based courses.

Table 18: Story Chain Five
Table continued

STORY TITLE	Comments made before the participant began telling the story	STORY
Different teachers, different formats/ Betty	Donna: I think the lesson plan idea is pushed on us...I think it's ridiculous that you have to come up with something off the top of your head when you're teaching. And honestly, I never follow a lesson plan. I mean, I know the activities to where I'll stand up, and then there's teachers that want you to write out word for word what you're going to say...You never know what you're going to say, what you're going to ask. It all pertains to the kids that day, to you that day, to what's going on in the classroom.	Betty: <i>And all the different teachers want different formats. Like I learned in principles one way to write objectives and goals but now I'm learning in all my other classes, a totally different way the terms have to be measurable, and I never learned that at all and now I'm not used to that. And it's a new thing. And I have to follow this format. And my neighbor, she's a teacher and she says, you know she told us that's not what we do. You know you do this little check off in the little bitty box. It's not this long drawn out thing. So it's like pointless. So you know, you spend most of the time writing all this out.</i>
What works/Betty	I: Do you talk to your neighbor very much? Betty: yeah, I go to her for stories. That's what I was going to say next...when I say I have to do this, she'll say you might not want to do this because of this... I: Do you find that her suggestions are useful?	Betty: <i>Just that like, um, (pause) if I have, just because she's so used to doing it with her kids that she knows like what works and what might not work so I know not to do certain things with kids. And then like too, with reading and language arts, like, my kids are at like what I thought was like a lower level, and</i>
	Betty: yeah	<i>the teacher that I have, she kind of like gives them a lower level. My neighbor gives me the suggestion of if they are at a lower level, don't give them lower level. Give them higher level and push them. You have to push them. If you don't push, then they never going to give, you know. So that's what I did and they wound up liking the higher level. You know what I'm saying. They were bored with that lower level stuff. So it actually got them motivated doing stuff like that.</i>
An issue of security Betty and Cheryl	I: Which stories do you find most surprising when you hear them? Better: I remember a story our teacher told us in principles	Betty: <i>I remember a story our teacher told us in principles, she told us somebody was getting beat up at bus stop or something and the parent came to the class and wanted to beat up the child for beating up her kid...</i> Cheryl: <i>That was in the multi-cultural...</i> Betty: <i>but she told us in 3100 too...</i> Cheryl: <i>cause we did that. Wasn't that like a case study or something we did in multi-cultural.</i> Betty: <i>But that was a shocker, cause I don't want to</i>

Table 18: Story Chain Five Table continued		
STORY TITLE	Comments made before the participant began telling the story	STORY
An issue of security Betty and Cheryl (continued)		<i>deal with parent who come in and beat up a child. Cheryl: She gave use a lot of info like that. So it's like that that story she told us about um, it was a predominantly white school or something and they had a little black child that was going there and he got beat up at the bus stop or whatever. And his parent went to go beat up the child that beat him up. And it created this whole issue of security and all of that stuff.</i>

Also like story chain two, the point of these stories seems to be that things that happen in university courses are not realistic because the required activities do not match what they think or have heard about what teachers do in classrooms. For example, Betty shares that the lesson plan formats and ways of writing lesson plans don't match what will happen in her own classroom when she begins teaching. She then confirms her own story with an example of how her neighbor helps her with a problem in her field experience teaching and reiterates her contention that the way they write lesson plans for the university is not what happens in the real world. Then Betty and Cheryl share a story about a situation told to them by a university teacher. The discussion about that story goes as follows:

Cheryl: That was in the multi-cultural...

Betty: But she told us in 3100 too...

Cheryl: Cause we did that. Wasn't that like a case study or something we did in multi-cultural.

Betty: But that was like a shocker, you know, cause I don't want to deal with parents who comes in to beat up a child.

Cheryl: She gave us a lot of info on like, diversity and stuff, that I never had to deal with cause I went to a very mixed school, public school. And I never had to deal with any of that. So it's like the stuff she was trying to tell us and trying to teach us, the case studies we would get, I felt was useless to me because I never had to deal with problems of diversity. I never had that issue. So it's like that that story she told us about um, it was a predominantly white school or something and they had a little black child that was going

there and he got beat up at the bus stop or whatever. And his parent went to go beat up the child that beat him up. And it created this whole issue of security and all of that stuff. So it's like I thought, I mean I thought it was interesting but for me, it wasn't realistic because I never experienced that. (group interview, lines 448-461)

As this discussion illustrates, these teachers are not sure that everything they hear at the university represents the "truth" of teaching. In other discussions, these teachers carry this contention over to some field-based university experiences as well. This is supported by other conversations making the same point in other parts of the group interview. Cheryl, for example, offers the following explanation:

They throw you into a school with children who all have some kind of special need. And it's not a regular classroom, it's not a realistic setting that they provide for you to teach in and it's very hard to get used to something like that. Especially when you weren't taught that way. You weren't taught to go into a school like that. You weren't taught to teach the way they want you to teach. Most people agree with me and find it very, very hard. I mean I like the fact that I only have three kids to a group but those three kids, it's like you have to constantly get on them and say pay attention. Do your work. Pay attention. Pay attention. Jeffery, stop. Wesley, stop trying to shoot me with your pen. It's hard. (group interview, lines 94-103)

Donna offers another example of what she thinks is unrealistic about her experiences in her courses:

I think that a lot, like another methods teacher, she taught in another state and different places like that and she'll give us stories about what they did there. I don't plan on ever teaching in another state. If I move to another state, I'll never teach in another state, and things like that I don't find useful. (group interview, lines 382-386)

Betty, Alice and Sally also demonstrate skepticism about practices their teachers are using within the university courses:

Betty: I'd rather teach the kids. Like I said earlier, I'd rather teach the kids than teach my peers. It's not realistic at all.

Sally: oh yeah, I don't like that peer teaching stuff.

Alice: I've noticed that in math. If I'm trying to teach addition, well, my peers know addition and lesson's just not going to go the way it would with little kids.

Donna: And you can't just sit there and say, now do this and do this. It's your peers, you can't talk to them like kids. You can't ask them the same questions as you're gonna ask kids. (group interview, lines 503-509)

In all, this point was brought up ten times during the group interview. Hannah is the only participant who maintains that what she's learning at the university is useful and applicable to the classroom in her story "You Don't Know What You Know." In contrast, the other teachers most often scripted themselves as being victims at the mercy of whims of the university teachers. Their perspective seems to be that the experiences they were having both on and off campus are seen as unproductive and not realistic enough. The overall tone of the stories seems directed toward resolving emotional issues of frustration, disappointment and distrust rather than focusing on teaching. The emotions may be based in the fact that what they are doing in their courses is in direct opposition to their own expectations which come from their personal experiences as students. In other words, what they are learning at the university isn't what they saw as students. Lortie (1975) observed that beginning teachers are affected by their own experiences as students in such a way that they have become overly familiar with teaching in a superficial way. Hammerness et al. (2005) elaborate on this by stating that

Prospective teachers may have experienced groupwork yet have been totally unaware of the degree to which the tasks they were assigned or the procedures they followed actually supported collaboration. They may therefore think they understand collaborative learning when in fact they do not. Whether they had poor experiences in unguided, poorly planned groupwork or good experiences with well-designed collaborative tasks, they may not know what elements caused the experience to be more or less productive (p. 38).

It is exactly such discrepant experiences as these that many researchers suggest help pre-service and beginning teachers become more reflective and able to incorporate theory into their practice (Armstrong, 2007; Bransford et al., 2000; Bullough, 2007). Without specific attention to such dilemmas and guidance in reflecting upon them, however, teachers will not engage in such productive thought

(Amobi & Irwin, 2009; Baker & Shahid, 2003; Gudwin, 2002; Johnston, 2001). Scheon, for example, discovered that

Learning to resolve dilemmas in situations that are vague or unclear is particularly difficult for pre-service and novice teachers, who often experience emotional discomfort and profound cognitive dissonance when confronted by seemingly unresolvable dilemmas and who tend to gravitate toward concrete or simple behavioral strategies for solving problems encountered in practice that represent a copy view of knowledge. In many cases, these unclear dilemmas in teaching are ignored altogether, which can unfortunately propagate an inaccurate image of teaching as a practice that is much simpler and easily mastered than it actually is (2005, p. 30).

More about the emotional aspect of these stories and what they might mean for the teachers will be discussed later.

There were three stories that did not occur in any story chain. I chose to call these isolated stories because, while these are stories are told in response to a particular question or to illustrate a point that one of the other teachers had made, they do not spark other stories nor do the other teachers elaborate on the events. The reasons for this will be discussed as each isolated story is examined.

Isolated story one: It's not the kids

Sally offers this story when the group is discussing school culture. It is unclear, however, why Sally thinks this relates to school culture.

Interviewer: Are there any stories that you hear other students in classes about other things that go on in classrooms?

Cheryl: Beware of reading and language arts. You weren't taught to teach the way they want you to teach. Like somebody who likes it....

Alice: Don't look at me Cheryl...

Cheryl: Most people agree with me and find it very, very hard.

Donna: I think that goes along with, after you get your degree, you need to make sure of the whole school philosophy that kind of you fit into it, cause if you don't agree with how they're teaching something, you're going to be kind of lost in that school.

Sally: you're not going to fit in. Sometimes the teacher causes more problems than the students. One teacher at the school I was going to talked on the cell phone the whole time we were in the class. It was very rude and we all were really mad about it but she did it all the time. Other teachers would just walk in the class and just start talking and interrupting what we were doing and we didn't know how to get them to stop it.

Interviewer: Have you talked with anybody that have had those kind of experiences?

(pause)

Cheryl: Only other students who have had the same class. They warned you about it ahead of time.

Interviewer: Have they warned you about any other classes?

Cheryl: Not really. I think the only class I've been warned about was reading and language arts.

Alice: I was warned about another course-not to take it with one person. And I didn't take it with that person and look where I am now... (group interview, lines 91-123)

What is interesting about this isolated story is that the emphasis is on university survival. Sally's story seems to confirm discussions that took place in story chains two and five but the other teachers did not respond to Sally's story in the same way they did to comments made at other times in the group conversation. It could be that the other teachers did not feel that Sally's story was pertinent to the topic of conversation or they could not recall any specific incidents that would match her story. A review of my journal reveals no overt signs of rejection of the story. More will be considered about this later.

Isolated story two: Unexpected behavior

Hannah offers this story when the interviewer is trying to elicit specific examples of stories that university professors tell in their classes.

Interviewer: Do any of your college professors share stories about teaching with you in class?

Cheryl, Hannah and Betty: the science teacher

Interviewer: What kinds of stories do they share about classroom management?

Hannah: Her student teaching and her classroom experiences.

Cheryl: Her experiences with her daughter.

Interviewer: Do any particular stories stand out?

Hannah: There was one boy who she really, really adored. He was really a good student. Always made straight a's and never had a b. And she has a behavior log and when you do something really bad, you have to sign the behavior log. And this really good student, one day she was talking to someone else, and this kid belches in the other kid's face. And she goes that's too much, just go sign the book. And the kid like drops on to the floor.

Betty: Are you serious?

Hannah: And she said that happens sometimes. That's what a classroom is really like.

Sally: We heard a lot of stories in classroom management too.

Betty: Yes.

Sally: So many that none of them really stand out but we did hear a lot in that one.

(group interview, lines 170-185)

Like Sally's story, there is a great deal of conversation surrounding this topic, but Hannah is the only one that offers a story as an example. The story is confirming what the other teachers are saying but it does not initiate any story matching. Betty does register surprise at this story which might indicate that this is the first time she had heard it. This provides a valuable clue as to why there is no story matching. The other teachers may not have heard the story before and, therefore, had not processed in a way that was possible for more familiar stories. Although the story is conformational in nature, it is too new for reaction.

Isolated story three: You don't know what you know

Hannah offers this story to illustrate a point that Donna is making:

Interviewer: Is there anything else you would like to add about storytelling and learning to teach?

(long pause)

Donna: I think that so much of our teaching is just learning from experience. From being in there and doing it. I think a lot of stuff we're getting taught, it's just so many, some

people aren't just made to be teachers and you can be taught to be a teacher, you just, most good teachers it just comes natural to them.

Hannah: My aunt was here the other day and she is a sixth grade teacher and she's working on international, national boards, that certification thing where she was taping herself. And we were talking school and the classroom and everything and she was telling me that none of this was going to help. I said not this is going to help. I was telling her I have great teachers with experience and I'm sure this is going to help me somewhere along the way when I get out there and she was telling me, no it isn't going to help. It's completely different when you get out there. I went to school and all that stuff and none of that is going to help. I guess, when you get your own classroom, you think of things your own way and you may not even realize it that you're using that background knowledge that you got from school. Because I was asking her what are your attention getters. She said I don't think I have that. Well I said I was researching it for a class and I said that the only one I really like was blurting out a funny word and then raising your hand that was one that always work. She said I really like that. Then she told me, what did she say, something she did and I said well that's your attention getter. I never thought about it that way. So she's using the stuff she learned she just doesn't realize it. When you get out to the class, you feel so inexperienced and rely on your own experience and that true but I think you do use the stuff you learned in class, you just don't realize it.

Interviewer: Okay, good point, I hear you telling me that you tell stories, you enjoy them, but you think field experiences are more important than sharing stories?

Sally: I'd like to think so.

Cheryl: It all depends on who the story is coming from.

Donna: Well most of the things that people talk about, it has or will eventually happen to you so one story goes with another. (group interview, lines 510-538)

This isolated story has a very different character to it than other stories told during the conversation. It provides a more detailed description of the interactions that take place between the

characters. It is also one of the seven stories that is most complete. It also contradicts what the other teachers are expressing about their university experiences. Throughout other conversations in the group and second personal interview, Hannah maintains that she is having positive experiences and is open to what she is learning. This is a stark contrast to the position of the other teachers.

When considering the isolated stories collectively, some intriguing insights emerge. It is interesting to note that these stories were told by Hannah and Sally, who are not taking courses with the other four teachers. The stories may be isolated because the people telling them are “isolated” from the shared experience of the other four teachers. Another reason these stories may be isolated is that they do not match the listener’s “indices” (Schank, 1993). Schank (1993) maintains that in conversation listeners respond by matching stories that fit a mental organizational pattern of narrative knowledge that he calls story index. This may be particularly true for Hannah’s stories. “You Don’t Know What You Know” in particular seems to contradict the prevailing view held by the other teachers. Betty, Cheryl, Donna, and Sally seem to contend throughout the group interview that what they are learning at the university is not going to be useful. Hannah’s story may be contradictory in such a way that the other teachers do not have stories that match in content or experience.

Hannah’s other story, “Unexpected Behavior,” and Sally’s story, “It’s Not the Kids” are more problematic, however. These stories seem to match what the other teachers are saying about learning to teach. Betty expresses surprise at Hannah’s story but the other teachers do not seem to react to it. It is possible that the teachers do not feel that it is necessary to explore these ideas further because they have already stated what they think is important, although there is no discussion in the group or third personal interview to support this. It is also possible that since Hannah and Sally are not in the same courses with them, Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Donna do not feel compelled to match stories with them. Do the stories function to isolate or marginalize certain group members? This leads to speculation about what other possible functions these stories might serve.

The Functions

The point of identifying the story chains and isolated stories was to help illuminate the reasons these teachers may be telling these stories. These claims are further supported with observations made during the structural analysis. What are the relationships among the characters in the story? What do

word choices reveal about why the participant may be telling the story? Are there relationships between the type of story, story topics and settings that reveal patterns of telling that give insights into the story function? Using clues such as these, researchers have offered many explanations as to what functions stories might serve. Rosenholtz's experience swapping (1991) and Clandinin and Connelly's cover stories (1995) are two examples that are more practical in nature. Cortazzi (1993), on the other hand, concluded that teachers tell stories for more theoretical reasons such as maintaining self and cultural identity or providing moral evaluation. A review of these stories and the context that surrounded them, however, did not yield such simple observations. The functions of these stories appear to range from explicit to implicit.

In all there were four functions identified in these stories: steering the conversation, emotional relief, warning to others, and identity performance. Each story seemed to have more than one function. "Please, Not Today", for example, served to steer the conversation, to provide emotional relief, as a warning to others and as an identity performance. "You Don't Know What You Know" seemed to steer the conversation and provide an identity performance. Each function will be explored in more detail.

Function one-To fit the conversation

As pointed out earlier, the most explicit reason these teachers gave for telling these stories is that they fit the conversation. This contention is supported by the opening statements these teachers used when introducing the story in the group interview as well as by the comments the teachers made in the second personal interview. During the second personal interview, when asked why they chose to share their stories in the group interview, for example, explanations such as these were offered:

Donna: Well, cause it fit what we were talking about or discussing. (personal interview, line 65)

Hannah: Similar to other people's stories, stories that just stood out, or stuff that's aggravating me. (personal interview, line 34)

Sally: Things that I thought other people would want to hear. My stories were like their stories so I thought they might fit. (personal interview, line 41)

Schank refers to this conversational storytelling as "story matching" and goes on to assert that the flow of these conversational stories can be argumentative in nature. He also offers that argumentative "mutual

storytelling can make the storytellers feel closer to each other" (1993, p. 52). As noted earlier, Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Donna were in the same courses and were more likely to share stories based on common experiences. When looking at their stories in the story chains, their stories most often contradict one another. Hannah and Sally, on the other hand, are not in the same courses and offer no contradictory stories. The three isolated stories are theirs as well. This makes one wonder if the gentle arguments in the group interview attest to the fact that these four teachers have a more established relationship with one another that alters the way they tell their stories. This possible explanation highlights the role that trust plays in how teachers select which stories to tell. According to some researchers, it is also an important factor in the professional change as Craig (1995) notes: "Knowledge communities are also critical to our discussion of the professional knowledge landscape because they are seeding grounds for competing stories, stories that may lead to professional change. Knowledge communities promote this kind of growth" (p. 141).

Function two-Emotional relief

In addition to steering the conversation, some of these stories seem to provide emotional relief of the frustrations and disappointments caused by participation in university courses and field experiences. This is consistent with Scheon's finding: "they had recognized that they felt 'in over their heads'...they were relieved to have the chance to share their experiences and feelings about those issues, and to be reassured that they were neither alone in feeling confused nor incapable" (2005, p. 13). The emotional relief function is further supported by Cheryl and Alice's bringing up the concept of "venting" when discussing university methods classes:

Cheryl: but I think we *vented* whether she liked it or not...

Alice: but then a lot of *venting* would have been about her...

(group interview, lines 333-335)

During the structural analysis, it was noted that these teachers used intensifiers and absolute adjectives more often than other linguistic feature in their stories. Intensifiers signal strong emotional functions of the narrative (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Lieblich et al., 1998; Reissman, 2008). There were additional clues to the emotional nature of these stories, however. In the semantic analysis, it was observed that certain words were used more often than others. Of particular note was how Cheryl and

Betty used the word “scary” quite often. The tone of voice observed on the tape recordings of the interviews and body language observed and documentation in my observational journal support these assertions.

This emotional venting was most evident when Alice and Donna were telling the stories “Answer My Question,” “Stupid Things,” and “Different Formats.” All three of these stories were based on university courses. There were many partial stories on this topic as well: “It Didn’t Happen”; “It’s Hard”; “Same Things Over and Over”; “No Way to Keep Up”; “He Doesn’t Check It”; “Nothing to Do With Nothing”; “Binders and Binders”; “Completely Emotional”; and “The Argument.” Only a few of the partial stories, however, had the emotional intensity evident in the three stories cited above. Surprisingly, these were not stories about field experiences. Although many tales of the classroom were horror stories, they did not have the emotional intensity of the stories of university experiences. So there seems to be a need to “vent” feelings about university courses more than field experiences.

What’s more, personality seems to be a big part in how these stories are being told. Alice, Donna and Betty seem to be more emotional when talking about university experiences but not so much about classroom experiences. All of Sally and Cheryl’s stories, on the other hand, seem to be more emotional in nature regardless of topic or setting when compared to the other stories.

It is important to note that at one time or another throughout the interviews, all the teachers evidenced some frustration. Even Alice, who was usually optimistic and hopeful, offered the following comment: “Yeah, it takes so much to keep up. *It just takes the life out of me.* I’m not too happy with it right now.” (lines 49-50) What’s important to note is the contrast in frequency and intensity of the information provided by each participant.

The emotional aspect of these stories may indicate the teachers’ confrontation of their own perceptions of their teaching performance. Osterman and Kottkamp (2004), for example, contend that Developing a conscious awareness of your own performance is critical for reflection, but this process of coming face-to-face with certain aspects of your own performance can be threatening and often provokes strong feelings, even under the best of conditions. I would venture to say that the emotional intensity is greater where the greatest learning is taking place (p. 130).

It may be that Sally and Cheryl are reflecting more challenges in learning to teach or having to confront more misconceptions about teaching than the other teachers.

It is important to understand that, not only are emotions an important part of the reflective process, but researchers have found that it is important for teachers to share their emotions through communal discourse in order to move forward in professional development (Armstrong, 2007; Bullough, 2008; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Scheon, 2005). Bullough points out that

While emotions are rational, they are not generally reflective. This said, an emotion can become the object of reflection, which may strengthen or weaken its hold, with the result that beliefs may change and character may form in desired ways, as well as views of self and other (2008, p. 107)

What does this mean for these stories and teachers? This will be explored more fully in the analysis of story meaning.

Function three-Warning to others

About half of the stories these teachers told were warning to others about various aspects of classroom teaching. Cheryl, for example, states that “Other students... *warned you* about it ahead of time.” These warnings were embedded in discussions of things that happen in classrooms. Stories that serve this function include “Scary kids,” “Funner,” “Ant Bites,” “Please Not Today,” “Just Thrown In,” “An Issue of Security,” “Unexpected Behavior,” “Sometimes It’s Not the Kids,” “No Help,” and “The Fish Died.” There were no partial stories that seemed to warn about classroom challenges. All of the appropriated horror stories and most of the personal horror stories identified in the structural analysis seemed to serve this function. Characters in these stories included classroom teachers, beginning teachers, parents and children. As one would expect, most of the teachers portrayed in these stories are incompetent. Only the classroom teacher in “Unexpected Behavior” is portrayed as competent. Not surprisingly, the topics for these stories are primarily classroom management with a hint of instructional concerns in “Funner” and “The Fish Died.”

The reason these stories were identified as warning was that when these stories were told, there were reactions from other teachers that indicated surprise or disbelief. An exchange between Hannah and Betty after Hannah has shared her story of “Unexpected Behavior” demonstrates this:

Hannah: There was one boy who she really, really adored. He was really a good student. Always made straight a's and never had a b. And she has a behavior log and when you do something really bad, you have to sign the behavior log. And this really good student, one day she was talking to someone else, and this kid belches in the other kid's face. And she goes that's too much, just go sign the book. And the kid like drops on to the floor.

Betty: *Are you serious?*

Hannah: And she said that happens sometimes. *That's what a classroom is really like.*

(group interview, lines 176-182)

Another example of this is when Cheryl relates "Scary Kids" and Hannah reacts to it:

Cheryl: I told the teacher, like we discussed it with the teacher. And the other person that had the gun group, she showed the papers to the teacher and actually they had another child today in another group that did the gun thing. The teacher talked to them about what was appropriate to do in school and what wasn't appropriate. But to tell them do their fantasy world and then they draw a big gun shooting at somebody, that's kind of scary.

Hannah: *Yeah, that makes you think.*

Cheryl: *Yeah, that's kind of scary.* (group interview, lines 52-58)

The fact that these stories are serving to warn others about teaching problems is important because researchers believe that functions such as this provide insight into how these teachers are evaluating their beliefs concerning schools, students, and teaching practice (Armstrong, 2007; Bullough, 2007; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). This is significant because Downey (2008) found that pre-service teachers display a confirmational bias during their field experiences because they tend "...to search for or interpret information in a way that supports existing beliefs while at the same time ignoring or reinterpreting disconfirming evidence" (p. 2). The following comments indicate that these teachers may be engaging in just such a practice when making sense of their experiences with students:

Cheryl: ...They throw you into a school with children who all have some kind of special need. And it's not a regular classroom, it's not a realistic setting that they provide for you

to teach in and *it's very hard to get used to something like that. Especially when you weren't taught that way. You weren't taught to go into a school like that. You weren't taught to teach the way they want you to teach...* Most people agree with me and find it very, very hard. I mean I like the fact that I only have three kids to a group but those three kids, it's like you have to constantly get on them and say pay attention. Do your work. Pay attention. Pay attention. Jeffery, stop. Wesley, stop trying to shoot me with your pen. It's hard.

Donna: I think that goes along with, after you get your degree, you need to make sure of the whole school philosophy that kind of you fit into it, cause *if you don't agree with how they're teaching something, you're going to be kind of lost in that school.*

Sally: *You're not going to fit in.* It takes time to learn what's going on.

Donna: And because their thing, I think they're trying to push their whole method of their school on you, like their method that they're using in their school is the best and that you should go teach there. You should try to adapt your style to their style. And I don't think that's right. I mean, *if you don't agree with a certain teaching style* (Alice: yeah) like I said before, *you even shouldn't go fool with a school like that.* (group interview, lines 94-114)

At another point in the interview, Donna offers "...like one methods teacher, she taught in another state and different places like that and she'll give us stories about what they did there. *I don't plan on ever teaching in another state.* If I move, I'll never teach there" (group interview, lines 382-386). Similarly, Betty states, "But that was like a shocker, you know, cause *I don't want to deal with parents who come in to beat up a child*" (lines 451-452, group interview). After Betty makes that statement, Cheryl adds the following point of view:

She gave us a lot of info on like, diversity and stuff, that I never had to deal with cause I went to a very mixed school, public school. And *I never had to deal with any of that.* So it's like the stuff she was trying to tell us and trying to teach us, the case studies we would get, I felt was useless to me because I never had to deal with problems of diversity. I never had that issue. So it's like that that story she told us about um, it was a

predominantly white school or something and they had a little black child that was going there and he got beat up at the bus stop or whatever. And his parent went to go beat up the child that beat him up. And it created this whole issue of security and all of that stuff.

So it's like I thought, I mean I thought it was interesting but for me, *it wasn't realistic because I never experienced that.* (group interview, lines 453-461)

From the second personal interview, the following comments reflect the assertion that what they university teachers are telling will not match what they anticipate happening in their own classrooms as well:

Cheryl: *They* (the stories) *don't match what you'll probably be doing in your classroom.* I don't think I'll ever be working with students like some of the ones I'm working with now so I don't think those stories will help me directly but I might come across something just like it and it may help me a little bit. (personal interview, lines 26-27)

Hannah: *Things that don't match my philosophy I tend to ignore.* (personal interview, line 50)

Some researchers contend that sharing stories in settings such as these, however, are essential for exploring such beliefs (Amobi & Irwin, 2009; Baker & Shahid, 2003; Butler et al., 2006). Gregory (2009) maintains that "...raw experience unmediated by reflection, theories and thought can teach us little" (p. 49). Gudwin concurred and offered that "It was unmistakable that the sharing of student teaching experiences in weekly sessions, coupled with debriefing, made an impact on the subjects" (2002, page 29). This is important because Marks (2007) found that initial beliefs were the biggest barrier to pre-service teachers' transfer of learning from the university to the classroom.

What is troublesome about this, however, is the fact that so many of these stories do not demonstrate successful resolution to the story dilemma nor do the teachers indicate that they have sought ways to resolve these dilemmas. In all, three warning stories were contradicted ("Scary Kids," "Funner" and "Now They Respect Her"), two warning stories confirmed one another ("Please Not Today" and "The Fish Died"), the topic shifted after three warning stories ("Ant Bites," "An Issue of Security," and "No Help") and two were isolated stories ("It's Not the Kids" and "Unexpected Behavior"). This means

that, for the majority of these stories, there was no attempt to solve the management or instructional issues presented.

What is interesting about these stories is that some of these teachers seemed to want to engage in such discussions. When Cheryl related “Scary Kids,” for example, Donna countered with “Creating Suspense” to explain what Cheryl was observing. When Betty related “Just Thrown In,” Alice shared a story that paralleled the structure of Betty’s story but had a different ending (“Now They Respect Her”). As noted earlier, none of these teachers indicated that they participated in specific debriefing activities in their university courses but these interactions seem to indicate that pre-service teachers would engage in such discussions if given the proper environment and opportunity.

This could have an impact on the storyteller’s sense of efficacy because Witcher et al. (2002) maintain that to change pre-service teachers’ beliefs, teacher educators must create situations that allow them to experience success with desired methodologies. These researchers go on to point out that “Efficacy influences educational beliefs, interventions that appropriately increase or decrease levels of efficacy may lead to desired shifts in educational belief” (p. 21). Based on these stories and the conversation that surrounds them, it appears that these teachers are not experiencing success in their field teaching and are not exploring these challenges in any meaningful way in the university classes. In other words, they have these stories but no place to process them in any useful way. This is not to say that the university teachers are not attempting to do this, but rather that the teachers do not seem to perceive the connection between such university activities and these stories of experience. Instead the teachers are engaging in reflective activities with peers who may not have any answers for their problems.

This is significant because researchers have found that it is incumbent on the teacher educator to facilitate this process (Amobi & Irwin, 2009; Baker & Shahid, 2003; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Richards & Gipe, 1998). When teacher educators fail to address these issues, the pre-service and beginning teachers are left to interpret classroom events in ways that may be counter-productive. Britzman, for example, found that when beginning teachers do not confront these challenges, they usually resort to “the ideology of blaming the victim and ultimately promote a simplistic understanding of the operation of power in educational life” (2003, p. 237).

So these warning stories reflect critical issues these teachers are dealing with in their field experiences. The most important finding is that these teachers do not seem to engage in systematic processing of these experiences in a way that helps them begin thinking more productively about teaching.

Function four: Identity performance

According to many narrative researchers, narrative is a performance of personal identity (Bruner, 2000; Bullough, 2008; Danielewicz, 2001; Mishler, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1988). Polkinghorne specifically points out that

...the analyst can assume two notions about the story. First, that whatever else the story is about, it is also a form of self-presentation in which the teller is claiming a particular kind of self identity...Second, because everything said functions to express, confirm and validate this claimed identity, the narrative analyst can search for statements and references related to the teller's identity throughout the account (1988, p. 165).

This is not to be construed to mean that the identity presented is the “true self” but rather the self that the teller wishes to portray (Bruner, 2000; Coia & Taylor, 2001). Furthermore, any identity performed in personal stories is the result of interrelated factors: to whom and where the stories were being told (Mishler, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1988; Schank, 1993), the types of experiences the storyteller was experiencing (Bruner, 2000; Bullough, 2008), the similarities and differences of the experiences of the listener and teller (Mishler, 1999), and sense of efficacy (Bullough, 2008; Coia & Taylor, 2001). It is important to note that these characteristics differ from the contextual analysis conducted earlier because, in this analysis, consideration is given to the story presentation during the interview. Each of these factors will be discussed more fully before evaluating these teachers’ stories to ascertain possible identity presentations.

The first factor, to whom and where the stories are told, is important because narrative researchers have established that stories are relational. That is to say, that stories are usually told to establish relationships with others (Mishler, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1988; Schank, 1993). Gregory (2009) and Danielewicz (2001) assert that stories are told because they allow storytellers to affiliate with particular groups. Mishler (1999) contends that this represents “...a radical shift in viewpoint...” (p. 111)

because “Our understanding of stories as identity narratives depends on a relational conception of identity” (p. 144). In other words, the identity performed in the narrative directly depends on the relation the teller has to the listener when the story is told. As discussed previously, issues of power and trust are particularly important in how stories are selected and identities are portrayed (Britzman, 2003; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Rosenholtz, 1991). Britzman points out that “The retelling of a story is always a partial telling, bound not only by one’s perspective but also by the exigencies of what can and cannot be told” (2003, p. 13).

Moreover, Polkinghorne (1988) and others have pointed out that how one elicits the story will also affect how the story is told. Some teachers may be intimidated by the interviewer or overly involved in wanting to present an identity they think will be most helpful in the study (Weiss, 1994). Reissman (2008), for example, reported that when a researcher worded questions using technical words, the responses were “terse reports of work histories.” However, by rewording “the questions to simple, more open and straight forward ones, long narratives ...” were elicited (page 24). Mishler (1999) contends that there is little “reciprocity and mutuality between researchers and subjects” and “an asymmetry of power” persists in most interviews (p. 151). This strongly influences the identity performed in the narrative.

