SECONDED TEACHERS AS TEACHER EDUCATORS

by

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Abstract

This is a study of seconded teachers' experiences as university instructors and faculty advisors in the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia.

Data were gathered for this study through interviews with 17 seconded teachers (5 first-year seconded teachers, 8 continuing seconded teachers, and 4 teachers who re-entered the school system after secondment). The purpose of my study was to understand more clearly the experiences of seconded teachers in the teacher education program through the use of Glaser and Strauss's (1967) grounded theory approach.

The results indicated that the seconded teachers in this study moved through stages: seeking the position, preparing for secondment, expressing self doubts and loneliness, adjusting to the tempo and workload, working with adult learners, and looking for support. As university instructors, seconded teachers bring realism to the teacher education program by presenting fundamentals of teaching, by modeling teaching strategies, by connecting theory and practice, and by sharing narratives. Seconded teachers acknowledge with reservations that as evaluators they possess power over student teachers. Regardless of how they might prefer to conceive of their role, in the end, they become evaluators. Seconded teachers displayed various communication styles. Reflection, an aspect of communication, was also identified as important. The themes

that have emerged in this study point to 5 general central issues: the contrast between university and school cultures, the strength of reflection on practice, seconded teachers' commitment to classroom teaching, seconded teachers' professional identities, and secondment as professional development. The results of this study suggest that the temporary, short-term nature of secondment, as it now stands, may be a lateral career move rather than a vertical progression. Comments suggest that the Faculty of Education could do a better job of educating seconded teachers about, not only the preservice teacher education program, but specifically the expectations and roles for the seconded participants.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

A primary function of teacher preparation programs is to provide an environment that promotes the transition from student to teacher; that is, they assist students to become teachers. Another transition, one from teacher to teacher educator for regular faculty or seconded teachers, however, is rarely acknowledged. Little attention is directed to the process whereby teachers assume the tasks of teacher education; together these transitions might be thought of as a *continuum of professional development*. The literature on seconded teachers' knowledge base for teaching, as well as their attitudes toward and beliefs regarding their roles as teacher educators is limited. The extent to which the university setting and the practicum influence these attitudes and beliefs has not been fully explored.

Few studies specifically recognize seconded teachers for their contributions to teacher education programs. And yet, depending on the setting, seconded teachers and other non-tenured faculty are assigned a considerable portion of the tasks of teacher education. Indeed, Goodlad (1990) contends that student teachers associate these "shadow faculty" most closely with their teacher education programs. In the extreme, the tenured, full-time professoriate is invisible to many student teachers on campuses across North America.

In many faculties of education two distinct groups of teacher educators exist: the full-time faculty and the

"shadow" or adjunct faculty (Goodlad, 1990). Generally, the shadow faculty is comprised of experienced cooperating teachers, some of whom may also be enrolled in graduate education programs, who are seconded by the university to teach methods courses and to supervise student teachers on practicum. After one or two years they return to school districts and resume their former roles as teachers. Therefore, they are in a unique position to observe the process of teacher education from both the school and the university perspective. As faculties of education continue to try to improve their preservice programs, these educators are important sources for informing the practice of teacher educators and improving the learning of preservice teachers.

It is conjectured that seconded and formerly seconded teachers are distinct from other teacher educators, largely because of their "practical" knowledge; a type of knowledge that reflects their classroom experiences, values, beliefs, and personal philosophies of teaching and learning. In this study, I include both seconded and formerly seconded teachers under the one label, seconded teachers. At this time, I do not wish to say anything more about "practical knowledge" other than I will be using this construct to analyze some of the data.

Assumptions of the Study

Three assumptions underlie this study of seconded teachers. First, preservice teacher education programs will

be improved if seconded teachers' skills and dispositions are made part of classroom knowledge and discourse in it. The Holmes Group (1995), for example, calls for the creation of a new type of faculty member in teacher education; "a person who is equally at home in the university and in public school classrooms. A clinical professor . . . who can show and do what education professors might otherwise be lecturing about in university classes on pedagogy, school psychology, counseling, etc." (cited in Murray, 1996, p. 29).

A second assumption underlying this study is that university faculties of education recognize the advantage of student teachers working with cooperating teachers, who were previously seconded teachers, since they better understand the philosophy, objectives, and sequence of the preservice programs of which the student teachers are a part.

A third, and related assumption is that, when seconded teachers and university faculty each enter the setting of the other, they may create and improve cooperative, even collaborative relationships. Programs as well as courses could benefit from seconded teachers' credibility of practice, and the intermingling of people from schools and from universities could bring about more effective and more satisfying partnerships.

Rationale of the Study

Schools and universities view preservice teacher education from unique perspectives. Seconded teachers have the opportunity to observe and participate in preservice teacher education in both contexts. This unique positioning provides access to a school/university perspective on preservice teacher education that is not often otherwise available. Little is known about the emerging roles of seconded teacher educators, except to say that the traditional cooperating teacher role is being expanded to include additional duties and responsibilities (Cornbleth & Ellsworth, 1994). In part, the expansion and redefinition of the cooperating teacher role is linked to efforts to unify the teaching profession and lessen the gap between professors of education in universities and classroom teachers in public schools.

The objectives, therefore, of this study are: (1) to explore seconded teachers' understandings of their roles as university instructors and faculty advisors; (2) to investigate ways in which seconded teachers' knowledge of learning to teach may be changed through their participation in the teacher education program; (3) to investigate ways in which seconded teachers' perceptions of the roles of all the parties (e.g., student teacher, faculty advisor, and cooperating teacher) may be changed through their participation in a teacher education program: and (4) to contribute to a better understanding of how the

skills and knowledge of seconded teachers can more effectively be used to inform the practice of teacher education.

Terms Used in This Study

The Teacher Education Program

As outlined in the Teacher Education Program Handbook of the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia, the context in which this study is set, candidates are enrolled in courses designed to provide them with a balance of general and specialized knowledge about curriculum and instruction. In the first term, students (12-month elementary and 12-month secondary options) enroll in The Principles of Teaching, a course designed to provide a foundation in general pedagogical knowledge, including lesson and unit planning, and ways to organize and provide for instruction and classroom management. Candidates enroll in courses in educational psychology and special education and a course in the analysis of the aims and means of education. Regardless of the program of study, student teachers enroll in subject specific curriculum and instruction courses prior to undertaking an extended practicum. During the thirteen week practicum the student teachers' teaching responsibilities increase gradually, as they demonstrate proficiency. After the extended practicum, candidates return to the campus to engage in studies designed to put their teaching experiences in a broader context.

Teacher Educator

When speculating about the potential contributions that seconded teachers make to teacher education, one needs first to consider the question: who or what is a teacher educator? Carter (1984) defined a teacher educator as a "faculty member in a tenure track position who taught at least one professional course during the preceding twelve months" (pp. 125-126). For Ducharme (1993), teacher educators are "those who hold tenure-line positions in teacher preparation in higher education institutions, teach beginning and advanced students in teacher education, and conduct research or engage in scholarly studies germane to teacher education" (p. 6). For the purposes of this study, I use the term teacher educator to refer to those who teach and supervise student teachers, whether they are tenured or tenure-track full-time faculty, sessional part-timers, or seconded teachers.

Clinical Professor

> For Conant (as cited in Cornbleth & Ellsworth, 1994), clinical professors need not . . . make contributions by research and writing. They would be generally recognized as superb teachers. . . . Such persons might be given appointments of three to five years . . . if possible, serving both the university and the school at the same time. (p. 230)

Conant's vision of the clinical professor perhaps most closely resembles the profile of seconded teachers in Canadian faculties of education. These teachers not only work in elementary and secondary school classrooms; they also spend part of their professional lives in university settings teaching and supervising student teachers.

Seconded Teacher

Seconded teachers are teachers who are seconded to the Faculty of Education from their school districts for usually a one or two-year term. They have a minimum of five years successful teaching experience at the elementary, middle, or secondary levels, are practicing teachers at the time of appointment, and have had recent involvement in the teacher education program as cooperating teachers.

Faculty Advisor

Faculty advisors are responsible for working with both the schools and cooperating teachers to establish a professional working relationship and to assist in planning for student teachers' work. Faculty advisors are expected to make frequent visits to schools, to assist schools in making adjustments in the placements of student teachers, to support school staff in work with student teachers, to respond to staff enquiries about the university's program, and to confer with student teachers about their experiences. Student teachers receive both oral and written feedback from cooperating teachers and faculty advisors.

University Instructor

Seconded teachers who participated in this study taught methods courses in a variety of curriculum and instruction areas. Additional teaching responsibilities often included three other courses, Principles of Teaching, Communication Skills in Teaching, and Language Across the Curriculum.

Cooperating Teacher

Cooperating teachers are expected to act as mentors and models for student teachers throughout the extended practicum. Their responsibilities include regularly checking unit and lesson plans, maintaining contact with faculty advisors, observing and providing oral and written feedback to student teachers, and completing a summative evaluation form for each student teacher.

Theoretical Perspectives

Contexts of and Orientations Toward Teacher Education

Acknowledging contextual realities in teacher education is important because seconded teachers perform within a context but, at the same time, that context acts upon them (Schon, 1983). Seconded teachers share with student teachers what they know about teaching, hoping to contribute to the education of beginning teachers, thus enhancing the profession and possibly refining their own skills through describing and demonstrating them. Their preconceptions about student teachers, what they need to

learn and how it will be learned, affect their practice as teacher educators.

A useful line of inquiry is the identification of different orientations toward the conceptual foundations of teaching and teacher education (e.g., Feiman-Nemser, 1990; Kennedy, 1987, 1990; Morine-Dershimer, 1991; Zeichner, 1983; Zimpher & Howey, 1987). An orientation, according to Feiman-Nemser (1990)

> refers to a set of ideas about the goals of teacher preparation and the means for achieving them. Ideally, a conceptual orientation includes a view of teaching and learning and a theory about learning to teach. Such ideas should give direction to the practical activities of teacher preparation such as program planning, course development, instruction, supervision, and evaluation. (p. 220)

A word of caution, however, is in order about orientations, despite their basic importance. They are not mutually exclusive and, as Merseth (1994) reminds us, different orientations offer teacher educators variations in the

> structure of [the] *why* and *how* of educating teachers. They provide a frame of reference to help guide deliberations about teacher education activities. They help make explicit the potential impact of a variety of practices

on the coherence and strength of overall programs. (p. 149)

Five conceptual orientations towards teaching and teacher education are outlined in anticipation of their possible use in analyzing and understanding seconded teachers' knowledge of learning to teach and their perceptions of their roles in teacher education: academic, personal, technical, practical, and social critical. Simply stated, my position is that seconded teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning influence how they perceive their roles as teacher educators. These widely accepted orientations, which will be discussed next, are useful when analyzing seconded teachers' knowledge of learning to teach and their perceptions of their roles in preservice teacher education.

Academic orientation.

The academic orientation in teacher preparation reflects the belief that knowledge of subject matter, in particular, is essential to a teacher's development. Teacher educators who adopt this orientation typically emphasize academic preparation in the belief that it will help student teachers acquire the necessary knowledge base. Disagreements exist, however, about the extent to which faculty-based teacher educators should be responsible for prospective teachers' subject matter preparation. Some critics of teacher education faculty, for example, argue that teachers have already learned as much about their

subject as they need to know from their undergraduate coursework. The teacher educator's role within the academic tradition, then, is mainly to transmit knowledge, and as Merseth (1994) points out, he or she is a person "firmly grounded in the subject matter to be taught who is facile in developing multiple representations of the material for different learning outcomes" (p. 145).

Personal orientation.

The personal orientation places the student teacher's learning at the center of the learning-to-teach process. The teacher educator who adopts this orientation encourages prospective teachers to take responsibility for their own learning. The emphasis here is not on teaching specific behavior, skills, or content knowledge, but instead on the quality of the experience; "a process of becoming rather than merely a process of educating someone how to teach" (Zeichner, 1983, p. 5). The teacher educator who adopts this orientation typically works as a counselor who tries to encourage inquiry and self-knowledge in student teachers.

Technical orientation.

The underlying assumption of the technical orientation is the notion that knowledge about teaching and learning can be codified and presented to teachers. Those who advocate a technical orientation believe that teachers find solutions to problems by applying appropriate teaching principles. The role of teacher educators in this

orientation is to provide teachers with examples of the general categories of situations that a teacher is likely to encounter. Teacher educators who adopt this orientation tend to emphasize skills and outcomes pertaining to areas like classroom management, lesson planning, lesson presentation, and questioning techniques.

Practical orientation.

The practical orientation recognizes that teaching is a complex and often ambiguous endeavor rooted in the wisdom and experience of practice. Early studies in this area focused on teachers' decisions reflecting personal values and beliefs. Elbaz (1983), for example, identified five broad domains of practical knowledge when she studied a high school English teacher called Sarah. Her study informs us about what teachers do but says little about what teachers actually know. Other studies (e.g., Clandinin & Connelly, 1987; Lampert, 1985; Munby & Russell, 1991) concentrate on specific incidents in a teacher's classroom. Fenstermacher (1986) goes further in developing a conception of how teachers convert knowledge into action. His argument is that teachers make decisions based upon the information they have about teaching, information that is rooted in the daily events of teaching. Those who advocate a practical orientation to teaching and teacher education tend to emphasize the "wisdom of experienced practitioners" (Zeichner, 1983) and the "localized, craft-oriented nature of teaching" (Lortie, 1975; Macdonald, 1986, Schon, 1983).