Furthermore, storytelling is an initiation process (Polkinghorne, 1988; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). This is particularly true for pre-service and novice teachers who are trying to negotiate entry into teaching communities through the stories they tell (Britzman, 2003; Danielewicz, 2001). Danielewicz (2001) maintains that “Students in teacher education courses are preoccupied with the issue of belonging” (p. 183). Many researchers go on to argue that this negotiated entry is not without conflicts (Britzman, 2003; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Danielewicz, 2001). For example, Britzman (2003) found that the tension between institutional demands and personal visions of being a teacher produces internal dialogue that is “...constantly shifting as student teachers set about to accentuate their teaching selves in contexts that are already overpopulated with the identities and discursive practices of others” (page 220). The story teller, therefore, tries to demonstrate consistency with the professional community in order to gain acceptance through the stories chosen for telling (Britzman, 2004; Clandinin & Connelly, 1999; Polkinghorne, 1988). Danielewicz (2001) further claims that in order for this to happen the interactions have to be “...sustained and substantive” (166).

The second factor, the types of experiences the storyteller is experiencing, influences the type of identity presented in the story. In reality, only those experiences that stand out in some way are chosen for telling, as Gregory (2009) explains:

What we often fail to consider is (1) dramatic events comprise only a small percentage of the formative events in our lives and (2) that dramatic events have the unfortunate tendency to rivet our attention and block our perception of incremental influences—the ‘small’ influences that generate their power cumulatively but that we seldom wind up talking about in our memoirs or on therapists’ couches...When we focus on the big traumas that drive us to drink or send us to therapy, our lack of awareness and thoughtfulness about the importance of life’s innumerable ‘small’ choices means that we often miss the most important data that tells the story of how we become the persons we turn out to be (p. 27).

The implication that Gregory (2009) and others maintain is that it is only those experiences that are problematic or unique that are exhibited in the stories one chooses to tell. Bruner colorfully provides the following explanation: “It (the story) is deeply about plight, about the road rather than about the inn to which it leads” (2000, p. 20). Reissman (2008) explains this by saying “When biographical disruptions occur that rupture expectations for continuity, individuals make sense of events through storytelling” (p. 10).

This also is reflected in resolving the dilemmas presented in the stories. For example, Coia & Taylor (2001) found that student teachers incorporated “...relatively little problematizing of the self...” when relating their classroom experiences (p. 17). Rather, the story teller is describing an incongruity that has occurred between the expected and reality in a way that captures the listener’s attention rather than focusing on a solution (Bruner, 2000).

Third, similarities and differences of the experience described in the story help shape the identity of the storyteller. While the story teller’s desire to connect with the listener help define identity, the ability of the listener to relate to that story is also important. Mishler (1999) states that the story only makes sense if the context is clearly understood by all parties trying to interpret it. Schank (1993, p. 57) explains that

Since we can only understand things that relate to our own experiences, it is actually very difficult to hear things that people say to us that are not interpretable through those experiences. In other words, we hear what we are capable of hearing. Understanding, for a listener, means mapping the speaker's stories onto the listener's story.

So if the story teller presents a situation that is foreign to the listener's experience, it is less likely to be heard in any productive way. This may be the situation that occurred when Hannah was telling her story "Unexpected Behavior" and Betty says "Are you serious?" The fact that this is an isolated story in which there is no further elaboration might indicate that the listeners can not relate to the context of the story.

The similarity and differences of experiences shared illustrate an identity that is defined by how similar or different the teller is from the audience in a dynamic way. Bullough maintains that "We do not seek out others whose lives call forth from us an uncomfortable persona, at least not frequently. Yet we do not only seek confirmation of our identities and the personas we have assumed" (2008, p. 58). This is important because Bruner explains that "When circumstances ready us for change, we turn to others who have lived through one," and "we constantly construct and reconstruct ourselves to meet the needs of the situations we encounter" (2000, p. 64). This means that the teller will choose stories that may answer the question "Is anyone else like me?"

Finally, the sense of efficacy that the storyteller possesses influences the identity presented in the story. Efficacy is defined as one's perception about their personal ability to accomplish a given task (Bandura, 1986; Dollase, 1992). Research has established a clear link between efficacy and success in the classroom so it is considered to be an important aspect of learning to teach (Philippou et al., 2005; Witcher et. al., 2002). Most importantly, however, researchers have determined that efficacy formed during the experiences prior to the first year of teaching is most influential and likely to determine future teaching behaviors (Brasewell & Cobia, 2000; Hay & White, 2005; Wingfield & Nath, 2000). Brasewell and Cobia (2000) state that a teacher's sense of efficacy are formed by "...the subjective beliefs about performance that occur during the internship and pre-existing career self-efficacy prior to the internship" (p. 9). Witcher et al. (2002) warns that this is problematic because "If success is too easily achieved, failure may seem devastating and result in discouragement" (p. 5) and "a pre-service teacher who begins

her teaching career with an unrealistically high level of efficacy may be more likely to drop out of the profession within the first few years” (p. 17).

Researchers such as Brasewell and Cobia (2000) and Hay and White (2005) have maintained that this perception can be presented in the stories one chooses to tell. They contend that if you believe you can teach effectively, it will show in the stories you tell. Hay and White (2005), for example, found that beginning teachers “commonly told ‘disaster stories’ or ‘war stories’ in which they were positioned as either the hero or the victim” (p. 6). It can be reasoned that the stories pre-service teachers tell will illuminate their sense of efficacy as well.

So using these four factors as a guide to understanding identity, the question becomes what identity are these teachers hoping to portray? As Bruner (2000) points out, “A self is probably the most impressive work of art we ever produce, surely the most intricate, for we create not just one self-making story but many of them” (p. 14).

As discussed in the structural analysis, the teachers portrayed in these stories are either competent or incompetent. When considering identity, however, it becomes important to look beyond these labels to identify other, more subtle, portrayals that may be present. In order to do this, I chose stories in which the teachers portray themselves: “Do You Speak Chinese?” “Be Prepared,” “Stupid Stuff,” “Now They Respect Her,” “Scary Kids,” “Ant Bites,” “Please Not Today,” “I Had Cookies,” “Different Formats,” “What Works,” “Creating Suspense,” “Answer My Question,” “The Social Guy,” “You Don’t Know What You Know,” “It’s Not the Kids,” “No Help,” and “The Fish Died.” In all, four portrayals became apparent: colleague, capable teacher, frustrated teacher and frustrated university student. It is important to consider each carefully.

In “I Had Cookies,” “What Works,” and “You Don’t Know What You Know”, the storyteller is relating experiences in which she interacts with other teachers collaboratively to enhance understanding of instructional practices. In “I Had Cookies” for example, Betty tells how she and another beginning teacher were able to work out a solution for teaching a lesson: “My thing was to split up the kids between me and another girl. That group wanted to come with me because I had cookies; she didn’t have that so we had to work around that.” In “What Works” and “You Don’t Know What You Know,” Betty and Hannah were interacting with classroom teachers as equals. Hannah, for example, states that

Because I was asking her what are your attention getters. She said I don't think I have that. I said that the only one I really like was blurting out a funny word and then raising your hand. She said I really like that. The she told me something that she did. So she's using stuff she learned, she just doesn't realize it.

Additionally, the word choice and tone seem to indicate a thoughtful response to a colleague's point of view as opposed to a critical one. For the most part, the teachers in these stories are not seen as incompetent but are negotiating an understanding of teaching with the storyteller. The exception is the classroom teacher from the field experience in Betty's "What Works": "The teacher I have gives them a lower level." The experiences related in these stories show how problems were solved and are similar in that they show teachers working in cooperation with one another. "I Had Cookies" and "What Works" were both told at the end of story chains. "I Had Cookies" echoes Cheryl's story about keeping students focused on her lesson but with a more positive spin. "What Works" provides a counter example to Betty's previous story contrasting university expectations with what happens in the "real world" of teaching. Hannah's story, "You Don't Know What You Know," was an isolated story. These characteristics seem to indicate that Hannah and Betty are portraying themselves as having already begun to establish an identity as a classroom teacher. This substantiated by the fact that all three stories had non-emotional language that described a positive resolution to the problem.

Not all stories of interactions between the storyteller and classroom teachers are so amicable, however. Sally's stories, "It's Not the Kids" and "No Help", portray an adversarial relationship between these story characters which present a different identity that will be discussed later. It seems sufficient to point out that the positive collegial relationship of Betty's and Hannah's stories are not manifested in other stories.

These teachers seem to connect with teachers in other ways as well. In "Be Prepared" and "Show No Fear" (a partial story), Alice and Cheryl describe information provided to them by classroom teachers in an indirect way. Cheryl initiates this thought at the beginning of the group interview when she states "I was told when I first got into teaching, the teacher told me 'Show no fear'." Later in the interview, Alice offers that, "I have one that goes along with 'show no fear'..." Unlike the three stories discussed earlier, these two stories do not provide descriptions of specific interactions but are more generalized.

These stories demonstrate an acceptance by the professional community, however (Britzman, 2003; Rosenholtz, 1991). This is important because as Danielewicz points out, “No matter how strong their individual convictions as teachers, my students instinctively desired some other outside organizational, institutional recognition of their status as teachers” (2001, p. 126). This sharing of the “folk wisdom” of teaching is an important part of the initiation process (Britzman, 2003; Bruner, 1996).

Interestingly, this is a sharp contrast to the interactions these storytellers have with their university teachers who are also charged with imparting wisdom about teaching. In three stories and six partial stories, Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Donna all describe interactions with university teachers that are less than satisfying. For example, in “Stupid Stuff,” Alice uses language that indicates the university teacher is unreasonable and arbitrary: “She rips apart all your stuff but never tells you how to do it better.” In “Answer My Question,” Donna states “That doesn’t answer my question. Everything is always up in the air.” Betty echoes this as well: “It’s a long drawn out thing; it’s like pointless.” This seems to indicate that Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Donna all reject information being provided by the university and seek acceptance in the classroom community outside the sphere of the university. This is supported by the fact that Alice, Betty, and Cheryl offer examples on acceptance and sharing of folk wisdom in their stories and Alice, Betty and Donna offer examples of ineffective experiences in their university classes. This is a separate identity that will be discussed more fully later.

When looking at all stories of portrayal as colleagues, the sense of efficacy is high. This is supported by the fact that identified problems were resolved in a satisfactory way and the storyteller seems confident in the telling of the story as evidenced by the language and tone used. What is important is that these tales of success illuminate a growing sense of self as teacher as Danielewicz points out “To adopt any identity, individuals must be enabled to act as *if* they are insiders” (2001, p. 118, author’s emphasis).

Another identity that seems to be portrayed in some of these stories is that of capable teacher. This identity is portrayed in “Do You Speak Chinese?,” “Be Prepared,” “I Had Cookies,” “What Works,” “Creating Suspense,” “The Social Guy,” and “You Don’t Know What You Know.” This is different from the identity as colleague because it demonstrates that the teacher can stand on her own in the classroom without the help of others. Britzman (2003) describes this as one of three myths of teaching that prevails

throughout teaching communities. These myths include the idea that everything depends on the teacher, the teacher is the expert, and teachers are self-made. Britzman states that “Student teachers are ‘summoned’ by cultural myths and through these myths, they recognize themselves as a teacher” (2003, p. 223). These stories seem to fulfill those myths. For example, Donna, in “Creating Suspense,” offers an explanation for why students in one particular setting might behave in the manner that Cheryl finds so scary: “...we were creating suspense so he had this whole horror movie thing in his head. It wasn’t something that startled me because he talked about scary movies the whole time so it wasn’t like he wants to do it.” Alice relates a similar experience in “Do You Speak Chinese?”: “...one boy asked me if he had to write in Chinese. I asked him if he knew how to write in Chinese and he said no. And I said, then you don’t have to write it in Chinese.” In these as well as other instances in this set of stories, the teller seems to be portraying someone who takes these events in stride and deals with them effectively as a “real” teacher might. In most of these stories, there is a positive resolution to the dilemma and for the stories in which the resolution is unclear, such as “The Social Guy,” there is an overall positive tone.

There is no clear cut pattern of where these occur in story chains. “Do You Speak Chinese?” is the story that initiates the first story chain as is “The Social Guy.” “Be Prepared,” and “Creating Suspense” occur in the middle of story chains, while “I Had Cookies” and “What Works” occur at the end. “You Don’t Know What You Know” is an isolated story.

Regardless of where they occur, however, the response to these stories is usually another story or a statement that offers a contradictory situation. Cheryl, for example, responds with stories that are contrary to Alice’s “Do You Speak Chinese?” and “Be Prepared” and Donna’s “Creating Suspense” and “The Social Guy”. Sally offers an explanation of other problems that occur in lesson when Betty concludes “I Had Cookies”: “Our group gets too noisy when they are around other groups...”

As pointed out earlier, in contrast to the capable teacher or colleague, some stories portrayed the teller as a frustrated teacher. The stories that presented this identity include “Scary Kids,” “Ant Bites,” “Please Not Today,” “It’s Not the Kids,” “No Help,” and “The Fish Died.” This categorization was supported by the emotional intensity of the language and repetition of key phrases as well as the lack of dilemma resolution. In “Scary Kids”, for example, Cheryl repeats the phrase “it’s scary” three times. In “It’s Not the

Kids”, Sally uses intensifiers such as “very” and “really” throughout her story. All of these stories take place in a classroom.

Interestingly, most of these stories occur after other teachers had presented a capable teacher identity. For example, Cheryl relates “Scary Kids” after Alice shares “Do You Speak Chinese?” and “Ant Bites” after Donna shares “Creating Suspense.” “No Help” occurs at the end of a story chain in which Betty and Alice have described opposing views of survival of classroom teachers. In both Betty’s and Alice’s stories, the classroom teachers have varying degrees of skill but are sympathetic characters. In Sally’s story, the classroom teacher is purposely trying to undermine the storyteller’s efforts to discipline the student. “It’s Not the Kids” is an isolated story that tells of a similar incident as “No Help.” There is a consistency in these two stories in that Sally has to deal with uncooperative, unprofessional teachers who make teaching very hard for her. Sally also uses more emotional and stronger language than Betty, Alice, or Hannah in their stories. Sally seems to be portraying herself as the victim of incompetent teachers. Her stories offer a very different view of her belief in her ability to deal with situations that those of some of the other teachers. Overall, the characters and situations described in this set of stories are not good. The sense of efficacy is not very high.

As previously discussed, there is a contrast between interactions with classroom and beginning teachers and university teachers portrayed in the stories. There are three stories which deal with interactions between the storyteller and university teachers: “Stupid Stuff,” “Different Formats,” and “Answer My Question.” There are six partial stories which also describe such experiences: “Same Things Over and Over,” “Nothing to Do With Nothing,” “It’s Hard,” “No Way to Keep Up,” “He Doesn’t Check It,” and “It Didn’t Happen.” There is a clear consistency in the message being delivered in all of these stories: what happens in university courses is frustrating and not useful.

One point of intrigue is that this is the only category where partial stories outnumber more fully formed ones. This anomaly and the fact that there were so few fully formed stories, caused me to consider the non-narrative text more carefully than for the other sets of stories being considered for identity performance.

Table 19: Comparison of Identity in Fully-formed and Partial Stories

	Fully formed stories	Partial stories
Colleague	4	1
Capable teacher	7	1
Frustrated teacher	6	1
Frustrated university student	3	6

Interestingly, in non-narrative parts of the interview, the teachers provided a more varied view of the university experiences. Although they appeared varied, they are consistent overall with the emerging personalities of the teachers. Hannah, for example, did not have any stories of being a frustrated university student and offered only positive non-narrative comments about her university experiences, such as the following:

Well, half of them are in the reading language arts class so we just sit and laugh and say wow cause my language arts teacher is completely different. And the teacher tries to tell her how she can talk to her teacher and what she should say and what she should not say. Trying to help her...Mostly every class, we just sit and talk. It's really hard to determine where we finish talking and where we start learning. It's just not formal and you really have to sit down and realize that you're going to need this eventually. So it's a neat class. (group interview, lines 294-305)

Throughout the transcript of the group interview, Sally doesn't have much to say about her university experiences. In contrast, Alice, Cheryl and Donna have the most to say about their university experiences in the non-narrative texts which is matched by the number of stories they tell.

Having considered each identity separately, I decided to look at the data in another way. I looked for patterns of identity presented by each participant. What's interesting is that certain teachers presented certain persona more often than others. Alice, for example, presented the persona of colleague ("Be Prepared"), capable teacher ("Do You Speak Chinese?" and "Be Prepared") and frustrated university student ("Stupid Stuff"). This was also true for Betty, Donna and Hannah. Sally and Cheryl, on the other hand, only tell stories of being the frustrated teacher. This was confirmed when the partial stories were considered.

Table 20: Identity Performance

	Colleague	Capable teacher	Frustrated teacher	Frustrated university student
Alice	Be Prepared	Do You Speak Chinese? Be Prepared		Stupid Stuff <i>Same Things Over and Over</i> <i>Nothing to Do With Nothing</i>
Betty	I Had Cookies What Works	I Had Cookies What Works		Different Formats
Cheryl	<i>Show No Fear</i>		Scary Kids Ant Bites Please Not Today <i>Rough Day</i>	<i>It's Hard</i> <i>No Way to Keep Up</i> <i>He Doesn't Check It</i>
Donna		Creating Suspense The Social Guy <i>We Go Crazy</i>		Answer My Question <i>It Didn't Happen</i>
Hannah	You Don't Know What You Know	You Don't Know What You Know		
Sally			It's Not the Kids No Help The Fish Died	

Reasons for the identities portrayed in these stories may be rooted in why the subjects chose to participate in the study. They may have thought that their stories would be heard by authorities that would change things. Maybe they thought that it was what they were supposed to say. It is important to note, however, that observations noted in my personal journal indicated that these teachers were sincere in their assertions and there did not appear to be any attempt to manipulate the situation. There was a feeling of authenticity in the exchanges. Any identity presented by these teachers appeared to be a reflection of their genuine beliefs.

Furthermore, there is a high degree of correlation between the identity performed and the type of story told. Colleague and capable teacher stories were optimistic while frustrated teacher and student stories were horror stories. Cheryl's presentation of narrative and non-narrative discourse, for example, was consistent with the identity she was portraying. There was consistency in body language, tone of voice, word choices and point of view expressed throughout the group and personal interviews. The same held true for all the teachers participating in this study.

So the identity these teachers portrayed seemed to be deeply rooted in their personality and not quickly adopted or discarded as situations dictated. While this may not be true for stories they tell in their university courses, it does provide some interesting insight into what may lie below the surface. Furthermore, what could be the source of these identities? Frustrated student is not so difficult to understand but how does one develop an identity of colleague or capable teacher prior to gaining full access teaching status? This question is especially intriguing when you consider that these teachers did not have extensive prior teaching experience.

When I proposed this study, I assumed that many of the stories that pre-service teachers would tell would be told to entertain others. This was not true for Donna and Sally. In the second personal interview, Donna specifically states that these kinds of stories are not useful to her:

Interviewer: Which stories do you think are not useful?

Donna: The ones from my friends that are the fun stories.

Interviewer: Why do you think those are least useful?

Donna: Because it happens to everybody. Everybody's been with a funny child and that's not something you have to deal with in the classroom. I mean, it's funny but it's not a problem that you have to deal with. (personal interview, lines 47-50)

Sally offers a similar explanation: "I don't listen to the funny things that kids say or do. They are fun but I don't learn a lot from them" (personal interview, line 51). What is interesting is that Donna demonstrates a high sense of efficacy in her stories, while Sally does not, yet they both consider entertainment to be irrelevant. Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Hannah don't specifically say they don't enjoy funny stories but neither do they find them useful. When asked which stories are most useful, these teachers indicated that stories that addressed more problematic aspects of teaching were useful. This will be explored more thoroughly in later discussions.

The Discoveries

A strange thing happened when I began to consider the context and functions of these stories. The structural analysis left me wondering if these stories were significant or not. When I began considering the context and function, however, these stories began to make more sense and a new

image of how these stories are being used by this group of teachers emerged. It's not the stories themselves that are important but when and how they are shared that is significant.

At the beginning of this study, I wanted to know what were the sources of stories these teachers told and with whom and where they shared their stories. I expected to find that most of the stories would come from classroom teachers or fellow pre-service teachers and that the teachers would share them in their classes. The conversations these teachers had during the interview did reveal that they did share many stories with fellow pre-service teachers. Surprisingly, however, was the fact that there were few instances of these teachers sharing stories with other classroom teachers.

These teachers seemed to share more stories with university teachers they perceived to be trustworthy than they did classroom teachers. This could be a function of the amount of time they spent with the university teachers as opposed to the classroom teachers, the hectic teaching activities that had to occur during the field experiences, or the setting in which interactions took place. What's more, the sharing that did occur with university teachers seemed to be focused more on university survival than actual teaching. Although strategies such as debriefing are almost universally advocated as a necessary part of making learning pertinent (Amobi & Irwin, 2005), there is little indication that these teachers engage in this in any productive way in their classes. It may be possible that there were debriefing activities happening but the teachers did not recognize them as useful or that debriefing happened after the interviews were conducted.

It also became apparent that interpersonal relationships with others in the group played a large role in with whom and what kinds of stories were shared. Those teachers with the closest affiliations and similarity of experiences were more likely to share more regardless of function. In other words context was more important than function. Hannah and Sally were not in the same classes as Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Donna and shared fewer stories. Even the non-narrative text is dominated by the four who were in similar classes.

Even more surprising was the fact that these teachers chose to share their stories with family and non-education workers more often than university-related personnel. This is not to say, however, that this sharing was productive. In other words, the number of times a participant chose to share a story has no connection to how it helps or hinders their ability to think reflectively about teaching (Bullough, 2008).

The stories these teachers told in the interview served a range of explicit and implicit functions in the context of the interview that are just as interesting. I expected to find that the stories would function to divest the pre-service teachers of responsibility for not mastering certain skills, mark milestones of achievement in learning how to teach, synthesize what the teller knows about teaching, or make others look incompetent. While some this was supported by the data, other functions arose when the stories were analyzed. These teachers did not seem to tell stories that specifically targeted skills or achievements acquired in learning to teach. Instead they were more generalized views of teaching. While some classroom teachers were portrayed as incompetent, the teachers portrayed themselves as incompetent about as often as they did others.

These teachers seemed to tell these stories that served four specific, overlapping functions within the context of the interview: steer the conversation, warn others that teaching is hard, emotional release and project certain identities. The first function was explicit and the teachers were fully aware of them. They seemed to be somewhat aware of the second and third but were less explicit. The most implicit function was projection of certain identities. This is consistent with findings of other researchers such as Bruner (2000), Bullough (2008) and Danielewicz (2001).

Interestingly, clear patterns in story characteristics emerged for each participant which matched the identities portrayed in the stories these teachers told. Alice, for example, presented clearly contrasting identities as capable teacher and frustrated university student while Cheryl and Sally presented identities as frustrated teachers. Hannah offered only one story of herself but it was one that showed someone who was confident in what she was learning and able to apply to real classroom situations.

In stepping back and looking more generally at the interview transcripts, one identity emerged that overshadowed everything these teachers said and did. It was clear from these conversations that these teachers see themselves as teachers without having the benefit of being sanctioned as such by the authorities. They are teachers as far as they are concerned. Furthermore, these teachers saw sharing stories as an important part of the process needed to become a teacher as exemplified in the following discussion from the group interview:

Interviewer: Okay, good point, I hear you telling me that you tell stories, you enjoy them, but you think field experiences are more important than sharing stories?

Sally: I'd like to think so.

Cheryl: It all depends on who the story is coming from.

Donna: Well most of the things that people talk about, it has or will eventually happen to you so one experience goes with another.

Interviewer: Would you like to see more storytelling incorporated in methods courses?

Betty: I would. I like it when the teacher tells the stories. I know I remember them better like when one teacher told us about how to go through a classroom like a child and think about what a child goes through so you know how to set up your classroom like that. I just remember things like that. So if I had stories like that yeah.

Donna: Yeah, if it's relevant and worthwhile stories too. If it's something off the wall then story, you know, or if it's a class and it's story after story about things kids say, well that gets kind of redundant cause all kids say crazy things, you know.

Sally: I like the stories because it makes the class more fun and the stuff we learn is easier to remember.

From this brief discussion and other comments made during the personal interviews, it became clear that these teachers saw experience as the best way to learn to teach but saw stories as being equally as valuable. Stories were valuable because they would match what others experienced and would be able to be recalled more easily than other kinds of information. It was at this point that I began to consider what these stories mean for these teachers.

Chapter Six

And So It Was, And So It Is

It's not denial. I'm just selective about the reality I accept.
Calvin and Hobbs

We've all been with groups of people and shared stories about our work, home or vacations. This is especially true when teachers come together. Many would agree with Danielewicz's contention that "All teachers know that nothing significant in education ever happens without a lot of talk" (2001, page 134). This leads one to ponder the nature of such talk. Most would agree that such talk often includes stories. It is interesting to consider what these stories mean to each of us as we interact with others. How many of those stories will we remember the next day? Do those stories influence our future actions? Whether we think about it or not, according to various narrative researchers, at least, these stories do affect us (Gregory, 2008). Those responsible for developing skills in a variety of professional vocations, including education, are beginning to appreciate this.

This new understanding has significant implications for pre-service teachers. Earlier consideration of the conversations these teachers have demonstrates that during the university courses in which they participate, there are multiple opportunities to share stories of experience with both educators and non-education related friends and family. The purpose of this study was to look at some of those stories and understand how they affect the teachers who tell and hear them. Although these teachers only interacted with each other briefly, their accounts yield some interesting patterns and themes.

An interview is not a conversation, however. In order to understand what these stories mean to these teachers, some things had to be arranged differently to make the information easier to discuss and compare. For example, it would have taken too long to go over each individual story in the second personal interview. So I grouped the stories together to make discussing them more efficient. Some might argue that this could affect the information offered by these teachers, but any arrangement of the questions in an interview can do that (Mishler, 1999). Reissman (2008) contends that the best narrative data is derived from interviews that are more conversational than clinical in nature. So I strived to make the interview more conversational and not tedious for these teachers.

At this point, analysis of the data moved into its final phase. In order to discover what these stories meant to these teachers, most observations were taken from the second personal interview and internet communication with the teachers. I then used observations from the group interview and notes in my personal journal for support or contrast. I went back to the group interview to support or contradict the individual communications because I wanted to see how group dynamics may have shaped the data as well trying to determine how consistent these teachers' answers were.

Once the second personal interviews were transcribed, I sorted the teachers' responses by the major research questions posed at the beginning of the study. For example, the question "What do you learn from sharing those stories?" was used to classify all responses that answered that question regardless of whether asked directly or voluntarily offered during the group or second personal interview. I then grouped questions that dealt with similar topics for further consideration. Three broad categories of meaning became apparent from this data: personal reactions and relations to the stories; stories' impact on learning to teach; and emergent characteristics of the stories.

In beginning this study, I proposed to find out why these stories are important to these teachers and how they feel about them. Do they think they illustrate something important about themselves or teaching? Do the events in the story seem real to the listener? How will the stories influence their practice? By exploring each of the aspects outlined above, I hoped to answer these questions.

The Reactions and Relations

The first category of responses included those that described personal reactions and relations to the stories told in the group interview. These were the responses that indicated the emotional aspect of the experience for these teachers and how they reacted to them. As discussed in the structural and contextual analysis, there was a strong emotional component to some of these stories and the personal interview allowed me to explore the teachers' reaction to the stories and the overall experience more thoroughly.

No surprises here

The most immediate observation was that these teachers were not surprised by the stories they heard. In all of the second personal interviews, these teachers indicated on seventeen different occasions that they had heard these or similar stories. Each teacher made this statement at least one time and

Betty, Sally, and Alice made this statement four times each. Cheryl's comment is a typical response to the question of what surprised these teachers about the stories they heard: "Nothing really surprised me because I see those people every day and most of those stories, I've already heard." This is expected because these teachers were in many of the same courses or knew people from other classes. As a result, they had many opportunities to share these stories with other pre-service teachers.

Although these teachers contended that they were familiar with these stories, some of them did offer more insightful statements about surprising elements of the stories they heard. Hannah, for instance, offered that "I'm always surprised about how professors treat their students." When asked to elaborate on this, she states

"I haven't taken some of those courses yet and I'm worried about them. (I'm worried about) The amount of work and how the teachers talk to the students. The other day a teacher called a university student a chicken**** because the student didn't want to call a kid's parents about tutoring... I mean, if you keep hearing the same thing over and over, you've got to think it's true, even if you don't want to" (personal interview, lines 54-56).

Similarly, in response to this question, Sally offered that "I was surprised that some of the stories seemed so unrealistic, especially the ones about the professors. Some of them seemed out of character or something" (personal interview, lines 48-49).

Alice was surprised that most of the stories were "funny" and that "I was thinking that I would hear scarier things" (personal interview, lines 28-29). This is interesting when contrasted with statements by other teachers in this group. Their statements indicate that they do not value funny stories. Donna, for example, when asked which stories are least useful responded that "The fun stories...because it happens to everybody. Everybody's been with a funny child and that's not something you have to deal with in the classroom. I mean, it's funny but it's not a problem" (personal interview, lines 54-55).

Betty also contends that funny stories are not useful: "If it's a class and it's story after story about things kids say, well that gets kind of redundant cause all kids say crazy things" (personal interview, line 47). Sally also indicates that funny stories are the least useful: "The funny things kids say or do are fun but I don't learn a lot from them" (personal interview, line 44). Cheryl and Hannah make no such comments.

Overall, these responses show that the stories told in the group interview were nothing new to these teachers. While certain aspects of the stories may have been surprising, they seemed familiar with these types of stories and were not shocked by them. Certainly, being in similar courses, having some of the same teachers, and interacting with same colleagues contributed to this situation, but that would be true of any professionals engaged in the same curriculum. While these teachers do not proceed through the courses at the same rate or sequence, they do interact with many of the same people over and over throughout their time at the university, certainly contributing to the redundancy in the stories they hear and tell.

Why these stories

So if these were the same stories they heard and told on so many other occasions, why did they choose to rehash them in this context? The reasons for telling these particular stories varied slightly among the teachers but were consistent with the contextual clues found in the group interview. Specifically, these teachers stated that the stories were told because they fit the conversation and had happened recently. This finding was supplemented with information that indicated that emotional needs were also being addressed. Donna stated that the stories were “Things that kind of scare you.” Hannah also states that the stories were about “...stuff that’s aggravating me.”

This leads to the conclusion that, while emotions played a large part in how they tell their stories, these teachers have an emotional connection to them that yield no significant insights about teaching. What seems to trigger the sharing of these stories is the context. Other people are telling stories that create the need to confirm or refute the point. This is similar to the experience swapping (Rosenholtz, 1991) and story matching (Schank, 1993) as well as with what other researchers have found about how teachers tell stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Britzman, 2003; Bullough, 2008)

How do they feel

Since the stories have an emotional element, how do these teachers feel when they tell them? Are these teachers aware of the emotions that are being processed when the story is heard or told? Can they articulate these emotions? There does not seem to be any clear consensus to how these teachers feel when hearing or telling stories. Although there were some mildly negative feelings, there were mostly positive feelings about sharing these types of stories. In their second personal interview, Cheryl and

Donna implied that talking about students and teaching could become gossip which, according to them, wasn't desirable. Donna, for example, states "I'm sure that they all, teachers the whole time talk and just talk and not gossip but, you know, talk about different experiences" (personal interview, line 58).

Similarly, Cheryl states "I feel like I'm talking about them, like gossiping about a child and I feel kind of weird about it" (personal interview, line 41). The other teachers, on the other hand, stated more positive emotions. These emotions included entertained, interested, curious, and better. These emotions contrast with comments made while the stories were being told. When the stories were shared in the group interview, the word *scary* was repeated often and these teachers used intensifiers when telling the stories. Why is there such a discrepancy between the group interview and the second personal interview?