In this orientation, learning to teach often involves apprenticeship experiences, case-based activities, and problem solving contexts intended to help the prospective teacher "think like a teacher" (Feiman-Nemser, 1990).

Social critical orientation.

The social critical orientation acknowledges teachers as active agents in their own preparation. This focus does not mean that the technical skills of teaching are unimportant. Instead, this orientation assumes that those skills alone are an insufficient basis for a conception of the fullness of professional knowledge. Because schools generally reflect what already goes on in society (Habermas, 1978), critical theorists expect to find the same inequalities in classrooms as one finds in society. To counter these inequalities teachers are expected to promote democratic values in the classroom. Teachers become social transformers, for example, by encouraging students to question taken-for-granted assumptions about power, language, schooling, knowledge, and teaching (Giroux, 1988). The role of the teacher educator who adopts this orientation is to raise the student teachers' consciousness of societal conditions.

To sum up, several orientations and approaches to teaching that reflect different goals and expectations for teachers and schools exist. Seconded teachers cannot escape their prior experiences as classroom teachers. Before I began this study, I expected seconded teachers to reflect

mainly a technical and/or practical orientation to teaching. I reasoned that they would bring with them strongly held views about teaching, learning, and learning to teach that would influence how they function as teacher educators.

Controversies over the reform of teacher education are, in some ways, linked to the foregoing orientations. Should the results from research on teaching be emphasized when designing or modifying teacher preparation programs (Gage, 1978; Good, 1990; Housego & Badali, 1996; Imig & Switzer, 1996; Reynolds, 1989; Zimpher & Sherrill, 1996)? Or, should we move toward alternative certification approaches by increasing the field-based component of preservice teacher education? Or, does it make more sense to advocate a vision of teacher education and schooling that leads to a more "just society" (Liston & Zeichner, 1991)? Or, is Goodlad's (1990) endorsement of collaborative efforts among professors of education, public school personnel, and professors of arts and sciences the way to proceed? Clearly, one can pursue more than one of these emphases (e.g., Grimmett & Housego, 1983; Imig & Switzer, 1996; Zimpher & Sherrill, 1996).

Review of the Relevant Literature

In this section of the chapter, I introduce some of the relevant literature that is useful in analyzing seconded teachers' experiences as university instructors and faculty advisors: perspectives on learning to teach,

cooperating teachers in teacher education, power and authority in education, and clinical faculty in teacher education. I did not create a separate chapter for the literature review. Instead, I situated the relevant literature side-by-side with the findings of this study (Chapters 3 - 7).

Some Perspectives on Learning to Teach

Much has been written about teachers' knowledge and learning to teach (e.g., Carter, 1990; Feiman-Nemser, 1989; Feiman-Nemser & Remillard, 1996; Kagan, 1992; Reynolds, 1992; Wideen & Mayer-Smith, 1996; Zeichner, 1987). In this brief overview, I acknowledge some of the ways to examine teachers' knowledge, beginning with more temporal aspects of learning to teach (e.g., Featherstone, 1993; Lortie, 1975; McDiarmid, 1990; Nemser, 1983). Learning to teach begins long before enrollment in formal teacher education programs. Obviously, this basic fact has implications for teacher educators when they decide what to include in the courses they teach.

Other studies examine teacher candidates as learners (e.g., Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Calderhead, 1991; Ducharme, 1996; Jackson, 1986; Zimpher, 1989). Teacher educators, to some extent, rely on knowledge about their student teachers in deciding what and how to present information. We see in the literature a recognition among teacher educators that they need to honor student teachers' backgrounds and

entering beliefs in order to help them make sense of their professional program experiences.

And yet another way to examine the learning to teach question is to focus on processes and opportunities in learning to teach (e.g., Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Cobb, 1994; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1986; Lanier, 1986; Lave, 1988; Strike & Posner, 1985). These studies concentrate on the how of learning to teach, including both cognitive processes and learning opportunities.

I decided to focus primarily on the content of learning to teach because it addresses a basic, pressing question for seconded teachers as they assume their functions as teacher educators: What do beginning teachers need to learn? Answers to this question bear on decisions about the curricula and pedagogy of teacher education.

Content of learning to teach.

Seconded teachers devote a significant portion of their time and energy as university instructors and faculty advisors deciding what teachers should be able to do. A barometer of a useful teacher education program, seconded teachers agree, is how well it prepares student teachers to assume their roles as beginning teachers. The tasks enumerated as being important are consistent with those that Reynolds (1992) outlined:

1. Plan lessons that enable students to relate new learning to prior understanding and experience.

2. Develop rapport and personal interactions with students.
3. Establish and maintain rules and routines that are fair and appropriate to students.
4. Arrange the physical and social conditions of the classroom in ways that are conducive to learning and that fit the academic task.
5. Represent and present subject matter in ways that enable students to relate new learning to prior understanding and that help students develop metacognitive strategies.
6. Assess student learning using a variety of measurement tools and adapt instruction according to the results.
7. Reflect on their own actions and students' responses in order to improve their teaching. (p. 26)

The idea of thinking about a knowledge base in this way is consistent with the view that teaching is a practical endeavor.

Personal practical knowledge.

In order to understand more fully the contribution that seconded teachers make to teacher education programs, it is worthwhile to consider their personal practical knowledge. The knowledge and perspectives that seconded teachers possess and communicate to student teachers

reflects their values, beliefs, and personal philosophies about teaching; views grounded in the world of practice. It also includes their ideas about learning how to teach.

The practical knowledge of seconded teachers refers to their knowledge about classroom situations, and the practical dilemmas they encounter in the act of teaching. Underlying the idea of practical knowledge is the notion that teachers rely on a personal, context-specific perspective in their work as teachers.

Although seconded teachers acknowledge the importance of subject matter content, they are concerned with helping student teachers develop "pedagogical content knowledge." Shulman (1987) defines pedagogical content knowledge as that "special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding" (p. 8). The participants in this study encouraged student teachers to be creative in planning lessons and units. They emphasized their own school experience in transforming the curriculum for their pupils, a form of expertise that some full-time faculty lack. Seconded teachers also emphasized to student teachers the notion that Ministry of Education curriculum documents (Integrated Resource Packages) are essentially general guidelines. By demonstrating pedagogical techniques, seconded teachers hoped to inspire their student teachers to make the curriculum come alive for the learner.

This leads to another aspect of personal practical knowledge, namely knowledge of learners, including knowledge of learning styles and child development. Early in their methods courses, seconded teachers recognized that some student teachers had an overly simplistic vision of teaching. They pleaded with student teachers to focus more on the pupil than the curriculum per se. Successful teaching was perceived as a liberating experience for not merely assuring pupils achieve expected test scores. They displayed the same caring attitude about their student teachers as they had for elementary and secondary pupils.

On the surface, it might seem that teacher educators have a good understanding about what teachers need to learn. Because much of the research is fragmented, however, teacher educators themselves debate the content of a student teacher's program.

Cooperating Teachers in Teacher Education

Defining roles and expectations.

Much of the literature on cooperating teachers focuses on their role in the practicum. Morrisey (1980) notes that the position of cooperating teacher is "a low status position," even though "the literature describes the cooperating teacher as the single most important person in pre-service teacher education" (p.3). The Griffen inquiry (1983) found that the cooperating teacher's role is not clearly defined either on a general level through institutional policies or on an individual cooperating

teacher level through individual reflection and decision. In that study, cooperating teachers reported little systematic orientation to their functions in student teaching except to note that they believed they were somehow to help student teachers. The nature of that help was seldom clarified with any precision. Other studies, such as Applegate and Lasley (1984); and Shippy (as cited in Garland & Shippy, 1991, p. 38), found little consensus among cooperating teachers regarding expectations for their role. Koerner (1992) noted that "although the cooperating teacher is vital to student teaching, little has appeared in the professional literature about being a cooperating teacher . . . and limited information has appeared about student teaching from the cooperating teacher's point of view" (p. 46).

There is nevertheless some consensus in the literature about expectations for the cooperating teacher role. Grimmett and Ratzlaff (1986) elicited from student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university advisors the specific expectations they held for the role of the cooperating teacher. Grimmett and Ratzlaff (1986) identified five role expectations that appear to transcend the bounds of time and context. From the studies they analyzed, the cooperating teacher is involved in

1. providing student teachers with basic information (regarding school rules, policies, physical set-up of the school and classroom) to enable adjustment

to the practicum situation;

2. ensuring student teacher acquisition of resource materials (teacher's manual, textbooks, and teaching aids);
3. involving student teachers in planning and evaluating learning experiences;
4. conferencing with student teachers at regularly scheduled times;
5. evaluating student teacher progress and development through regular observation and feedback. (p.46)

Two important points seem clear in these expectations for cooperating teachers (Grimmett & Ratzlaff, 1986). First, cooperating teachers are expected to help student teachers develop skills related to teaching and classroom management. Second, cooperating teachers are expected to encourage in student teachers a sense of professional development by providing them with support and guidance on a day-to-day basis. Because the seconded teachers in my study will have previously been cooperating teachers, it is interesting to examine and compare their knowledge of learning to teach and their expectations for their roles as previously been teacher educators as they move to the faculty for the duration of their secondment and then return to schools.

Classroom teachers, however, to some degree define for themselves their role as cooperating teachers. Koerner (1992) states that cooperating teachers use two major

"sources" to define their role. First, they draw upon their own experiences as student teachers to empathize with their student teachers and to guide them during the practicum. Koerner (1992) reports that because "cooperating teachers [view] the personal relationship with the student teacher as of primary importance, they [believe] it [is] vital to establish the communication necessary to develop and nurture that bond" (p. 52). The support and encouragement that often reflects the personal relationship between student teacher and cooperating teacher is downplayed by Grimmett and Ratzlaff; either it wasn't important enough for a statement unto itself or it is assumed in #4. Second, cooperating teachers, in part, construe their role in the practicum as a response to what they perceive as a lack of communication and support from the university for themselves and for student teachers (Koerner, 1992).

Adjusting to the university setting.

Expecting seconded teachers to adapt to the university setting without difficulty, minimizes or fails to acknowledge the reality that several somewhat different cultures co-exist on university campuses. The lack of widespread agreement among participants about the cooperating teacher role results in part from schools and universities being very distinct institutions with different goals, objectives, and commitments. Brown, Clark, and Sorrill (1987) suggested that differing expectations are rooted in

> the ideological diversity which emanates from inevitably different conceptions of teaching, the institutional divergence between those involved in school and university settings, the authority relationships between the student and the experienced practitioner, and the widely held beliefs that theory and practice are discrete entities which present almost intractable problems to those who seek to integrate them. (p. 3)

Similarly, Raths, Katz, and McAninch (1989) describe two particular cultures:

> One of these cultures is associated with the world of the researcher, the scientist who seeks to understand and generate new knowledge. The second, has to do with the arena of the practitioner, the trainer, the developer who applies knowledge to complex and demanding individual cases and in turn trains others to do the same. (p. 106)

McIntyre (1984) and Grimmett and Ratzlaff (1985) have also identified the ambiguity of expectations which participants hold for the practicum.

As seconded teachers come to terms with the complexities and ambiguities of teacher education inherent in the university setting, it is reasonable to expect them to reflect on their own classroom teaching practices and

draw upon them when they work with student teachers. Interacting with student teachers may serve as a trigger for recall of incidents from their practice, thus serving in some ways to identify professional development opportunities.

Therefore, research on collaboration between schools and universities might be useful in understanding the role and knowledge of seconded teachers in university settings. Cuban (1991) points out that, viewed from at large, the primary focus of a university is the promotion of scholarship; the primary focus of a faculty of education is the preparation of beginning teachers; and the primary focus of a school or district is providing instruction to children or youth. In efforts to transcend these different foci, school and university personnel need to contribute to the provision of the highest quality of education for children and youth through designing and delivering quality professional preparation programs for teachers.

Power and Authority in Education

Complicating the traditional cooperating teacher role are issues of power and authority between school and university settings. Typically, clinical faculty members have little impact on defining their roles and relationships. Cornbleth and Ellsworth (1994) report that one of the ways that universities dominate the partnership involving clinical faculty "is by establishing relationships with individual teachers . . . rather than

with schools or districts from which clinical faculty members are to be selected" (p. 240). Generally, individual teachers are in no position to challenge hierarchical university organizations, or the established faculty groups and campus norms. In other words, clinical faculty members are at a significant disadvantage in comparison to university faculty because they have less formal power and authority in the teacher education setting.

Why power and authority?

There are two reasons for analyzing issues of power and authority in teacher education. First, as Nyberg (1981) suggests, issues of power exist in every aspect of social life:

> Organization and power are conjugal concepts . . . . Where there is organization, there is power; where there is power, there is organization. If organization is inevitable in social life then it is also true that power is inevitable in all social relations. (p. 43)

Second, seconded teachers are potentially key persons in the teacher education program, but they often find themselves pulled in different directions by the needs and desires of student teachers, the somewhat different priorities of some cooperating teachers, and the still different priorities and expectations of faculties of education. In order to understand teacher education and

field experience better, a number of issues, including those of power and authority, need to be examined.

Clarifying power and authority.

The lack of discussion about power among educators probably contributes to the rather superficial understanding of power that most of us possess. Indeed, when power is mentioned in the educational literature, Nyberg (1981) points out, it is often used "without definition, as if people already had a clear understanding of its meaning" (p. 10). Most of the literature on how power operates in schools has focused on the principal's role in managing teachers and students (e.g., Fairholm & Fairholm, 1984). Thinking of power only in this way, as essentially an act of hierarchical domination, tends to dismiss or minimize the power and influence of individual teachers within the school and university settings. French and Raven (1959) suggest that "in addition to legitimate organizationally derived power, there are also informal and less predictable forms of individual power" (p. 8). If power and authority are defined as only institutional phenomena, then it becomes a difficult task to describe accurately or to analyze complex social relationships such as those which occur during preservice teacher education.

Power and authority in teacher education.

Although issues of power and authority have been discussed in education (e.g., Apple, 1982; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Karabel & Halsey, 1977), few have talked about power

on a face-to-face level (Badali, 1994; McNay & Badali, 1994, Tom, 1997). Giroux (1980) says that understanding issues of power and authority is fundamental to a better conception of teacher education. There are four reasons for this claim. First, it must be acknowledged that schools do exist within and are characterized by power structures; the matter of power relationships is inescapable. Second, teacher education programs reflect traditions and social practices that are linked to notions of meaning and control. Giroux (1980) believes that if "questions of meaning can be associated with notions of authority and control, the issue can be raised as to whose sets of meaning stalk behind . . . teacher education programs" (p. 6). A great deal can be learned by questioning the assumptions of power and authority that are hidden within the course content of such programs. Third, issues related to the purposes of teacher education programs are essentially political in nature. Giroux (1980) suggests that, in the most general sense,

> teacher education programs represent socializing agencies that embody rules and patterns for constructing and legitimizing categories regarding competence, achievement, and success. Moreover, they serve to define specific roles (teacher, student, principal) through the language they use and the assumptions and research they consider essential to the profession. (p. 8)

Fourth, student teachers are often unprepared to recognize and handle the variety of interests and practices that collide and compete for dominance in teacher education programs. Giroux (1988) is critical of teacher education when he suggests that "student teachers frequently receive the impression that classroom culture is free of ambiguity and contradiction" (p. 187). In many respects, teacher education programs have not given teachers the means they require to view teaching as problematic.

Gender and power.

It is clear that seconded teachers reject the notion of "power-over" student teachers. Nevertheless they are powerful in terms of a more "feminine" conception of power (Gilligan, 1982; Miller, 1988; O'Neil & Egan, 1993; Robertson, 1992). Power has generally meant the ability to control others but, as we have seen, seconded teachers are more likely to view power as consensus, mutuality, partnership, support, and guidance. This "feminine" conception of power (Cook, 1993) is more consistent with their vision of themselves and what it means to be an effective teacher educator.

Background Literature

Clinical Faculty in Teacher Education

I now wish to turn my attention to the literature pertaining to seconded teachers who are referred to in the literature under various names including clinical or adjunct faculty, teachers in residence, and faculty

associates. Little formal research exists about clinical faculty members' roles, relationships, and careers because many of the partnerships between schools and universities are relatively new. Historically, the clinical faculty role primarily consisted of supervising student teachers. With respect to traditional roles, Ellsworth and Albers (1991) noted that cooperating teachers

> may be only partially reconceptualizing their role in the direction of becoming teacher educators. That is, cooperating teachers appear to be applying the mentor model of one-on-one experience-based problem solving to the new structure . . . rather than significantly restructuring their role toward that of the teacher educator. . . . (p. 27)

Similarly, Cornbleth and Ellsworth (1994) found in their study that several clinical faculty members had difficulties in seeing themselves in roles other than as cooperating teachers or supervisors of student teaching.

Some Canadian studies of seconded teachers.

Only a few studies have documented the experiences of seconded teachers in Canadian faculties of education. Adams (1993), for example, examined the seconded Practicum Associate position at the University of Alberta and the University Associate position at the University of Calgary. The associates were classroom teachers who were seconded to faculties of education from their school districts for a

one- or two-year term. They instructed in a variety of courses and supervised student teachers. Adams' study detailed how five associates progressed through what she called phases or orientations that in some ways parallel teaching careers (anticipating, commencing, establishing, enacting, re-viewing, renewing, re-aligning, re-entering, and retrospecting, p. 28). Within these phases, Adams documented how the roles, responsibilities, and experiences affected associates personally and professionally. In her summary comments, she suggested that because of diminishing budgets and re-evaluation of teacher education programs, it is conceivable that the number of seconded teacher positions will decrease or their role may be redefined.

In another Canadian study, Maynes, McIntosh, and Wimmer (1998) explored a group of adjunct professors involved in supervision of field experiences at the University of Alberta. They were concerned about the university dependence on "externals," otherwise known as retired and part-time teachers employed to supervise student teachers. Among other issues, Maynes, McIntosh, and Wimmer focused on "the absence of a formal recruitment and selection process for making these appointments . . . [and] the 'hit and miss' nature of their connection to the university such that the externals' knowledge of our program . . . was uneven at best" (p. 3). They concluded that the solution to the quality supervision issue was not to attract more members of the academic community, but to

focus on the recruitment and selection process of the existing group of externals.

At Simon Fraser University, a research project is currently underway to document the experiences of faculty associates in the teacher education program. Warsh (1996), for example, examined the experiences of approximately one hundred former faculty associates after leaving their two-year secondment to the university. Warsh found that many former faculty associates pursued administrative positions because they were unsatisfied remaining as classroom teachers.

In a related study, Dawson (1996) analyzed data from five professors regarding their role in working with faculty associates in the teacher education program. Dawson argued that major differences exist within school and university cultures, and that faculty and faculty associates often value different forms of knowledge. Issues of power and authority were also identified as being important.

As part of the same research project, Beynon (1996) examined how faculty associates negotiate two key transitions from school to university and from being teachers of children to teachers of adults as they assume the tasks of teacher education.

Green and Purvis (1995) remind us that there has been almost no research that examines the experiences of teachers returning to the classroom after completing

graduate studies. They found that at the University of Lethbridge part-time and full-time graduate studies had a positive impact on the manner in which teachers thought about their teaching. In addition, they found that when teachers returned to the school community, they believed that colleagues resented their new knowledge.

Other studies of seconded teachers.

In a review of 20 teacher education programs that include some form of clinical faculty in teacher education, Cornbleth and Ellsworth (1994) found three major types of clinical faculty roles: (1) an enhanced status of the traditional role of the cooperating teacher through title changes, increased preparation and prerequisites, and role differentiation; (2) additional involvement of classroom teachers in teaching university courses; and (3) broader participation by classroom teachers in teacher education program planning, admissions, and other decision making (p. 218). Cornbleth and Ellsworth (1994) linked the creation of clinical faculty positions in teacher education to identified problems in American education (e.g., The Holmes Group, 1990; Carnegie, 1986).

Gilstrap and Beattie (1996) examined clinical faculty in other American professional development school sites. They found that as teachers become clinical faculty, they take on numerous roles including mentor, coach, communicator, counselor, supervisor, evaluator, reflective

practitioner, school leader, researcher, and collaborator (p. 16).

In the United States, many of the reforms associated with professional development schools overlap with the creation of an expanded role for clinical faculty. Hohenbrink (1993), Karlsberger (1993), and Sherrill (1993), in their studies of professional development school projects, all described clinical educator roles that evolved as part of those projects. Howey (1992) identified as one of eight general goals for professional development schools the development of clinical faculty who can guide novice teachers. Howey and Zimpher (1994) concluded that the preparation of clinical faculty members is limited and suggested that various literatures (e.g., teacher socialization studies, expert-novice studies, studies of beginning teachers' beliefs, teachers' reasoning) be employed to design a program of studies for clinical members beyond the simple orientation that seems to be the norm in most institutions.

As a springboard for designing the orientation needed by clinical faculty and to understand more fully the contributions they may make to teacher education, more knowledge about their understandings of learning to teach and their perceptions of the role they play in teacher education and how either or both of these change during secondment is required.

This study addresses this need and is guided by the following research questions with regard to beginning, continuing, and formerly seconded teachers.

1. What general expectations are held as to their role definition and role fulfillment by teachers seconded to university-based teacher education?
2. Do seconded teachers change their perceptions of their roles during the secondment experience? If so, how do these perceptions change?
3. What knowledge of learning to teach is held by seconded teachers on beginning secondment?
4. Do seconded teachers change their perception of learning to teach during secondment? If so, how do these perceptions change?

Potential Contribution of the Study

In *Profession of Medicine*, Eliot Freidson (1970) argued that the "everyday physician" is expected to solve concrete, often complex and ambiguous problems, largely in isolation from his or her colleagues. According to Freidson, the setting and the demands of practice contribute to a worldview quite different from the orientation of medical researchers. The present study draws upon the work of Freidson (1970) by utilizing his conception of the "clinical mentality," (see Chapter 3) and applying it to the experiences of seconded teachers as they make the transition from classroom teacher to university-based teacher educator.

The contributions of this study are (1) to update the literature relating to the role of the seconded teacher in preservice teacher education programs. Participation in this study may enhance seconded teachers' reflection on their roles in preservice teacher education and their contributions to inservice education; (2) to increase our understanding of the contribution of seconded teachers to teacher education at a time when there are political and economic pressures being exerted on educational institutions to assess the contribution of seconded teachers in their programs. Many teacher education institutions have lengthened programs and time in schools in the belief that school-based "practical" training is the most valuable component of preservice teacher education. The trend toward more school-based training (e.g., witness the move toward professional development schools in the United States) inevitably gives cooperating teachers, seconded teachers, and other part-time teacher educators an even more influential role in determining the substance and nature of student teacher learning; and (3) to familiarize seconded teachers with the continuum of professional development so that they will not only understand their own functioning within the context of the continuum but also explain it to others who may come to see opportunities to contribute to the profession by hosting student teachers.

Overview of the Remaining Chapters

There are eight chapters in this study. In Chapter 2, I describe the methodology I used in collecting data from seconded teachers. In Chapter 3, I present the major themes concerning seconded teachers' experiences as they make the professional development transition from classroom teacher to university-based teacher educator. As seconded teachers make the transition from classroom teacher to teacher educators, they play two distinct roles. The role of the university instructor is the focus of Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, I concentrate on seconded teachers as faculty advisors. Chapter 6 is an analysis of the shared reflections of the participants in this study. In Chapter 7, I present seconded teachers' experiences as they return to the school community after secondment. And in Chapter 8, I draw conclusions, identify implications, and make suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2 - METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the research methods used in this study, specifically: perspective of the study, data sources, data gathering, data analysis and interpretation, ethical issues, and limitations of the study.

Theoretical Perspectives Informing the Study

Teacher education institutions operate within a defined social structure that serves specific interests. Many of the premises and rules that guide teacher education programs go unquestioned by participants, often resulting in complex problems being defined as basically technical. Popkewitz (1979) suggests that the "language, material organization, and social interactions of teacher education establish principles of power, authority, and rationality for [educating teachers] and guiding occupational conduct. These patterns of thought and work are not neutral and cannot be taken for granted" (p. 1).

Reality is socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Bruner, 1986; diLeonardo, 1991; Gall, 1991; Gergen & Gergen, 1991; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Martin, 1987; Radway, 1984; Riger, 1992; Wertsch, 1991). Taking a social constructivist perspective means focusing not on formal institutions themselves but on the processes by which people experience and make sense of their lives. This is precisely what is attempted in this study.

Recognizing that seconded teachers personally construct knowledge about teaching is fundamental to understanding the way in which they fulfill their roles as instructors and faculty advisors. Individuals do not construct knowledge in isolation. Indeed, the social setting and the interactions within it influence the manner in which individuals construct knowledge about the world.

Hennessey (1993) reviewed the literature pertaining to "situated cognition," finding that learning is a process of participation in social settings. According to Suchman (cited in Hennessey, 1993), situated cognition widens our capacity to problem-solve:

> (a) to recognize the critical role of the social and physical circumstances in which actions are situated, when interpreting those actions; and (b) to encompass thinking as a part of culturally organized activity which is carried out within a community of practitioners. In this view, learning is a process of enculturation or individual participation in socially organized practices, through which specialized local knowledge, rituals, practices, and vocabulary are developed. The foundation of action is no longer an extraneous problem but the essential resource that makes knowledge possible and actions meaningful. (p. 2)

The work of Lave and Wenger (1991) is also useful in explaining how seconded teachers make sense of the university culture. They present the notion that learning occurs in communities of practice, and as people gain access to a community they become increasingly involved. According to Lave and Wenger, "the form that the legitimacy of participation takes is a defining characteristic of ways of belonging, and is therefore not only a crucial condition for learning, but a constuitive element of its content" (p. 35). They suggest that entry to a community results from a process they call "legitimate peripheral participation." This means that an individual gains access to a community through growing involvement over a period of time. Newcomers move from peripheral participation towards full participation. While this is occurring, individuals are involved in constructing new identities for themselves.