Group dynamics may be why emotions vary so much between the two situations. Darling (2001), for example, noted that when groups of teachers come together informally, "communities of compassion" often develop that function more as a "support group" than a community of inquirers (p. 12). Bullough (2008) also contends that novice teachers form groups to cope with challenging situations: "When external conditions cannot be changed, talking, managing the emotions, and learning to cope may be all that is left" (p. 174). Other researchers have looked specifically at how pre-service teachers share stories in group settings and found that group sharing is supportive for them as well (Artzt & Curcio, 2003; Wiltz, 2000). The findings of this research indicate that once the emotions are processed in the group or with someone else, the individual pre-service teachers can then proceed to problem solve and plan more rationally for teaching as demonstrated in the following comments made during the group interview:

Sally: Yeah, the same thing goes for the group you're working with in the class. I like the group I'm working with in the school cause we help each other out and when one of us is having problems, we talk and then when we're feeling better, we help each other. (lines 165-167)

Cheryl: Especially with the reading and language arts. You have to discuss whatever happens in your classroom. Like usually when I leave, I've had a rough day, I call my mom. I tell everything to my mom and she says okay, you're better now? And I say yeah. (lines 244-246)

Hannah: Well half of them are in the reading/language arts class so we just sit and laugh and say wow, cause my language arts teacher is completely different. So one girl gets really completely emotional about it and she's talking and she's fussing and she's like. And our classroom management teacher is like, are you feeling better now? And the teacher tries to tell her how she can talk to her teacher and what she should say and what she should not say. Trying to help her. (lines 298-303)

Do these stories impact these more rational approaches aspect of learning to teach? Clandinin and Connelly (1995, p. 161) contend that they impact teaching in a positive way: "Storytelling can be noneducative, as end in itself, merely, a pleasurable activity. But stories told and retold in these places at least in this study, are educative" (1995, p. 161). So it seems that these teachers intuitively understand the different roles that stories play in the group setting and personal reflection upon them. They seem to acknowledge that group sharing is an emotional process and not about learning to teach. Individual reflection, on the other hand, is where the work of learning to teach occurs. This is consistent with what many researchers maintain stories can do for tellers and listeners. These researchers maintain that stories have strong relationships to problem identification but not problem solving (Bullough, 2008; Gregory, 2009; Polkinghorne, 1988). Bruner (2000) points out that a story "... is an instrument not so much for solving problems as for finding them. We more often tell stories to forewarn than to instruct" (p. 15). Other narrative researchers maintain that stories give the narrator a chance to rehearse solutions that may or may not be put into action (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Mishler, 1999; Schank, 1993).

The Impact

If the individual reflection is where the rational analysis of teaching takes place, what happens as result of this reflection? According to these teachers' statements, they learn about teaching from the stories they hear and tell. When specifically asked what they learn, these teachers did not hesitate to give responses that ranged from specific teaching topics to a general understanding of teaching. Cheryl, for example, responded that "Kids can be very funny. They can be scary sometimes. And from just past stories like you learn a lot about different classes that people have taken and what to expect from the classes." Conversely, Donna and Alice focused more on the experiential aspect of learning to teach.

Donna: I learn that everybody, experiences change. It helps you compare opinions.

(personal interview, line 42)

Alice: What to do and what not to do in the classroom. Someone else makes the mistake and you can learn from their mistakes and try not to do it yourself. (personal interview, lines 39-40)

Sally and Betty offered more generalized answers:

Sally: "Teaching can be hard. It takes a lot to know to be a teacher..." (personal interview, line 27)

Betty: I have a lot to forward to and watch out for. (personal interview, line 50)

It is important to note that these statements appear to be taken out of context, but in fact, the context supports the intent represented in these phrases. For example, the entire conversation that transpired around Alice's contention that these stories help her not make mistakes in her own teaching demonstrates this point:

Interviewer: How does hearing or telling stories help you learn to teach?

Alice: What to do and what not to do in the classroom. Someone else makes the mistake and you can learn from their mistakes and try not to do it yourself.

Interviewer: What kind of mistakes?

Alice: Like teaching or doing certain things when the kids don't behave. I think I'm better prepared and can do things differently.

Interviewer: How does this help?

Alice: (pause) maybe, if I see the same thing happening, I can remember how to do it better, or at least not the same. (personal interview, lines 35-40)

The contexts of the statements made by the other participants were similar.

Different actions

As demonstrated by Alice's comments, in addition to what they learned, these teachers shared what they would do differently as a result of telling and hearing these stories. A review of the transcripts revealed three main categories of answers that emerged in these teachers' descriptions of what they would do differently after hearing other people's stories. These teachers shared that hearing these

stories would enable them to take a different approach to the problem described in the story and be better prepared to teach, set realistic standards for personal teaching performance, and navigate university courses more successfully. After each category is fully described, the impact they have on these teachers will be considered collectively.

The statements describing how hearing stories would enable them to take a different approach to the problem indicated that these teachers were applying lessons learned directly to their practice. Alice, Betty, Donna and Hannah indicated in their statements that, after hearing about the problems someone else had, they would try something different. Additionally, all these teachers indicated that hearing about these problems in story form would aid recall. Hannah, for example, stated “I’ll try to remember what did work. I don’t know if I can remember everything but hearing it in a story does help me remember it better.” Alice echoes this as well: “Even if it’s just from our stories, I feel better hearing people’s stories and knowing that maybe I might not make the same mistakes or make a different choice because I heard someone’s story.”

Furthermore, these statements indicated that this information would be useful to them in the present as well as the future. Donna’s statements illustrate this point: “Well, if it’s something they tried and it didn’t work, you can always recommend to them and try it yourself if it would ever come up.” Statements such as this show that these teachers are experimenting with different ways to teach and are thinking critically about what they are doing.

One should be cautious when making this conclusion, however. These teachers could be merely repeating what they think they should be saying or what they have heard others say. In order to ascertain the accuracy of these statements, one would have to spend time with these teachers in actual classrooms observing actions that could corroborate these beliefs. That, however, is not the purpose of this study. It is sufficient to note that these teachers believe that these stories function this way for them.

In a similar way, Cheryl maintains that hearing stories will help her be better prepared to teach. Cheryl’s statements differed from those offered by Alice, Betty, Donna and Hannah in that she did not refer specifically to trying something different but rather a more generalized vision of what a classroom should be like as illustrated by the following statement:

You can get good experience from other teachers, stuff that they've done that you can always use in your classroom. It helps you to learn the difference between what should be going on and what shouldn't be going on to form your own opinion. Be better prepared for what can possibly happen or what they can possibly say, something they can possibly do. (personal interview, lines 61-63)

Cheryl's statements also seem more future-oriented than those made by the other teachers.

The next category of statements revealed that these stories help at least some of these teachers set more realistic expectation of personal teaching performance. Alice, for example, stated that "It helps me know that no one is a perfect teacher. I think hearing the stories will make me more likely to try things and not be too hard on myself when I try something and it doesn't work." Donna echoes this sentiment in her statement: "I mean even when you're a good teacher, you're gonna always have bad things happen to you so it's not always going to be perfect."

This is interesting because, at least for Alice and Donna, they seem to acknowledge that there will be mistakes made in learning to teach. This admission indicates an understanding of skill development that may be more sophisticated than traditional models of teacher development have proposed. Additionally, this relates to Scheon's findings:

"Preservice teachers should be reminded that the uncertainty they perceive in the problems they encounter is not a result of their lack of experience in the classroom or poor teaching technique, but an inexorable part of the nature of teaching with which they will need to cope even when they are veteran teachers with many years' classroom experience" (2005, p. 670).

The final category of statements reflects these teachers' need to navigate the obstacles they encounter in their methods courses. Cheryl, Betty and Sally all indicate that these stories specifically help them meet the challenges they face in their university courses. All three state that hearing stories helps them choose what not to do in choosing courses and teachers. Betty states, for example, that hearing stories helps her know "not to take a certain teacher." Sally, on the other hand, also offers a view of hearing stories that is more positive in nature: "I think it'll help me do better in my courses and eventually be a better teacher. It helps me understand what I need to learn."

When considered collectively, these categories highlight specific aspects of how these teachers are using these stories to find better ways to teach or process current experiences. These statements reveal that these teachers are engaged in a trial and error approach to learning to teach based on what they experience and hear and the stories demonstrate the temporal nature of how they acquire these teaching skills. This is consistent with what some researchers have discovered about the stories teachers tell. Clandinin et al., for example, describe this process in the following way:

There will always be a tension as we tell and live out stories between received knowing and constructed knowing. As we live out our lives as teachers, our stories are always lived in uncertain contexts and we are always trying to figure out what is the best action to take at any time. (1993, p. 199)

Examples of this tension can be found in the group interview as well as the second personal interview. As discussed earlier, Cheryl expresses frustration with this in the following passage:

There needs to some experience and some explanation as well. Because, like for instance, with Dr. Smith, he doesn't explain it a lot like he wants you to figure it all out on your own. But if it's not right when you figure it out, he doesn't check it. He doesn't go over it with you. And that's a concept I think we're having a hard time with. (group interview, lines 202-205)

Additionally, the idea of a temporal orientation is important because as Clandinin and Connelly pointed out in their study of teacher lives in classrooms, "One lives, looks backward and forward, and then lives again. It is this desire, more so than the desire to know, that drove human experience and was the source of education" (1995, p. 156). Connelly and Clandinin offer that "...humans make meaning of experience by endlessly telling and retelling stories about themselves that both refigure the past and create a purpose in the future" (1988, p. 24).

This is illustrated through the verb tenses used in the narrative and non-narrative discourse in the data. Cheryl, Donna, and Sally make statements that are oriented to present time uses while Alice, Betty and Hannah's responses are more future-oriented. This is interesting because the implication of the literature on learning to teach is that pre-service teachers do not consider such temporal dimensions of learning how to teach (Bullough, 2008; Campoy & Ratcliff, 2002). This data contrasts with that finding.

There was one tantalizing statement in the data that did not seem to fit any emergent category. Sally's statement that "It takes a lot to know to be a teacher and everybody knows something about teaching" is particularly interesting. Unfortunately, I did not follow up on this statement with her to find out exactly what she meant, but it is a tantalizing statement that offers many possible explanations. Sally seems to be saying that there are a lot of stories about teaching that anyone can access if necessary. She also seems to be saying that anyone can provide information on how to be a teacher.

Comparisons

To follow up on the conversation at the end of the group interview, I asked these teachers to share their views on how this storytelling experience compared with other times they have told stories both in and out of their university classes. All six teachers agreed that the sharing of the stories in this group were about the same as their experiences in other group sharing outside the university classes. Cheryl indicated that there was more feedback in other story sharing sessions: "We give each other feedback on their experiences and what they should do with their experiences." Donna and Betty offered contrasting views on the focus of the storytelling as they experienced it in the group interview:

Donna: They were a little more directed. There were more questions about them then there usually are. (personal interview, line 24)

Betty: I think we weren't as focused on one thing or one event like we usually are when we're talking after class. (personal interview, line 29)

When asked to compare this storytelling experience to field experiences and story-type experiences in their university courses, these teachers consistently contended that hearing stories from others was as useful as actual teaching but Donna and Sally state that actual experience is more useful:

Donna: Field experiences are more real. They're the real thing that you do to learn how to be a teacher. Stories are okay but you can't really know everything there is to know about the event because you weren't really there and you're probably missing some really important parts of what was happening. All you're hearing is this one person's idea of what was happening but if other people describe what was going on, it would probably be different. (personal interview, lines 25-28)

Sally: There's a lot more going on in when you're in the classroom than when you're hearing a story. When you're hearing a story, you have to make a picture in your mind and that picture may not be the same one that the person who is telling the story has or even like the one where the stuff really took place. If you had been there, your story might be very different. (personal interview, lines 32-34)

Hannah has a more neutral point of view: "I think both are important. It's better to see for yourself, but it's also good to hear it" (personal interview, line 28). Based on responses in the personal interviews, these teachers did not indicate that they found case studies, journals or written reflections were as helpful to them as oral storytelling.

The flow of conversation in the group interview included a conversation about what was the best way to learn to teach. I followed up on this question in the second personal interview because it seemed that these teachers were well aware of the variety of methods used in their courses and had definite feelings about them. In the second personal interview, it became clear that these teachers had specific ideas about what methods would best help them learn to teach. These teachers emphatically stated that actual, realistic experiences were by far the best way to learn to teach. What qualifies as realistic?

Donna: I like field experiences too but I think that all of these classes you're with someone else or with a group of people or with a small group, it's not realistic. I guess right now you're with a group of kids, but in science methods you've got the whole class but then you're in a group with three or four other people so you've got lots of help. It's not realistic. (group interview, lines 499-502)

Betty echoes this by stating that "I'd rather teach the kids. Like I said earlier, I'd rather teach the kids than teach my peers. It's not realistic at all" (group interview, line 503). Throughout the group and second personal interviews, these teachers expressed concerns that the students they were teaching were not the same as those they expected to be teaching, the lesson plan requirements were not realistic, and that they were receiving too much assistance in teaching situations to make them useful.

Although observation and reflection were most often mentioned, other methods such as peer teaching, case studies, and class discussions of various methods were also mentioned. It is important to note that all of these are experienced based and communal in nature. Bransford et al. (2000) have noted

similar findings: “Two major themes emerge from studies of teacher collaborations: the importance of shared experiences and discourse around texts and data about student learning and a necessity for shared decisions” (p. 198). The necessity for shared decision making will be discussed in the next chapter of this study.

Often these teachers stated that these types of experience were useful only if paired with actual, realistic teaching, however. Sally’s response is typical of these statements: “Actually doing it and then talking to other people about it. I think sharing is important” (personal interview, line 36). Alice echoes this sentiment when describing her experiences observing teachers:

I like observations and field experience, yes. I feel that if, with the observations, once I’m there like a few hours, the same things just happen over and over again, no matter how long you’re there. I’d rather talk to the teacher and talk about it with someone rather than just sit there and observe. (group interview, lines 495-498)

Only Cheryl and Donna offered methods typically included in the current proposed teacher preparation methodology that were not generally considered collaborative. Cheryl stated that direct instruction was sometimes the best way to learn how to teach and Donna mentioned portfolios one time with no elaboration. Since these two responses seemed divergent from the statements made earlier, I followed up for explanation through e-mail conversations. When asked, Cheryl responded by saying

It’s because they want you to do it (teach) a certain way anyway so they just need to tell us what to do and then we can do it. You probably won’t teach that way when you have your own classroom but at least you can get finished with the course work. (e-mail correspondence, April)

When questioned about her response, Donna indicated that it was something she remembered doing in class: “It was fun, but I don’t think it helps me be a better teacher.” (personal interview, line 26)

These comments indicate that these teachers think that communal sharing of stories is important but with certain stipulations. It appears that they have an intuitive understanding of the benefits and shortcomings of the use of stories in learning to teach.

Acceptance and Rejection

Interviewer: Would you like to see more storytelling incorporated in methods courses?

Donna: Yeah, if it's relevant and worthwhile stories too. If it's something off the wall then, you know, or if it's a class and it's story after story about things kids say, well that gets kind of redundant cause all kids say crazy things, you know. (group interview, lines 605-617)

To follow up on this comment, I asked "Which story do you think was most useful" in each personal interview. Bruner contends that this is the real mystery of stories:

Once we have characterized a text in terms of its structure, its linguistic form, its genre, its multiple levels of meaning, and the rest, we may still wish to discover how and in what ways the text affects the reader...What makes great stories reverberate with such liveliness in our ordinarily mundane minds? (1986, p. 4)

The responses from these teachers did not refer to specific stories, but rather to generalized characteristics of stories. This could reflect the fact that these teachers had already processed these particular stories and had moved on mentally. It could have also been due to the fact that these teachers had already developed an intuitive, mental organizational structure for analyzing and categorizing the stories they hear.

These discussions revealed that these teachers had developed a sense of what kinds of stories were most useful to them. By carefully studying their comments, specific characteristics emerged for stories that they could use. I classified the stories that these teachers described as being useful as accepted stories and those that were not seen as being useful as rejected stories. The responses indicated that these teachers are looking carefully at such characteristics as story sources, topics and personal relevance to evaluate the stories they hear. Interestingly, these teachers seemed to apply a variety of criteria to the stories they hear. Each story characteristic will be discussed and then interpreted collectively.

Source

Not surprisingly, Alice, Cheryl and Donna state that stories from classroom teachers are more useful than other types of stories, but neither indicates that they seek classroom teachers out for those

stories. Alice's response is typical: "Any teacher that has been teaching for a while or that has taught for a while. I mean, I think they're stories, again, you can learn what to do and what not to do from them because they've done it" (personal interview, lines 32-34). Donna's comments add another dimension to this contention:

I think it's ones that, I mean it's teachers who obviously tell useful stories, but I mean to define what's useful. I think that teachers who you think are being honest and, you know, who will dramatically tell their story. (personal interview, lines 60-61))

Hannah, on the other hand, views stories told by professors to be the most useful:

I would listen to a professor. My husband thinks that if a professor hasn't been in a classroom for a while, then she's not reliable. But I think that at least she's been there and some things may be different but she's also teaching about that so she's made the whole circle. She's supposed to read up on the information. My husband thinks they haven't have direct experience with how kids have changed. I think a professor has to study and learn new ways more than a classroom teacher, I mean they have to keep up and teach others so they can't stick to their old ways. (personal interview, lines 61-65)

By contrast, Sally expresses a more generalized skepticism that is not connected to any one group:

I look at the person telling the story, is this someone I believe? I wonder how they know this and if it really happened. But there are some people who go on and on about stuff. But some of that *makes me wonder* if it's just their personalities, because there are some people in that group who just bring out the worst in some people. There's probably millions of stories that are terrible. (personal interview, lines 55-57)

Betty, who indicated in the group interview that she often talks with her neighbor about students, does not mentioned any story sources but rather focuses on the content of the story:

I think about the story. Some of them, I believed probably could have happened but some of them seemed out of character or something. Some of them don't seem as realistic as others. They were blown out of proportion. (personal interview, lines 55-56)

Interestingly, along these same lines, these teachers indicated that certain pre-service teachers were seen as being more likely to have more reliable stories than others. The nature of these comments

reveals that group dynamics also influence this perspective. According to comments made during the personal interviews, these teachers indicated that they sought out and shared their stories with selected colleagues. Alice, for example, stated “In our classes, we have our friends that we work with. We know who we can trust and who we can’t” (personal interview, line 65)). She restated this position in the second personal interview as well: “We all try to work together whenever we can. I don’t like it when new people are in our group. I don’t want to be mean or anything but it’s just easier to work with people you know” (personal interview, lines 68-69). Betty made a similar statement in our first personal interview: “I like to work with certain people, people who think like I do and we can get things done” (personal interview, lines 60). Cheryl, Sally and Donna also make similar comments in the personal interviews. While not saying that she discounts anyone’s stories, Hannah related that she had developed strong friendships with certain other pre-service teachers: “I actually became really good friends with someone in one of my classes and now our kids play together. We go to the gym together and we try to take the same classes so we can do our project together and everything” (personal interview, lines 74-75). It may be possible to infer from this that pre-service teachers select colleagues who think in a similar way and seek out the stories these people tell.

The same seems to hold true for stories from teacher educators. Alice, for example, expresses skepticism about stories she hears from one of her university teachers: “With the one teacher who, I mean, for one of my courses, I mean some of her stories didn’t really go with the way she, I mean like, her time line of where she was at this particular time, with how old she is, with things that she’s done. I don’t think I believe too much that she said” (personal interview, lines 63). Sally and Hannah, on the other hand, indicate that there were specific university teachers with whom they would share their stories:

Sally: I would go to my science teacher because she’s a good listener.

Hannah: The teacher. She is so interested and involved in science and she makes everything fun and she explains things. If we have questions about it, it’s not like going to class in reading and language arts and somebody jumping down your throat about the question. And calling you closed minded. (group interview, lines 161-164)

Donna and Betty make similar statements in their personal interview. Cheryl does not comment on this.

There may be specific reasons that these stories are accepted or rejected. Differing philosophies and personal characteristics play an important role in how stories are perceived. The dilemmas these teachers are facing could also have an impact on source credibility. Bruner, for example, states that “When circumstances ready us for change, we turn to others who have lived through one, become open to new trends and new ways of looking at ourselves in the world” (2000, p. 84). It is possible that these teachers have not hit the critical circumstance that readies them for change. Finally, the group dynamics may influence how the story source is perceived (Grossman et al., 2000). This is reflected in Sally’s comment that “Sometimes I wonder if people aren’t telling stories just to be telling stories or they feel like they have to say something.” The story source is not the only factor that influences whether a story is accepted or rejected, however.

Content/topics

While the observation that the content or story topic affects whether a story is accepted or rejected is somewhat surprising, the topics suggested for useful stories were not. They ranged from generalized topics such as behavior management and how to handle kids to more specific topics such as how to deal with parents. Cheryl’s response is typical:

I think more behavior management with the kids. You don’t hear a lot of stories about behavioral issues. You just hear a lot about stories about things kids say and stuff like that, so I think I’d like to hear more about behavioral issues, like a behavior problem they’ve experienced and what they’ve done about it. (personal interview, lines 59-60)

This is similar to Donna’s contention that she would like to hear “Teacher stories about how to handle the kids”(personal interview, line 41). Sally offers a more generalized view when she says she would like to hear stories about “how to teach something. I’d like to hear more stories about what to do if this or that happens to you in the classroom” (personal interview, line 50). Betty’s response is similar:

I’d like to hear more stories about the kids and the daily routine of things. There were a lot of stories about students who were different but there needs to be stories about what’s normal. (personal interview, lines 66-67).

These statements are consistent with the topics of the stories these teachers told and the non-narrative discourse in the group interview. While this was consistent, other perspectives were not.

Shifting standards

It is interesting that there were diverse perspectives on what was not useful in the stories these teachers hear. There were particular types of stories that Hannah, Donna and Sally specifically stated were not useful for them. These included funny stories, stories complaining about university teachers, or stories that did not match personal expectations. Hannah, for example, stated that stories “complaining about the university teachers” were not useful for her. It is interesting to note that her stories and non-narrative comments in the group interview are consistent with this perspective. Hannah also adds that “Things that don’t match my philosophy I tend to ignore.” Sally and Donna hold similar views about which stories are not useful.

Sally: The funny things that kids say or do are fun but I don’t learn a lot from them.

(personal interview, line 69)

Donna: The ones from my friends, just the fun stories.

Interviewer: Why do you think those are least useful?

Donna: Because it happens to everybody. Everybody’s been with a funny child and that’s not something you have to deal with in the classroom. I mean, it’s funny but it’s not a problem that you have to deal with in the classroom. (personal interview, lines 52-54)

This contrasts with the criteria they hold for their own stories, however. Donna, for example, states that funny stories are not useful but during the group interview offers a humorous tale of “The Social Guy” and also states in the second personal interview that she shares funny stories with her mother: “I’ll mention stuff to my mother, little things that the kids say that I think is funny.”

There is another deviation from this point of view in Alice’s and Betty’s response to the questions of which stories are not useful indicate that all stories are useful in some way:

Alice: I don’t think any of them were not useful or least useful. I think they were all the same level. I would take them all and use them all. (personal interview, line 25)

Betty: None. I just think anybody’s experience in the field I’m going in is important knowledge for me to know. As far as, I mean, I’ve never been there so. (personal interview, lines 34)

Of all the teachers, Cheryl presents statements with the greatest number of conflicts. In the personal interview she states “I really haven’t heard any stories that I think that aren’t useful. I think some of them aren’t as relevant as others, but I think they’re all useful in some way” (personal interview, lines 21-22).

When asked to clarify this, Cheryl adds that

They don’t match what you’ll probably be doing in your classroom. I don’t think I’ll ever be working with students like some of the ones I’m working with now so I don’t think those stories will help me directly but I might come across something just like it and it may help me a little bit. (personal interview, lines 24-25)

In looking at transcripts, it became clear that these participants were differentiating between the stories they share with their peers and those that they hear from others. Although most of the stories they shared were of personal experience, they seemed to indicate in the second personal interviews that they view the stories they tell as serving a different function and having a different value than the stories they hear from others, especially classroom teachers and university professors.

For these teachers, accepted stories were described as unique, relevant, “normal,” honest, realistic, useable, related to field experiences and dramatic. Characteristics of rejected stories included those in which events were unrealistic, were missing something important, told by a person who may not be credible, too universal or redundant, and unrelated to personal needs.

The Discoveries

These brief stories seem to be doing a great deal of work for these students. They process emotion, direct group dynamics and bonding, inform the teachers about class practices, and help them navigate their university courses. These teachers are also quite specific about what constitutes a satisfying narrative experience and what types of stories are most useful.

It also appears that, while they have heard and processed many stories, they are still looking for “good” stories. One gets the sense that these teachers feel that something is missing, although they cannot exactly articulate what that something is. Alice says “But I guess we’re missing the structure in the classrooms and we’re in there seeing that that’s not a typical classroom.” The other teachers’ responses are similar:

Cheryl: but there needs to be stories about what’s normal. (personal interview, line 30))

Donna: Maybe when I get into the classroom, I'll say why didn't we talk about that.

(personal interview, line 43)

Hannah: I would imagine there would be something we would miss but I don't know what it would be. (personal interview, line 40)

Sally: I don't know enough about teaching to know what I still need to know. That's why I like to talk to classroom teachers, they know more than we do and can tell us what we need to know. (personal interview, lines 38-39)

These comments show that there may be some reflection occurring with these teachers but it is minimal. Furthermore, what is questionable is whether these stories are educative. These participants indicated that hearing and telling stories increases memory and the ability to retrieve information, provides feedback on performance, increases their preparedness to teach, and helps understand what to expect in their own classes. These are very generalized comments that might lead one to suspect that, although these teachers verbalize these perspectives, they may not apply to actual practice. Clandinin and Connelly offered this explanation of this phenomenon in their own study of teacher stories:

Education involves cultivation, awakenings and transformations. Cultivation is the living and telling of life stories. But education also involves change in these stories. Ultimately we see most of the cultivations, awakenings, and transformations described in this book as miseducative for teachers. They do not lead to more initiative, increase creativity, more spontaneity, greater reflectivity, or the creation of more moral places in schools. At the conclusion of their stories they feel saddened and powerless. (1995, p. 158-159)

The teachers in this study do not seem saddened and powerless but rather overwhelmed and hopeful. There is a sense that these teachers believe that the right method, the right context or the right knowledge is out there for them to find. For them, these stories seem to support that hope.

Chapter Seven

And Now the Story is Yours

*The more that you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.
Dr. Suess*

Why are stories more than just stories? As discussed in the first chapter, we are surrounded by stories that influence how we perceive the world around us. Stories we listen to are more than just stories because they persuade and instruct us. We can be drawn in or marginalized by the stories that others tell. Stories we tell are more than just stories because they are identity performances, demonstrations of preconceptions, or communication of our concerns to others. Whether considering our own personal stories, philosophical insights gleaned from *Star Trek* or latest insurance commercial, the knowledge about our world and ourselves is stored, retrieved and managed through various narrative processes (Schank, 1993; Bruner, 1996). This is important because as Gregory (2009) points out

“Nothing should be clearer by now than my passionate belief that we do ourselves an injustice not to think hard and evaluate carefully the potential ethical influence of the stories that we put into our hearts and head because, like any other form of nutrition, their contents nourish us either richly or poorly”(p. 193).

Just as significant is the need to prepare teachers to teach students who are being subjected to highly influential stories from a greater variety of sources than ever before. The typical elementary or high school student spends more time watching television or webcasts or playing video games than any other generation. For these children, movie directors and producers such as Peter Jackson and George Lucas or video game creators such as Marc Laidlaw (writer of *Half-life 2*) and Matt Costello (writer of *Pirates of the Caribbean* video games) are the most influential thinkers of the day with whom teachers must compete (Lindley, 2005; Castronova, 2006). This means that time in the classroom is a precious commodity that must be used to its fullest capacity and beginning teachers must be equipped with new and enhanced teaching skills.

Simply imparting knowledge about teaching and children is not a simple task, however. Is teaching an art or a science? How can teachers address the myriad of cultural and educational

differences that occur in a classroom of students? What preconceptions do the teachers and students bring to any lesson? Society and those charged with responsibility for preparing tomorrow's teachers are asking these and many other questions about how teachers go about their daily work. To address these concerns, NCATE has proposed that "...norms in teacher preparation and licensing change" (2008, p. 3).

In response to these demands, teacher educators have carefully considered how to make changes in the way they prepare new teachers for classroom life. In response to popular disdain for "book learning" and through deliberation and investigation, they have discovered that, while there are many ways to approach learning to teach, using experience in reflective ways appears to be the most promising (Bransford et al., 2005c). While it has been generally agreed that experience is the best way to learn to teach, how to address the role of experience in learning to teach is being debated (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005b). The use of stories and narrative is a promising avenue of tapping into those experiences and explicating them for use in learning to teach as well as addressing the societal concerns confronting new teachers (Bullough, 2008).

Many forms of narrative including case studies, journaling, and reflective dialogue are being investigated to see how they manifest themselves within university classes (Hammerness et al., 2005). The use of story as pedagogy, however, is not without its challenges. Storytelling is such an integral part of the complexity of who we are and how we learn, that it is difficult to codify a process that will produce reliable results (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Additionally, using stories in university methodology is difficult for more practical reasons. Foremost, group dynamics make sharing stories in most university courses problematic (Grossman et al., 2000). This is because the trusting relationships that are necessary for effective use of narrative are difficult to foster in university classes. The pre-service teacher must be concerned with what can be shared with peers as well as university educators. The fear of evaluative reprisal looms large for these teachers (Bullough, 2008, Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). As Alice said, "...but then a lot of the venting would have been about her and we couldn't exactly vent about her to her". When asked to elaborate on this, Alice restated positions similar to those made in her story "Stupid Stuff." Specifically, she said, "Teachers remember what students say about them and then take points off from your work" (personal interview, line 68). Because of the variety of circumstances in which they share stories, individuals

quickly learn to become the guardians of their own stories. As Estes points out, “As keeper of the stories, I can give them or not. It depends on no five-point plan, but on a science of soul, depending on the day and the relationship” (1992, p. 464). Pre-service teachers swiftly learn this as well.

Also of concern is the limited amount of time that pre-service teachers spend in university classes and field placements in preparation for teaching (Marks, 2005). This means that pre-service teachers have many opportunities to interact with others outside classroom and field experiences and few have considered how these outside influences impact what they learn. This is important for two reasons. First, as most teachers know, students quickly learn to play the role expected of them in the classroom whether it is their true feeling or not (Brasewell & Cobia, 2000). Second, because preconceptions and beliefs about teaching are so persistent, what teacher educators do within their classes can quickly be undone through interactions with others outside the institution (Doecke & McKnight, 2002). In order to fully understand how pre-service teachers use stories to learn to teach, it becomes incumbent on researchers to investigate how narrative is used outside of the classroom and field experience.

Time is also a factor in that it takes time to fully develop, share and think about one’s story of teaching (Doecke and McKnight, 2002; Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995). Things happen quickly in university courses and pre-service teachers often have to juggle many time-consuming tasks simultaneously. Many of these teachers see taking the time to develop those stories as more theoretical than practical and, for a group that values action over theory, this is an unacceptable use of their time.

Last, learning to teach is a highly emotional task for the pre-service teacher (Bullough, 2008; Britzman, 2003). While most teacher educators are trying to impart theoretical frameworks that inform practice, the pre-service teacher is trying to understand and process feelings associated with the thrills and chills of teaching. These challenges are important considerations when considering the use of narrative with pre-service teachers. With great challenge often comes great potential, however. It was with these concerns that I embarked on this study.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

I wanted to know what kind of stories these pre-service teachers were telling and how the stories influenced what they knew about teaching. Specifically, I hoped to understand the tacit beliefs these participants may have and their awareness of the role these stories play in how they learn to be teachers.

Through the analysis of structure, context, function and meaning, I wanted to learn what these participants were taking out of the conversations they have outside their university courses that would apply to their future behaviors as a teacher. What I found was enlightening and surprising.