Lave and Wenger (1991) state that the key to legitimate peripherality is access by newcomers to the community (p. 100). Because the period of legitimate peripheral participation is relatively brief for seconded teachers (usually between one and two years), they did not become absorbed in the "culture of practice" (p. 95). "To become a full member of a community of practice," Lave and Wenger (1991) write, "requires access to a wide range of ongoing activity; old timers, and other members of the community; and to information, resources, and opportunities for participation" (p. 101).

Data Sources

In August, 1996 The Teacher Education Office at the University of British Columbia, in which the study was based, mailed a copy of my letter of introduction, which outlined the study, to prospective volunteers. I met prospective volunteers at the orientation meeting (August 27, 28) of new faculty, including elementary and secondary seconded teachers. Some volunteers agreed to participate in the study in advance of these meetings; others gave their consent in person. A group of 17 seconded teachers (5 first-year seconded teachers, 8 continuing seconded teachers, and 4 teachers who re-entered the school system after secondment who were not at the orientation meetings) was selected for this study from among a number who volunteered to participate. I rejected approximately ten individuals because technically they were not seconded teachers. These were graduate students who were assigned similar teaching and supervising duties to seconded teachers.

Aggregate Profiles

A traditional form of qualitative analysis has been to use single case studies. Cases are usually presented as "individuals," but cases may also represent instances of a larger phenomenon. In an effort to present the different voices in a context, it made sense to construct four aggregate profiles. In creating profiles, I adapted well documented strategies for cross-case analysis (Abbott,

1992; Denizen, 1989; Eisenhardt, 1989; Fischer & Wertz, 1975; Gladwin, 1989; Huberman, 1991; Persol, 1985; Yin, 1984, 1991). This approach was an effective method of presenting seconded teachers' experiences at the university. I created these profiles by combining data from several cases. Year one seconded teachers are represented by a composite profile that I have called "Brenda," likewise, continuing seconded teachers are represented by "Frank," graduate student seconded teachers are represented as "Sarah," and former seconded teachers are referred to as "Gerald." In other words, seventeen voices are captured in the stories of Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald.

Once I began analyzing the data, it became clear to me that certain major themes emerged that were common to certain "groups" (first-year seconded teachers, continuing seconded teachers, and formerly seconded teachers). I chose to present the data in aggregate profiles because there was less variation within groups than between groups. Had this not been so, it would have been necessary to provide a full description of each category.

Brenda appears as an elementary teacher with eight years of teaching experience. She has worked in the same school since moving to British Columbia from Ontario where she completed a Bachelor of Education Degree. Her primary teaching responsibility was grade 2/3. She has supervised two student teachers prior to secondment to the university.

Frank appears as a secondary mathematics teacher with twenty three years of experience. He has worked in two senior secondary schools, the last nine years serving as department head. He is active in his provincial subject specialist association and has made numerous workshop presentations to colleagues. His primary teaching responsibility was Mathematics 11, 12. He has supervised eleven student teachers during his career.

Sarah appears as an elementary teacher who requested a leave of absence from her school district in order to begin a master's degree in teacher education. She has six years of teaching experience, mostly at the grade 6/7 level. In the year preceding secondment, Sarah took a leadership role in her school's accreditation process. She is very interested in issues related to teacher professionalism and reflection. She had supervised one student teacher.

Gerald appears as a secondary teacher with twelve years experience. Although educated as an elementary teacher, he accepted a secondary appointment upon graduation. He was involved in several extracurricular activities in his school. For the last eight years, his primary teaching responsibility has been English 8, 9, 10 and Social Studies 8. He has supervised five student teachers.

The Teacher Education Program

It might be useful at the outset to say a little bit about the teacher preparation program in which these

seconded teachers were involved. All of the participants in this study were employed in either the elementary or secondary twelve-month teacher education program which leads to a post-baccalaureate Bachelor of Education degree at the University of British Columbia. Student teachers are assigned to schools for a total of 15 weeks in their academic year (a two-week secondary pre-practicum experience occurs in October, and a 13-week extended practicum in January - May; a two-week elementary pre-practicum experience occurs in January, and a thirteen-week extended practicum in March - June). All students enroll in subject-specific curriculum and instruction courses prior to undertaking the extended practicum. Secondary student teachers normally specialize in teaching in one or two curriculum areas. In order to give them time to reflect and to observe in classrooms, the maximum teaching load during the extended practicum is expected to be, for the last half of the practicum, approximately eighty percent of the sponsor teacher's normal teaching load.

Data Gathering

I collected information by means of three semi-structured interviews conducted between September 1996 and June 1997. After informing the participants in my study of my interest in their views on preservice teacher education, I began the first interview with somewhat open-ended questions designed to reveal something about their understandings of their roles as university instructors and

faculty advisors, as well as to investigate their knowledge of learning to teach. Each interview required approximately sixty minutes. Interviews were audio-taped, transcribed, and stored on computer disk. Questions such as the following served as starting points; other questions arose in response to particular comments and, at times, I asked for clarification or expansion. Not all questions apply equally to both presently and previously seconded teachers.

Interview One

1. Why did you choose to become a seconded teacher in the teacher education program?
2. What course(s) will you be teaching this year?
3. What are your expectations and goals for this course? What are your expectations and goals for yourself as a faculty advisor working with student teachers in their practicum?
4. What do you feel you know about teaching that will be important for your student teachers to learn or also know?
5. How do you plan to share what you know with student teachers?
6. Tell me about your experiences as a seconded teacher last year. What stands out in your memory as important? How have your experiences influenced your initial expectations for your role as an instructor and faculty advisor?

7. Since leaving the university, have you changed any of your ideas about your role as a university instructor? Faculty advisor? Sponsor teacher?

Interview Two

8. Tell me about your experience thus far as a seconded teacher. What stands out in your memory as being important?
9. Have you revised your views about your role as a university instructor? Faculty advisor? If so, what are the sources of your revised views about your role in the teacher education program?
10. What expectations do you have for yourself as a faculty advisor in the extended practicum?
11. What are your current views about the nature and process of teacher education?
12. Do you feel you were successful this year in achieving your goals?
13. Do you feel constrained in any way in the role you play in the teacher education program? If so, can you comment on the sources of those constraints?

Interview Three

14. What are your expectations for the courses you will be teaching and for practicum supervision next year?
15. Will you do anything differently as a university instructor next year? Faculty advisor?

16. From a professional development perspective, what did you learn about teacher education during the year(s)?
17. In what ways, if any, did your university teaching and supervising contribute to your sense of professional development?
18. What benefits have you experienced as a result of your experience as a university instructor? Faculty advisor? School advisor? Classroom teacher?
19. Do you expect or plan to make a contribution to your colleagues or school as a result of your experience as a university instructor and faculty advisor? If so, how do you envision this happening?
20. Would you advise a colleague to seriously consider secondment? Why? Why not?

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The purpose of my study was to understand more clearly the experiences of seconded teachers in the teacher education program through the use of Glaser and Strauss's (1967) grounded theory approach. The aim of this method is to build a understanding that is faithful to and that illuminates the area under study. Strauss and Corbin (1990) define the approach as "a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon"

(p. 24). "One does not begin with a theory, then prove it," write Strauss and Corbin (1990); rather, "one begins with an area of study and what's relevant to that area is allowed to emerge" (p. 23).

Before I began the formal process of organizing the data contained in the interview transcripts, I created five files that enabled me to manage and organize the large amount of data the interview process had generated. The *identity files* contain information about the seconded teachers who participated in this study (e.g., name, years of teaching experience, altered identity). The *tape file* includes the coded audio-taped recordings from each interview. The *document file* consists of dated original research materials. This file was particularly important because it ensured that even after data were copied for analysis and filing, the original context was always easily determined. The *content file* contains copies of original data, and the *process file* includes a record of each step taken in the research process. In this last file I included personal reflections on the decisions I took about the way in which the research was conducted.

My first challenge was to organize and make initial sense of the data. It was obvious from the very beginning that I needed to reduce the huge volume of information before I could identify patterns and construct a suitable framework to present findings. During several readings of the interview transcripts, prominent themes began to

emerge. These themes were to become the basis for organizing this thesis. The process, in some detail, (after Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) was as follows: Coding began with words that described what appeared to be going on among seconded teachers in the teacher education program. The exact words used by seconded teachers were often catchy and meaningful. I highlighted all interesting and provocative comments. While I was reading and re-reading the blocks of information, I asked myself several questions about specific words, phrases, and sentences that occurred repetitively in the data (see Strauss, 1987, p. 30 for guidelines for open coding). While coding words and phrases from the interview transcripts, I paid attention not only to blocks of information that seemed to fit together but also to any instances that seemed to stand outside the common experience. I tried not to take anything for granted, because to do so is to foreclose on the many possibilities that may be buried in the data. In the course of my study, I found that a continuous process of comparison was necessary in order to link blocks of information to one another. This was accomplished through the constant comparison of data items with other data items until sections went together in large blocks or seemed to describe something.

Eventually, these blocks of information were brought together into one large file. The next step was to assign some level of significance and importance to each block of

information. Once each block was highlighted, I reorganized each quote under its tentative heading. From the beginning of data collection, I made inferences and drew tentative conclusions to describe what was happening, noting regularities, patterns, and explanations.

While reading the interview transcripts, I spontaneously recorded my ideas about emerging themes in an effort to capture connections within the data. The result was many memos documenting what I thought was emerging from the data. In addition, I recorded personal observations immediately after each interview.

Interpreting the data is clearly the most challenging component of data analysis. For Patton (1990) interpretation involves

> explaining the findings, answering "why" questions, attaching significance to particular results, and putting patterns into an analytic framework. It is tempting to rush into the creative work of interpreting the data before doing the detailed, hard work of putting together coherent answers to major descriptive questions. But description comes first. The discipline and rigor of qualitative analysis depend on presenting solid descriptive data . . . in such a way that others reading the results can understand and draw their own interpretations. (p. 375)

Interpretation, then, means giving significance to the data by providing explanations, making inferences, investigating rival or competing explanations, and drawing conclusions. Kirby and McKenna (1989) summarize this process in the following manner:

> Data analysis consists of moving data from category to category (constant comparison), looking for what is common (properties) and what is uncommon (satellites) within categories and between categories. The data is [sic] arranged and rearranged until some measure of coherence becomes evident. (p. 146)

When I look back on the research process, I remember a great deal of excitement in conducting the first interviews with seconded teachers. I was pleased to discover that they were very articulate in describing their experiences.

Ethical Issues

Researchers would agree that all participants in a study should be fully informed about the research before they agree to participate. One of the features of qualitative research designs, however, is that questions, observations, and theories emerge over the course of the study. Brickhouse (1992) reminds us that "researchers must always be cognizant that ethical responsibilities are not over when initial consent is obtained--they are just beginning" (p. 96). The researcher-participant relationship, therefore, is problematic because the initial

consent received from a participant may not be adequate to cover the entire research project as it evolves. In addition, the researcher should be sensitive to the possibility that some participants may not be prepared to discuss and cope with issues that might reflect negatively on them or, in the case of teachers, on their schools or the teaching profession. In a study concerning the sharing of field notes and reports with participants, Tobin (1992), for example, highlights one of the difficulties in providing teachers with analyses of their teaching. "When a researcher chooses to focus on a particular role of the teacher and to ignore others, there is a potential problem if the teacher has given low priority to the role on which the researcher has focused" (p. 108). My decision to provide interview transcripts to seconded teachers is based on my belief that it is essential for them to have some input into the research process. After each round of interviews, they were given a copy of the interview transcript. They were asked to read it for accuracy and encouraged to make notes in the margins about anything they wished to clarify, retract, change, or expand. Although seconded teachers were not directly involved in data analysis, the validity and reliability of the interpretations were in many ways a joint effort between me and the seconded teachers. During the second and third interviews, I shared my preliminary analysis with seconded teachers. I asked them if my "interpretation" of their

transcript made sense to them. It was during these moments that seconded teachers were engaged, to some degree, in the interpretive process. Doing research that promotes dialogue between teachers and researchers may, as Brickhouse (1992) hopes, "lead to new understandings of teaching and teachers. Ideally, this will strengthen the bonds between students, teachers, and researchers, and simultaneously improve the quality of teaching, learning, and research" (p. 101).

To the extent that other Canadian universities employ seconded teachers in teacher education programs, there is likely to be some similarity in their experiences.

Limitations of the Study

Three limitations to this study are: aggregate profiles; gender of participants; and relationship to some seconded teachers.

Presenting data in aggregate profiles opens the possibility that some individual detail might be lost in the reporting process. Aware of this potential problem, I decided, while writing the final draft (Chapters 3 - 7), to re-read the original transcripts, an exhausting but worthwhile task because it convinced me that I had presented the data fairly. I am also convinced that it would have been redundant and cumbersome to present seventeen individual case studies.

Of the seventeen participants in this study, only four were male. Although I did not originally set out to compare

male-female perspectives and did not persist in doing so, it might have been preferable to have similar numbers of male and female participants.

Some of the teachers who participated in this study told me that they had agreed, in part, because they knew me through my association with the Principles of Teaching course. They indicated that they might not have agreed to participate otherwise. On the other hand, the majority of the teachers who did volunteer had no prior knowledge of me whatsoever.

CHAPTER 3 - ENTERING AND INTERPRETING THE UNIVERSITY CULTURE

This chapter explores seconded teachers' experiences as they make the previously mentioned professional development transition from classroom teacher to university-based teacher educator. Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald came to the position with different expectations based on their experiences as teachers and former cooperating teachers. Each had high expectations for secondment; none sought the position to "escape" classroom teaching. Instead, they approached secondment as a professional development opportunity.

As one might expect, the transition from the school community to the university community is problematic in a number of ways. Seconded teachers, for example, reported inadequate orientation procedures as well as minimal contact with full-time faculty, both aspects of secondment that disappointed them. Instead of being integrated into the university culture as a whole, seconded teachers' comments suggest that they resorted to a "community within a community," a theme that will be discussed later in this chapter. Part of the reason for their creating their own community has to do with their continuing teacher identities and their primarily practical perspectives on teaching and learning.

In the first part of this chapter, I introduce an overarching concept which permits an explanation of the

manner in which they construct their roles as university instructors and faculty advisors: the "clinical mind." Freidson's (1970) construct is useful when attempting to understand seconded teachers' experiences because it summarizes teachers' worldviews which have been reported in both the curriculum research and research on teacher thinking. Second, I will outline six stages of secondment: seeking the position; preparing for secondment; expressing self doubts; adjusting to the tempo and workload; working with adult learners; and looking for support (Chapter 7 deals with re-entry to school districts, and Chapter 8 connects teacher identities and communities of practice as a way to explain seconded teachers' experiences).

Clinical Consciousness and Teaching

A study from outside the field of teacher education is helpful in understanding that teaching promotes a certain type of orientation to knowing, problem solving, and acting. Freidson's (1970) study of the medical profession highlights the physician's need to react to complex problems, largely in isolation from colleagues. This setting, and the need to take action, he argued, is very different from the orientation of medical researchers. He labeled the physician's worldview the "clinical mentality." Freidson's construct was adapted for the field of teaching and teacher education by McAninch (1993), and re-named "clinical consciousness."

The Clinical Mind

Freidson (1970) found that clinicians' "way of looking at the world" (p. 169) is characterized by five elements:

1. the aim is action, not knowledge.
2. a belief in what he [she] is doing.
3. a crude pragmatism, relying on results.
4. trust in personal, firsthand experience.
5. emphasis on the idea of indeterminacy or uncertainty, not the idea of regular, scientific behavior.

These five elements are described more fully below as a possible frame for understanding seconded teachers' worldview of teaching and learning, a worldview that influences how they construct and enact their roles within the university setting.

First, clinically minded people tend to intervene when faced with a problem. According to Freidson, clinicians take action even when they may not have a clear rationale for doing so:

> Successful action is preferred, but action with very little chance for success is to be preferred over no action at all. There is a tendency for the practitioner to take action for its own sake on the spurious assumption that doing something is better than doing nothing. (p. 168)

When having to solve problems, the clinically minded individual is more likely to attempt some sort of intervention instead of delaying action in favor of further study.

Second, people who possess a clinical orientation tend to have faith in the efficacy of their actions. This means that the clinician might keep teaching in ways for which there is no clear rationale. According to Freidson, "Given a commitment to action and practical solutions, in the face of ambiguity the practitioner is more likely to manifest a certain will to believe in the value of his [her] actions than to manifest a skeptical detachment" (pp. 168-169).

Third, a reliance on firsthand experience in decision making is fundamental to the clinically minded practitioner. When an intervention fails, the practitioner is likely to try something else. The focus is on the immediate problem, rather than on long-term implications. Another way of looking at this is to portray the clinician as a person characterized by something of a trial-and-error approach.

Fourth, clinically minded people rely primarily on firsthand experience, rather than on theory or book knowledge. Experience is considered most important, whereas theory and texts are less valued sources of knowledge. Freidson goes further to suggest that the simple prizing of firsthand experience is possibly problematic because practitioners are then more prone to interpret their

experiences in unanalytical ways. Reflection on practice can be perceived as undermining their "gut feelings" or intuitions.

Finally, clinicians have a distrust for generalizations. Because they work with individuals in dynamic settings, practitioners tend to highlight the differences between situations rather than their similarities. This means that a practitioner generally defaults to his or her own experience, intuition, and instinct in assessing a remedy.

While it might be true that practitioners tend to dismiss abstract generalizations, Freidson argued that principles of practice evolve from an individual's experience. This is an important point because clinicians have theories, but their source is different from those of researchers. This is not to suggest that clinicians are irrational in their actions, but rather their rationality differs from that of the scientist:

> The rationality is particularized and technical; it is a method of sorting the enormous mass of concrete detail confronting him [her] in his [her] individual cases. The difference between clinical rationality and scientific rationality is that clinical rationality is not a tool for the exploration or discovery of general principles, as is the scientific method, but only a tool for

> sorting the interconnections of perceived and hypothesized facts. (p. 171)

Freidson (1970) suggested that individualism and subjectivism are important characteristics of the clinically minded. Each person collects a series of personal experiences, and because the practitioner "is so absorbed in and isolated by his [her] own work, he [she] is likely to see and evaluate the world more in terms of his [her] own experience than in terms of what authorities tell him [her]" (pp. 170-171).

Clinical Consciousness Among Teachers

Freidson's (1970) construct is useful in the educational domain for several reasons. Most important, it provides insight into the nature of teachers' knowledge claims, and how they approach problem solving.

Much has been written about the lack of systematic research on teachers' perspectives towards knowing. Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986), for example, wrote, "Teachers have not been seen as possessing a unique body of professional knowledge and expertise. The prevailing view among most researchers is that teachers have experience while academics have knowledge" (p. 512). This would suggest that clinical consciousness generally characterizes the teaching profession. There is an emerging body of literature, however, recognizing teachers' practical craft knowledge (Blumberg, 1989; Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992;

Kohl, 1986; Tom, 1984; Zeichner, Tabachnick & Densmore, 1987).

Several studies reported the importance of teachers' firsthand experience (e.g., Grant & Sleeter, 1985; Hargreaves, 1984). Clearly, firsthand experience provides teachers with a basis from which to make decisions, as well as a filter for new information. Huberman's (1983) description of teachers' orientation toward knowledge and problem solving is also useful in understanding the work of teachers. He wrote:

> The global image emerging from the classic and recent studies of knowledge use by teachers is that of practically oriented professionals drawing chiefly on their own and their peers' experience to resolve problems or otherwise modify their instructional practices. Recourse to more scientific, distant, and noneducational sources is infrequent. . . . There is a good deal of recipe collecting, enabling teachers to expand their instructional repertoires, their bag of tricks. These recipes are traded on the basis of a validation that is craft embedded and highly experiential; ideas, techniques, products, and explanations of classroom life that "worked for me" are circulated among users, but undergo an intuitive test--how the message or product

> feels or fits--before being tried out in the classroom. (pp. 483-484)

<u>Teacher Education and the Clinical Worldview</u>

The research on teachers' firsthand experiences may indicate that teachers display a clinical consciousness. The seconded teachers who participated in this study also exhibited the characteristics that Freidson attached to the clinician. Before secondment, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald were firmly entrenched in their school communities. They defined themselves as "experienced practitioners." Frank, for example, noted "there's not much I haven't seen before. I'm confident that when I talk to student teachers, I have a fairly diverse background of handling problems." Brenda also relied on her experience in working with student teachers:

> I told student teachers about a situation that occurred to me in my first year of teaching. It was a situation in which a grade 10 pupil came to class late, disrupting the rest of the students. This wasn't the first time it had happened. I confronted him, and I mean I really confronted him. I had had enough of his disruptive behavior. I ended up making the student even more defiant and I threw him out of class. I tell my student teachers what I was thinking at the time and why I acted in that way. The point of the story

> is that, over the years, I learned through experience how to handle similar situations. You can't learn that kind of stuff in books. There is no substitute for experience.

Brenda's story is just one example of how seconded teachers transmit a clinical worldview to a receptive group of student teachers.

Before proceeding any further, I wish to make it perfectly clear that I am not suggesting that individuals who possess a clinical consciousness are somehow less adequate teachers or teacher educators. On the contrary, I recognize the intuitive, present-oriented thinking, and actions demanded of classroom teachers.

In order to get a feel for the somewhat longitudinal nature of this study, I describe teachers' experiences as they move through stages of secondment starting by discussing the first inclination toward secondment.

Stages of Secondment

Seeking the Position

Most of the seconded teachers who participated in this study did not actively seek the position. Instead, other people, most notably faculty advisors they worked with in the practicum, encouraged them to apply. Frank, for example, described how he found out about the position that was ultimately offered to him:

> I was a cooperating teacher for a number of years and I had built up a solid relationship

> with the faculty advisor. She told me that she was moving on to other things. She encouraged me to apply for her vacant position. I was thrilled to be asked and even happier when the position was offered to me.

Having experience as cooperating teachers convinced Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald that they had an accurate understanding of the position. Frank expected his work as a cooperating teacher to come in handy:

> I always enjoyed the contact I had with student teachers and cooperating teachers. I felt like I had a pretty good understanding of the teacher education program, and the role and expectations for student teachers, cooperating teachers, and faculty advisors. When everything was said and done, I accepted the position because I thought I could make a positive difference and help student teachers. As well, it would be a nice change to be part of the university community.

Gerald's journey from the school community to the university, however, was different. After completing a master's degree, his advisor invited him to do workshops for student teachers. "I was petrified at first," Gerald noted, "so I said no." Gerald appeared to be an accomplished and confident teacher, and yet he was somewhat

intimidated at the prospect of working with student teachers in the university setting:

> I couldn't keep saying no, so I eventually accepted. That sounds awful doesn't it? I figured that if they had that much confidence in me I should give it a try. It never occurred to me that I was 'university material.'

This is good evidence of the separation of the two cultures. Initially, Gerald's secondment lasted four months. He does not recall being formally interviewed for the position, nor does he remember if the position was advertised.

Like Gerald and Frank, Brenda was encouraged to apply for the position. A professor from whom she had taken a graduate course a few years earlier contacted her and asked her to apply for a vacant secondment. "After thinking about the offer," Brenda recalled, "I thought it would be a nice change of pace to teach a methods class." Seconded teachers acknowledged that they welcomed a change of pace, viewing it as a renewal opportunity. "It wasn't a life-long dream or anything," Brenda noted, "but because I had built up relationships with people at the university, I found out through the grapevine that some faculty were either retiring or going on sabbatical."

At the outset, I said that most teachers did not actively seek secondment. Sarah, however, left the classroom to pursue a master's degree in teacher education.

Secondment was not initially something she had anticipated. She acknowledged that she was seeking a change from classroom teaching:

> I enjoyed teaching, but I felt the need for a change. I could have asked for a transfer to another school, but the appeal of coming to the university to do graduate work and be paid as a seconded teacher was an excellent opportunity, one that doesn't come around very often.

Like Gerald, Frank did not initially consider secondment as a career option, but when the opportunity presented itself, he felt that it was too good an offer to pass up:

> I was really pleased to be offered the position. It seemed like the right time for me to make a change. I've always enjoyed the contact I've had with student teachers. There were a few negative things happening in my school and I thought that it would be a good time to do something else for awhile. I was motivated, however, primarily out of a sense of commitment to help students become effective classroom teachers.

Except for Sarah, seconded teachers did not actively pursue the position. Had it not been for the encouragement and support of faculty advisors, it is unlikely that they would have applied at all.

Preparing for Secondment: The Orientation

In the last week of August, the Teacher Education Office invited seconded teachers, along with many of the other people assigned duties in preservice teacher education, to a series of orientation meetings designed to acquaint them with the teacher education program. Course coordinators and experienced instructors shared program philosophies, outlined policy, suggested assignments, described evaluation practices, and answered questions. I know from personal experience that these meetings can be both exhausting and exhilarating. As newcomers to the university, individuals are confronted with the difficult task of trying to make sense of the teacher education program, and more specifically, their role within it.

Seconded teachers commented about the orientation training they received from the Teacher Education Office and their departments, training that was intended to ease their transition to the university. Recalling the initial phase of her secondment, Sarah was critical of university expectations for her and the other newly appointed seconded teachers. "What surprised me the most," she said, "was that there was no training. There was the assumption that if you can teach grade two, you can teach university students. Part of the orientation should have helped us deal with teaching adults." During the first week of her secondment, Brenda was surprised to discover how things worked at the university and how little formal support was available:

> I thought there would be more opportunities to talk to other people who were already teaching at the university. I was a bit insecure about working with adults, having no experience doing so. During the first few weeks there were very few opportunities to share ideas and get organized because everyone was so busy. I was confronted with having to deal with so many new things on my own.