This study focused on the following question: What kind stories do pre-service teachers tell about their experiences as students and their teaching experiences? In order to answer this question, I looked at narrative elements such as story sources, images of teacher in the story and types of stories. Furthermore, I investigated the personal relationships these teachers had to their own and stories told by others. How useful do pre-service teachers perceive these stories to be? What is it about these stories that make pre-service teachers think they are useful or believable? How do their stories impact actions and perceptions about teaching? The most important aspect of this study, however, was to inform teacher educators about ways to influence this process and improve current methods of preparing teachers for classroom practice. These questions guided and shaped the data analysis to find the answers to these questions.

Findings of This Study

As findings became apparent from this study, it soon became clear that there were no simple answers to these questions. I began this study thinking that these stories would indicate what kinds of tacit knowledge and preconceptions these teachers might possess about teaching. However, I soon discovered that this issue was much more complicated.

Furthermore, as I continued to study these stories, my methods evolved from a narrative to a phenomenological study—the story was the study. While in some cases considering the individual who was telling the story was useful, it soon became clear that the most enlightening information would grow from considering the stories collectively. This not unlike Clandinin and Connelly's assertion that the narrative inquirer often strays from narrative into other frameworks:

As work proceeds, narrative inquirers will discover that aspects of their work have features that some call ethnographic, and other aspects have features that some call phenomenological, and so forth. As one makes the transition from field texts to research texts, these theoretical considerations again come to the fore as inquirers position their research texts theoretically (2000, p. 128).

For this study, therefore, I began looking at the stories collectively to search for patterns and themes rather than connecting the stories to individual participants. What I found was intriguing. I was expecting the conversations in the group interview to be awash with detailed stories of children, teachers and schools. Instead there were only the barest fragments of stories. As I carefully studied and examined these stories, I was reminded of Estes's comments on resurrecting the bones: "The sole work of *La Loba*, the wolf woman, is the collecting of bones. She is known to collect and preserve especially that which is in danger of being lost in the world" (1992, p. 27). This study, therefore, was an attempt to collect, preserve and resurrect the stories these pre-service teachers told.

In doing this, four major, overlapping findings emerged from this study. First, the stories that these teachers told had many consistent structural features. The most notable structural feature was that they were not fully formed and lacked detailed descriptions of characters, settings and problem resolution. The structure of these stories also reflected an emphasis of practical action over theoretical reflection. This led to the conclusion that these teachers were using stories to process emotion, not knowledge. Emotions associated with stories seemed to be only peripherally considered by other researchers, but this study demonstrated that emotions were the central focus of these stories. Second, the type of story the teacher told was related to the storyteller's personal characteristics. Like emotions, identity demonstrated in stories has been a focus of many narrative studies, but these stories demonstrated that the person portrayed in was a deeply embedded personality and not some quickly adopted, superficial persona for the situation as indicated in the research. Similarly, the third finding is that these teachers already consider themselves to be teachers and have fully formed ideas about how they should learn to teach. Fourth, these teachers are inconsistent about stories. That is, these teachers often said one thing, but their stories demonstrated something completely different. Additionally, there were two sets of standards: one for those that they told and one for those that they heard. These teachers told and reacted to stories in very specific ways. Each finding will be considered more fully.

Processing emotion

Structural analysis of the stories these teachers told revealed consistent features regardless of whether they were stories of personal experience or stories appropriated from others. It was no surprise that most of the stories told were about experiences within classrooms associated with university field

experiences or courses. Also not surprising was that there were more personal stories than appropriated ones and more horror than optimistic ones. Classroom management was the topic of most of these stories. These stories were not reflective but rather a simple retelling of events using some emotionally charged language. What was surprising was that they were all incomplete and lacked details concerning characters, settings and problem resolution. They were the bare bones of stories. In fact, throughout the group interview most of the stories were just barely stories at all. These teachers also seemed reluctant to elaborate on the stories they told. There were no metaphors or other linguistic features other than the repetition of certain words or use of intensifiers in these stories. It is this emotion that is demonstrated in the stories that proved to be the most insightful aspect of the structural features.

Some researchers have acknowledged the need to address emotion when working with pre-service and beginning teachers but little research has actually been conducted in this area (Bullough, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). This is unfortunate because Bandura maintains that emotions are related to a sense of efficacy and researchers have established that efficacy is an important factor in how one learns to teach (Watzke, 2002). The most instructive finding of this study was the role that emotion plays in the reason these participants tell their stories. The emotions are reflected in the language used in the stories through use of intensifiers such as *really* or *very* and repetition of words such as *scary* (Lieblich et al., 1998). It appears, that for this group of teachers, the main implicit purpose for telling stories is to release emotional concerns about teaching and university survival.

Despite the emotional intensity, however, it was especially interesting that these pre-service teachers process experiences quickly and with little recall of all but the most extreme experiences. The immediate, personal experience stories were shared shortly after the experience with whomever was deemed safe or supportive. This process of sharing was not about finding solutions but rather releasing the emotions associated with them or just being heard. This is consistent with Schank's assertion that story telling exerts both positive and negative influences on memory and learning:

Without a lesson, we have difficulty remembering something. We can tell a story of what happened to us yesterday, for example, but if we didn't learn a lesson from what happened to us, we won't remember a year later what we said or much of what occurred.

Once the story has been composed and told, the forgetting process begins. Of course, memory maintains the newly created story. But, and here is the key prediction, a story must be told fairly often to retain its status as a viable, that is, findable memory structure. In other words, if you have a bad experience, you should compose the story, tell it once, and never tell it again. The sooner you tell a story, the sooner you can begin to forget it—by never telling it again. If you want to remember the story, on the other hand, keep telling it. Telling stories is fundamentally a memory reinforcing process. The more you tell, the more you remember. (1993, p. 140-141)

Despite their claims of wanting to hear others' stories, appropriated stories are not as important to these teachers as their own experiences, leading one to suspect that there is the need to process personal emotions is the first order of business for these teachers. Although these teachers appeared sympathetic to the stories other teachers told, the appropriated stories seem to be more quickly forgotten than personal stories. Furthermore, when these teachers share stories, they usually share their own stories and not appropriated ones.

Once the emotion is processed, there is evidence that these teachers discard them and these stories have little or no relation to how they are learning to teach. There are many possible explanations for this which will be discussed later, but for now, it's important to understand how this impacts teacher

This finding contrasts with Malkani and Allen (2005) who contend that "it appears that the 'reflective' part of the pedagogical practices that may be more important than the form." It is important to note, however, that theirs was a quantitative study that investigated reflective activities that have written components. This study highlights that just orally sharing stories with randomly selected listeners may not have the same value.

Bullough, on the other hand, argues that emotion is an important part of the learning process that results in judgments about people and circumstances (2008). Only recently have those who wish to understand how teachers learn to teach come to understand the role that emotions play in this process, however, despite Bullough's claim that "It is within the realm of the emotions as constitutive of the self and as central to teaching success that lies one of the most important areas of research for teacher educators" (2008, p. 118). Those researchers who have carefully studied the impact of emotions on

learning to teach have made important discoveries. For example, Hawkey (2006) found that emotions played an important role in how pre-service teachers were able to understand and use feedback from mentors which, in turn, affected how they implemented suggestions from these colleagues. Bullough (2008) found that student teachers demonstrated a somewhat consistent emotional roller coaster type trajectory during their teaching assignments and that "...was one of growing confidence, grounded in increasing instructional competence and emotional control" (p. 10). Other researchers found that emotions are part of the reflective process but are only useful if shared communally (Armstrong, 2007; Scheon, 2005).

This is instructive because if these teachers are using these stories to process emotion rather than knowledge and university educators are focusing on knowledge, then communication will quickly become difficult. Neither the university educators nor pre-service teachers understand the context of the conversation they are having. It might be more important for university educators to understand that these stories may be pre-rational reflections. In other words, pre-service teachers may need to engage in this emotional venting prior to dealing with the technical rationality of teaching. It may, in fact, be a necessary first step in the reflective process. Only more research will substantiate this.

What is known is that these emotional issues are directly related to a pre-service teacher's efficacy and identity (Hammerness et. al., 2005). This is important because efficacy is an important factor in how one learns to teach and identity creation is most active during pre-service and beginning teaching phases. According to some researchers, identity changes rapidly during this time (Britzman, 2003; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Bullough, 2008). Furthermore, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) linked identity and context of the experience to the types of knowledge practitioners acquire about teaching and students. Emotion, therefore, is connected to identity and knowledge formation and this study highlighted some interesting aspects of identity formation through teaching experiences that were important.

Identities are deeply embedded

The third finding of this study was that there are strong relationships between the types of stories told or heard and the personality of the story teller or listener. We are our stories. This is not new, but what this study shows is that, while many researchers contend that stories are told to project what the teller wishes others to think they know about him or her, I found that these stories portray who the

storyteller really is and not some easily adopted persona for the listener. Some aspects of this finding are consistent with the literature on teacher preparation and some provide new insights.

Despite the limited amount of time I spent with them, I came to know these six pre-service elementary education students fairly well and developed a sense of who they were as people, not just teachers. Although these participants were very similar in age, culture, and experience, they manifested a variety of attitudes, identities, and personalities that resulted in differing ways in how they related to me and the others in the group. They were also taking similar courses and participating in similar field experiences but approached them with varying degrees of acceptance and anticipation.

I soon discovered that in this non-formal setting, an optimistic person tells more optimistic stories. Those who feel overwhelmed or distraught about their experiences tell more horror stories. Alice and Hannah, for example, demonstrated an optimistic personality in their stories and non-narrative comments. On the other hand, Sally's stories were those of frustrated teacher and Cheryl's stories were those of frustrated teacher and university student. Their non-narrative comments also reflected this type of personality.

This is important because, while identity is situational and relational, it is, like perceptions, deeply entrenched (Chambers, Henson & Sienty, 2001). Connelly and Clandinin's characterization of identity as "story to live by" is particularly applicable to this set of teachers (1999). In their research, Connelly and Clandinin maintain that a teacher's story to live by can only be altered when the tension on the school landscape becomes great enough to cause change. Clandinin et al. assert that any change to the story to live by is gradual, not instant and by no means guaranteed: "We also saw how being comfortable in our stories to live by might mean we become stuck in a story. We might dismiss the tension or we might stay with it, scaffolding a new story to live by." (2006, p. 133) Tensions might arise from issues of power and authority that cause teachers to modify their behavior (Clandinin & Connelly, 2006) or configurations of the school community (Rosenholtz, 1991)

It is unclear if this holds true in university course discussions, but does reflect underlying characteristics which will impact how information from experience is processed and occurs concurrently with the teller's portrayal of identities in stories such as colleague or frustrated teacher and the need to process emotional aspects of learning to teach. Although Connelly and Clandinin (1999) maintain that

teachers can “restory” themselves to think about their teaching in new ways, the process begins with the original story. If that original story is silenced, then the process of thinking of the situation and themselves as teachers has to occur outside the school environment. Connelly and Clandinin refer to this as being silenced by the “sacred story” (1999, p. 154). According to these researchers, when that happens, teachers tell stories elsewhere. This is not unlike the stories Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Donna told of university teachers who did not want to hear negative stories about their classroom experiences. This causes these teachers to look for other outlets to process these stories as noted in Connelly and Clandinin’s contention that “While teachers can be silenced by the sacred theory-practice story in its many guises, stories nevertheless, bubble up because they must. It is a way, perhaps the most basic way, that humans make meaning of their experience” (1999, p. 154). This research shows that those who are overseeing the field experiences in which these pre-service teachers are engaging should understand that such stories that may be classified as judgmental or resistant are signs of frustration or being overwhelmed. Learning to teach, therefore, begins with dealing with these emotions before other more theoretical aspects of learning to be a teacher can be addressed.

Furthermore, the stories these teachers told indicated that they were more concerned with university survival than classroom survival. They held a high sense of efficacy about their ability to teach a “real” class but seemed convinced that the university was not providing the right kinds of experiences for them to develop their skills further. This is important because other researchers found that this sense of efficacy is most likely to determine future teaching behaviors (Brasewell & Cobia, 2000; Hay & White, 2005; Wingfield & Nath, 2000). Other researchers also have noted that pre-service and beginning teachers have a higher sense of efficacy (Witcher et al., 2002).

These teachers also exhibited characteristics consistent with Hammerness et al.’s (2005) contention that pre-service and beginning teachers exhibit more concern for self and teaching performance than students and student learning. Most of these teachers also exhibited characteristics of distrust of abstract information presented by university teachers as noted in Berliner’s paradigm of teacher development (1991). Only Hannah indicated that she felt what the university educators were doing would be helpful to her.

Identity and efficacy also have strong ties to preconceptions about teaching. Consistent with past and current literature on learning to teach, prior experience strongly influenced the current experience and preconceptions these teachers held. Cheryl, for example, stated that

So it's like the stuff she was trying to tell us and trying to teach us, the case studies we would get, I felt was useless to me because I never had to deal with problems of diversity. I never had that issue. So it's like I thought, I mean I thought it was interesting but for me, it wasn't realistic because I never experienced that. (personal interview, lines 76-78)

The tendency to rely on prior experiences to judge what is appropriate teaching was clearly demonstrated by most of these participants throughout the interviews. As demonstrated by Cheryl's statements above, this led these teachers to accept or reject new methods of teaching based on its conformity to their expectations of teaching. While it is unclear if reflective activities in their courses would cause this situation to change, it is clear that the story swapping that occurs among pre-service teachers does not. The preconceptions and beliefs are unchallenged, unprocessed and unimportant for these teachers.

They are teachers

Equally enlightening was the fact that, in spite of the reality they had not completed their coursework, all of these participants saw themselves as teachers and felt they knew the best way to learn to teach. That is not to say that they thought they were good teachers but even when portraying themselves as frustrated teachers, they still were teachers first and students second. This is particularly evident in the stories in which these teachers portrayed themselves as colleagues and capable teachers but even the stories of being a frustrated teacher implied a sense of self as teacher. The identities of colleague and frustrated teacher offer opposing views of the types of relations these teachers are establishing with other classroom teachers. Hannah, for example, engages in an enlightening exchange with her teacher cousin in a way that proves that she is as an equal to this classroom teacher. Sally, on the other hand, is highly critical of the classroom teachers in a way that implies she is capable of identifying good teaching practices and there is a sense of collegial betrayal in Sally's stories.

Most insightful about this aspect of these teachers' identity are Donna's comments on university expectations:

I think all the lesson plan idea is pushed on us, like in ... principles, it was, you could not get any kind of idea off the internet. You just had to come up with a lesson out of your head. I mean in teaching, you never have to come up with a lesson out of your head. You're given a subject, you're given you know, what you have to accomplish and then you make it up. And rarely have to make it up, there's so many ideas everywhere for lesson plans and lessons. I think it's ridiculous that you have to come up with something off the top of your head when you're teaching. And honestly, I never follow a lesson plan. I mean, I know the activities to where I'll stand up, and then there's teachers that want you to write out word for word what you're going to say, what you're going to ask. And you never know what you're going to say, what you're going to ask. It all pertains to the kids that day, to you that day, to what's going on in the classroom. (group interview, lines 407-418)

These comments demonstrate that Donna is comparing what the university is expecting her to do with what she knows about teaching: there are specific sources of lessons that teachers access and how teachers act when they are teaching. These comments show that she already considers herself a capable teacher.

Additionally, there seemed to be no consistency between their identity as teachers and students. That is to say that one could be a capable teacher and frustrated university student at the same time. While Cheryl, Sally and Hannah maintained consistent identities as teacher and student, Alice, Betty, and Donna were frustrated students and capable teachers. This contrasts with Cheryl, for example, whose identities included frustrated teacher and student. It is interesting that Alice, Betty and Donna held such opposite identities which may suggest that in their minds, these were two separate roles that did not impact one another.

This leads one to question the source of this teaching identity. Did they possess this identity prior to starting their coursework or did it develop during initial courses? Nevin et al. found that "local and regional cultural iconic representations of teachers may be a factor in teacher identity formation" (p. 20,

2009). The biographies that these teachers offer, however, show no clear pattern as to the source of this identity. Cheryl, Donna, Hannah and Sally indicated that their choice to become a teacher was influenced by interactions with others which could be the source of their teaching identity. Betty, on the other hand, chose teaching as a career as a practical matter in that it would allow her to raise her children more easily and Alice simply stated that she always wanted to be a teacher. Donna offers an interesting observation when discussing what is the best way to learn to teach: "...some people aren't just made to be teachers and you can be taught to be a teacher, you just, most good teachers it just comes natural to them." This could imply that these teachers felt an innate teaching personality existed prior to entering their education courses.

Research indicates that pre-service teachers have spent a great deal of time observing teaching from the point of view of the student (Britzman, 2003; Bullough, 2008). Some have suggested that this "apprenticeship of observation" leads the pre-service teacher to assume that teaching is a straightforward process (Hammerness et al., 2005). Researchers also contend that it is this situation which is the source of many preconceptions pre-service teachers have about teaching (Hammerness et al., 2005). This study suggests that the most important preconception of all is that when they decide to enter their teacher preparation program, they become a teacher.

The support for this contention lies in the stories that they tell as well as the dialogue that exists in the group and personal interviews. For example, there seems to be a collegial relationship in stories such as Hannah's story, *You Don't Know What You Know* and Betty's story, *What Works*. Sally's stories, on the other hand, imply that what she was seeing was not the way she would behave in a similar situation. Donna states, "If you don't agree with the philosophy, you shouldn't be there" suggesting that she understands something about school culture. Betty is critical of the way she has to write lesson plans because she says that real teachers don't do write them that way. All of these clues suggest that these teachers are evaluating others' images of teaching based by comparing them to their own performance.

Furthermore, these teachers specifically stated that experience was the best way to teach. While there was agreement that experience was a component of the best way to learn to teach, these teachers stated that experience should be coupled with other interactive methods. Alice, for example, suggested observation followed by actual teaching while Sally suggested teaching and then talking with others about

it. This suggests that these participants have some understanding that experience alone is not sufficient for learning to teach. What differs is what the something else is that must be paired with the experience. Perhaps these assertions come from the preconceptions these teachers have about teaching. Perhaps they come from the experiences they have already had in their methods courses. Alice offers a hint of this when she states

I feel that if, with the observations, once I'm there like a few hours, the same things just happen over and over again, no matter how long you're there. I'd rather talk to the teacher and talk about it with someone rather than just sit there and observe. (group interview, lines 495-498)

In this statement, Alice seems to indicate that she has already done this type of activity and is thinking about how it might be conducted more efficiently for her. This type of rational analysis contrasts sharply with the emotional analysis of what is happening in their field experiences.

Ironically, in spite of their assertions that the university was not providing adequate experiences for them, these teachers named methods that are consistent with the literature for teacher preparation. These methods included observations, peer teaching, reflection, portfolios, and case studies. Cheryl also offered that direct instruction should be used in the courses. She supports this by saying "There are some things that you can learn from an experience but sometimes, the teachers just need to tell you what to do and you do it." Perhaps the most salient aspect of this is that pre-service teachers, like all learners, gravitate toward some reflective activities and reject others. Scheon (2005) obtained similar results in a study of pre-service teachers and suggested that teacher educators should seek to understand "...why some reflective processes and contexts might be more successful with some pre-service teachers than others" (p. 675).

So these stories demonstrated important characteristics about these teachers that would be insightful for university educators. The characteristics of the identity portrayed in their stories including efficacy, strong influence of prior experience, and personality traits impact how new information is accepted and processed. Using these clues would help teacher educators guide reflections and discussions of experiences. For example, if the pre-service teachers felt comfortable enough to share such insights with them, the teacher educator could structure questions in such a way to help them clarify

their perceptions. When Sally states that the teachers she observed were not acting professionally, the teacher educator could have Sally describe what should have happened, why it should have happened, and how she knows these things.

Particular about stories

In further study of how these teachers use stories, it soon became clear that these teachers were very specific about the kinds of stories they told and heard. These teachers seemed to classify stories as accepted or rejected stories. Accepted stories were those that offered insights into how to handle specific teaching situations that they would be most likely to encounter while stories that should be rejected were those that were unrealistic. These stories were not told for entertainment but were part of the serious business of learning to teach. More importantly, they treated the stories they heard differently from the stories they told. This led to unexpected insights about each kind of story.

When considering the stories that these teachers tell, the common sense view that the fact that these teachers told different kinds of stories at different times to different people was reinforced. As Estes noted, "The story is most often dictated by inner sensibilities and outer need" (1992, p. 462). Initially, this is surprising because one would think that stories are stories, but when other findings are considered, the fact that these teachers tell different stories at different times to different people makes sense. For example, since emotion is more readily accepted in certain situations and not others, the teacher may subconsciously edit the story to fit the situation (Schank, 1993). This finding was both stated and implied during the group interview. Alice, Betty, and Cheryl, for instance, specifically stated that there were certain people with whom they would not share stories. When asked if they had opportunities to share stories of experience in their university classes, Alice offered "I would be afraid to tell the teachers in reading and language arts any of the stories of the kids." Betty added "They already told us they didn't want to hear anything bad about their teachers." Hannah also confirmed that she was aware of with whom she could share stories: "My science teacher...is so interested. If we have questions about it, it's not like going to class in reading and language arts and somebody jumping down your throat about the question." In the second personal interview, Betty acknowledged that "Some teachers don't really listen when you ask things in class so they probably won't listen to your stories either" (personal interview, line 25).

Furthermore, these teachers indicated that the stories they told in their university classes were about other university teachers while the stories they told those outside of the university were about the children. Donna, for example, states that “I’ll mention stuff to my mother, little things that the kids say that I think is funny.” Contrast this with statements by others in the group interview:

Hannah: Social studies but I have the same teacher and she lets you talk. She takes the time. If you’re having problems, she wants to hear them right here and there. She just takes the time to listen to you.

Betty: We kind of had that in 3100. The teacher wanted to hear the things we had to complain about.

Donna: Yeah, she tried to help us a lot.

Interviewer: What kinds of things were ya’ll trying to get her help with?

Betty: Just getting the classes over the summer and just making sure we’d get to graduate.

Donna: She did give us lots of new requirements and stuff like but as far as kind of promising us things that were going to happen and then they didn’t happen ‘til we all found ourselves kind of screwed because we needed things that we anticipated things were going to be offered. (lines 313-324)

This is interesting because one would think that the focus of a university course would be on the field experience rather than problems of scheduling courses.

Another aspect of how stories differed in different settings also became evident in this study. Even in safe environments when no university educators are present, the interactions of these teachers are bounded by ties to other group members. There seems to be an unstated rule of acceptance of stories that requires no judgment. This is not to say that there are lack of subtle processes occurring within the group. The sharing of their stories work to include or exclude some group members, for example. Ideas are elaborated upon or ignored as the conversation meanders through various topics.

All six teachers were fully engaged in each interview and did not seem to be distressed by the interactions that took place in the group interview. That is not to say, however, that all interactions in the group interview were straightforward. The most important observation of this group dynamic was how the

number of stories varied among the teachers. As noted earlier, Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Donna were all in the same classes and had already shared many experiences. Generally, they told more stories than Hannah or Sally. The stories that were not matched by other member stories, isolated stories, also belonged to Hannah and Sally. Sally confided “This isn’t my usual group that I talk with all the time so it felt a little different.” In conversations I had with Sally when the tape recorder was turned off, she also confided that she didn’t think she could work effectively with some of the other group members. Hannah also seemed to be somewhat of an outsider but she didn’t indicate at any point that this was a problem for her. Alice, Betty, Cheryl and Donna, on the other hand, did not seem to be aware of their influence on the group in the group interview although each commented on the fact that the group does influence how they share their experiences in the personal interviews.

This exchange of stories in a group setting also illustrated the dichotomy of standards these teachers use for stories. While they generally feel the stories they tell are contributions to group dialogue, they are less generous about the stories they hear. Issues of confidence in the accuracy of stories that others told and general valuing of specific types of stories also created tensions that often made the participants feel uneasy with one another. Only Sally stated explicitly that she was suspicious of some of the stories that the other teachers told: “Sometimes I wonder if people aren’t telling stories just to be telling stories or they feel like they have to say something.”

This study revealed that, whereas there is limited overt judgment of the stories they tell, these pre-service teachers are very critical of the stories they hear. They are particularly skeptical of the validity of any experiences, classroom-based or otherwise, related to the university. In most cases, these teachers indicated that actual teaching experience was the best way to learn to teach but, for the most part, university experiences in classrooms were not satisfactory for them. The uniqueness of assigned school or lack of conformity to their perceptions of what constituted a real classroom caused these participants to dismiss their teaching as not real and any stories that others told of that experience was not useful. This constitutes a particularly difficult theory-in-use for teacher educators to overcome.

This is important because it seems to strongly influence how readily they accepted the information they received from their university teachers before, during and after field experiences.

Through their dialogue, Betty, Cheryl and Donna seemed particularly critical of their university experiences while Hannah was convinced that she was learning a great deal in her courses.

It could be said that this difference was the result of having different teachers, but other interview comments made that seem unlikely. Donna, in her second personal interview, when asked what surprised her the most about the stories she heard in the group interview, stated “That most of them, that we all have similar experiences between teachers and field experience and a lot of us are in the same classes or we tend to experience the same things” (personal interview, lines 53-54). These teachers indicated that they had at least some teachers in common and Alice, Betty, Cheryl, and Donna did acknowledge that some of their university teachers were capable educators. I didn’t sense the need to explore this further during the study but looking back that would have been an interesting avenue to explore.

When asked whose stories they would most like to listen to, most of these teachers indicated that they would like to hear stories from classroom teachers. This creates an interesting paradox. These teachers saw stories from classroom teachers as being most useful, but had few of those to share. Most of the stories they shared in the group interview came from personal experience, peers or university educators. This could be due to the limited access these teachers had to actual classroom teachers. Most of the time, the only interactions these pre-service teachers had with classroom teachers was during field experiences when demands on time and energy must be directed elsewhere. Additionally, these were classroom teachers who had professional ties to the university which may have made these pre-service teachers cautious about sharing stories with them for fear of evaluative consequences. Only when these teachers happened on to other classroom teachers in random social settings or if they were related to a teacher could a greater variety of stories be shared.

In addition to the source being important, these pre-service teachers were particular about the content of the stories they liked. Most surprisingly, entertainment was not a desirable function. “Cute” stories were seen as less useful than horror stories. For these teachers, there were other more important functions such as expressing emotions and warning to others that teaching is hard than simply being entertained. Furthermore, when confronted with experiences and stories of unexpected behavior, they discounted them as unrealistic. It appeared they were also looking for stories that matched what they

thought they knew about teaching. While this is consistent with existing research on teachers' preconceptions, what was surprising is that the teachers attributed this skepticism concerning these types of stories to some fault of the university. Most of these teachers are simply saying that the university is "wrong."

Additionally, these teachers value action over abstract theory. This is consistent with other findings on characteristics of beginning teachers (Genor, 2005; Hammerness et. al, 2005; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). This is particularly evident in Donna's and Betty's stories and non-narrative comments on the activities required in some of their methods courses.

While there was agreement about what they didn't like, what they did like was less clear. They wanted stories that would help them teach better and comments made in the third interview indicated they were looking for a highly generalized set of stories. Betty offered the most specific statement of what kinds of stories she wanted to hear when she stated that she wanted to hear stories about how to deal with parents. Alice also suggested a specific content while Cheryl and Donna were more concerned with the source of the stories. Sally offered the broadest statement of what stories she wanted to hear: "I think stories about how to teach something." They wanted specifics on how to teach but in most cases, didn't know what those specifics were.

Implications of the Study for Teacher Educators

Learning to teach is a highly emotional task for pre-service teachers and this hinders the more rational technical and reflective approaches to teaching that form the basis of what most teacher educators are trying to accomplish in their courses. Horror stories, for example, are examples of this emotional response that contrasts with the rational approach most university educators are trying to model. This study seems to indicate that pre-service teachers are easily frustrated, skeptical about information given to them by university sources, and selective about what constitutes a satisfactory learning experience. These characteristics must be considered and dealt with before the work of more rational approaches can proceed.

In order to accomplish this, there are three broad categories of suggestions that can be applied to courses in which pre-service teachers participate: immediate, near future and visionary future. First there should be careful consideration of who works with these teachers. In an ideal situation, actual classroom

teachers as well as university educators who are not responsible for evaluating these pre-service teachers and who understand group facilitation should be working with them over a period of time. Scheon (2005) also contends that the "...strong emotional reactions to the dilemmas they face...underscores the importance of teacher educators building trusting, collegial, supportive relationships with the pre-service teachers with whom they work, in order to facilitate pre-service teachers' willingness to share and examine their beliefs" (p. 673). Authority, power and consequences for actions are very real for pre-service teachers. These participants indicated that they were highly aware of with whom and where they could share certain stories. Even when there is a sense of trust, these participants were wary of letting too much information be formally recorded.

Other immediate actions that should be taken by teacher educators include setting time aside immediately after the experience to allow emotional and other preparatory sharing of the experiences and save the more rational, technical sharing for more structured class time. Any sharing during this time should be in self-selected groups and not considered in any evaluative procedures. Once this emotional processing has occurred, then reflective activities using structured questions such as those offered by Hay and White (2005) to make the transition to more technical reflections possible.

To further facilitate the quality of this sharing, the teacher educator should consider the size of the group in which these emotions are processed. Group size and bonds among the members are important. Large group discussions do not offer the same level of intimacy that may be necessary to allow these kinds of stories to be shared. How members of the group relate to one another is important as well. For this study, the teachers did not select the other group members but it was obvious that those who were already comfortable with one another shared a greater variety of stories that those who were not. In order to make the emotional processing more productive, small groups should be established and the teacher educator should oversee these discussions with as little intervention as possible until the initial stages of discussion have occurred. As the conversation is winding down among group members, then the teacher educator can have the group offer an oral summation of events discussed.

The final suggestion that could be applied immediately would be to consider the quantity of experiences that are being processed and pick only those experiences that seem most problematic to address in more structured class analysis. As demonstrated in this study, pre-service teachers are

overwhelmed with information to process and it is important to get them to slow down and carefully consider what can be learned from their experiences. Since stories are not a problem-solving tool in themselves, these teachers must learn how to use them effectively in order to make them a problem solving tool. Furthermore, the number and types of frustrations that are told through their stories may help identify pre-service teachers who may be in trouble. For example, if the pre-service teacher consistently tells stories that demonstrate consistent failure or inability to overcome an obstacle, the teacher educator may need to work more closely with that teacher to create a new story outcome.

In the near future, teacher educators may want to work more collaboratively within departments to help pre-service teachers create class journals that travel from course to course with the teachers. This may help these teachers connect past with present experiences. It will also help them begin to identify patterns of experiences that may occur across courses and help them see beyond a particular university teacher. Researchers such as Coia and Taylor (2001) have recommended having pre-service teachers write autobiographies to use as a basis of reflection in university courses. This could be expanded to include university experiences also so that the pre-service and university teachers could observe changes that may occur as experiences accumulate.

Finally, teacher educators could seek to establish self-selected cohorts that meet outside of the courses and for the duration of the course of study. Although the pre-service teachers and a faculty advisor may remain the same throughout the time they are taking education courses, university and classroom teachers can rotate through the groups to share their own insights. The key aspect of this group would be the lack of evaluation and the ability to process the more emotional aspects of learning to teach and initiating the first steps to more rational thinking about the problem these teachers are facing. This process would address the time and relationship obstacles observed with these teachers.

Suggestions for Further Study

The findings of this study offer a glimpse into what happens when the university educator is not looking. These observations suggest that there might be other opportunities for teacher educators to more fully explore how pre-service teachers use stories outside of university classes to learn how to teach.

First, there is a need to understand how varying factors such as maturity, gender or ethnicity affect what and how stories are told. The participants in this study were of similar age, ethnicity and experience which may have strongly influenced the type of stories they told. Studying how factors such as these would present a more fully informed understanding of how pre-service teachers tell and use stories. It would also offer an opportunity to explore group dynamics more thoroughly and provide insights into how to address the needs of diverse learners.

Additionally, it would be interesting to observe how pre-service teachers would react to stories told in a group setting when some of the members of that group are actual classroom teachers. The current configuration of most university courses limits the amount and type of interactions that pre-service teachers can have with actual classroom teachers. Group discussions in non-formal settings with classroom teachers might yield an entirely different type of storytelling process than the experience swapping observed in this group.