I asked seconded teachers to comment on the extent to which the orientation meetings helped them prepare for their roles and responsibilities. Overall, seconded teachers generally appreciated the efforts of course coordinators during orientation meetings, as well as the support and encouragement they received from more experienced seconded teachers, sessionals, and part time faculty. Brenda, however, acknowledged that there was not enough time to process all the information:

> I was quite overwhelmed to say the least. It was a little scary sitting there and trying to sort out what the year would look like. I felt a bit like a beginning teacher. I had all these unfamiliar courses to teach; I had all this planning to do; and I had almost no time to do it.

Seconded teachers were in unanimous agreement that they needed more time to plan their courses. Frank described the first few weeks of his secondment:

> We met in late August for a few days and I began teaching the following week. I had a massive binder of information. We talked about course philosophies, marking criteria, and other policy. Even then, however, I didn't know what was expected of me. I was learning as I went along. I was often only one day ahead of my student teachers which made it rather stressful.

Initially, the "time press" associated with the position was a constant source of stress. As well, the different focus of schools and universities creates culturally different perceptions of what is important to know, a theme that will be discussed later in this chapter.

At the beginning of their secondments, teachers were understandably concerned about practical issues such as room locations, supplies, secretarial support, library privileges, and resources. Because they had little time to organize course materials, seconded teachers resented "wasting time" over things that they said could have been done earlier. Gerald, for example, complained:

> I couldn't believe how long I had to wait in line to get keys to my office. This might sound like a petty thing, but it was frustrating at the time. I had to pick up my keys at the same

> place where they issue parking permits so you can imagine what the line ups were like the week before classes start. I must have been in line for two hours. This could have been done earlier and I'm not sure why someone else couldn't get the keys for me.

During the second interview with teachers, I asked them to reflect on the initial orientation they received from the university. Frank linked the orientation to what he called the "fragmented nature" of the teacher education program. He said, "The meetings helped me learn about specific courses but I felt like I was on my own in trying to figure out the whole program. There wasn't enough time to do everything." Sarah's comments about the orientation were similar to what the others said:

> The orientation period was too short. I think it should be viewed as part of our professional development, a basic requirement to help us understand our roles and responsibilities within the program, not just specific courses. Meetings should go on for a couple of weeks rather than a few days. Maybe a retreat of some sort would be a good idea.

Recognizing that they could be better prepared as seconded teachers, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald suggested ways that the orientation might be improved. Gerald, for example, advocated a mentoring program for new

staff. He described a conversation he had with one of the course coordinators:

> I wanted to know if there was someone I could go to if I needed help. I asked if there was anyone in the Faculty of Education who could act as my mentor. I was really disappointed to discover that there wasn't a formal mentor program. At least in most school districts there is some sort of assistance for beginning teachers. The same sort of thing should be available at the university.

Seconded teachers' comments reveal the inadequacy of the orientation program. A more "coherent overview of the entire teacher education program," they said, would be an improvement.

Expressing Self Doubts and Loneliness

In the early days of secondment, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald expressed doubts about their ability to handle the new position. Gerald, for example, said, "I never dreamed that I would end up teaching at the university. I'm mentioning this because I am the first person in my family to graduate from a post secondary institution." Frank also worried about whether or not he was "up to the challenge" of teaching at the university level:

> I remember how I felt at the end of the first week. I was really scared going out to the university as a classroom teacher. I remember

> driving out to the campus and thinking to myself that it had been a great week! If I can teach here, I can teach anywhere. It was a really empowering experience.

Frank, too, was apprehensive about meeting student teachers for the first time. "I was nervous before meeting student teachers because they already had degrees in a number of areas. They were bright, articulate, and more knowledgeable than I am in those fields."

The first few weeks of secondment were crucial in setting the tone for what was to follow and in clarifying expectations and defining roles. As well, a special bond developed among those teachers who began secondment together, contributing to a "community within a community" phenomenon.

Some seconded teachers had more difficulty than others adapting to their new roles. Indeed, some were uncomfortable in thinking of themselves as teacher educators, viewing full-time professors as the "real teacher educators." Brenda said, "In my heart of hearts, I am a classroom teacher, plain and simple." Ironically, the literature (e.g., Ducharme & Ducharme, 1996) suggests that full-time faculty also prefer to distance themselves from the label of teacher educator. Who wants to be teacher educators? Who owns the programs? Who holds this task in high priority? This theme will be discussed in Chapter 8.

Sarah recalled much of her first year in the following way. "I resisted being the teacher I knew I was. I really struggled because I knew I was doing things that I didn't think were very good but I was attempting to do what was expected of me." Initially, Sarah admitted that she was confused about her role at the university. She was the seconded teacher who was most critical of the university for its lack of "systematic support" in helping her and others make the transition to the university. By the second year, Sarah's views were tempered somewhat, but she still described herself as a person who "danced to the beat of a different drummer." She decided to emphasize what she thought was most important for helping prospective candidates learn to teach, worrying less about what the university might think. Clearly, Sarah was happier with her performance in the second year. She added, "I was really nervous throughout the first year. I never felt comfortable about what I was doing. Initially, I felt like an impostor." In addition, Sarah said she felt constrained by the demands of some student teachers. "They expected me to tell them exactly how to teach. I was more interested in getting them to think about teaching, not just about techniques and strategies." Sarah seems not to reflect the "clinical mind" as much as Brenda, Frank, and Gerald. Her work as a graduate student shaped somewhat differently her identity as a teacher educator.

All seconded teachers talked about the relationships they established with student teachers as being important to their identity as instructors and faculty advisors. Brenda was somewhat surprised to discover that student teachers accepted her so readily as a credible "authority" on teaching. She was pleased that she and her students developed a trusting relationship. "They listened to every word I said. I wasn't used to that. I realized that I was in a very powerful position to influence their thinking."

It must be acknowledged that there is an entire literature to be found on the concept "authority," which is usually defined as "legitimate power." Benne (1970), for example, says:

> Authority is always a function of concrete human situations however large or complex the situation may be. It operates in situations in which a person or group, fulfilling some purpose, requires guidance or direction from a source outside himself [herself] . . . the individual or group grants obedience to another person or group which claims effectiveness in mediating the field of conduct or belief as a condition of receiving assistance. (pp. 392-393)

In other words, power is linked to authority through both delegation and some form of consent, the effectiveness of delegation hinging on a group's acceptance of and consent to the leader's plan. Authority ultimately reflects a

relationship between people with different amounts of power; or as Bendix (1960) puts it, "authority involves a reciprocal relationship between rulers and ruled" (p. 295).

Neiman (1986) discusses authority in education, suggesting that there are two types of authority: social-political authority and epistemic authority. Teachers, he points out, must be both "in charge" and "in authority." Teachers are granted their socio-political authority by virtue of their role within the school's organization. Beyond this role, they are granted epistemic authority by virtue of their knowledge of the subjects they teach. For another version of authority, Nyberg (1981) distinguishes between "authority to oversee" (social-political, economic, legal, and organizational) and "authority to exercise," in particular in education, to exercise judgment over curriculum and instruction.

Brenda was a highly motivated individual who tried to please her department heads and course coordinators. During secondment, she never completely left behind her identity as a classroom teacher. "I still felt like I was representing my school and district's reputation when working with student teachers. I always attempted to portray my school in a positive light, not only with student teachers but also with other seconded teachers and faculty." The first few months of secondment were challenging for her as she tried to reconcile her personal

expectations for the role with those of the university. Brenda said:

> The first month was a sink or swim situation; it was pretty frightening. In preparing my lectures, I would read a textbook and then try to relate the content to my own experiences as a teacher. I was a little unsure of what the university expected of me.

Goodlad (1990) noted "that [seconded teachers] straddle two cultures, that of the university and that of the K-12 school system" (p. 154). It is important to recognize that part of the difficulty in making the transition from schools to the university is adapting to the multiple communities that are firmly entrenched on university campuses. Elementary and secondary schools are more often thought of as singular institutions, or as Kagan (1990) says, "places of a common professional culture with a sense of similar goals and purposes" (p. 50).

Approximately six weeks into secondment, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald commenced working with student teachers during a two-week orientation in school settings. The faculty advising role confirmed their identities as teachers. Brenda described the two-week practicum:

> Being back in the schools as a faculty advisor made me think about who I am and what I do for a living. I began thinking, 'What am I doing at the university? I'm a teacher.'

Brenda's experience was important for her because it affirmed her identity as a teacher. She worried, however, that over time she could potentially be "cut off" from both school and university communities. "I would sit at the back of the room watching the student teacher and thinking that I am not part of this school community either. I sit there and watch, and take notes but I miss being in a school and being part of a group."

Working at the university meant leaving behind colleagues, friends, and pupils. They continued to identify themselves with their former schools. At various stages of secondment, the teachers who participated in this study reported feelings of loneliness. Sarah said:

> I'm surprised by how lonely I feel. Maybe it's because I've been out on practicum and I've lost contact with other faculty advisors. But I think I was feeling a little lonely before. The university can be a very lonely place. I was used to the constant dialogue of a staff room. When I came to the university, all that dialogue stopped. This has been hard for me to adjust to.

Brenda, an elementary teacher, had the misfortune of being assigned an office with secondary seconded teachers. "They were very supportive but they were never there because our schedules were totally different. It was a very lonely time. There was nobody to talk to." Gerald, back in his

school district, recalled the early days of his secondment. "I remember saying to my non-teaching friends how lonely I was. I think it had something to do with the way the position is designed."

Although the teachers said they experienced some degree of loneliness while at the university, it was most acute when fulfilling the role of the faculty advisor. Frank enjoyed going into schools but he acknowledged, "It was the loneliest job I've ever had in some ways. I really felt alienated from my work life, partly because I was always on the road. There was never a central place for me to put down some roots."

Seconded teachers described the first semester of secondment as both rewarding and challenging. Overall, the transition from the school community to the university was more difficult that they had anticipated.

Adjusting to the Tempo and Workload

Seconded teachers made numerous comments about their teaching workloads. By the end of her first semester, Brenda was ready for a vacation:

> I am surprised at the physical exhaustion that I felt at the end of each class. This was particularly true for the Principles of Teaching course. There was always that moment when I would be erasing the chalkboard at the end and I would feel the physical exhaustion. It was

> something beyond my experience as a classroom teacher.

Like Brenda, the more experienced seconded teachers also reported some difficulty adjusting to the tempo and workload of the position. Sarah, for example, described her tiredness as a "fact of life." "In the fall semester of both years, I was very, very, very tired! It was overwhelming teaching three courses and supervising student teachers. The second semester is less busy, nowhere near the hectic pace of the first semester."

Seconded teachers reported that they were working harder than they had expected. "My day stretched to fit all the things that I had to do," Gerald recalled. "As a classroom teacher, I had a much better idea of what to expect. At the university, however, I find myself working long hours in the evening and on weekends." Gerald was not the only individual to make this observation. In fact, they sometimes joked that, as seconded teachers, they were re-living the student teaching experience.

The immediate pressure of adjusting to the role took a toll on some seconded teachers. Sarah, in describing her first year, said, "Last year I was really stressed out. I was losing weight and I wasn't sleeping. Some of my friends were concerned about me, but I managed." Gerald, too, had problems juggling his personal and professional life. "The first semester of secondment was exhausting. It affected me

and my family quite a lot. I needed the holidays to recuperate and re-charge my batteries."

Seconded teachers also kept in contact with school-based colleagues, who they said liked to tease them about their "cushy" university position. Frank defended himself to colleagues on numerous social occasions. He said:

> My colleagues have the idea that I don't work as hard as they do. But I tell them about the hours it takes me to prepare for my classes. I can't believe how busy my life is. In fact, my whole life has changed since coming to work at the university.

In the second year of their tenure at the university, seconded teachers expected the tempo and workload to ease due to their familiarity with the role. They reported, however, that they were almost as busy. Gerald, for example, said that "at least in the second year I knew what to expect. I still spent a lot of time planning but it was much less stressful."

Working with Adult Learners: How Should I Know?

Working with adult learners was both rewarding and challenging. At the beginning of her secondment, Brenda predicted, "All student teachers will be highly motivated adults. This is a big career choice for them, and I expect them to be very committed to their studies. I'm really looking forward to working with them." Frank compared the differences in working with student teachers with secondary

pupils. "For the first time in a long time, I felt like a teacher again because I could concentrate on the material. I didn't have to worry about being interrupted every five minutes by someone asking to go to the washroom."

Seconded teachers, however, were surprised to discover that not all student teachers were "model learners." Gerald, recalling the second year of his tenure at the university noted, "I was disappointed in some student teachers' attitudes. They complained a lot, and some of them didn't come to class. Then, they had the gall to complain about their grades. What did they expect?"

All of the seconded teachers who participated in this study expected student teachers to attend all classes. They were shocked and disappointed when this was not the case because they viewed attendance as part of a teacher's professional responsibility. Sarah admitted that "maybe I was naive, but I thought attendance was mandatory in a professional program. It is absolutely essential that they attend classes with their peers in order to get the full benefit of the program."

Initially, at least, seconded teachers thought it would be easier teaching adults. Sarah observed:

> First of all, I think a person has to really want to work with adults. Let's face it, that's not the main reason we wanted to be seconded. But it is the reality of the work. As much as I like to draw analogies between teaching

> children and adults, there is a big difference in terms of how you deal with them. I've watched other people come to the university who have had a hard time working with adults, especially elementary teachers.

Secondary teachers are more likely to be comfortable with university schedules, tempo, and grading practices.

Gerald, too, wondered why some elementary teachers had difficulty working with adult learners:

> Elementary teachers are used to working with small children. They find themselves at the university but there is little discussion about the differences in teaching children and adults. Although I basically used the same principles of teaching, there were distinct differences that I learned along the way.

Gerald concluded that "successful seconded teachers have to be able to deal 'eyeball to eyeball' with student teachers. Secondary teachers are more used to doing this. I don't accept the idea that any successful classroom teacher will automatically do well as a seconded teacher."

Seconded teachers acknowledged that their relationships with student teachers are different than the relationships they had with elementary and secondary pupils. "You have to keep your distance as a university instructor," Frank warned, "because it's not the same as

when you're a classroom teacher. It took me a while to figure this out." Sarah said that she had learned a great deal about herself after working with student teachers. "There are boundaries," she noted, "that have to be respected. Otherwise, you could get into trouble." By December of the first year of her secondment, Brenda evaluated her relationships with her student teachers in the following manner. "I had difficulty, at first, maintaining a professional distance. I'm not sure why but it was especially difficult working with student teachers who were having trouble adjusting to the program."

Part of the difficulty in adapting to working with adult learners relates to the accelerated nature of course work at the university. Gerald said, "I was used to having the same pupils for a whole year. We had time to get to know one another but at the university everything is so urgent. I have them for about 13 weeks. There are some obvious downsides associated with the pacing of courses."

Adapting to the much larger university was problematic for seconded teachers. On the one hand, they said they enjoyed the "freedom" and "autonomy" associated with the university. On the other hand, the support network that they relied on as classroom teachers had vanished. Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald had several coping strategies that were directly related to their personal dispositions and previous experiences. The most common strategy was to seek support from other seconded teachers.

Looking for Support: Other Seconded Teachers to the Rescue

Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald were complimentary of more experienced seconded teachers for the informal support they provided. Seconded teachers often met to discuss planning issues. Brenda was grateful for the help she received. "As someone who is new to the position, the more experienced people have been very welcoming. They have been very good about sharing their ideas with me." Gerald recalled the voluntary informal meetings he attended in the first year of his secondment:

> We met every week over coffee. We shared resources and we talked about what we planned to do in future classes. We also talked about any problems we were having. That was important because there weren't many opportunities for seconded teachers to meet and talk to other seconded teachers about our experiences. That support group was amazing. It was really helpful because I didn't have to reinvent the wheel.

The informal meeting that seconded teachers described had a therapeutic dimension. One of the most important aspects was seconded teachers' "peace of mind" from realizing that their experiences were similar to what other, more experienced instructors were doing. This became evident when discussing and sharing assignments. Frank described some of the informal meetings he attended:

> We tried to make sure that student teachers were treated fairly in multi-sectioned courses. I know, as an instructor, I found it really helpful when other people gave me copies of their plans. This was especially important for me during the first few weeks of my secondment when everything seemed to be happening so quickly.

Seconded teachers also set aside time to meet informally as faculty advisors. Some of them scheduled meetings "on the road," which was more difficult because they were spread out over a large geographic area. Sarah described how it worked:

> The other faculty advisors and I would plan our observations in the morning in a similar area so that we could more easily meet for lunch. It was worth the scheduling hassle because otherwise, we worked in isolation. The practicum is such a busy time; it seemed I was always on the run. Talking to other faculty advisors was useful because I realized that my experiences were not unique.

Seconded teachers organized their own support; the faculty neither suggested nor designed it.

Sarah, who was critical of the university lack of leadership in providing formal support for seconded teachers, had this to say about being a faculty advisor:

> Earlier I talked about the lack of support for new people teaching courses, but I have the same criticism as it applies to the faculty advising role. I can only speak for myself, but I think there is a lack of community among faculty advisors. What I mean is that you have to take the initiative in building one. I was lucky in that a group of us decided to meet casually in our homes. We talked about all kinds of things. But why are there no conversations taking place in the university? I wonder about some of the other seconded teachers. What about them?

In summary, seconded teachers found support among other seconded teachers. But what about curriculum departments? To what extent did departments support seconded teachers' membership in the university community?

The answer to this question is that some departments were more active than others in supporting seconded teachers and making them feel welcomed. Frank's experience was positive:

> My department really embraced me as one of their own. I was lucky. They always included me in everything. They asked my opinion on things. I must say, however, that other seconded teachers told me that their experiences

> were different. I got the feeling that they
> were on the fringe of things.

I mentioned earlier that teachers who began secondment together developed a special bond. Professional relationships and friendships did not necessarily end with secondment. Although Gerald was no longer working at the university, he still kept in touch with formerly seconded teachers:

> There are about five of us who still meet. We started to get together after the Principles of Teaching course in my first year. Our friendship has continued to this day. We go out to dinner about once a month. I think we bonded because of the similarities in personalities and because of our work experiences. But for me, it has been a great opportunity to talk to other people about my secondment experience. After all, nobody else seemed to care.

Seconded teachers were generally complimentary about the Teacher Education Office in its efforts to provide "technical support" as it might pertain to things like clinical supervision techniques or writing reports. Sometimes, however, teachers said they needed a more personal and immediate type of assistance in dealing with problems. Other seconded teachers were not always helpful. Sarah, for example, had difficulty relating to older and more experienced seconded teachers. "There were only a few

other people in the same age range as myself. Most of the faculty advisors, in particular, were 15 to 20 years older, and they were at very different stages of their careers." Sarah noticed the power dimension in relationships:

> I would sometimes talk to them about what I was doing and some of the challenges or problems that came up. I wanted to have a conversation with them, but they were more interested in giving me solutions. I think they saw their role more as my teacher, but I was looking for a colleague. The only thing that I can think of is that it had something to do with the fact that I'm considerably younger than them.

Sarah believed that they meant well but she did not like being perceived as a student. Seconded teachers do not develop a secure identity as teacher educators, in part, because of the uneven support of curriculum departments and possibly the lack of personal and focused help they sometimes desire. It seems they want entry to the university community but know it is short-term and gaining entry may not be the best investment of their limited time and energy. Although seconded teachers are given responsibility for many of the practical dimensions of teacher education, they remain on the periphery, never fully gaining entry to the "mainstream" university culture. The work of Lave and Wenger (1991) is helpful in trying to

make sense of seconded teachers' experiences (See Chapter 8)

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, Freidson's construct, "clinical mentality," was introduced and applied to the fields of teaching and teacher education. I have suggested that this construct characterizes the perspectives of the seconded teachers who participated in this study. An important source of the clinical mentality can be traced to the present-minded, action-oriented work of teachers.

Some researchers have suggested that if a clinical mentality works in practice, then teacher educators should promote its use in teacher education programs. For example, Yinger (1987) used the term "language of practice" instead of clinical mentality to characterize experienced teachers' worldviews.

In upcoming chapters, I examine teachers' experiences as they progress through different stages of secondment.

CHAPTER 4 - TAKING ON THE IDENTITY OF THE UNIVERSITY INSTRUCTOR

As seconded teachers make the transition from classroom teacher to teacher educator, they play two distinct functions. The role of the university instructor is the focus of this chapter. Two dominant themes emerged from the interview data: bringing realism to the teacher education program; and evaluating course achievement. In Chapter 5, I will concentrate on seconded teachers as faculty advisors.

Whether working as a university instructor or a faculty advisor, seconded teachers serve as mentors, coaches, counselors and evaluators as evidenced in the comments of the participants of this study. Although the roles are overlapping and interdependent, each merits individual description.

Seconded teachers in this study considered the role of *mentor* to be highly rewarding. Most dictionaries define a mentor as a person who is a "wise, loyal advisor, or perhaps teacher." Throughout their secondment, by encouraging, modeling, and providing feedback, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald helped student teachers achieve a high level of performance. An effective mentor must demonstrate a considerable amount of trust, openness, and flexibility, because it is not always easy to accommodate the needs of student teachers.

Clearly, being a mentor means being a role model, serving as a source of information, and occasionally lending a sympathetic ear. Since teaching and mentoring are similar, seconded teachers readily embrace the mentoring role.

In another role, as *coaches*, seconded teachers become guides and facilitators. The coach attempts to impart the knowledge, skills, and beliefs needed for effective teaching. Skillful guidance is needed to encourage student teachers to explore the often ambiguous nature of teaching. The emphasis is on helping another reach full potential in the little time available. Whenever possible, the seconded teachers in this study shied away from giving direct advice. Instead, they helped student teachers identify a variety of problems and facilitated their movement toward solutions.

The *counselor's* role is also part of the seconded teachers' job. Counseling skills are needed because many student teachers struggle with changes in their personal and professional lives as they make the transition from student to beginning teacher.

Counseling skills are also needed to help student teachers deal with the exhaustion and stress that is frequently a part of the practicum experience. Counselors ask questions which promote reflection and self-assessment, enabling student teachers to evaluate their priorities and actions.

Through counseling, seconded teachers are able to share the experience of their own student teaching, as well as the first few years of teaching. Remembering those experiences and sharing them with student teachers, who sometimes find the narrative supplied by the advisor difficult to imagine, is an effective part of performing the role of counselor.

All participants in this study declared that the most difficult role is that of the *evaluator*. In part, the difficulty of the role depends on the level of success they have had in other roles. For example, if trust and support has been established through effective mentoring and dialogue, then evaluation will be easier for both seconded teacher and student teacher.

Seconded teachers are acutely aware that assigning a grade may affect a student teacher's future employment. But the role of evaluator involves more than giving a grade. Providing constant feedback is central to the student teacher's professional growth.

Seconded teachers sometimes become very possessive of their student teachers, creating a situation in which it may be difficult or awkward to provide critical feedback. Therefore, the seconded teacher who wants to avoid hurting the student teacher's feelings may choose to avoid giving critical feedback. At the same time, however, seconded teachers acknowledge that the professionalization of

teaching requires high performance standards for initial teacher certification.

Bringing Realism to the Teacher Education Program

The professoriate may often be "out of touch" with schools. The Teacher Education Office expects seconded teachers to bring realism to the teacher education program: by presenting fundamentals of teaching; by modeling teaching strategies; by connecting theory and practice; and by sharing narratives. Each of these sub-themes will be discussed separately.

By Presenting Fundamentals of Teaching

Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald tried to bring realism to the teacher education program in the methods and foundational courses they taught in the program. This was accomplished through presenting to student teachers those aspects of teaching that they perceive as fundamental to good practice. In the Principles of Teaching course, in which they were all instructors, they were obliged to focus student teachers on the following topics: assuming the role of the teacher; instructional planning; instructional strategies; assessment, evaluation, reporting; and classroom management. For example, Gerald said:

> I try to model what I would do in a classroom. I try to find out what my students already know. I want to get a sense of who they are. When I presented material to student teachers, I would always talk about the objectives of

> selecting one strategy versus another. I always tried to bring the discussion back to what it would look like in a classroom.

They exposed student teachers to the "daily realities" of teaching, hoping to facilitate a smooth transition from course work to the practicum. Recalling their own student teaching, as well as their work as cooperating teachers, was helpful.

In the belief that student teachers need some "general tools" pertaining to lesson planning and classroom management strategies, seconded teachers emphasized "survival skills." For example, Brenda commented:

> I open up doors for them, I give them skills and processes for dealing with the frustrations of learning to teach. I try to expose them to a variety of techniques. For example, they have to develop a one hundred lesson syllabus in detail for the methods course I teach.

Similarly, Frank said, "At the beginning I think it's important to give student teachers the nuts and bolts of how to teach." Sarah tended to view her role somewhat differently, noting:

> I want to engage my student teachers in substantive discussions about what it means to teach and what it means to learn. I want them to move beyond the easy answers and

> the biases they come into the teacher education program with. I give them time to reflect on their practice and I want them to relate it to theory.

Sarah placed the student teacher's learning at the center of the learning-to-teach process. She encouraged and expected prospective teachers to take responsibility for their own learning. Her emphasis was on teaching specific behavior, skills, or content knowledge, but also on the quality of the experience, similar to Zeichner's (1983) "process of becoming rather than merely a process of educating someone how to teach" (p. 5).

When asked what the major contribution of seconded teachers is to the teacher education program, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald began by describing their own student teaching experiences. They recalled several of their education professors who had been out of the classroom for so long they were no longer able to provide relevant information to student teachers. They were all somewhat critical of full-time faculty members. Frank, for example, noted:

> Some faculty haven't been in a classroom for twenty years. Some of the same professors who were here when I was a student teacher are still on faculty. I think that student teachers have a legitimate criticism of some of their

> professors who are out of touch with what goes on in today's classrooms.

Clearly, seconded teachers' practical knowledge of teaching distinguishes them from many full-time faculty members.