Second, future researchers need to track how these stories change over time and with a greater variety of experiences. Understanding the transformations that take place in the course of learning to teach would be beneficial in identifying significant characteristics that guide how this group of teachers acquires understanding of the teaching and learning process. Factors such as memory of events may provide significant insights into what kinds of experiences are necessary to have pre-service teachers think reflectively about their teaching or deal with the more emotional aspects of this process.

Third, in order to more fully understand how to incorporate findings such as these in university practices, future researchers should explore the differences in oral vs. written stories. Are there differences in the kinds of stories these teachers tell in written forms in their classes and the ones they share in these groups? By comparing written artifacts provided in courses with the oral data collected interviews, teacher educators can recognize and identify significant issues that should be addressed.

Finally, a more realized understanding of how group dynamics influence how stories are told is necessary. As Connelly and Clandinin (1999, p. 101) point out “...we have seen how stories to live by are communally sustained as people share stories and recollections. We have paid less attention to how new stories are composed communally.” How are marginalized members of the group treated when their stories are told? How do stories work to include and exclude certain members of the group? Grossman

et al. (2000) for example, found that there are specific dynamics which determine how points of view are shared in the group: "In its initial stages, a group may deny differences and proclaim a false sense of unity. But if a group spends enough time together, conflict will inevitably erupt onto the main stage" (p. 47). Teacher educators should anticipate and be ready to mediate any such tensions. These are all questions that should be addressed in order to more fully understand how pre-service teachers tell their stories and what these stories mean to them.

Conclusions

Richards and Gipe note in their study of how pre-service teachers use case methods in acquiring professional knowledge, "As we became more knowledgeable about case methods, we developed greater understandings of the approaches and conditions necessary for nurturing our pre-service teachers' case writing initiatives" (1998, p. 15). Perhaps this is true for understanding the stories pre-service teachers tell outside of the university courses as well. By becoming aware of what they are saying, the teacher educator can become more skilled at using them in the university classroom.

In order to become more skilled at using them, however, the university educator must rethink some highly entrenched thoughts about teacher preparation. First, emotions must be dealt with in a productive way. While venting is important for these pre-service teachers, it is not productive, however (Bullough, 2008). The teacher educator should carefully consider which standards are necessary to enforce and which are optional.

Teacher educators should also understand that development of teaching skill involves some initial steps that involve sorting through some messy business. Pre-service teachers often feel bombarded with assignments, responsibilities and information to process. They prioritize in ways that are very different from experts and not very efficient but this is how they learn. A clear understanding that evaluation would be better informed if it was not based on accuracy of performance, but instead on how mistakes are identified and rectified.

These stories should be considered in two separate dimensions: the features and the context of the stories these teachers tell. Pre-service teachers value experience over theoretical reasoning because they think it is the logical place to begin. They tell stories of teaching because they believe they are teachers. These stories will not look like the highly polished, professionally constructed case studies that

so often populate the teacher education methods courses. Instead, they are nuggets tossed around casually and briefly, never to be consciously considered again. That is not to say that these stories should be cast aside but rather, that unless some other intervening force acts upon them, they will disappear. There are so many of these stories that come and go, it would be difficult to hold to them unless specific methods are undertaken to do so. Further investigation as to how to accomplish this is needed, however.

Additionally, these stories exist in very specific contexts consisting of formal and informal groups that occur in university courses. Pre-service teachers form groups of convenience and survival both in and outside of their classes. They seek others who are willing to listen to their stories in non-judgmental or evaluative ways. They just want to know that others are hearing them without necessarily offering advice. Carefully observing the group dynamics within the university class may offer significant clues about what and how these teachers are learning to teach.

Teacher educators should also know that while pre-service teachers value experience, they also understand that it must be completed with other experiences such as class discussion and observation. These teachers are not without at least some skills to guide their own growth and those skills should be fostered to better serve these teachers once they move to full-time classroom teaching.

Pre-service teachers do not share their stories with just anyone. Erma Bombeck once noted that “It takes a lot of courage to show your dreams to someone else” (1983, p. 15). To hear and share their stories is an honor that one should not take lightly. Sometimes they are painful to hear and frustrating to understand but they are important because they are important to the teacher telling the story. To elicit and appreciate these stories takes time and patience. The pre-service teachers themselves are producing and processing these stories at an amazing pace that is difficult to slow. Their internal work marches on regardless of how much we as researchers would like to capture and marvel in it for a while. These teachers do not have time for this. They want to learn to teach now and get on with the reality of their lives.

The need to honor and respect these stories needs to extend beyond the full-time faculty to anyone who works with these students. Although it is hard to find classroom teachers who are willing to work diligently with pre-service teachers, it is important that those who do are models worth emulating.

Even when pre-service teachers do not like the classroom teacher with whom they work, they are strongly influenced by them. One would hope that this influence is a positive one.

These are highly idealized hopes for teacher preparation that must occur in turbulent times. But experience is the basis for all stories they tell and Donna offers the ultimate summative view of this: “I think that so much of our teaching is just learning from experience. From being in there and doing it.”

Clandinin and Connelly (1995, p. 163) also offer an idealized hope for the future of teacher education:

“Ultimately, we believe, this will mean a breakdown in the sacred theory-practice story and the creation of new relational stories of theory and practice. These will be stories that acknowledge and validate the educational potential inherent in teachers’ reflective, relational storytelling desires. They will be stories of mutuality between those on the professional knowledge landscape and those outside it.”

As Gandalf said to the Hobbits as he was boarding the ship to the Grey Havens, “And so it is that we come to the end of our journey.” It is so for this study of how these teachers use their stories to learn how to teach. We have drifted apart and each has gone their own way but I often still wonder how they are doing and if they remember any part of their experiences with this study. I feel that the story is not finished, however, just as J.R.R Tolkien noted in his work with more tales of Middle Earth: “Narratives are all “unfinished”, but to a greater or lesser degree, and in different senses of the word” (1980, p.30). But my hope is that you will use these stories as Estes advises: “I hope you go out and let stories happen to you, and that you will work them, water them with your blood and tears, till they bloom” (1992, p. 4)

References

- Amobi, F. and Irwin, L. (2009). Implementing on-campus microteaching to elicit preservice teachers' reflection on teaching actions. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 27-34.
- Armstrong, D. A. (2007, April). *Using drawn images to prepare teachers who can envision and actualize a world of educational quality*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Convention, Chicago, IL.
- Artzt, A. and Curcio, F. (2003, April). *From college freshman to secondary mathematics teachers: Longitudinal case studies based on an analysis of knowledge*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.
- Baker, T. E. and Shahid, J. (2003, January). *Helping preservice teachers focus on success for all learners through guided reflection*. Paper presented at American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, New Orleans, LA.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Banks, J., Cochran-Smith, M., Moll, L., Richert, A., Zeichner, K., LePage, P. Darling, Hammond, L., and Duffy, H. (2005). Teaching diverse learners. In L. Darling-Hammond and J. D. Bransford (Eds.) *Preparing teachers for a changing world* (pp. 232-274). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Berliner, D. (1991). Educational psychology and pedagogical expertise: New findings and new opportunities for thinking about training. *Educational Psychologist*, 145-155.
- Berliner, D. (2001). Learning about and learning from expert teachers. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 463-483.
- Bombeck, E. (1983). *Motherhood the second oldest profession*. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York.
- Bransford, J. B, Brown, A.L., and Cocking, R.R. (2000). *How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
- Bransford, J.B., Darling-Hammond, and LePage, P. (2005a). Introduction. In L. Darling Hammond and J. D. Bransford (Eds.) *Preparing teachers for a changing world* (pp. 40-87). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Bransford, J.B., Derry, S., Berliner, D., and Hammerness. (2005b). Theories of learning and their roles in teaching. In L. Darling-Hammond and J. D. Bransford (Eds.) *Preparing teachers for a changing world* (pp. 40-87). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brasewell, C. and Cobia, D. (2000, October) *The effect of internship and a personal trait on career development*. Paper presented at the Annual Association for Institutional Research, Myrtle Beach, SC.
- Britzman, D. P. (2003). *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Bruner, J. (1996). *The culture of education*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (2000). *Making Stories*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Buffet, J. (1988). *A Pirate Looks at Fifty*. New York: Random House.
- Bullough, R. V. (2008). *Counternarratives: Studies of teacher education and becoming and being a teacher*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Bullough, R. V. (2007). Professional Learning Communities and the Eight-Year Study. *Educational Horizons*, 168-180.
- Bullough, R. V. and Baughman, K. (1997). *First-year teacher eight years later: An inquiry into teacher development*. New York: Teacher's College Press.
- Butler, M. B., Lee, S. and Tippins, D. J. (2006). Case-based methodology as an instructional strategy for understanding diversity. *Multicultural Education*, 20-26.
- Byrne, M. (2001). Understanding life experiences through a phenomenological approach to research. *AORN Journal* April 2001.
- Campoy, R. W. and Ratcliffe, R. (2002, April). *Reflective decision-making and cognitive development: A descriptive study comparing the reflective levels of pre-service and in-service teachers*. Paper presented the Annual Meeting of the Educational Research Association, New Orleans, La.
- Castronova, E. (2006). *Synthetic worlds: The business and culture of online games*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Chambers, S., Henson, R., and Sienty, S. (2001, February). *Personality types and teaching efficacy as predictors of classroom control orientation in beginning teachers*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, New Orleans, February, 2001.
- Clandinin, D. J., Huber, J., Huber, M., Murphy, M. S., Orr, A. M., Pearce, M., and Steeves, P. (2006). *Composing diverse identities: Narrative inquiries into the interwoven lives of children and teachers*. New York: Routledge.
- Clandinin, D. J. and Connelly, F. M. (1995). *Teachers' professional knowledge landscapes*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Clandinin, D. J., and Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Josey Bass.
- Clandinin, D.J., Davies, A., Hogan, P. and Kennard, B. (Eds.) (1993). *Learning to teach, teaching to learn*. New York: Teachers' College Press.
- Cochran-Smith, M. and Lytle, S. (1993). *Inside outside: Teacher research and knowledge*. New York: Teachers' College Press.
- Coffey, A. and Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Coia, L. and Taylor, M (2001, July). *Future perfect: Reflecting through personal narrative*. Paper presented at Annual Meeting of United Kingdom Reading Association.
- Connelly, F.M. and Clandinin, D. J. (1999). *Shaping a professional identity*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Connelly, F. M. and Clandinin, D. J. (1988). *Teachers as curriculum planners*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Cortazzi, M. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. London: Falmer Press.
- Craig, C. (1995). Safe places on the professional knowledge landscape: Knowledge communities. In D. J. Clandinin and F. M. Connelly (Eds.) *Teachers' Professional Knowledge Landscapes* (pp. 137-141). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

- Danielewicz, J. (2001). *Teaching selves: Identity, pedagogy, and teacher education*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Darling, L. F. (2001). When conceptions collide: Constructing a community of inquiry for teacher education in British Columbia. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 27(1), 7-21.
- Darling-Hammond, L. and Bransford, J.D. (Eds.). (2005a) *Preparing teachers for a changing world*. San Francisco: Josey Bass.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Banks, J., Zumwalt, K., Gomez, L, Sherin, M. G., Griesdorn, J. and Finn, L. (2005b). Educational goals and purposes: Developing a curricular vision for teaching. In L. Darling-Hammond and J. D. Bransford (Eds.) *Preparing teachers for a changing world* (pp. 40-87). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Darling-Hammond, L. and Hammerness, K. (2005). The design of teacher education programs. In L. Darling-Hammond and J. D. Bransford (Eds.) *Preparing teachers for a changing world* (pp. 390-441). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Holtzman, D.J., Gatlin, S.J. and Heilig, J. V. (2005c). Does teacher preparation matter? Evidence about teacher certifications, Teach for America, and teacher effectiveness. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 13(42). Retrieved March 23, 2010 from <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v13n42/>.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Pacheco, A., Michelli, N., LaPage, P., and Hammerness, K. (2005d). Implementing curriculum renewal in teacher education: Managing organizational and policy change. In L. Darling-Hammond and J. D. Bransford (Eds.) *Preparing teachers for a changing world* (pp. 442-479). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Delamont, S. (1992). *Fieldwork in educational settings: Methods, pitfalls and perspectives*. Washington, DC: Falmer Press.
- Doecke, B. and McKnight, L. (2002). *Forming a professional identity: Conversations between English methods students*. Brisbane: Australian Association for Research in Education.
- Dollase, R. H. (1992). *Voices of beginning teachers: Visions and realities*. New York: Teachers' College Press.

- Downey, J. (2008). It's not as easy as it looks: Preservice teachers' insights about teaching emerging from an innovative assignment in educational psychology. *Teaching Educational Psychology* (3)1
- Ely, M., Vinz, R., Downing, M., and Anzul, M. (1997). *On Writing Qualitative Research*. Philadelphia: The Falmer Press.
- Estes, C. (1992). *Women who run with the wolves*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Fuller, F. (1969). Concerns of teachers: A developmental consideration. *American Educational Research Journal*, 6(2), 207-226.
- Gardner, H. (1995). *Leading minds: An anatomy of leadership*. New York: Basic Books.
- Geertz, C. (1977). *The Interpretation of Cultures*. NY: Basic Books.
- Genor, M. (2005). A social reconstructionist framework for reflection: The "problematizing" of teaching. *Issues in Teacher Education*, pp. 45-62.
- Gergen, K. and Gergen, M. (1986). Narrative form and the construction of psychological sciences. In T. R. Sarbin (Ed.), *Narrative Psychology: The storied nature of human conduct* (pp. 22-44). New York: Praeger.
- Giorgi, A. (1997). The theory, practice, and evaluation of phenomenological method as a qualitative research procedure. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 28, 235-260.
- Goldblum, J. O'Dowd, A. and Syn, T. (2007). *Considerations and strategies for creating interactive narratives*. Museums and the Web 2007; The International Conference for Culture and Heritage On-line. <http://www.archimuse.com/mw2007/papers/goldblum/>.
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Gregory, M. (2009). *Shaped by stories: The ethical power of narratives*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Groenewald, T. (2004). A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1). Article 4. Retrieved [Sept. 15, 2010] from http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/3_1/pdf/groenewald.pdf.

- Grossman, P., Wineburg, S. and Woolworth, S. (2000). *What makes teacher community different from a gathering of teachers?* Albany: National Research Center on English Learning and Achievement.
- Gudwin, D. (2002). *A qualitative study of the perceptions of six preservice teachers*. Sarasota: Eastern Educational Research Association.
- Hammerness, K., Darling-Hammond, L. and Bransford, J. (2005). How teachers learn and develop. In L. Darling-Hammond & J. Bransford (Eds.) *Preparing teachers for a changing world*(pp. 358-389). San Francisco: Josey-Bass.
- Hargreaves, A. and Fullan, M. (Eds.) (1992). *Understanding teacher development*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Harste, J. C., Leland, C., Schmidt, K., Vasquez, V., and Ociepka, A. (2002). Practice makes practice, or does it? The relationship between theory and practice in teacher education. *International Journal of Educology* , 116-191.
- Hawkey, K. (2006). Emotional intelligence and mentoring in pre-service teacher education: A literature review. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 14(2), p137-147, (May 2006).
- Hay, T. and White, J. (2005). *The teacher writer: Narrative theory, storytelling and research*. New York: unpublished paper on ERIC.
- Henson, R. K. (2005, February). *Relationships between preservice teachers' self-efficacy, task analysis, and classroom management beliefs*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Horowitz, F. D., Darling-Hammond, L. and Bransford, J (2005). Educating teachers for developmentally appropriate practice. In L. Darling-Hammond and J. D. Bransford (Eds.) *Preparing teachers for a changing world* (pp. 40-87). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Huberman, M. (1992). Teacher development and instructional mastery. In A. Hargreaves and M. G. Fullan (Eds.) *Understanding Teacher Development* (pp.122-142). New York: Teachers College Press

- Imel, S., Kerka, S., and Wonacott, M. (2002). *Qualitative research in adult, career, and career technical education*. Office of Education Research and Improvement, Washington, D.C.
- Jackson, P. W. (1992) Helping teachers develop. In A. Hargreaves and M. Fullan (eds.), *Understanding teacher development* (pp.62-74). New York: Teachers' College Press.
- Jalongo, M. and Isenberg, J.P. (1995). *Teacher stories: From personal narrative to professional insight*. San Francisco: Josey Bass.
- Johnston, J. D. (2001, November). *Using written reflection to identify preservice teachers' active instructional knowledge during mathematics mentoring*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association, Little Rock, AR.
- Jones, M. G. and Vesilind, E.M. (1996). Putting practice into theory: Changes in the organization of preservice teachers' pedagogical knowledge. *American Educational Research Journal*. 33(4), 91-118.
- Kagan, D. (1992). Professional growth among preservice and beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research* 62(2), pp129-169 Sum 1992.
- Labov, W. (2001). Uncovering the event structure in narrative. *Georgetown University Round Table* 2001: 63-83.
- Lareau, A. (1989). *Home Advantage*. New York: Taylor and Francis, Inc.
- Lieblich, A., Tuval-Mashiach, R., and Zilber, T. (1998). *Narrative research: Reading, analysis and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Lincoln, Y., and Guba, E. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. In D. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed., pp. 163-188). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lindley, C.A. (2005). Story and narrative structures in computer games. In B. Brunhild. (ed.) *Developing Interactive Narrative Content: sagas/sagasnet reader*. Munich: High Text.
- Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kagan, D. (1992). Professional growth among novice teachers. *Review of Education Research*. 62(2), 128-165.

- Kraus, S. and Butler, K. (2000, February). *Reflection is not description: Cultivating reflection with pre-service teachers*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Chicago, IL.
- McAnally, M. (1999). Semi-true stories on *Beach house on the moon*, Jimmy Buffet.
- Malkani, J. M. and Allen, J. D. (2005, April). *Cases in teacher education: Beyond reflection into practice*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.
- Marks, M. J. (2007, April). *Influences of preservice teacher socialization: A qualitative study*. Paper presented at the American Research Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL.
- Marshall, S. (2010). Storytelling in museums and galleries. March, 2010
<http://www.crickcrackclub.com/CRICKRACK/MUSEUM.HTM> [accessed March 18, 2010].
- Miles, A. M. and Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Mishler, E. G. (1999). *Storylines: Craftartists' Narratives of Identity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Moustakas, C (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. (2008). *Professional standards for the accreditation of teacher preparation institutions*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Nevin, A., Bradshaw, L., Cardelle-Elawar, M. and Diaz-Greenburg, R. (2009, February). *Becoming a teacher: A cross-cultural analysis of motivation and teacher identity formation*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.
- Osborne, J. W. (2010). Some similarities and differences among phenomenological and other methods of psychological qualitative research. *Canadian Psychology*. 16 Sep, 2010.
- Osterman, K. and Kottkamp, R. B. (2004). *Reflective practice for educators: Improving schooling through professional development*. Newbury Park: Corwin Press.

- Philipou, G., Charalambous, C. and Kyriakides, L. (2003, July). *The development of student teachers' efficacy beliefs in mathematics during practicum*. Paper presented at 27th International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education Conference, Honolulu, HI.
- Polkinghorne, D. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Reamy, T. (2002). Imparting knowledge through storytelling. *KMWorld*. July/August 2002, 11(7).
- Richards, J. and Gipe, J. (1998, April). *Themes in preservice teachers' cases: Rich sources of information for literacy teacher educators*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA.
- Riessman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Robinson, P. (2000). The body matrix: A phenomenological exploration of student bodies on-line. *Educational Technology & Society* v3 n3.
- Rodriguez, T. and Kotarba, J. (2009). Postmodern philosophies of science: Pathways to nursing reality. *Southern Journal of Online Nursing Research* 9(1). www.snrs.org (accessed 9/15/2010).
- Rosenholtz, S. J. (1991). *Teachers' Workplace: The social organization of schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Russel, T. and Munby, H. (Eds.) (1992). *Teachers and teaching: From the classroom to reflection*. London: Falmer Press.
- Schank, R. C. (1993). *Tell me a story*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Scheon, L. (2005). *Learning to make sense of the dilemmas of teaching practice: An exploration of preservice teachers' development of reflective judgment*. Boston: unpublished doctoral dissertation.

- Schon, D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner*. New York: Basic Books.
- Schubert, W. and Ayers, W. (1992). *Teacher lore: Learning from our own experience*. New York: Longman.
- Shulman, L. S. (2004). *The Wisdom of Practice: Essays on teaching, learning and learning to teach*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Smith, J., Flowers, P., and Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, method and research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Spence, G. (1995). *How to argue and win every time*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Sottile, J. M. and Brozik, D. (2004, January). *The use of simulations in a teacher education program: The impact on student development*. Paper presented at the Hawaii International Conference on Education, Honolulu, HI.
- Spradley, J.P. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Swap, W, Leonard, D., Shields, M. and Abrams, L. (2001). Using mentoring and storytelling to transfer knowledge in the workplace. *Journal of management of information systems*, 95-114.
- Tolkein, J.R.R. (1965). *Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Rings*. New York: Ballantine.
- Tolkein, J.R.R. (1980). *Unfinished Tales: The Lost Lore of Middle-Earth*. New York: Random House.
- van Es, E. A. and Conroy, J. (2009). Using performance assessment for California teachers to examine pre-service teachers' conceptions of teaching mathematics for understanding. *Issues in Teacher Education*, 83-102.
- van Manen, M. (1990). *Research lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. London, Ontario: State University of New York Press.
- Vassiliki, V. (2007). Staging narratives in the museum: The guided tour and museum education. March 2010. *Museology e-journal*, issue 4.
- Watzke, J.L. (2002, April) *Study of stages of beginning teacher development in a field-based teacher education program*. Paper presented at the annual conference of American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

- Weiss, R. (1994). *Learning from strangers: The art and method of qualitative interview studies*. New York: The Free Press.
- Williams, M. and Watson, A. (2004). Post-Lesson Debriefing: Delayed or Immediate? An Investigation of Student Teacher Talk. *Journal of Education for Teaching: International Research and Pedagogy* , 85-96.
- Wiltz, N. (2000, April). *Group seminars: Dialogues to enhance professional development and reflection*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Wingfield, M. and Nath, J.L. (2000, April). *The effect of site-based preservice experiences on elementary social studies self-efficacy beliefs*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Witcher, L.A., Onwuegbuzie, A.J., Collins, K., Witcher, A.E, Minor, L.C., and James, T.L. (2002, November). *Relationship between teacher efficacy and beliefs about education among preservice teachers*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association. Chattanooga, TN.
- Zeichner, K. M. and Liston, D. P. (1983). Teaching student teachers to reflect. *Harvard Educational Review*. 57, 28-48.
- Zeichner, K. M. and Liston, D. P. (1996). *Reflective teaching*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Appendix A Study Forms

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS COMMITTEE ON THE USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

Form Number: 12FEB03 (please refer to this number in all future correspondence concerning this protocol)

Principal Investigator: Cynthia S. Ybos **Title:** Graduate Student

Department: Curriculum and Instruction **College:** Education

Name of Faculty Supervisor: Judith Kieff, Ph.D. (if PI is a student)

Project Title: How storytelling processes affect pre-service teachers' preconceptions and knowledge about teaching.

Date Reviewed: January 24, 2003

Dates of Proposed Project Period: From 1/03 to 1/04*

*approval is for one year from approval date only and may be renewed yearly.

Note: Consent forms and related materials are to be kept by the PI for a period of three years following the completion of the study.

☐ Full Committee Approval

☒ Expedited Approval

☐ Continuation

☐ Rejected

☐ The protocol will be approved following receipt of satisfactory response(s) to the following question(s) within 15 days:

Committee Signatures:



Matthew S. Stanford, Ph.D. (Chair)

Scott Bauer, Ph.D.

Gary Granata, Ph.D.

Betty Lo, M.D.

Hae-Seong Park, Ph.D.

Jane Prudhomme

Jayaraman Rao, M.D. (NBDL protocols only)

Richard B. Speaker, Ph.D.

Gary Talarchek, Ph.D.

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

ALL-UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON THE USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

In order to comply with NIH policy and all federal, state and local rules and regulations concerning the treatment and use of human subjects in research, the following information must be provided. Instructional programs, internally funded and unfunded research projects using human subjects must also be approved by the Committee. Notification of the Committee's recommendations will be communicated to the investigator as quickly as possible. Please remember that research may not be initiated without approval. In the case of sponsored projects, it is therefore advisable to obtain approval at the time the project is submitted to the agency, so that the project can start as soon as the award is received. Remember that the Division of Sponsored Research will not authorize the opening of accounts unless approval has been granted by the Committee.

Form Number _____

Date Received _____

Principal Investigator: Cynthia S. Ybos Title Ph.D. Candidate

Campus Mailing Address: Education Building

Department: Curriculum and Instruction

College: College of Education

Campus Telephone: 280-6605 Home Telephone: (985) 643-4509

Name of Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Judith Kieff
(if PI is a student)

Project Title: How storytelling processes affect pre-service teachers' preconceptions and knowledge about teaching

Dates of proposed project period: From January 2003 To May 2003

Name and address of outside funding agency to which this project has been submitted:
(if not submitted for outside funding put N/A)

N/A

Cynthia S. Ybos 1/21/03
Signature of Principal Investigator Date

Renée Castagne 1/21/03
Signature of Department Chair Date

Judith Kieff 1/21/03
Signature of Faculty Supervisor Date
(if PI is a student)

STUDY ABSTRACT

Title of the research study:

How storytelling processes affect pre-service teachers' preconceptions and knowledge about teaching

Purpose of this research:

This study is designed to obtain stories that beginning teachers tell about teaching and learning to teach to provide insights into the transition from novice teacher to expert teacher. This knowledge will be used to enhance and evaluate preparation of beginning teachers.

Procedures for this research:

You will be asked to participate in two individual interviews and a focus group to share and discuss the stories you tell about teaching and learning to teach. It is estimated that the entire study will require about four hours of your time over a three-week period. All interviews will be conducted at a time and location that is convenient for you. You will be given opportunities to review and comment on any information you contribute to this study by electronic mail, telephone or regular mail.

Potential risks of discomforts:

In all situations, guarantees of confidentiality to the fullest extent possible are hereby given to all research participants. I do not anticipate any other risks beyond fatigue. Please keep in mind that participation in this study is voluntary. If discomfort or fatigue is experienced at any point in the interview, for any reason, we may take a break or end the interview.

If you wish to discuss these or any other discomforts you may experience, you may call the Project Director.

Potential benefits to you or others:

This study will help document factors that may affect how beginning teachers process information about teaching that may impact how undergraduate education methods courses are taught. This information may be used in the future for preparation of conference papers, articles for publication or completion of doctoral dissertation by the above named researcher.

Alternative procedures:

There are no alternative procedures to this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw consent and terminate participation at any time without consequence.

Protection of Confidentiality:

I will conduct the group session and individual interviews personally. Audio tapes, identified only by pseudonym, will be transcribed by me. Audio tapes may be reviewed by me or my dissertation committee in order to insure accuracy of my transcription. Participants will not be identified by name in or on the tapes, tape transcripts, files, or subsequent discussions or writings related to this project. Following transcription, audio tapes, signed consent forms, and any related notes or materials will be maintained in a secure and confidential manner by me as project director.

Signatures and consent to participate:

DATA SHEET

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Best time to call: _____

E-mail (if available) _____

Would you prefer to be contacted by telephone or e-mail? _____

Are you married? _____ Do you have children? _____

If yes, how many and what ages?

How long have you lived in the area?

List any teaching experiences you have had prior to enrolling in university courses.

List any non-teaching careers you have had prior to enrolling in university courses.

Briefly describe any jobs you currently hold.

List any education courses you have completed.

List any other courses you are taking this semester.

When do you plan to student teach?

Appendix B

Participant Biographies and Stories

ALICE

Alice is 24 years old, not married and has no children. She lives with her parents in a suburban area and commutes to the university. She has lived in the same neighborhood and attended local public schools all of her life. She works in a retail store near her home in the evenings.

Alice has no close relatives who are teachers nor has she worked in any teaching-related field prior to starting her course work at the university. Being a teacher has always been her college goal, however. She likes the challenge of working with children and learning new things. Alice reported that she didn't really have any exceptional teachers in school but she did enjoy being a student. School was a pleasurable experience for her.

Alice transferred to the university from another local area college. She is extremely organized and confident in her work. During the group interview, her peers often defer to her when organizational skills are needed and teased her about her positive attitude toward everything.

Alice is completing her methods courses this semester and will be student teaching next semester. Alice is currently taking four methods courses, which is considered to be a large number of such courses to take in one semester. Despite this, she does not seem stressed and appears to be able to handling these courses easily. Unlike many of her peers, Alice always appears calm and optimistic about her experiences in learning to teach.

During the interviews, Alice laughs a great deal and gives thoughtful responses. She seems genuinely interested in thinking about teaching and hopes to gain insights from this study that will help her become a better teacher.

Alice's Stories

STORY TITLE: Do you speak Chinese?

I was doing an activity yesterday in reading and language arts, and they had to write this, like a good wish, almost like a fortune cookie kind of thing on this piece of paper. Cause we're doing a study of Chinese New Year, and one boy asked me if he had to write it in Chinese. I asked if him if he knew how to write in Chinese and he said no. And I said, then you don't have to write it in Chinese.

My initial impressions: I liked this story although it was very short. Alice seems to assume that the listener can fill in the blanks in telling this story. The interaction also highlights an important point about teaching but Alice does not seem aware of that point. (This was later refuted in the second personal interview).

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY: Alice reported in the second personal interview that she thought this was an important story because it showed how students think about things that the teacher does in teaching and how students can misinterpret what the teacher is expecting.

Interviewer: How did you feel when you shared the story about the boy wanting to know if you wanted him to write the answer in Chinese with the rest of the group?

Alice: *I was disappointed that they didn't have more to say about it. They just listened and then started telling their own story. It didn't seem that they even thought it was that funny. When I told that story to my family, they really laughed at it. Some of my other friends really laugh when I tell them what happened.*

Interviewer: Why do you like telling this story?

Alice: *Because it's funny and it's the kind of thing that a teacher should expect. This boy wasn't trying to be silly or anything. He really thought I wanted him to write the wish in Chinese. It's important for a teacher to think about what she is saying and how students can take it the wrong way or misunderstand what you're saying.*

Interviewer: What do you expect to happen when you tell a story like this?

Alice: *I would think the others would find it as funny and interesting as I do and say something to me about it.*

Alice was very proud of this story. She told it to me during the first interview and repeated it to the group during the group interview. Alice waited until other participants had had a chance to tell what they think before she shared this story but it was one of the first real stories told in the group interview. The story came after a discussion of “folk wisdom” that Cheryl shared with the group. The other participants smiled briefly when Alice told the story and Cheryl immediately began with another story that she felt dovetailed with Alice’s story.

None of the other teachers seemed particularly impressed by the story. They stated it was a cute story but didn’t really teach them much about students or teaching.

STORY TITLE: Be prepared

I have one that goes along with “Show no fear” is don’t let them know that you’re not prepared, even if you’re not. They think that in reading and language arts, when you walk into the classroom and you’re listening to them read and doing activities with them three times, and one boy looks at us and says you’re not prepared? Is that why we’re reading today?

My initial impressions: Very brief; this is almost not a story. It shows some understanding of how students think; connection to previous examples.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

Interviewer: You shared a story about students’ thinking you’re not prepared when you ask them to read or doing activities over and over. What made you decide to share that story at that point?

Alice: *I don’t remember. It probably fit into what we were talking about at the time or something that someone else said made me think of it.*

Interviewer: Cheryl had just shared a story about a boy drawing inappropriate things in his book. Does that help you remember why you told your story?

Alice: *Not really but I do remember that Cheryl’s story was funny and we were laughing at it. I probably thought this one was funny too.*

Interviewer: Do you think it is an important story?

Alice: *It’s like the other one. Students can look at what you’re doing very different from the way you do so you have to think about that when you are teaching.*

None of the other participants thought this was a particularly interesting story. Like “Do you speak Chinese?” they thought it was cute but not helpful.

STORY TITLE: Now they respect her

My teacher there had the same problem when she was thrown in, well she wasn’t thrown in, she took the position, but this is her first time ever teaching and no one ever offered her any kind of help as a first time teacher. The kids try to walk all over her and she took it upon herself to be strong with the kids and now they respect her a lot more for it. But she didn’t get any help in the beginning either. And it’s just kind of scary.

My initial impressions: The context of this story is interesting; its structure parallels Betty’s story but with a different outcome; very optimistic and presents a picture of teacher that is different from most of the other teachers. Ending statement is interesting because the story is optimistic but Alice seems to want to make it sound more like a horror story.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY: Alice shared this story when asked specifically if other teachers shared stories with any of them. This When questioned about this story in the personal interview, Alice reported that she told the story because Betty’s story seemed so sad and it reminded her of the teacher with whom she was working.

Interviewer: What made you decide to share the story about the teacher with whom you worked at the school?

Alice: Well, Betty was telling about her teacher and I thought it sounded just like my teacher. My teacher had dealt with it and it sounded like Betty's teacher hadn't. I guess we'll go through that but it seemed that these teachers had it harder.

Interviewer: In what way?

Alice: Nobody was there to help them. They just had to figure things out on their own.

Interviewer: Do you think it will be as hard for you?

Alice: No, I'll be able to student teach and I've worked with people and know how to get them to help me. My teacher didn't know anything about teaching but I know more than she does.

Alice's story prompted Sally to offer a different point of view of how classroom teachers communicate with the university students who teach in their classrooms in her story, No help. In the personal interviews, the other teachers did not comment on it specifically.

STORY TITLE: Stupid things

See, we're getting those kind of answers too but we're getting just a, points taken off for stupid things. Like one person had staple marks in their paper like where she had actually stapled it but she doesn't want anything stapled so she circled the staple marks and took 2 points off. She just taking points off mine because my heading was double-spaced instead of single spaced; not just a few points but lots of points. She rips apart all of your stuff but never tells you how to do it better.

My initial impressions: Marked contrast to Alice's overall personality; tone of voice and body language indicates high level of frustration.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY: I did not discuss this particular story with Alice but she made general comments about her university situation.

Interviewer: In general, are the teachers like the ones you describe in your stories?

Alice: No, not all of them. I won't say they're bad, just some of them can be so frustrating. They focus on the unimportant things instead of showing us how to teach. I guess that means they showing us what not to do, never thought about that before.

CHERYL

Cheryl is 23 years old, not married and has no children. Cheryl is proud of the fact that she currently owns her own home and is completely self-sufficient. She has lived in the same suburban neighborhood and attended local public schools all of her life. She currently is a bartender and waitress at a local bar and grill.

Cheryl has no close relatives who are teachers but her mother works as a secretary for a local school board. Cheryl has worked in a local daycare for six years and feels confident in her ability to work with children. She reports that her experiences working for the daycare prompted her to choose a career in education.

Cheryl told me that she was not a good student in school but thinks she can make learning better for her students. She does report that she thinks her second grade teacher, who she still sees regularly, is a model teacher and she wants to be just like that teacher. Interestingly, Cheryl says that this teacher did not inspire her to become a teacher.

Cheryl is very opinionated and quick to state what she thinks regardless of what others might think. Cheryl often dominated the conversation during the group interview but was not argumentative. Despite her negative comments about her experiences, her peers seem to accept her thoughts and opinions with little or no judgment.

Cheryl plans to student teach in the fall 2004 semester. So far she has taken the introductory education courses and is currently taking social studies, reading/language arts and science methods. She seems to be able to handle her courses and other responsibilities very well.

Cheryl is very skeptical about the types of experiences, she is having during her methods courses. She thinks they are not realistic and are not preparing her for teaching. Cheryl wants to participate in this study to see if what she thinks about learning to teach matches what others think about it.

Cheryl's Stories

STORY TITLE: Scary kids

To go along with reading and language arts, not necessarily the kids in my group but the kids that noticed that were in the same range as the kids in my group, they're like pyro-maniacs, they like fire. They like guns. They had to draw a picture for one of the other teachers of like their fantasy world and a couple of the students drew guns like killing Spiderman and Superman cause they didn't like that kind of hero. Like that is kind of scary and I had a child discuss what would happen if you start a fire in the air conditioner. It was kind of scary.

I told the teacher, like we discussed it with the teacher. And the other person that had the gun group, she showed the papers to the teacher and actually they had another child today in another group that did the gun thing. The teacher talked to them about what was appropriate to do in school and what wasn't appropriate. But to tell them do their fantasy world and then they draw a big gun shooting somebody, that's kind of scary.

My initial observations

Cheryl was very emotional when telling this story. Also quite animated, moving her arms freely as she talked. Alice, Betty, and Donna often nodded or shook their heads as Cheryl told this story. Story seems to demonstrate strong opinions about this particular student. Cheryl was quick to tell this story and seemed to use other stories to support it.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

In the personal interview, Cheryl was asked to comment on this story.

Interviewer: What do you think about you part of the story where you talked about telling the teacher about the students drawing guns?

Cheryl: *It wasn't really important because the teacher really didn't do anything that made a difference. She talked to the kids and they just kept on drawing the pictures. It wasn't like they got in trouble or anything cause all she did was talk to them. They don't see any problem with it.*

Interviewer: The kids or the teacher?

Cheryl: *The kids don't. I guess the teacher doesn't think it's that big of a problem either because she didn't really do anything that made them stop.*

Interviewer: What do you learn about teaching when you tell or hear stories like this?

Cheryl: *That there's some scary kids out there in some schools.*

Interviewer: Do you think you'll have kids like that in your classroom when you're student teaching?

Cheryl: *Maybe, but I don't think so and I'll do more about those kind of drawings cause they're just not right. Kids shouldn't be drawing that kind of stuff and allowed to get away with it.*

Sally commented on this story in her personal interview, in conjunction with comments that she often thinks critically about who is telling the story.

Interviewer: How do you feel when you hear stories like these?

Sally: *I look at the person telling the story, is this someone I believe? I wonder how they know this and if it really happened. Sometimes I wonder if people aren't telling stories just to be telling stories or if they feel like they have to say something.*

Betty also commented on this story and other like it:

Interviewer: How do you feel when you hear stories like this?

Betty: *I think about the story. Some of them, I believed probably could have happened but some of them seemed out of character or out of something. Some of them don't seem as realistic as others. They were probably blown out of proportion. Some of them I could see, you know, I could see in all the stories a possibility of those scenarios happening but some of them were so blown out of proportion, it's like they needed to tone it down a bit to make it believable I guess.*

No else commented specifically on this story. This story was considered collectively with Ant Bits, Funner, and Please, Not Today.

STORY TITLE: Ant Bites

I also have a child who likes body parts. He decided to draw ant bites on the little boy in the book as like the little boy's chest. He drew them on the little boy's chest, he drew them and called them ant bites. (everyone laughs) And he was so excited because he got to draw ant bites cause the little boy didn't have a shirt on in the book and he got to draw ant bites. He showed it to the teacher and everything. He's like, Look ant bites. (everyone laughs)

My initial observations: The same theme as Scary Kids. Maybe some attempt at humor. Interesting use of the term for body parts (ant bites are breasts). Cheryl was not as animated in telling this one. She did continue to use arm gestures.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY: The reactions to this story were discussed when Scary Kids was discussed. Statements for that story apply to this one as well.

STORY TITLE: "Funner"

And they want to do what everybody else is doing. Like if somebody else is doing something funner than what you're doing, like candy, they want to do that. If the other group is making a flag and your group's writing, no, no, no, they don't want to write. They want to do what that group's doing. They want to make a flag.

My initial observations: Theme is consistent with other stories Cheryl told. Seems to be complaining about another aspect of working with students. Has a "yes but" quality to it.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY: same as above(stories were considered collectively rather than individually)

STORY TITLE: Please, not today!

I have a little boy in my group for reading and language arts that has Tourette's syndrome and he shakes his head a lot. It's not outgoing but I had a visitor Monday that came in and he has verbal Tourette's and I wasn't told until after. And I told everybody that story because all of a sudden we're doing something and you hear this little voice say shut up. And like, I just kind of looked around and I was like okay. And my two kids almost got into a fight because the little boy couldn't stop, controlling his shut up and my other little Tourette's child was shaking his head. And they were like going at it and I was like, Oh god! This is all I need. Please, not today.

My initial observations: Same observations as those made for other stories Cheryl told. Remarkably consistent. Same story characteristics, style of telling the story and implications.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY: same as noted above (stories were considered collectively rather than individually)

BETTY

Betty is 24 years old, not married and has one child. She lives in a suburb close to but not with her parents who assist her with child care and commutes to the university for her classes. She has lived in the same neighborhood and attended local public schools all of her life. She currently is a billing specialist in a local medical office.

Betty has no close relatives who are teachers but reports that some of her neighbors are teachers and she talks with them regularly. Despite having had no teaching experience, teaching was Betty's first choice for a career when she entered college. Her reasons for choosing a career in teaching were influenced by the fact that she has a child and thought that teaching would be a good career to have if you are raising children.

Betty doesn't recall much about her time as a student in school and reports that there were no particular teachers who inspired her to become a teacher. She says that she likes school, however.

Betty has a quiet and pleasant way about her. She isn't afraid to speak up when she feels strongly about a topic but will not go out of her way to state her opinions if she thinks they are contradictory to the group opinion. She seems more comfortable with close friends than she does with those with whom she is not familiar. During the first personal interview, Betty seemed reluctant to share her thoughts but opened up after a few minutes. During the group interview, Betty seemed relaxed and eager to share her experiences. Betty was very relaxed and candid about her opinions during the third interview.

Betty plans to student teach in the fall 2004 semester. So far she has taken the introductory education courses and is currently taking social studies, math, reading/language arts and science methods. Despite this heavy load, she seems to be able to handle these courses easily. Betty is somewhat concerned about the types of experiences she is having at the university but is more optimistic about what she will learn than not. Betty hopes to learn more about teaching from participating in this study.

Betty's Stories

STORY TITLE: Just thrown in

My teacher for reading and language arts, she had just told me that she had just got thrown in there like just in January, like as a substitute or something and she just became the teacher. And that someone else was like head of the school or whatever, supposedly, and was supposed to come help her, like set up her room because the room that she's in was like a storage room or whatever. And they, she never showed up so she had to do it all on her own and she's never come in there to observe the students or do anything to help her out or anything. She's just on her own. So she's really just like thrown in, don't know what to do. The class is chaotic. She has no classroom management at all. I mean, she's trying like now. But they are just out of control and she needs that first before she can even get to teaching. You know what I mean.

My initial observations: the language is interesting in this story; particularly the use of the word "just" The word "just" is used quite often. It has different functions in various contexts, however:

"...she had just got thrown in..." meaning: without thought

"...just in January..." meaning: recently

"...she just became the teacher..." meaning: suddenly

"...she's just on her own..." meaning: all along

"...she's really just thrown in..." meaning: without thought

"...they are just out of control..." meaning: statement of condition

Also has alternative labels to many of the nouns in the story: "substitute or something..." "head of the school or whatever..." "storage room or whatever..." and "to help her or anything." Indicates that there is a specific order to solving the problems in the classroom: "She needs that first before she can even get to teaching." There are some absolute words in this story as well: "she never showed up," "she's never come in there," "the class is chaotic," "she has no classroom management," and "they are just out of control."

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

Betty told this story when asked to if other teachers had told them stories about teaching. There were not any comments about this or Alice's story that echoed the events. In the third interview, however, Betty elaborated on her feelings about this story.

Interviewer: How did you feel about telling the story of the teacher who was just thrown in the classroom and had to figure things out on her own?

Betty: *I couldn't believe it, I mean, can schools do that kind of stuff to you, just throw you in the classroom and let you figure it out on your own? It's really scary that that could happen to someone.*

Interviewer: Do you think it will happen to you?

Betty: *It might. I don't know what I will do if I have to figure all of that stuff, the teaching methods and discipline, out on my own, you know.*

Interviewer: How will taking these courses and having field experiences affect your ability to handle those kinds of things?

Betty: *I hope I will know a little more than these teachers did but I'm sure the students will be the same.*

Alice, Cheryl and Donna all commented that although they all felt that these were the kinds of things they didn't want to happen to them, they thought that it would not be so hard for them because they would have more experience going into the classroom than these two teachers did. See Alice's comments with the story "Thrown in and survived." Hannah and Sally had a different perspective on these two stories, however.

Interviewer: Tell me more about the story of the teachers who were thrown into the classroom and just have to figure things out on their own.

Hannah: *Yeah, I know teachers that have had something like that happen to them too. Some of them didn't stay around very long. They just gave up and quit.*

Interviewer: Do you think something similar will happen to you?

Hannah: *I hope not. I don't think so because I know kind of what to expect in the classroom. I don't think they did. I think I'll be at a different kind of school too than they were. I think what they did was because of the school and the people that worked there.*

Interviewer: Tell me more about the story of the teachers who were thrown into the classroom and just have to figure things out on their own.

Sally: *They weren't prepared to teach.*

Interviewer: What do you mean?

Sally: *They didn't know anything about teaching. They shouldn't have been there if they didn't know what they were doing. Nobody should have to have help when they are teaching in their classroom.*

Interviewer: So you think you will not need help when you are teaching?

Sally: *I may want to share ideas with some of the other teachers but I probably will not have to have anyone help me set up my room or anything. I already know what I want to do in my classroom and I don't think anyone needs to tell me how to do that.*

STORY TITLE: I had cookies

I had that in my group too. I had the little ones in reading and language arts and I had did like a little activity to where they were digging for bones and fossils in the cookies. And like my thing was to split up the kids between me and another girl so that group wanted to come with me because I had cookies and it was more motivating. And she didn't really have that. So we had to work around that.

My initial observations

Contrasting with Cheryl's story but with a positive resolution. Shows collaboration with another teacher. Sounds like an interesting lesson.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY:

No one, including Betty discussed this particular story.

STORY TITLE: Different teachers, different forms

And all the different teachers want different formats. Like I learned in principles one way to write objectives and goals but now I'm learning in all my other classes, a totally different way the terms have to be measurable, and I never learned that at all and now I'm not used to that. And it's a new thing. And I have to follow this format. And my neighbor, she's a teacher and she says, you know she told us that's not what we do. You know you do this little check off in the little bitty box. It's not this long drawn out thing. So it's like pointless. So you know, you spend most of the time writing all this out.

My initial observations: Betty's tone of voice sounded like she was overwhelmed and confused by what she was learning in these classes. Implication that there should only be one correct way to do these teaching tasks?

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY:

While she was telling this story, Alice and Donna were nodding in agreement. In the personal interview, Betty commented on this further.

Interviewer: Tell me more about your experiences in your courses?

Betty: Most of them are pretty good, pretty much a lot going on. I don't think teaching will be this hard. I just wish the courses made more sense.

STORY TITLE: What Works

Just that like, um, (pause) if I have, just because she's so used to doing it with her kids that she knows like what works and what might not work so I know not to do certain things with kids. And then like too, with reading and language arts, like, my kids are at like what I thought was like a lower level, and the teacher that I have she kind of like gives them a lower level. My neighbor gives me the suggestion of if they are at a lower level, don't give them lower level. Give them higher level and push them. You have to push them. If you don't push, then they never going to give, you know. So that's what I did and they wound up liking the higher level. You know what I'm saying. They were bored with that lower level stuff. So it actually got them motivated doing stuff like that.

My initial observations: There is a hesitation at the beginning of the story which may indicate the teller is reluctant to tell the story or is trying to recall it. Repetition of phrases pertaining to "lower level" and "higher level" are used throughout the story. The classroom teacher favors lower level while the neighbor favors the higher level. The intensifier "like" is used seven times in the first half of the story and then not at all in the second half. There is emphasis on having to "push" the students: "give them higher level and push them. You have to push them. If you don't push, then they (are) never going to give." "Like" is used when describing what the classroom teacher is doing and "push" is used when describing what the neighbor says. The phrase "you know what I'm saying" is also interesting. Does the teller wish to verify that she is being clear or looking for acknowledgement that what she is saying is correct? There is also transitions between past and present tense verbs.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY: no comments

STORY TITLE: An issue of security

I remember a story our teacher told us in principles. She had told us that somebody was getting beat up at a bus stop or something. And the parent came to the class and wanted to beat up the child for beating up her kid...

Cheryl: So it's like that that story she told us about um, it was a predominantly white school or something and they had a little black child that was going there and he got beat up at the bus stop or whatever. And his parent went to go beat up the child that beat him up. And it created this whole issue of security and all of that stuff.

My initial observations: This was a story that both Cheryl and Betty told. Betty starts it and Cheryl finishes. Has the literature discussed shared story telling? I should have asked Betty more about this in the group interview. Did follow up in personal interview.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

Interviewer: You started a story about a child whose parent came to school to “beat up” kids for picking on her child...

Betty: Yeah, I remember...

Interviewer: What point were you trying to make?

Betty: I don’t remember exactly but I think a story like that doesn’t help me learn to teach. It just kind of scares me. It makes me want to not work with some kinds of kids, you know, like some schools you hear about on TV.

Interviewer: Have you had any personal experiences like the one in the story?

Betty: No, well, we would have fights at school or something but the parents were never part of it. The parents came when the principal or teacher called them, but not part of the fight. I would like to know what to do when something like that happens.

Other teachers did not comment on this story.

DONNA

Donna is 22 years old, recently married, and has no children. She and her husband live quite a distance from the university and she commutes to school. Donna has lived in her community all of her life and she attended local public schools there.

Donna has no relatives who are teachers but has worked in a daycare for 3 years. She also has friends who are teachers with whom she regularly communicates. Donna was inspired to become a teacher because of her experiences working at the daycare. She wants to be a teacher so that she can help children enjoy learning and thinks that a career in education will help her when she has a family.

Unlike most of the other participants, Donna does not work nor has she had any other work experience besides working in the daycare.

Hannah plans to student teach in the fall 2004 semester. So far she has taken the introductory education courses and is currently taking social studies, math, reading/language arts and science methods. Like Cheryl, Donna is skeptical of the experiences that she is having in her methods courses. She does not think they are realistic or particularly helpful in preparing her to become a teacher.

Donna is very relaxed in sharing her experiences with others and seems to enjoy the interactions with her peers. Donna is diplomatic when disagreeing with others and often can see situations from a variety of perspectives. Donna hopes to gain insights into her own teaching ability by participating in this study.

Donna's stories

STORY TITLE: Creating suspense

I also had the same experience with a sword. He wanted to put a sword in somebody's heart and he wanted to have a dead body in his world. But it was all about suspense, we were creating suspense so he had this whole horror movie thing in his head. It wasn't something that startled me because he talked about scary movies the whole time so it wasn't like he wants to do it. He thought it was cool.

My initial observations

Contrasts with Cheryl's Scary Kids story. Demonstrates some understanding and acceptance of student characteristics. Donna's tone was quiet and she appeared calm when telling the story. Not humorous but not horror either. No strong language observed in the story.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

No one commented on this story.

STORY TITLE: Answer my question

No but she likes her lesson plans, she wants us to break up into groups the first day of assessment. This is math methods, and so I raised my hand and I said, are we going to be split up into groups in the classroom for assessment or for the whole time that we're there and she said, well, everyday should be an assessment. You should constantly be assessing kids. Kind of like well, that doesn't answer my question. I asked are we all going to be broken up into groups. Answer my question. Don't tell me we're going to be assessing every day. So another girl says well are we going to be broken every day or just for the first day. So then she clarified it. Everything is always up in the air about everything.

My initial observations: Donna was quiet animated when telling this story. At the end of the story, she threw her hands up in the air; could be a sign of frustration.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

Reactions of this story were considered collectively with frustrations about the university.

STORY TITLE: The social guy

Like I was telling ya' when we were in reading and language, this boy that I have in my group, he's, I guess, he's a social guy, he's a woman lover of the 5th-6th grade class. But he's telling me about these two girls who were in my fifth grade group that are his friends and he was best friends with one of them

last year but she, they got in an argument, she got mad at him so they're not talking right now. So the two girls plotted together that they, they told him that they were going to make up with him and it's all a big trip. They didn't want to make up with him and they said that he doesn't listen to their needs so they can't be friends. I'm like, what are ya'll twenty year olds? They sound like they're old people!

My initial observations: This is a funny story. I couldn't help laughing at it and neither could any one else. I'm not sure what the point of the story was but it was fun to listen to. I would have thought it would have prompted more discussion. Others laughed but had no other reactions.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

No one commented specifically on this story but Donna's comments that she doesn't find funny stories helpful are the opposite of the feel and content of this story. I didn't realize this until much later in the analysis and did not follow up on it with Donna.

HANNAH

Hannah is 23 years old who is married and has two children. The younger child is her and her husband's and she also has a 13-year old stepson. She and her husband live in the metropolitan area and she commutes to school. Hannah has moved around the area throughout her life. She attended local public schools. She is proud of her Native American and French heritage.

Hannah has an aunt who is a teacher and has had experience tutoring family and friends before entering the university to become a teacher. Hannah was inspired to choose teaching by her high school French teacher. Hannah also states that some of her teachers were very poor and she uses that experience to help her decide what a good teacher should do. She wants to be a teacher so that she can excite children about learning.

Like most of the other teachers, Hannah works to help support herself while she is in school. She is currently working with media for a local library. In the past, Hannah has worked as a clerk in an insurance company.

While Hannah is the quietest of the group, she is not shy. She has a pleasant way of interacting with others. She is very expressive in her speech.

Hannah plans to student teach in the fall 2005 semester. So far she has taken the introductory education courses and principles of instruction. She is currently taking classroom management and social studies methods.

Hannah thinks that her experiences in this university courses will help her learn to teach and she is looking forward to taking them. She seems genuinely interested in hearing what others have to say about their experiences and hopes to be able to make better decisions about teaching from participating in this study.

STORY TITLE: Unexpected behavior

There was one boy who she really, really adored. He was really a good student. Always made straight a's and never had a b. And she has a behavior log and when you do something really bad, you have to sign the behavior log. And this really good student, one day she was talking to someone else, and this kid belches in the other kid's face. And she goes "That's too much, just go sign the book." And the kid like drops on to the floor. And she said that happens sometimes. That's what a classroom is really like.

My initial observations: One of the most complete stories told. One of the few appropriated stories; is probably a horror story but could also be humorous. Elicits surprise from Betty. No other comments or reactions from other teachers. Uses "really" often when telling this story. Doesn't elaborate on a solution.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

None of the other teachers or Hannah commented on this story.

STORY TITLE: You don't know what you know

My aunt was here the other day and she is a sixth grade teacher and she's working on international, national boards, that certification thing where she was taping herself. And we were talking school and the classroom and everything and she was telling me that none of this was going to help. I said no this is going to help. I was telling her I have great teachers with experience and I'm sure this is going to help me some where along the way when I get out there and she was telling me, no it isn't going to help. It's completely different when you get out there. I went to school and all that stuff and none of that is going to help. I guess, when you get your own classroom, you think of things your own way and you may not even realize it that you're using that background knowledge that you got from school. Because I was asking her what are your attention getters. She said I don't think I have that. Well I said I was researching it for a class and I said that the only one I really like was blurting out a funny word and then raising your hand. That was one that always work. She said I really like that. Then she told me, what did she say, something she did and I said well that's your attention getter. I never thought about it that way. So she's using the stuff she learned she just doesn't realize it. When you get out to the class, you feel so inexperienced and rely on your own experience and that's true but I think you do use the stuff you learned in class, you just don't realize it.

My initial observations

There is more of a conversational quality to this story than the others. Different kind of relationship? Collegial relationship between Hannah and her aunt. Phrase “going to help” used a great deal. Interesting point of view about learning how to teach that contrasts with other teachers. Story did not prompt stories from other teachers. No facial or verbal reaction by the other teachers in the group interview. Phrase “not even realize it” connected to tacit knowledge? Hannah wins the argument.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

Interviewer: Tell me more about your aunt who is a teacher.

Hannah: I see her every so often. She always asked what I’m doing and seems interested in what I’m learning.

Interviewer: Do you ever ask her to help you with your work?

Hannah: No, not really. She sometimes tells me about things that she’s doing in class but I don’t call or see her enough to get her help with school stuff.

None of the other teachers commented on this story in the personal interview.

SALLY

Sally is 23 years old, not married, and has no children. She shares an apartment with a friend and commutes to school. She has lived in the same neighborhood and attended private schools all of her life. She works as a store cashier near her home in the evenings.

Sally has an aunt and uncle who are teachers and she worked with a tutoring program at her high school. Being a teacher has always been her college goal.

Sally reported that she didn't really have any exceptional teachers in school. Elementary and junior high school were boring for her but she enjoyed high school because the teachers challenged her to think. She recalls a high school English teacher who inspired her to choose education as a career. She credits this teacher with creating a love of reading and learning to be analytical.

Sally looks much younger than her peers but has a confidence about her that earns their respect. During group interactions, Sally did not speak much. During the personal interview, Sally reported that she was not comfortable with this group because they seemed more experienced than she was and they were not her circle of friends with whom she normally interacted. She did find the conversation stimulating and thought-provoking, however. She also reported that she did have similar sharing experiences with her friends although they had not taken any of the methods courses that the others had.

Sally plans to student teach in the fall 2005 semester. So far she has taken the introductory education courses and principles of instruction. Sally is currently enrolled in classroom management and science methods.

Sally wanted to participate in this study so that she could learn more about how to teach and prepare her for future education courses.

Sally's Stories

STORY TITLE: No help

I've learned what not to do by watching some of the teachers in the classrooms. They don't tell me anything, I just see, watch they're doing. Like one time, a student would not behave so I sent him to sit with the teacher. Then when we were reviewing with the class, the teacher was telling the kid the answers and he would shout them out loud. Then they both would laugh and cut up about it. I was really mad about that. We all just couldn't get over it.

My initial observations:

Anger observable in tone of voice and body language when telling the story. Uses many extreme adjective such as really or all. Use of many visual verbs: by watching some of the teacher, they don't tell me anything, I just see, watch what they're doing.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

After Sally shared this story, there was a pause and the interviewer went on to other topics. In the third interview, Sally felt strongly about her story.

Interviewer: What made you decide to share the story of the teacher that was encouraging the student to misbehave?

Sally: *It seemed to fit in and I thought about how teachers don't help solve the problems that you're having with some of the students.*

In the subsequent interview, Donna and Cheryl commented on this group of stories rather than the individual stories.

Interviewer: What did you think of the story of the teacher who didn't discipline the child when the university student was trying to teach?

Donna: *I thought, well, I know some of the teachers in that group and I had heard their stories before. It seemed kind of strange for a teacher to behave that way but if she said it happened, then it probably happened that way.*

Interviewer: Do you learn anything about being a teacher from hearing a story like this?

Donna: *What not to do, what I don't want to happen to me.*

Interviewer: What did you think of the story of the teacher who didn't discipline the child when the university student was trying to teach?

Cheryl: *I had heard those stories, those kinds of stories before so I wasn't surprised. There are those kinds of teachers out there and you just have to not pay attention to them. They aren't good teachers and you don't learn anything from them.*

STORY TITLE: Sometimes it's not the kids

Sometimes the teacher causes more problems than the students. One teacher at the school I was going to talked on the cell phone the whole time we were in the class. It was very rude and we all were really mad about it but she did it all the time. Other teachers would just walk in the class and just start talking and interrupting what we were doing and we didn't know how to get them to stop it.

My initial observations

This story is one of three stories that stood alone. Unclear connection between this and statement immediately preceding it: Donna talks about fitting into the school culture; not sure how Sally thinks this fits. Continued use of extreme adjectives. Highly emotional while telling this to the group.

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

Interviewer: How did you feel when you were sharing the story about the teacher using the cell phone in the classroom?

Sally: *A little angry, couldn't believe it. I thought those teachers were supposed to be there to help us but this teacher was busy doing stuff she shouldn't have been doing. It made me wonder what she does when we're not there. Does she still talk on the phone while she's supposed to be teaching or was that something she just did because we were there and she didn't have to teach? It's rude either way, like she doesn't care about what other people need, just what she wants.*

Interviewer: What do you think others learn when they hear this kind of story?

Sally: *How bad some teachers are and what not to do in the classroom. This teacher can't be a good teacher if she's not paying attention to what's going on in her own classroom.*

STORY TITLE: The fish died

Sometimes we talk about what happened while we were teaching. In one of our lessons, we were supposed to have the students observe fish and we worked hard to bring these fish to class. They seemed okay when we brought them, they had been alive all weekend but during the lesson they started floating up to the top of the water and turning upside down and we just couldn't believe it. The kids just sat there and watched the fish die, one by one. The person in our group who was teaching just kept going right on and asking questions about the fish and the students just kept poking at the fish. By the end of the lesson every fish was dead. We couldn't wait to talk it over outside of class. We couldn't believe it.

My initial observations

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STORY

Sally offered this story to add to what Donna and Cheryl were saying were the topics of most of their stories. One might suspect that this could be a hilarious story but the group did not seem to respond to it much. There were some slight giggles (mostly from Alice) and nods of acknowledgement from the other participants.

When asked to comment on these stories in the third interview, the participants all acknowledged that they had had similar experiences or had heard of similar stories before. They didn't find these stories particularly useful or that they provided insights into teaching.

Interviewer: Let's talk about the stories of the student who was having girl problems, the students with Tourette's syndrome and the dead fish. What do you think of those stories?

Alice: *Those were okay stories. I did like the fish story. I bet that would have been really funny to see in the classroom but I'm glad it didn't happen to me. I wanted to know why the person who was teaching just kept right on going but I guess I might have done the same thing knowing that I was being graded on my teaching.*

Interviewer: Why didn't you ask Sally to share more about the story?

Alice: *I don't know. I guess everyone else didn't seem interested so I didn't ask anything.*

Interviewer: Let's talk about the stories of the student who was having girl problems, the student with Tourette's syndrome and the dead fish. What do you think of those stories?

Hannah: *Those were pretty good. I hear funny stories about students all the time and I like hearing them, the funny stories.*

Interviewer: Do you learn anything from these stories?

Hannah: *Just how kids behave and you can't ever know what they're going to say or do. I didn't know anything about Tourette's syndrome until Cheryl told her story.*

Interviewer: Do you know more now?

Hannah: *Not really.*

Interviewer: If you had been hearing this story some place else, do you think you would have asked more about it?

Hannah: *I don't know.*

Interviewer: Let's talk about the stories of the student who was having girl problems, the students with Tourette's syndrome and the dead fish. What do you think of those stories?

Betty: *They were fun. We tell stories like that sometimes after we're through venting about other things like schoolwork and bad teachers.*

Interviewer: Do you learn anything from these stories?

Betty: *I don't know. (long pause)*

Appendix C

Interview Transcript

INTERVIEWER: Alright, thank you for being here today. I appreciate you taking the time to be part of this study. I would like to emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers or point of view. I'm not looking for any particular opinion on any of the topics we will explore. I'm interested in your honest opinions and perceptions of your experiences. Please feel free to agree or disagree with any positions presented in the interview. The purpose of the interview is to share stories that you have about teaching. These stories may be based on your personal experience or may be ones that others have told you. I'd like to start by asking you what you think a story is.

Betty: a story is a sequence of events that tell about something that happened.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have any other ideas of what a story might be?

Cheryl: It can be made up or real.

Sally: It has characters, people doing things and it happens in a particular place.

INTERVIEWER: okay, anything else?

No response from anyone

INTERVIEWER: Okay, if someone asked you to describe the most important teaching experience you personally have had or that someone else had told you, what story would you tell?

Hannah: that we have had?

INTERVIEWER: yeah that you have heard or experienced about teaching. (long pause)

Cheryl: Well, I was told when I first got into teaching, well, I was working at a daycare so I kind of had my experience with children as it was, but I had went on an observation and the teacher told me, "Show no fear." (everyone laughs) Don't let them know that you're scared. Don't let them know that you're nervous cause then they're going to act out more. So I would tell that everyone that's going into teaching, don't let them see that you're nervous.

Alice: They smell fear. (laughing)

Sally: Yes, that's right!

INTERVIEWER: Have you found that to be true in your experiences?

Cheryl: I've tried to be less nervous as possible. Like, it depends. I'm more comfortable getting up in front of a group of children than I am getting up in front of a group of peers, of my own age. I would much rather prefer getting up in front of group of children, I guess because I've had so much experience with it. I'm not really nervous about it any more.

Donna: and you're by yourself too. Like when you're student teaching or when you're doing a field experience you've got other people with you. I mean, I'm comfortable when I'm by myself, I know in my class even with preschool kids when I'm in my class by myself, we go crazy but when if somebody's in there, I feel more reserved.

Sally: yeah, I get nervous when the teacher or my teacher is watching me teach. I always think I'm doing something wrong, like I'll fail or something.

INTERVIEWER: what other stories do you have about teaching? (long pause)

Alice: (laughing) I was doing an activity yesterday in reading and language arts, and they had to write this, like a good wish, almost like a fortune cookie kind of thing on this piece of paper. Cause we're doing a study of Chinese New Year, and one boy asked me if he had to write it in Chinese. I asked if him if he knew how to write in Chinese and he said no. And I said, then you don't have to write it in Chinese.

Cheryl: To go along with reading and language arts, not necessarily the kids in my group but the kids that noticed that were in the same range as the kids in my group, they're like pyro-maniacs, they like fire. They like guns. They had to draw a picture for one of the other teachers of like their fantasy world and a couple of the children drew guns like killing spiderman and superman cause they didn't like that kind of hero.

Sally: Good grief

Cheryl: Yeah, like that is kind of scary and I had a child discuss what you happen if you start a fire in the air conditioner. It was kind of scary.

INTERVIEWER: Did you share that story with anybody?

Cheryl: I told the teacher, like we discussed it with the teacher. And the other person that had the gun group, she showed the papers to the teacher and actually they had another child today in another group that did the gun thing. The teacher talked to them about what was appropriate to do in school and what wasn't appropriate. But to tell them do their fantasy world and then they draw a big gun shooting at somebody, that's kind of scary.

Hannah: Yeah, that makes you think.

Cheryl: Yeah, that's kind of scary.

Betty: Mine just draw pictures of body functions and stuff. Pictures of gross stuff.

Donna: I also had the same experience with a sword. He wanted to put a sword in somebody's heart and he wanted to have a dead body in his world. But it was all about suspense, we were creating suspense so he had this whole horror movie thing in his head. It wasn't something that startled me because he talked about scary movies the whole time so it wasn't like he wants to do it. He thought it was cool.

Cheryl: I also have a child who likes body parts. He decided to draw ant bites on the little boy in the book as like the little boy's chest. He drew them on the little boy's chest, he drew them and called them ant bites. (everyone laughs) And he was so excited because he got to draw ant bites cause the little boy didn't have a shirt on in the book and he got to draw ant bites. He showed it to the teacher and everything. He's like, Look ant bites. (everyone laughs)

Alice: I have one that goes along with "show no fear" is don't let them know that you're not prepared, even if you're not. They think that in reading and language arts, when you walk into the classroom and you're listening to them read and doing activities with them three times, and one group looks at us and says you're not prepared? Is that why we're reading today?

INTERVIEWER: Cause you couldn't think if anything else to do huh?
(everyone laughs)

Alice: Yeah, they say you're making us read because you didn't do something?

Cheryl: And they want to do what everybody else is doing. Like if somebody else is doing something funner than what you're doing, like candy, they want to do that. If the other group is making a flag and your group's writing, no, no, no, they don't want to write. They want to do what that group's doing. They want to make a flag.

Betty: I had that in my group too. I had the little ones in reading and language arts and I had did like a little activity to where they were digging for bones and fossils in the cookies. And like my thing was to split up the kids between me and another girl so that group wanted to come with me because I had cookies and it was more motivating. And she didn't really have that. So we had to work around that.

Sally: Our group gets too noisy when they are around other groups. I have a hard time hearing them and I don't, don't want to yell or anything but it's hard to keep them involved in your lesson.

INTERVIEWER: (pause) Do you have any other stories about teaching?
(long pause)

INTERVIEWER: Are there any stories that you hear other students in classes about other things that go on in classrooms?

Cheryl: Beware of reading and language arts. (everyone laughs) Beware of the school they make you go to. They throw you into a school with children who all have some kind of special need. And it's not a regular classroom, it's not a realistic setting that they provide for you to teach in and it's very hard to get used to something like that. Especially when you weren't taught that way. You weren't taught to go into a school like that. You weren't taught to teach the way they want you to teach. Like somebody who likes it (laughs)

Alice: Don't look at me Cheryl...

Cheryl: Most people agree with me and find it very, very hard. I mean I like the fact that I only have three kids to a group but those three kids, it's like you have to constantly get on them and say pay attention. Do your work. Pay attention. Pay attention. Jeffery, stop. Wesley, stop trying to shoot me with your pen. It's hard.

Donna: I think that goes along with, after you get your degree, you need to make sure of the whole school philosophy that kind of you fit into it, cause if you don't agree with how they're teaching something, you're going to be kind of lost in that school.

Sally: You're not going to fit in. It takes time to learn what's going on. Besides sometimes the teacher causes more problems than the students. One teacher at the school I was going to talked on the cell phone the whole time we were in the class. She seemed really nice when we started and when we started teaching, I mean, like, we were working with the students, she just became different. She was very rude and we all were really mad about it but she did it all the time. Other teachers would just walk in the class and just start talking and interrupting what we were doing and we didn't know how to get them to stop it. So we just kept on teaching and hoping somebody would help us.

INTERVIEWER: Have you talked with anybody that has had those kinds of experiences?

(pause)

Cheryl: Only other students who have had the same class. They warned you about it ahead of time.

INTERVIEWER: Have they warned you about any other classes?

(long pause)

Cheryl: Not really. I think the only class I've been warned about was reading and language arts.

Alice: I was warned about another class-not to take it with one person. And I didn't take it with that person and look where I am now...

Sally: yeah, still got messed up. (everyone laughs)

Alice: I really don't like the teacher I have.

Sally: But see you're complaining and Donna has the other teacher and she's complaining too so either way, you're still messed up.

Donna: No but she likes her lesson plans, she wants us to break up into groups the first day of assessment. And so I raised my hand and I said, are we going to be split up into groups in the classroom for assessment or for the whole time that we're there and she said, well, everyday should be an assessment. You should constantly be assessing kids. Kind of like well, that doesn't answer my question. I asked are we all going to be broken up into groups. Answer my question. Don't tell me we're going to be assessing every day. So another girl says well are we going to be broken every day or just for the first day. So then she clarified it. Everything is always up in the air about everything.

Alice: See, we're getting those kinds of answers too but we're getting just a, points taken off for stupid things. Like one person had staple marks in their paper like where she had actually stapled it but she doesn't want anything stapled so she circled the staple marks and took 2 points off. She just taking points off mine because my heading was double-spaced instead of single spaced; not just a few points but lots of points. She rips apart all of your stuff but never tells you how to do it better.

Sally: She doesn't give good criticism, she only gives bad criticism.

Alice: Then she tells us she wants a certain kind of lesson plan that we've never been taught.

Cheryl: We didn't beg enough. That's what happened, we didn't beg enough.

INTERVIEWER: What do you mean you didn't beg enough?

Cheryl: To get the teacher that we wanted to teach it. I had to drop it. I had to drop math methods because I had too many hours and there was no way I would have been able to keep up.

Alice: Yeah, it takes so much to keep up. It just takes the life out of me. I'm not too happy with it right now.

Donna: The hardest is to come up with fun lesson plans, I think.

Betty: You know, I had a really good teacher in math. I really didn't like math but he made it fun.

Donna: I enjoy math. I love math out of anything but I just think all of the other subjects you can do so many fun things with but math, I mean you can do fun things, it's just harder to find, come UP with fun things to do, I don't know.

Hannah: I think out of all teaching classes and experiences I've had so far, I have liked science the best. And I wasn't really a science person. I was more like the reading/language arts person but I'm liking science more than anything that I've done.

INTERVIEWER: What is it about science that you like?

Hannah: The teacher. She is so interested and involved in science and she makes everything fun and she explains things. If we have questions about it, it's not like going to class in reading and language arts and somebody jumping down your throat about the question. And calling you closed minded.

Sally: Yeah, the same thing goes for the group you're working with in the class. I like the group I'm working with in the school cause we help each other out and when one of us is having problems, we help each other. I've learned a lot just by watching the other people in my group teach. They think of things to do that I would never think of.

Hannah: We share those kinds of things in class all the time.

INTERVIEWER: Do any of your college professors share stories about teaching with you in class?

Cheryl, Hannah and Betty: the science teacher

INTERVIEWER: What kinds of stories do they share about classroom management?

Hannah: Her student teaching and her classroom experiences.

Cheryl: Her experiences with her daughter.

INTERVIEWER: Do any particular stories stand out?

Hannah: There was one boy who she really, really adored. He was really a good student. Always made straight a's and never had a b. And she has a behavior log and when you do something really bad, you

have to sign the behavior log. And this really good student, one day she was talking to someone else, and this kid belches in the other kid's face. And she goes that's too much, just go sign the book. And the kid like drops on to the floor.

Betty: Are you serious?

Hannah: And she said that happens sometimes. That's what a classroom is really like.

Sally: We heard a lot of stories in classroom management too.

Betty: Yes.

Sally: So many that none of them really stand out but we did hear a lot in that one.

INTERVIEWER: What about some of the other stories in science? What other stories are you hearing in there?

Cheryl: Just stories about how she was taught science and we discussed how we were taught science. How it's so much different now. Science is all about trying to be inquiry based and hands on and not vocabulary like we all were taught. She has a lot of stories about that and she talks about some of her student teachers, some of the stuff they do. And she gives a lot of examples about things that she, like if we do a lesson on something, she'll say for instance, like assessment, this is on the Praxis, for you to focus something on. She's very energetic and she loves science and it makes you interested in it because she so energetic about it.

Donna: Dr. Smith is the same way. He loves doing all kind of fun activities where you actually discover what it is and not just feeding it to you. You actually discover it on your own.

INTERVIEWER: How does that help you become a better teacher?

Donna: Because, for me I enjoy it more that way and it stays in my head better. If you're experiencing it and you're finding out for yourself you remember it longer. And I think for kids it's the same way. If they're experiencing it and they're finding it out on their own, then they're more apt to remember it.

Cheryl: There needs to some experience and some explanation as well. Because, like for instance, with Dr. Smith, he doesn't explain it a lot like he wants you to figure it all out on your own. But if it's not right when you figure it out, he doesn't check it. He doesn't go over it with you. And that's a concept I think we're having a hard time with. Because it's like we want to know, I just need a little more direction. Like I'm fine with doing the experiments. I love doing the experiments, it's great. And I think that kids need to do more experiments in elementary schools because when I grew up, we never did experiments in elementary school, at all. It was all vocabulary out of the science book. But I think there needs to be some kind of understanding of what they're doing before they can do it.

(pause)

INTERVIEWER: What about teachers that you work with in the schools? Do any of them ever share stories with you?

(pause)

Betty: My teacher for reading and language arts, she had just told me that she had just got thrown in there like just in January, like as a substitute or something and she just became the teacher. And that some one else was like head of the school or whatever, supposedly, and was supposed to come help her, like set up her room because the room that she's in was like a storage room or whatever. And they, she never showed up so she had to do it all on her own and she's never come in there to observe the children or do anything to help her out or anything. She's just on her own. So she's really just like thrown in, don't know what to do. The class is chaotic. She has no classroom management at all. I mean, she's trying like now. But they are just out of control and she needs that first before she can even get to teaching. You know what I mean.

Alice: My teacher there had the same problem when she was thrown in, well she wasn't thrown in, she took the position, but this is her first time ever teaching and no one ever offered her any kind of help as a first time teacher. The kids try to walk all over her and she took it upon herself to be strong with the kids and now they respect her a lot more for it. But she didn't get any help in the beginning either. And it's just kind of scary.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ask her to share that information or did she just give it to you?

Alice: She just gave it to us. (pause)

Sally: I've learned what not to do by watching some of the teachers in the classrooms. They don't tell me anything, I just see watch they're doing. Like one time, a student would not behave so I sent him to sit with the teacher. Then when we were reviewing with the class, the teacher was telling the kid the answers and he would shout them out loud. Then they both would laugh and cut up about it. The

teacher was no help at all. We were counting on her to help make the student behave but she didn't. I was really mad about that. We all just couldn't get over it.

INTERVIEWER: What about things that you talk about with other people in your class? Either inside of class or outside of class?

Alice: Usually it's all the same stuff. Especially right after it happens. The first person you see, you need to go tell. (everyone laughs)

(everyone talking, not understandable)

Cheryl: Especially with the reading and language arts. You have to discuss whatever happens in your classroom. Like usually when I leave, I've had a rough day, I call my mom. I tell everything to my mom and she says okay, you're better now? And I say yeah.

Donna: Like I was telling ya' when we were in reading and language, this boy that I have in my group, he's, I guess, he's a social guy, he's a woman lover of the 5th-6th grade class. But he's telling me about these two girls who were in my fifth grade group that are his friends and he was best with friends with one of them last year but she, they got in an argument, she got mad at him so they're not talking right now. So the two girls plotted together that they, they told him that they were going to make up with him and it's all a big trip. They didn't want to make up with him and they said that he doesn't listen to their needs so they can't be friends. I'm like, what are ya'll twenty year olds? They sound like they're old people!

Cheryl: I have a little boy in my group for reading and language arts that has Tourette's syndrome and he shakes his head a lot. It's not outgoing but I had a visitor Monday that came in and he has verbal tourette's and I wasn't told until after. And I told everybody that story because all of a sudden we're doing something and you hear this little voice say shut up. And like, I just kind of looked around and I was like okay. And my two kids almost got into a fight because the little boy couldn't stop, controlling his shut up and my other little Tourette's child was shaking his head. And they were like going at it and I was like, Oh god! This is all I need. Please, not today.

Donna: So I mean it's mainly just about students, funny things or bad things that happen.

Cheryl: We discuss our students. Especially from reading and language arts.

Donna: They're funny.

Cheryl: They're definitely an interesting bunch.

Sally: Sometimes we talk about what happened while we were teaching. In one of our lessons, we were supposed to have the students observe fish and we worked hard to bring these fish to class. They seemed okay when we brought them, they had been alive all weekend but during the lesson they started floating up to the top of the water and turning upside down and we just couldn't believe it. The kids just sat there and watched the fish die, one by one. The person in our group who was teaching just kept going right on and asking questions about the fish and the students just kept poking at the fish. By the end of the lesson every fish was dead. We couldn't wait to talk it over outside of class. We couldn't believe it.

INTERVIEWER: So you just share with whoever, shows up first?

Sally: Yeah, and then we usually tell it over and over to everybody we see.
(everyone else agrees)

INTERVIEWER: Do you all get a chance to share that in class?

Alice, Donna, and Cheryl: no

Hannah: Yeah, in classroom management, she lets us vent. Mostly everyone has issues with the language arts class.

Cheryl: We talk about it a little bit in our science methods class. It's not about the children, it's about the teachers.

Alice: and the course in general.

Cheryl: yeah, we talk about the course in general. We get to vent a little bit with her.

Alice: I would be afraid to tell the teachers in reading and language arts any of the stories of the kids.

Cheryl: Yeah, they might not like that.

Betty: They already told us they didn't want to hear anything bad about their teachers. (agreement from others)

Donna: And because their thing, I think they're trying to push their whole method of their school on you, like their method that they're using in their school is the best and that you should go teach there. You should try to adapt your style to their style. And I don't think that's right. I mean, if you don't agree with a certain teaching style (Alice: yeah) like I said before, you even shouldn't go fool with a school like that.

INTERVIEWER: In the classroom management course, how do the other people react when they hear these stories about the reading/language arts class?

Hannah: Well half of them are in the reading/language arts class so we just sit and laugh and say wow, cause my language arts teacher is completely different. So one girl gets really completely emotional about it and she's talking and she's fussing and she's like. And our classroom management teacher is like, are you feeling better now? And the teacher tries to tell her how she can talk to her teacher and what she should say and what she should not say. Trying to help her.

INTERVIEWER: Do you find that help you? When you hear these stories?

Hannah: Yeah, mostly every class, we just sit there and talk. It's really hard to determine where we finish talking and where we start learning. It's just hand in hand. Every class we just talk. We don't have a lot of notes. But all the stories are related to schools, so we are learning. It's just not formal and you really have to sit down and realize that you're going to need this eventually. So it's a neat class.

Sally: I can remember the stories better than the other stuff.

INTERVIEWER: Besides the classroom management course, what other courses do you share stories like that in?

Hannah: Social studies but I have the same teacher and she lets you talk. She takes the time. If you're having problems, she wants to hear them right here and there. She just takes the time to listen to you.

Betty: We kind of had that in 3100. The teacher wanted to hear the things we had to complain about.

Donna: Yeah, she tried to help us a lot.

Sally: (couldn't hear)

INTERVIEWER: What kinds of things ya'll trying to get her help with?

Betty: Just getting the classes over the summer and just making sure we'd get to graduate.

Donna: She did give us lots of new requirements and stuff like but as far as kind of promising us things that were going to happen and then they didn't happen 'til we all found ourselves kind of screwed because we needed things that we anticipated things were going to be offered.

Cheryl: I have the same teacher for multi-cultural and she didn't really give us time to vent.

Sally: I had another teacher for multicultural and we didn't do any of that in there either.

Alice: She said that it was going to be like the first five minutes of class or but...

Donna: it was supposed to happen...

Betty: yes, she said that we could vent...

Cheryl: but considering she was always late...

Betty: it did start to happen towards the end...towards the end of the semester but pressures for scheduling ..

Cheryl: but I think we vented whether she liked it or not...

Alice: but then a lot of the venting would have been about her and we couldn't exactly vent about her to her. Cause I had a pretty good semester other than that one class.

Cheryl: No, I had some class problems, I had statistics on top of that. (pause)

INTERVIEWER: So this venting, I mean, is it stories particularly that you tell to vent or is it just "I can't believe they're doing this to us kind of thing?"

Cheryl: It's both

Donna: Both. Teacher experiences, scheduling experiences, both.

INTERVIEWER: How do these stories guide your future decisions about teaching? Like what do you think you will do as a result of hearing these stories?

Betty: Not take a certain teacher.

Sally: Not go to the school that they're at for reading and language arts when I start really teaching.

Alice: But if you do have those students in your class, at least now you'll know how to handle them. Even if it's just from our stories. I feel better hearing people's stories and knowing that maybe I might not make the same mistakes or make a different choice because I heard someone's story.

Donna: Or knowing from, I mean, this one class for example, the teacher always gave us stories, this, this and that, but seeing that we enjoyed the teacher, bad things, I mean even when you're a good teacher, you're gonna always have bad things happen to you so it's not always going to be perfect.

INTERVIEWER: So it gives you a different perspective on teaching when you hear stories. How else do these stories affect what you do as a teacher?

Cheryl: You can get good experience from other teachers, stuff that they've done that you can always use in your classroom. Or you can have bad experiences that you've listened to and that you can try not to let that happen to in your classroom. It helps you to learn the difference between what should be going on and what shouldn't be going on to form your own opinion.

INTERVIEWER: Who do you think tells the best stories? If you could pick one person to tell you about teaching experiences, who would you pick?

Cheryl: I would pick my second grade teacher who has been teaching for 19 years and is still teaching at the same school, in the same classroom she's been in since I had her. I would go to her.

INTERVIEWER: Anybody else?

Sally: I don't know who I would go to.

Alice: I like to listening to stories in classroom management...

Donna: They were so dramatic and animated...

Alice: And they're very realistic, I mean I could see that some of that stuff happening. I've had teachers tell stories and you're thinking that probably didn't happen, they had to have made that up just to have something to talk about. Like in one methods class, she stopped us in the middle of stuff to tell us stories that have nothing to do with nothing. We don't know why she started talking about them. So anyone that can tell me story that I can learn from and that I can use, I like.

INTERVIEWER: How do you decide whether a story is realistic or not?

Alice: Things that like I may have seen in the classroom and then if they talked about it, I think that they may have probably happened. I know people like the people they're talking about. With the one teacher who, I mean, in multicultural, I mean some of her stories didn't really go with the way she, I mean like, her time line of where she was at this particular time, with how old she is, with things that she's done, I don't think I believe too much that she said.

INTERVIEWER: How about the rest of you, have you found that to be true also?

Donna: I think that a lot, like one of my methods teacher, she taught in a different state and different places and she'll give us stories about what they did there. I don't plan on ever teaching in another state. If I move to another state, I'll never teach, and things like that I don't find useful. But I mean, it is good in comparing how it is there to how it is here, but I don't really find it useful.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anyone else you would go to and try get stories that you think is important?

Hannah: the classroom management teacher. (can't hear)

Sally: I would go to my aunt or uncle because they're good listeners.

INTERVIEWER: why would you choose those folks?

Sally: I was always around them from the time I started taking methods classes. They were helpful. (can't hear) the last time I went back, he had a student teacher from here and she's secondary and she said, "Get out." I said what are you talking about and she had binders and binders of paperwork from the university to fill out. She thought she had to hand it in but then she didn't. She said she had to spend all of her time doing this paperwork and they didn't even look at it.

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting.

Sally: That's secondary. I don't know if it's any different from elementary.

Alice: It's not any different. We learned that from my cousin who works in schools. When we, when Betty and I went to observe, and she told us the same thing, that she sort of got into an argument with the teacher from the university who came to observe her student teacher. Why were they doing so much paperwork, useless paperwork? You know the lesson plans format, it's not how you, it's not realistic. You don't write a lesson plan that way. And all this time was being taken on all this paperwork stuff and they weren't having enough time to plan good lessons because the university has you doing all this paperwork.

Donna: I think all the lesson plan idea is pushed on us, like in classroom management, you weren't allowed to, no it wasn't classroom management (Alice: principles), principles, it was, you could not get any kind of idea off the internet. You just had to come up with a lesson out of your head. I mean in teaching, you never have to come up with a lesson out of your head. You're given a subject, you're given you know, what you have to accomplish and then you make it up. And rarely have to make it up, there's so many ideas everywhere for lesson plans and lessons. I think it's ridiculous that you have to come up with something off the top of your head when you're teaching. And honestly, I never follow a lesson plan. I mean, I know the activities to where I'll stand up, and then there's teachers that want you to write out word for word what you're going to say, what you're going to ask. And you never know what you're going to say, what you're going to ask. In all pertains to the kids that day, to you that day, to what's going on in the classroom.

Betty: And all the different teachers want different formats. Like I learned in principles one way to write objectives and goals but now I'm learning in all my other classes, a totally different way the terms have to be measurable, and I never learned that at all and now I'm not used to that. And it's a new thing. And I

have to follow this format. And my neighbor, she's a teacher and she says, you know she told us that's not what we do. You know you do this little check off in the little bitty box. It's not this long drawn out thing. So it's like pointless. So you know, you spend most of the time writing all this out.

INTERVIEWER: Do you talk to your neighbor very much?

Betty: Yeah, I go to her with stories too. That's what I was going to say next, when everyone else had finished. Yeah, she gives me a lot of stories of whenever I have things to say. You know, like when I say I have to do this, she'll say well maybe you might not want to do this because of this. She gives me help and, you know, suggestions and stuff because she's experienced.

INTERVIEWER: Do you find that her suggestions are useful?

Betty: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: What is it about them that makes them useful?

Betty: Just that like, um, (pause) if I have, just because she's so used to doing it with her kids that she knows like what works and what might not work so I know not to do certain things with kids. And then like too, with reading and language arts, like, my kids are at like what I thought was like a lower level, and the teacher that I have, she kind of like gives them a lower level. My neighbor gives me the suggestion of if they are at a lower level, don't give them lower level. Give them higher level and push them. You have to push them. If you don't push, then they never going to give, you know. So that's what I did and they wound up liking the higher level. You know what I'm saying. They were bored with that lower level stuff. So it actually got them motivated doing stuff like that.

INTERVIEWER: Which stories do you find most surprising when you hear them?

Betty: I remember a story our teacher told us in principles. She had told us that somebody was getting beat up at a bus stop or something. And the parent came to the class and wanted to beat up the child for beating up her kid...

Cheryl: That was in the multi-cultural...

Betty: But she told us in the other class too...

Cheryl: Cause we did that. Wasn't that like a case study or something we did in multi-cultural.

Betty: But that was like a shocker, you know, cause I don't want to deal with parents who come in to beat up a child.

Cheryl: She gave us a lot of info on like, diversity and stuff, that I never had to deal with cause I went to a very mixed school, public school. And I never had to deal with any of that. So it's like the stuff she was trying to tell us and trying to teach us, the case studies we would get, I felt was useless to me because I never had to deal with problems of diversity. I never had that issue. So it's like that that story she told us about um, it was a predominantly white school or something and they had a little black child that was going there and he got beat up at the bus stop or whatever. And his parent went to go beat up the child that beat him up. And it created this whole issue of security and all of that stuff. So it's like I thought, I mean I thought it was interesting but for me, it wasn't realistic because I never experienced that.

INTERVIEWER: In how many of your classes do you do case studies?

Sally: we haven't done any case studies.

Betty: we're doing one in science.

Alice: we're doing one in science, we did them in classroom management, and we did those little mini-things in multicultural. They weren't really case studies, they just gave the problem real fast and you just wrote on it.

Cheryl: for praxis

Donna: and we did an in-class case study for science.

INTERVIEWER: What's an in-class case study?

Donna: She gives it to you in-class and you just got to write about it.

Alice: It's like answering a question.

INTERVIEWER: What other methods do your teachers use besides storytelling and case studies and field experiences?

Hannah: Videos and reference books. Lots of books I'd want in my library.

INTERVIEWER: You find they're useful?

Hannah: yes

INTERVIEWER: Are there any other methods?

(pause)

(can't hear)

Sally: a lot of power point, yug.

INTERVIEWER: Power points are exciting huh?

(everyone laughs)

INTERVIEWER: what about role playing or observations or anything like that?

Cheryl: role playing and simulations, we've done those.

Sally: We've done role playing in social studies before.

Donna: Well we did, for science methods, this past week we're doing city park. We went out to city park and she brought us to different spots and next week we are going to have to write up a lesson plan dealing with something that we've you know, on city park on a field trip and something that you can use.

INTERVIEWER: Which experiences do you think are most beneficial in helping you learn to teach?

Cheryl: Observations

Hannah and Sally: Field experience

Alice: I like observations and field experience, yes. I feel that if, with the observations, once I'm there like a few hours, the same things just happen over and over again, no matter how long you're there. I'd rather talk to the teacher and talk about it with someone rather than just sit there and observe.

Donna: I like field experiences too but I think that all of these classes you're with someone else or with a group of people or with a small group, it's not realistic. I guess right now you're with a group of kids, but in science methods you've got the whole class but then you're in a group with three or four other people so you've got lots of help. It's not realistic.

Betty: I'd rather teach the kids. Like I said earlier, I'd rather teach the kids than teach my peers. It's not realistic at all.

Sally: oh yeah, I don't like that peer teaching stuff.

Alice: I've noticed that in math. If I'm trying to teach addition, well, my peers know addition and lesson's just not going to go the way it would with little kids.

Donna: And you can't just sit there and say, now do this and do this. It's your peers, you can't talk to them like kids. You can't ask them the same questions as you're gonna ask kids.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else you would like to add about storytelling and learning to teach?
(long pause)

Donna: I think that so much of our teaching is just learning from experience. From being in there and doing it. I think a lot of stuff we're getting taught, it's just so many, some people aren't just made to be teachers and you can be taught to be a teacher, you just, most good teachers it just comes natural to them.

Hannah: My aunt was here the other day and she is a sixth grade teacher and she's working on international, national boards, that certification thing where she was taping herself. And we were talking school and the classroom and everything and she was telling me that none of this was going to help. I said not this is going to help. I was telling her I have great teachers with experience and I'm sure this is going to help me some where along the way when I get out there and she was telling me, no it isn't going to help. It's completely different when you get out there. I went to school and all that stuff and none of that is going to help. I guess, when you get your own classroom, you think of things your own way and you may not even realize it that you're using that background knowledge that you got from school. Because I was asking her what are your attention getters. She said I don't think I have that. Well I said I was researching it for a class and I said that the only one I really like was blurting out a funny word and then raising your hand that was one that always work. She said I really like that. Then she told me, what did she say, something she did and I said well that's your attention getter. I never thought about it that way. So she's using the stuff she learned she just doesn't realize it. When you get out to the class, you feel so inexperienced and rely on your own experience and that true but I think you do use the stuff you learned in class, you just don't realize it.

INTERVIEWER: Okay, good point, I hear you telling me that you tell stories, you enjoy them, but you think field experiences are more important than sharing stories?

Sally: I'd like to think so.

Cheryl: It all depends on who the story is coming from.

Donna: Well most of the things that people talk about, it has or will eventually happen to you so one story goes with another.

INTERVIEWER: Would you like to see more storytelling incorporated in methods courses?

Betty: I would. I like it when the teacher tells the stories. I know I remember them better like when one teacher told us about how to go through a classroom like a child and think about what a child goes

through so you know how to set up your classroom like that. I just remember things like that. So if I had stories like that yeah.

Donna: Yeah, if it's relevant and worthwhile stories too. If it's something off the wall then story, you know, or if it's a class and it's story after story about things kids say, well that gets kind of redundant cause all kids say crazy things, you know.

Sally: I like it when the teacher tells stories because it makes the class more fun and the stuff we learn is easier to remember.

INTERVIEWER: So how do you decide which story is relevant? (long pause)

Donna: I guess, just mainly, not being, but one suggestion would be to offer a variety of stories and not be redundant with the stories. There's always unique stories.

INTERVIEWER: Okay thank you for participating and I will contact each of you to set a time and date for another interview.

Appendix D
Summary of Structural Features
Table continued

Story	setting	<i>“the” teacher or teacher collaborator</i>	<i>Teacher image</i>	<i>Story topic</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Problem solved?</i>	<i>Type of story</i>
Speak Chinese?	classroom	“the” teacher	Competent self	Instruction	Short	yes	Personal optimistic
Be prepared	classroom	“the” teacher	Competent self	Management	Short	Don't know	Personal optimistic
Now They Respect Her	classroom	“the” teacher	Competent other	Management	long	yes	Appropriated optimistic
Stupid Things	university		Incompetent other	learning	long	no	Personal horror
Scary Kids	classroom	Collaborative teacher	No Description	Management	Short	no	Personal horror
Funner	classroom		No Description	Management	Not clear	no	Personal horror
Ant Bites	classroom	Collaborative teacher	No Description	Management	Short	no	Personal horror
Please, Not Today	classroom	“the” teacher	Incompetent Self	Management	Not clear	no	Personal horror
Just Thrown In	classroom	“the” teacher	Incompetent other	Management	long	no	Appropriated horror
I Had Cookies	classroom	Collaborative teacher	Competent self	Management	Short	yes	Personal optimistic
Different Formats	university		Competent other	learning	long	no	Personal horror
What Works	Classroom/ other	Collaborative teacher	Competent self and other	Instruction	Not clear	yes	Personal optimistic
An Issue of Security	school		No Description	Management	Short	no	Appropriated horror
Creating Suspense	classroom	“the” teacher	Competent self	Management	Short	yes	Personal optimistic
Answer My Question	university		Incompetent other	learning	Short	yes	Personal horror
The Social Guy	classroom	“the” teacher	Competent self	Management	Short	Don't know	Personal optimistic
Unexpected Behavior	classroom	“the” teacher	Competent other	Management	Short	no	Appropriated horror
You Don't Know What You Know	other	Collaborative teacher	Competent self and other	learning	Short	yes	Personal optimistic

<i>Story</i>	<i>setting</i>	<i>“the” teacher or teacher collaborator</i>	<i>Teacher image</i>	<i>Story topic</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Problem solved?</i>	<i>Type of story</i>
Sometimes It's Not the Kids	classroom	Collaborative teacher	Competent self Incompetent other	Management	long	no	Personal horror
No Help	classroom	Collaborative teacher	Incompetent self and other	Management	Short	no	Personal horror
The Fish Died	classroom	Collaborative teacher	Incompetent other	Instruction	Short	no	Personal horror

Appendix E
Summary of Contextual Features

STORY in order told in group interview	Who told it		Relation to previous story
<i>Do You Speak Chinese?</i>	Alice	Story Chain One Focus: Student behavior	initiating
<i>Scary Kids</i>	Cheryl		contradict
<i>Creating Suspense</i>	Donna		contradict
<i>Ant Bites</i>	Cheryl		contradict
<i>Be Prepared</i>	Alice		Focus shift
<i>Funner</i>	Cheryl		confirm
<i>I Had Cookies</i>	Betty		confirm
<i>It's Not the Kids</i>	Sally	isolated	
<i>Answer My Question</i>	Donna	Story chain two Focus: frustrating methods courses	initiating
<i>Stupid Things</i>	Alice		confirm
<i>Unexpected Behavior</i>	Hannah	isolated	
<i>Just Thrown In</i>	Betty	Story chain three Focus: what to expect when you begin	initiating
<i>Now They Respect Her</i>	Alice		contradict
<i>No Help</i>	Sally		contradict
<i>The Social Guy</i>	Donna	Story chain four Focus: unexpected things happen in your lessons	initiating
<i>Please Not Today</i>	Cheryl		confirm
<i>The Fish Died</i>	Sally		confirm
<i>Different Formats</i>	Betty	Story chain five Focus: contrast between university and real world	initiating
<i>What Works</i>	Betty		confirm
<i>An Issue of Security</i>	Betty and Cheryl		confirm
<i>You Don't Know What You Know</i>	Hannah	isolated	

Appendix F:
Summary of Second Personal Interview
Table continued

What surprised you most about the stories you heard the group tell?					
Alice: That most of them were funny. There were some scary situations but most of them were funny. I think I was thinking that I would hear scarier things so that you would say, "Oh I'm glad I wasn't there that day," or "I'm glad I wasn't in that class."	Betty: Nothing. I had heard or told most of these stories before so I was kind of expecting to hear them again. We all tell each other these same stories over and over.	Cheryl: Nothing really surprised me because I see those people every day and most of those stories they told, I've already heard or I'm experiencing it just as much as they are.	Donna: That most of them, that we all have similar experiences between teachers and field experience and a lot of us are in the same classes or we tend to experience the same things.	Hannah: I'm always surprised about how some professors treat their students. I haven't taken some of those courses yet and I'm worried about them. Interviewer: What is it about those courses that worries you? Hannah: The amount of work and how the teachers just talk to the students. The other day a teacher called a university student a chicken**** on the phone because the student didn't want to call a kid's parents about tutoring cause the kid couldn't be in the program anymore.	Sally: I was surprised that some of the stories seemed so unrealistic, especially the ones about the professors. I believed that they probably could have happened, I wouldn't say all the cases, but they were, you know, stories about classes. And some of them seemed out of character or something. Interviewer: They didn't seem quite right or quite realistic? Sally: yea, a lot of them weren't, I wouldn't say a lot of them, some of them didn't seem as realistic as others.
<p style="text-align: center;">Comments from group interview that also relate to this question</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Which stories do you find most surprising when you hear them?</p> <p>Betty: I remember a story our teacher told us in principles. She had told us that somebody was getting beat up at a bus stop or something. And the parent came to the class and wanted to beat up the child for beating up her kid...</p> <p>Cheryl: That was in the multi-cultural...</p> <p>Betty: But she told us in 3100 too...</p> <p>Cheryl: Cause we did that. Wasn't that like a case study or something we did in multi-cultural.</p> <p>Betty: But that was like a shocker, you know, cause I don't want to deal with parents who come in to beat up a child.</p> <p>Cheryl: She gave us a lot of info on like, diversity and stuff, that I never had to deal with cause I went to a very mixed school, public school. And I never had to deal with any of that. So it's like the stuff she was trying to tell us and trying to teach us, the case studies we would get, I felt was useless to me because I never had to deal with problems of diversity. I never had that issue. So it's like that that story she told us about um, it was a predominantly white school or something and they had a little black child that was going there and he got beat up at the bus stop or whatever. And his parent went to go beat up the child that beat him up. And it created this whole issue of security and all of that stuff. So it's like I thought, I mean I thought it was interesting but for me, it wasn't realistic because I never experienced that.</p>					

What did you learn from sharing these stories?					
Alice: What to do and what not to do in the classroom. Like I said, someone else makes the mistake and you can learn from their mistakes and try not to do it yourself. You also get feedback from others when you share your own stories. We do that a lot too.	Betty: I have a lot to look forward to and watch out for. You know, stuff like that.	Cheryl: Kids can be very funny. They are very scary sometimes and they draw a lot of guns and kill a lot super comic heroes. And from just past stories, like you learn a lot about different classes that people have taken and what to expect from the classes.	Donna: I learn that everybody, different experiences from day to day, experiences change. You're never going to be able to walk into the classroom and it's going to be the same. You're telling your own stories always brings up another story from somebody else. It helps you compare opinions.	Hannah: I couldn't tell off the top of my head but I know whenever I need it, I'll be able to pull it because it will be there. The need triggers the memory. We talk about assignments, which teachers not to take, which ones we like. What they do, the students you're teaching do.	Sally: Teaching can be hard. It takes a lot to know to be a teacher and everybody knows something about teaching.
<p>Comments from group interview that also related to this question (30-35)INTERVIEWER: Have you found that to be true in your experiences?</p> <p>Cheryl: I've tried to as less nervous as possible. Like, it depends. I'm more comfortable getting up in front of a group of children than I am getting up in front of a group of peers, of my own age. I would much rather prefer getting up in front of group of children, I guess because I've had so much experience with it. I'm not really nervous about it any more.</p> <p>(226-241) INTERVIEWER: How does that help you become a better teacher?</p> <p>Donna: Because, for me I enjoy it more that way and it stays in my head better. If you're experiencing it and you're finding out for yourself you remember it longer. And I think for kids it's the same way. If they're experiencing it and they're finding it out on their own, then they're more apt to remember it.</p> <p>Cheryl: There needs to some experience and some explanation as well. Because, like for instance, with Dr. Smith, he doesn't explain it a lot like he wants you to figure it all out on your own. But if it's not right when you figure it out, he doesn't check it. He doesn't go over it with you. And that's a concept I think we're having a hard time with. Because it's like we want to know, I just need a little more direction. Like I'm fine with doing the experiments. I love doing the experiments, it's great. And I think that kids need to do more experiments in elementary schools because when I grew up, we never did experiments in elementary school, at all. It was all vocabulary out of the science book. But I think there needs to be some kind of understanding of what they're doing before they can do it.</p>					

How does sharing these stories compare with other times you've shared stories?					
<p>Alice: It was about the same. You know, people sitting around, just telling the funny stories and one story would remind you of something that happened to you and you'll tell that story.</p>	<p>Betty: Pretty much the same but I think we weren't as focused on one thing or one event like we usually are when we're talking after class. When we usually talk, we're all talking about the same experience so we're hashing a lot of the same things out over and over. This had more different stories.</p>	<p>Cheryl: Probably about the same. Just getting more input with people, when sharing it with other people in the group than you would individually. But we share stories a lot so you tend to get a lot feedback with the stuff that I say or from them. We give each other feedback on their experiences and what they should do with their experiences. Interviewer: What kind of feedback do you give them? Cheryl: Well, if it's something that I've already experienced, I'll tell them the things that I did or if it's things that I haven't experienced, um, I say that I don't want to experience it.</p>	<p>Donna: They were a little more directed. There were more questions about them then there usually are. Basically there were the same stories. Interviewer: How do you all get started telling stories in groups? Donna: A lot of times it gets started when somebody is frustrated or put out about something. If we're talking about a lesson and we want to see if anyone has done it before. Basically it's what we've done in class.</p>	<p>Hannah: It was about the same. It was sharing stories about the same teachers, the same students so it was just reinforcing what you don't want to do.</p>	<p>Sally: This isn't my usual group that I talk with all the time so it felt a little different. My friends and I haven't taken any of the reading/language arts or math courses so that was interesting. But we talked about some of the same things and it was pretty similar to what I've heard other people say.</p>
<p>Comments from group interview that also relate to this question: There are no quotes in the group interview that elaborate on this question.</p>					

How does sharing these stories compare with field experiences					
Alice: I think hearing the stories is just as good as the field experience. Because all of course, the methods courses are different, no matter if you're taking the same methods you're working with different teachers and going to different schools and it's good to hear someone else from another class talk about another school or another class, another lesson they did. I think they're just as important as the field experience.	Betty: I think storytelling is part of experience. Everybody has stories about their experiences, you know. Without stories, nobody would know what everyone's experiences were.	Cheryl: I don't think it's very different. I think that because people are telling stories of their experiences doing field work, so it's just giving you, the stories are giving you an opportunity of what you can expect or different things that you've done in their field experience that you can do in your field experience. So I don't think that they are different.	Donna: Field experiences are more real. They're the real thing that you do to learn how to be a teacher. Stories are okay but you can't really know everything there is to know about the event because you weren't really there and you're probably missing some really important parts of what was happening. All you're hearing is this one person's idea of what was happening but if other people describe what was going on, it would probably be different.	Hannah: I think both are important. It's good to be out there and figuring out what you have to do. And see other teachers interact with kids. It's better to see for yourself, but it's also good to hear it.	Sally: There's a lot more going on in when you're in the classroom than when you're hearing story. When you're hearing a story, you have to make a picture in your mind and that picture may not be the same one that the person who is telling the story has or even like the one where the stuff really took place. If you had been there, your story might be very different.
How does sharing these stories compare with case studies					
Alice	Betty	Cheryl	Donna: Field experiences, you're up there and doing the thing that you're going to be doing. Case studies aren't necessarily you trying out your different procedures and strategies, I mean it's just you're there and you tell what you think you would do, not necessarily the right thing cause you can't see how the kids or the child might react, or the school but in the field experience you can see how the child will react.	Hannah	Sally
How does sharing these stories compare with actual teaching					
Alice	Betty: You should go to the classroom and actually teach. That's the only way you're gonna know what works and doesn't for you. You have to do it and think about it.	Cheryl	Donna	Hannah:	Sally: Actually doing it and then talking to the other people about it. I think sharing is important.
Comments from group interview that also relate to this question (lines460-514) INTERVIEWER: In how many of your classes do you do case studies? Sally: we haven't done any case studies. Betty: we're doing one in science. Alice: we're doing one in science, we did them in classroom management, and we did those little mini-things in multicultural. They weren't really case studies, they just gave the problem real fast and you just wrote on it.					

Cheryl: for praxis

Donna: and we did an in-class case study for science.

INTERVIEWER: What's an in-class case study?

Donna: She gives it to you in-class and you just got to write about it.

Alice: It's like answering a question.

INTERVIEWER: What other methods do your teachers use besides storytelling and case studies and field experiences?

Hannah: Videos and reference books. Lots of books I'd want in my library.

INTERVIEWER: You find they're useful?

Hannah: yes

INTERVIEWER: Are there any other methods?

(pause)

(can't hear)

Sally: a lot of power point, yug.

INTERVIEWER: Power points are exciting huh?

(everyone laughs)

INTERVIEWER: what about role playing or observations or anything like that?

Cheryl: role playing and simulations, we've done those.

Sally: We've done role playing in social studies before.

Donna: Well we did, for science methods, this past week we're doing city park. We went out to city park and she brought us to different spots and next week we are going to have to write up a lesson plan dealing with something that we've you know, on city park on a field trip and something that you can use.

INTERVIEWER: Which experiences do you think are most beneficial in helping you learn to teach?

Cheryl: Observations

Hannah and Sally: Field experience

Alice: I like observations and field experience, yes. I feel that if, with the observations, once I'm there like a few hours, the same things just happen over and over again, no matter how long you're there. I'd rather talk to the teacher and talk about it with someone rather than just sit there and observe.

Donna: I like field experiences too but I think that all of these classes you're with someone else or with a group of people or with a small group, it's not realistic. I guess right now you're with a group of kids, but in science methods you've got the whole class but then you're in a group with three or four other people so you've got lots of help. It's not realistic.

Betty: I'd rather teach the kids. Like I said earlier, I'd rather teach the kids than teach my peers. It's not realistic at all.

Sally: oh yeah, I don't like that peer teaching stuff.

Alice: I've noticed that in math. If I'm trying to teach addition, well, my peers know addition and lesson's just not going to go the way it would with little kids.

Donna: And you can't just sit there and say, now do this and do this. It's your peers, you can't talk to them like kids. You can't ask them the same questions as you're gonna ask kids.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else you would like to add about storytelling and learning to teach? (long pause)

Donna: I think that so much of our teaching is just learning from experience. From being in there and doing it. I think a lot of stuff we're getting taught, it's just so many, some people aren't just made to be teachers and you can be taught to be a teacher, you just, most good teachers it just comes natural to them.

How do you decide which stories to listen to and which not to?

<p>Alice: Any teacher that has been teaching for a while or that has taught for a while. I mean, I think they're stories, again, you can learn what to do and what not to do from them because they've done it. It's not just this field work where you are in a group of 2 to 4 people teaching half of the class sometimes. It's a teacher who has been by themselves for many years in the classroom. I think those are the good stories.</p> <p>Those are things that, we're going to see some of that but I guess we're missing the structure in the classrooms and we're in there seeing that that's not a typical classroom.</p>	<p>Betty: I think about the story. Some of them, I believed probably could have happened but some of them seemed out of character or out of something. Some of them don't seem as realistic as others. They were blown out of proportion. Some of them I could see, you know, I could see in all the stories a possibility of those scenarios happen but some of them were so blown out of proportion, it's like they needed to tone it down a bit to make it believable I guess... ...stories about kid and the daily routine of things...there needs to be stories about what's normal.</p>	<p>Cheryl: I listen to all of them. If somebody, I'm a very good listener, so if somebody needs to talk to me about something, I just listen. And if I don't feel that it's as relevant as some of the other stories, then I tend to forget it. I forget what they say but it's not like you're at a psychiatrist and he's going uh-um, uh-um, and he's not really listening. I listen to all of them. If somebody's talking I generally listen. After it's over, I'm like what did you say? They don't match what you'll probably be doing in your classroom. I don't think I'll ever be working with students like some of the ones I'm working with now so I don't think those stories will help me.</p>	<p>Donna: I don't know. Out of my peers, mostly all of them I'll listen to because we all have stories but out of teachers, I think it's ones that, I mean it's teachers who obviously tell useful stories, but I mean to define what's useful. I think that teachers who you think are being honest and, you know, who will dramatically tell their story. If you're actually learning something from their class.</p> <p>Interviewer: Whose story are you most likely to listen to a university professor or a classroom teacher?</p> <p>Donna: A classroom teacher.</p> <p>Interviewer: Why is that?</p> <p>Donna: Just because they're there and they are experiencing young kids. A lot of professors will tell you what to do but, I mean, most of them have been in a classroom situations and have been teachers but I mean if they haven't been, college students are totally different. That's why I feel that a lot of the theorists, you know, and all of those people, they haven't been in classrooms and then they try to come up with all these theories and you know different techniques to use, you haven't been in a classroom and you don't even have kids so how do you even know. How can you</p>	<p>Hannah: I would listen to a professor. My husband thinks that if a professor hasn't been in a classroom for a while, then she's not reliable. But I think that at least she's been there and some things may be different but she's also teaching about that so she's made the whole circle. She's supposed to read up on the information. My husband thinks they haven't have direct experience with how kids have changed. I think a professor has to study and learn new ways more than a classroom teacher, I mean they have to keep up and teach others so they can't stick to their old ways. Things that don't match my philosophy I tend to ignore.</p>	<p>Sally: I look at the person telling the story, is this someone I believe? I wonder how they know this and if it really happened. Sometimes I wonder if people aren't telling stories just to be telling stories or they feel like they have to say something.</p>
--	--	--	---	---	---

			<p>come up with a lot of these things that you say? Stories are okay but you can't really know everything there is to know about the event because you weren't really there and you're probably missing some really important parts of what was happening. All you're hearing is this one person's idea of what was happening.</p>		
<p>Comments from group interview that also relate to this question (409-458) INTERVIEWER: Who do you think tells the best stories? If you could pick one person to tell you about teaching experiences, who would you pick? Cheryl: I would pick my second grade teacher who has been teaching for 19 years and is still teaching at the same school, in the same classroom she's been in since I had her. I would go to her. INTERVIEWER: Anybody else? Sally: I don't know who I would go to. Alice: I like to listening to stories in classroom management... Donna: They were so dramatic and animated... Alice: And they're very realistic, I mean I could see that some of that stuff happening. I've had teachers tell stories and you're thinking that probably didn't happen, they had to have made that up just to have something to talk about. Like in math methods class, she stopped us in the middle of stuff to tell us stories that have nothing to do with nothing. We don't know why she started talking about them. So anyone that can tell me story that I can learn from and that I can use, I like. INTERVIEWER: How do you decide whether a story is realistic or not? Alice: Things that like I may have seen in the classroom and then if they talked about it, I think that they may have probably happened. I know people like the people they're talking about. With the one teacher who, I mean, in multicultural, I mean some of her stories didn't really go with the way she, I mean like, her time line of where she was at this particular time, with how old she is, with things that she's done, I don't think I believe too much that she said. INTERVIEWER: How about the rest of you, have you found that to be true also? Donna: I think that a lot, like my math methods teacher, she taught in New York and different places like that and she'll give us stories about what they did there. I don't plan on ever teaching in New York. If I move to New York, I'll never teach in New York, and things like that I don't find useful. But I mean, it is good in comparing how it is there to how it is here, but I don't really find it useful. INTERVIEWER: Is there anyone else you would go to and try get stories that you think is important? Hannah: the classroom management teacher. (can't hear) Sally: I would go to my science teacher because she's a good listener. INTERVIEWER: why would you choose those folks? Hannah: I was always around them from the time I started taking methods classes. They were helpful. (can't heard) the last time I went back, he had a student teacher from here and she's secondary and she said get out. I said what are you talking about and she had binders and binders of</p>					

paperwork from UNIVERSITY to fill out. She thought she had to hand it in but then she didn't. She said she had to spend all of her time doing this paperwork and they didn't even look at it.

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting.

Hannah: That's secondary. I don't know if it's any different from elementary.

Alice: It's not any different. We learned that from my cousin who works in schools. When we, when Betty and I went to observe, and she told us the same thing, that she sort of got into an argument with the teacher from the university who came to observe her student teacher. Why were they doing so much paperwork, useless paperwork? You know the lesson plans format, it's not how you, it's not realistic. You don't write a lesson plan that way. And all this time was being taken on all this paperwork stuff and they weren't having enough time to plan good lessons because the university has you doing all this paperwork.

(473-499) **Betty:** And all the different teachers want different formats. Like I learned in principles one way to write objectives and goals but now I'm learning in all my other classes, a totally different way the terms have to be measurable, and I never learned that at all and now I'm not used to that. And it's a new thing. And I have to follow this format. And my neighbor, she's a teacher and she says, you know she told us that's not what we do. You know you do this little check off in the little bitty box. It's not this long drawn out thing. So it's like pointless. So you know, you spend most of the time writing all this out.

INTERVIEWER: Do you talk to your neighbor very much?

Betty: Yeah, I go to her for stories too. That's what I was going to say next, when everyone else had finished. Yeah, she gives me a lot of stories of whenever I have things to say. You know, like when I say I have to do this, she'll say well maybe you might not want to do this because of this. She gives me help and, you know, suggestions and stuff because she's experienced.

INTERVIEWER: Do you find that her suggestions are useful?

Betty: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: What is it about them that makes them useful?

Betty: Just that like, um, (pause) if I have, just because she's so used to doing it with her kids that she knows like what works and what might not work so I know not to do certain things with kids. And then like too, with reading and language arts, like, my kids are at like what I thought was like a lower level, and the teacher that I have she kind of like gives them a lower level. My neighbor gives me the suggestion of if they are at a lower level, don't give them lower level. Give them higher level and push them. You have to push them. If you don't push, then they never going to give, you know. So that's what I did and they wound up liking the higher level. You know what I'm saying. They were bored with that lower level stuff. So it actually got them motivated doing stuff like that.

(618-621) INTERVIEWER: So how do you decide which story is relevant? (long pause)

Donna: I guess, just mainly, not being, but one suggestion would be to offer a variety of stories and not be redundant with the stories. There's always unique stories.

<i>Is something missing from stories you tell or hear?</i>					
<p>Alice: Well, the ones that we tell from reading and language arts, those are not the typical classrooms. Those aren't the things that, we're going to see some of that. But I guess we're missing the structure in the classrooms and we're in there seeing that that's not a typical classroom.</p>	<p>Betty: I like to hear more stories about the kids and the daily routine of things. There were a lot of stories about students who were different but there needs to be stories about what's normal.</p>	<p>Cheryl : Not really. Cause usually when we talk about the stories, it's like right after the situation has happened. So memory is pretty good on it. Now give me a couple of days and I probably won't remember too much of what's happened, but when we tell stories, it's usually, like we're waiting for each other after class and we'll talk about everything that just happened in class. Interviewer: I mean are there other things that you wish you were sharing with your friends or parts of the story that you wish were shared but are not being told? Cheryl: Oh, no, not really. I guess I never really thought about that.</p>	<p>Donna: Not that I can think of yet. Maybe when I get into the classroom, I'll say why didn't we talk about that</p>	<p>Hannah: Well the stories that we hear are just from other students, other classmates so we're all at the same level, so I would imagine there would be something we would miss but I don't know what it would be.</p>	<p>Sally: I don't know. I don't know enough about teaching to know what I still need to know. That's why I like to talk to classroom teachers, they know more than we do and can tell us what we need to know.</p>
<p>Comments from group interview that also related to this question: There are no connections between the group interview and this question.</p>					

<i>What stories do you think are least useful?</i>					
<p>Alice: I don't think any of them were not useful or least useful. I think they were all the same level. I would take them all and use them all.</p>	<p>Betty: None. I just think anybody's experience in the field I'm going in is important knowledge for me to know. As far as, I mean, I've never been there so.</p>	<p>Cheryl: I really haven't heard any stories that I think that aren't useful. I think some of them aren't as relevant as others, but I think they're all useful in some way.</p> <p>Interviewer: What do you mean when you say that some of them aren't relevant?</p> <p>Cheryl: They don't match what you'll probably be doing in your classroom. I don't think I'll ever be working with students like some of the ones I'm working with now so I don't think those stories will help me directly but I might come across something just like it and it may help me a little bit.</p>	<p>Donna: The ones from my friends, just the fun stories.</p> <p>Interviewer: Why do you think those are least useful?</p> <p>Donna: Because it happens to everybody. Everybody's been with a funny child and that's not something you have to deal with in the classroom. I mean, it's funny but it's not a problem that you have to deal with in the classroom.</p>	<p>Hannah: They're all useful. I just don't remember all of them. Things that don't match my philosophy I tend to ignore.</p>	<p>Sally: The funny things that kids say or do are fun but I don't learn a lot from them.</p>
<p>Comments from group interview that also relate to this question: There were no connections to the group interview for this question.</p>					

What stories do you think are most useful?					
<p>Alice: I think the ones that are about the grade level that I might like to teach. Because if someone tells a story about even a mistake they made or something that happened with the kids, then you're looking out for that to happen to you and you're ready for it. So that you can stop the problem before it happens. I like the ones that are the most, that will help me with the grade levels that I would like to teach.</p> <p>Alice: I think we get a pretty broad range of stories so there's nothing that I'd like to hear more stories about.</p>	<p>Betty: I think stories about how to deal with parents would be most useful. I think about the story of the parent coming to beat up the kid and I don't know what I would do if that happened to me.</p>	<p>Cheryl: I like to hear stories from like other teachers that are experienced and have been teaching for a really long time. Cause it's nice to hear the things that they've done, situations that's happened to them and things that they've done, in case that situation happens to me I'll know a little bit of how to react cause the teacher has told me what she has done. And if you get different experiences from so many different teachers, it kind of builds like a little prerequisite of what you can do.</p> <p>Cheryl: I think more behavior management with the kids. You don't hear a lot of stories about behavioral issues. You just hear a lot about stories about things kids say and stuff like that, so I think I'd like to hear more about behavioral issues, like a behavior problem they've experienced and what they've done about it.</p>	<p>Donna: Usually the stories from teachers, teachers that give you different experiences they've had or if it's on the topic you're discussing. Teacher stories about how to handle the kids are helpful. A lot of times the ones that come from your peers are just funny, that's not real helpful, that's just stories about the kids. But when it's experienced teacher who's been in the classroom and taught for years it's different.</p>	<p>Hannah: Those stories that may be the same as what I will experience in the classroom so when I get there, I'll know not to do it. I when you hear people complaining about their teachers in the classroom, it helps me keep from being that way.</p>	<p>Sally: I think stories about how to teach something would be better than stories about how the kids behave or the funny things they say. I'd like to hear more stories about what to do if this or that happens to you in the classroom.</p>
<p>Comments from group interview that also relate to this question (338-353)</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Do you find that help you? When you hear these stories?</p> <p>Hannah: Yeah, mostly every class, we just sit there and talk. It's really hard to determine where we finish talking and where we start learning. It's just hand in hand. Every class we just talk. We don't have a lot of notes. But all the stories are related to schools, so we are learning. It's just not formal and you really have to sit down and realize that you're going to need this eventually. So it's a neat class.</p> <p>Sally: I can remember the stories better than the other stuff. (619-621)</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: So how do you decide which story is relevant? (long pause)</p> <p>Donna: I guess, just mainly, not being, but one suggestion would be to offer a variety of stories and not be redundant with the stories. There's always unique stories.</p>					

What made you choose the stories that you shared with the group?					
Alice: Cause they just happened. They were fresh in my mind... You know, people sitting around, just telling the funny stories and one story will remind you of something that happened to you and you'll tell that story.	Betty: I guess it's just whatever we're talking about at the time that reminds me of things that happened to me.	Cheryl: it's the first things that popped off my head. The first things that came to my mind. It wasn't something I thought about...if it's something that I've already experienced, I'll tell them the things that I did...	Donna: Cause it fit what we were talking about or discussing... You're telling your own stories always brings up another story from somebody else...A lot of times it gets started when somebody is frustrated or put out about something.	Hannah: Similar to other people's stories, stories that just stood out, or stuff that's aggravating me.	Sally: Things that I thought other people would want to hear. My stories were like their stories so I thought they might fit into the conversation.
No comments about this is the group interview					
What do you think you will do differently as a result of hearing or sharing these stories?					
Alice: It helps me know that no one is a perfect teacher. I think hearing the stories will make me more likely to try things and not be too hard on myself when I try something and it doesn't work.	Betty: I think I'll try to do a better job than the person telling the story. Hopefully I'll be able to remember what happened to that person so when I have to deal with the same situation I'll be able to handle it the right way.	Cheryl: Be better prepared for what can possibly happen or what they can possibly say, something they can possibly do. Especially with the case of reading and language arts, you just need to be prepared for anything that can possibly happen.	Donna: Well, if it's something they tried and it didn't work, you can always recommend to them and try it yourself if it would ever come up. Try different things.	Hannah: I'll try not to do the same thing, not do the same thing if what they did didn't work. I'll try to remember what did work. I don't know if I can remember everything but hearing it in a story does help me remember it better.	Sally: I think it'll help me do better in my courses and eventually be a better teacher. It helps me understand what I need to learn. ...not to go to the school like that they're at for reading and language arts when I start really teaching
Comments from group interview that also related to this question (389-408) INTERVIEWER: How do these stories guide your future decisions about teaching? Like what do you think you will do as a result of hearing these stories? Sally: Not go to the school that they're at for reading and language arts when I start really teaching. Alice: But if you do have those students in your class, at least now you'll know how to handle them. Even if it's just from our stories. I feel better hearing people's stories and knowing that maybe I might not make the same mistakes or make a different choice because I heard someone's story. Donna: Or knowing from, I mean, this one class for example, the teacher always gave us stories, this, this and that, but seeing that we enjoyed the teacher, bad things, I mean even when you're a good teacher, you're gonna always have bad thing happen to you so it's not always going to be perfect. Cheryl: You can get good experience from other teachers, stuff that they've done that you can always use in your classroom. Or you can have bad experiences that you've listened to and that you can try not to let that happen to in your classroom. It helps you to learn the difference between what should be going on and what shouldn't be going on to form your own opinion.					

How do you feel when you share these stories?					
<p>Alice: It makes me feel better that I was seeing the same things that they are because we're in such different grade levels and that was comforting.</p> <p>I feel better hearing people's stories and knowing that maybe I might not make the same mistakes or make a different choice because I heard someone's story.</p>	<p>Betty: Interested. I want to know more because I've never been there. You know, I get little pieces of it in my classroom but other than that, you know, I mean, I like to hear more and more stories.</p>	<p>Cheryl: Weird at first, but then I feel better after I've told somebody. But then I'm fine. Interviewer: Why do you feel weird?</p> <p>Well because it's like I'm sharing stories about the kids that I'm with. I feel like I'm talking about them, like gossiping about a child and I feel kind of weird about it. But it's not necessarily bad stories that you know, oh he did this today, and I'm so frustrated. It's more or less like guess what he did?</p>	<p>Donna: I feel like, there's just a never ending, I mean the stories will never end. I mean, even as a teacher, I'm sure that they all, teachers the whole time talk and just talk and not gossip but you know talk about different experiences, the lesson, or if the kids are being bad that day, why you think they're being bad. Like we have a teacher, an old teacher at the daycare and she just knows everything. If you tried, something and it didn't work, she's got the right way to do it. Or if she's tried something it's gonna work cause she knows how to do it. What was the question?</p> <p>Well, if someone who's offering honest suggestions and opinions or if they're being honest, then you feel like it's helping you. But if it's like the old lady who just wants to put down everything you do, then I feel bad about it. That just makes you angry, because she doesn't want to do anything different because she's just stuck in her ways. It just makes you angry.</p>	<p>Hannah: I get over emotional about everything. I just start going crazy and get overworked and stuff. I'll get all red and teary eyed but everyone else understands. They're entertaining because you can't believe it and depressing because you can't believe it.</p>	<p>Sally: Curious. I start to think about what I would do if I had been there. Sometimes I'm glad I wasn't there but it would be good to try it out without having to actually do it, like a computer thing that you can try it out first.</p>
<p>Comments from group interview that also relate to this question (338-345) INTERVIEWER: In the classroom management course, how do the other people react when they hear these stories about the reading/language arts class? Hannah: Well half of them are in the reading/language arts class so we just sit and laugh and say wow, cause my language arts teacher is completely different. So one girl gets really completely emotional about it and she's talking and she's fussing and she's like. And our classroom management teacher is like, are you feeling better now? And the teacher tries to tell her how she can to talk to her teacher and what she should say and what she should not say. Trying to help her.</p>					

Best way to learn to teach (comments from group and personal interviews)					
<p>Alice: I think hearing stories is just as good as the field experience. Watch other do it and then try it yourself. I learn a lot by watching someone else teach but after a while, I just want to try it myself. I like observations and field experiences. Once I'm there like a few hours, the same things just happen over and over again, no matter how long you're there. I'd rather talk to the teacher and talk about it with someone rather than just sit there and observe.</p>	<p>Betty: Go to the classroom and actually teach. That's the only way you're gonna know what works and doesn't for you. You have to do it and think about it. I'd rather teach the kids. Like I said earlier, I'd rather teach the kids than teach my peers. It's not realistic at all.</p>	<p>Cheryl: Direct instruction. There are some things that you can learn from an experience but some times, the teachers just need to tell you what to do and you go do it.</p>	<p>Donna: I think so much of our teaching is just learning from experience. From being there and doing it. Peer teaching even though I don't like it and field experiences. Second is reflections and portfolios and then case studies. Case studies are pretty good because you get to hear how other people would handle the situation. I like field experiences too but I think all of these classes you're with someone else or with a group of people or with a small group, it's not realistic. In science methods you've got the whole class but then you're in a group with three or four other people so you've got lots of help. It's not realistic.</p>	<p>Hannah: Teaching and then thinking about what you did, reflection I guess. It's good to be out there figuring out what you have to do. And see other teachers interact with kids. It's better to see for yourself, but it's also good to hear it.</p>	<p>Sally: Actually doing it and then talking to the other people about it. I think sharing is important.</p>

Vita

Cynthia Shank Ybos was born in Alexandria, Louisiana and obtained her Bachelor's degree in elementary education from Southeastern Louisiana University in 1977. She earned her Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction in 1990 from the University of New Orleans. She then entered the education graduate program to pursue a PhD in curriculum and instruction. In addition to teaching and supervising student teachers and interns, she works with a national environmental education program dedicated to training teachers.