By Modeling Teaching Strategies

Frank discovered that being a seconded teacher was a great deal more challenging that he had anticipated. He had to develop new routines, new materials, and new forms of organization. The amount of time required to prepare for the courses he taught was overwhelming. He felt compelled to plan meticulously because he was not used to working with adult learners. Seconded teachers told me they modeled various instructional strategies for student teachers, hoping to prompt them into thinking like teachers. In deciding what to emphasize, they recalled their own student teaching experiences. Gerald noted:

> When I was a student teacher, I thought that I had to create everything from scratch. I learned rather quickly that was very difficult and time consuming. Now as an instructor, I encourage student teachers to adapt lessons and units that are already available. I think they should spend the time on developing and refining their teaching strategies, not worrying about where the ideas came from in the first place.

To reduce student teachers' anxiety, seconded teachers, in their classes, typically modeled

organizational, management, instructional, assessment and evaluation strategies for use in the practicum. The strategies they selected and their goals for the courses they taught, are inextricably related. The participants in this study employed a variety of strategies designed to introduce student teachers to the subtleties of teaching, the most common of which was debriefing their lessons. Like the others, Frank described his rationale for such a strategy:

> I tried to expose the rationale for my lessons to my student teachers. For example, my objectives for whatever we were doing, why I selected a certain strategy to prove a point, and how I was going to assess or evaluate their performance. I want my student teachers to see how I plan the lesson so that they would understand the importance of planning.

Seconded teachers tended to "editorialize" their own practice as teacher educators. Sarah, for example, talked about her desire for a democratic classroom in which student teachers would feel free to challenge and question her instructiónal choices. Therefore, in an effort to engage her students in critical analysis of her practice as a teacher and teacher educator, Sarah always explained her rationale when demonstrating instructional strategies. In addition to recognizing the value of debriefing lessons,

Sarah also commented on the influence that graduate courses had on her university teaching:

> In my courses I was reading people like Shulman, Zeichner, and Britzman. I was searching for the essence of their understandings of teaching and teacher education. Then as an instructor, I was working with student teachers but Shulman was still with me. The opportunity to explore the literature had a profound effect on my university teaching, and I suspect it will influence my teaching when I return to my school district next year.

<u>By Connecting Theory and Practice</u>

Debriefing lessons was an attempt to engage student teachers in making connections between theory and practice. Dewey called for teaching to be a learned profession, in which teachers possess the disposition and skill to continue to study thoughtfully their own practice throughout their careers. "Unless a teacher is such a student, he [or she] may continue to improve in the mechanics of school management, but he [or she] cannot grow as a teacher, an inspirer, and director of social-life" (Dewey, 1904, p. 15). The intellectual quality that Dewey saw as vital to teachers is this capacity for growth, for theory and practice to "grow together out of and into the teacher's personal experience" (p. 15).

Dewey's argument is forceful because he addressed the problem of choosing between teaching as an expression of personal judgment and teaching as a scientific endeavor. He insisted that the dichotomy is a false one; it is not a choice between personal experience and intuition or science, but a question of how the latter can inform and liberate the former. The personal and the scientific must work together. Otherwise, Dewey argued, teachers will fall into the trap of empiricism, dependent on precedent and trial and error.

Seconded teachers emphasized the context-specific nature of teaching because they wanted student teachers to understand the complexities of teaching. They wanted student teachers to develop the skills needed to select and implement "tried and true" teaching strategies, ones that they believe successful teachers subscribe to. Seconded teachers emphasized that a teacher is required to make numerous decisions during a typical day. According to Brenda:

> Student teachers have no idea how demanding the job really is. You can't be passive. When you have thirty pupils demanding your attention, you have to make a lot of decisions. Sometimes you make the wrong choice but with experience, generally a teacher is able to size up the situation correctly. This is a very difficult skill for student teachers to develop.

Gerald, in commenting about his practice, noted:

> Sometimes a strategy is more effective than at other times because you are dealing with people. A teacher must examine the reasons why something is effective and then transfer it to a situation where it is not effective. There is no recipe.

There is evidence pointing to teachers' reliance on firsthand experience in decision making (Grant & Sleeter, 1985; Hargreaves, 1984; Jackson, 1968; Lortie, 1975). Firsthand experience provides both a reason for many teachers' decisions, and a lens through which new information is viewed. Jackson (1968), in studying teachers' thinking about classroom events, found that teachers tend to be "confident, subjective, and individualistic" in their professional views. Doyle and Ponder (1977-1978) referred to the pragmatic elements in teacher decision-making as the "practicality ethic." Based on their examination of curriculum innovation literature, they concluded that teachers typically label proposals for change as either "practical" or "impractical" based upon their estimation of how problematic it will be to implement them in their classrooms.

Seconded teachers perform an important role in introducing student teachers to the prescribed curriculum in their subject areas and grade levels. Seconded teachers' comments reveal that "subjective knowing" is essential for getting the job done. Subjective knowing is the third of

the five ways of knowing (silence, received knowing, subjective knowing, procedural knowing, and constructed knowing) proposed by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) and following on the work of Perry (1970) and Gilligan (1982). Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule's (1986) study examines how women from various social class backgrounds and age groups view knowledge and its sources.

Subjective knowing, in which the source of the truth is the individual's gut feeling, personal experience, and intuition, is especially relevant to the participants in this study. The findings of experts or scholars are simply viewed as other opinions based on different experience. This prizing of firsthand experience and intuition is accompanied by some distrust of books as a source of knowledge. Another characteristic of subjective knowing is pragmatism, a focus on what works or feels right. This perspective embraces not only a crude empiricism and pragmatism, but also an element of particularism with respect to teaching. The women in the study by Belenky and others were in effect saying that one has to experience the problem firsthand in order to know what to do.

Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald were motivated to apply for seconded teaching positions because they had always enjoyed working with student teachers in the capacity of cooperating teachers and they wanted to be more current in their profession. They were accustomed to teaching children or adolescents and had some difficulty

adjusting to teaching adults. Brenda described the first few months at the university:

> Until I was actually standing in front of student teachers, I wasn't really sure what to expect. I have to admit it was quite a shock working with adults. They were a lot more needy that I had expected. I thought they would be much more independent and motivated as a group. I had a little trouble at first adjusting my thinking.

Before serving as seconded teachers, they expected all student teachers to be highly motivated and receptive to learning how to teach. They were excited about sharing their personal insights and expertise about children, adolescents, and teaching. Brenda summed up her attitude this way:

> I assumed that all student teachers would be motivated to learn how to become the best teacher possible. I was a little disappointed when I came across student teachers who seemed resistant to learning. They had difficulty getting their heads into the minds of teachers. When I began my secondment I just assumed that adult learners would be motivated but I found that some student teachers were almost as immature as some of my elementary pupils.

Seconded teachers acknowledged that student teachers enter programs of teacher preparation with strongly held beliefs about the work of teaching (Britzman, 1986; Weinstein, 1990). Student teachers have developed these views after years of being exposed to pedagogical modeling and interacting with peers and teachers. Bolin (1990) maintains that student teachers begin their program in the belief that they already know how to teach. Tensions develop between student teachers, seconded teachers, and other teacher educators when their beliefs come into conflict.

In summary, seconded teachers expose student teachers to practical teaching strategies. Their main goal is to make their courses as practical as possible in the belief that this information will facilitate a trouble free practicum experience. As well, because their own professional identities are rooted in the school setting, they focus on practical strategies and techniques that they believe student teachers need to master in order to be effective teachers.

By Sharing Narratives

In order to understand more fully the contribution that seconded teachers make to teacher education programs, it is useful to examine their practical knowledge and the manner in which they share it with student teachers. I will attempt to show that the knowledge and perspectives that seconded teachers possess and communicate to student

teachers reflect their values, beliefs, and personal philosophies about teaching, views grounded in the world of practice. Furthermore, the contribution of seconded teachers to teacher education programs may indeed address some of the concerns that Schwab (1983) described in a series of articles on the practical in which he argued that theoretical knowledge was often in the wrong form, rendering it useless to many individuals. He was concerned, in part, with how knowledge claims are stripped of their inquiry origins, producing what he called a "rhetoric of conclusions." Seconded teachers avoided communicating conclusions and instead transmitted inquiry through the stories they told student teachers.

The practical knowledge of seconded teachers is deceptively simple. Practical knowledge usually refers to teachers' knowledge about classroom situations, as well as the practical dilemmas they encounter in the act of teaching. Underlying the idea of practical knowledge is the notion that teachers rely on a personal, context-specific perspective in their work as teachers. According to Elbaz (1983), practical knowledge

> . . . encompasses firsthand experience of students' learning styles, interests, needs, strengths and difficulties, and a repertoire of instructional techniques and classroom management skills. The teacher knows the social structure of the school and what it requires, of teachers and students

> . . . . This experiential knowledge is informed by the teacher's theoretical knowledge of subject matter, and of areas such as child development, learning and social theory. (p. 5)

According to this view, practical knowledge is largely influenced by one's experiences in the everyday world of teaching. Similarly, Clandinin (cited in Fenstermacher, 1994, p. 10) sees personal practical knowledge as

> in the person's past experience, in the person's present mind and body and in the person's future plans and actions. It is knowledge that reflects the individual's prior knowledge and acknowledges the contextual nature of that teacher's knowledge. It is a kind of knowledge carved out of, and shaped by situations; knowledge that is constructed and reconstructed as we live out our stories and retell and relive them through processes of reflection.

Taken together, the practical knowledge and personal practical knowledge of teachers reported in the literature leads one to conclude that, first, teachers' knowledge is highly personal and dynamic; and second, thinking about knowledge and teaching in this way reflects the context-specific nature of teaching.

What is important for the present argument is that seconded teachers possess practical knowledge, and

in working with student teachers they exposed beginning teachers to what Carter (1989) calls, the "depth and breadth of teaching knowledge." This argument begins with the assumption that learning to teach is inherently complex and ambiguous. The dilemma is how to share this complex and particular knowledge with student teachers. Having seconded faculty teach methods courses may be helpful in focusing students initially to "think like teachers," particularly about technical matters of instruction and management. It is in methods courses, in particular, that seconded teachers describe and model their values, beliefs, and personal philosophies directly for student teachers, often through the stories they tell as well as the way they teach.

In a moment, I will discuss the manner in which seconded teachers incorporate stories in their university teaching but first, let me say that I think that preservice teachers gain at least some understanding of what it means to teach through the vicarious experiences of working with seconded teachers. It is through "shared inquiry" that student teachers might uncover some of the hidden and obscure relationships between, for example, theory and practice. In other words, seconded teachers help student teachers generate multiple interpretations and solutions to given problems. "In the Principles of Teaching course," Sarah noted, "case studies prompted student teachers to consider alternatives ways of dealing with everyday

problems. I tried to draw their attention to readings, whenever possible, so that they would learn to support their opinions and decisions."

If Carter (1990) is correct in her assertion that "attention in teacher education has traditionally been focused on what teachers need to know and how they can be trained, rather than on what they actually know or how that knowledge is acquired" (p. 291)," then the knowledge of seconded teachers is important because they are in a unique position to observe the process of teacher education from both a school and a university perspective. In a time when faculties of education are attempting to improve their preservice programs, the knowledge of these educators is an important source for informing the practice of preservice teacher education.

Next I will describe the nature of seconded teachers' stories, a strategy they use to engage student teachers in thinking about their emerging practice.

When asked why they told student teachers stories about their classroom experiences, seconded teachers said it was an effective strategy to engage student teachers in thinking about the highly personal and complex nature of teaching.

Brenda, in her first year of secondment, told more stories to her student teachers than the others, focusing on specific types of situations:

> I often told stories where I got myself into a bad situation. Student teachers always ask me what I would do differently now. I think about how I've grown and changed over the years and I share my thinking with them. They seem to appreciate the fact that I'm being honest about some of the difficult situations I've had to deal with as a teacher.

By the end of the first year, Brenda admitted that she had largely relied on her classroom experience to engage student teachers in discussions about learning and teaching. Like the other seconded teachers, Brenda used stories to expose student teachers to what she called the "multiple dimensions of teaching":

> I spent significant amounts of time debriefing my rationale for what I did, hoping that student teachers would recognize my story as an exemplar of good practice. When they find themselves in a similar situation during practicum or in their first year of teaching, I hope they think of me.

Obviously, seconded teachers told stories about recent classroom teaching experiences. They also told stories about the first few years of their teaching careers. Gerald, for example, revealed his shortcomings as a beginning teacher:

> I admit to my student teachers that when I began teaching I really didn't understand some really

> important things about teaching. For example, I thought teaching was basically about information processing but how I came to realize that there were much more important things such as the process of learning and empowering children to become interested, motivated learners and, most important, giving them opportunities to make decisions and problem-solve.

It is clear from their comments that seconded teachers believe one of their primary responsibilities is to share what they know about teaching so that student teachers might learn from the mistakes of others. Facilitating meaningful discussion about teaching, however, requires time. The compressed nature of course work, typically 13 weeks, forced seconded teachers to do everything at an accelerated pace.

Although seconded teachers generally acknowledged the importance of telling stories, they also recognized that the strategy was problematic. Sarah, for example, was somewhat reluctant to share her stories with student teachers because she was concerned that student teachers would interpret her stories as a recipe for their own teaching. Sarah noted:

> I'm really cautious about telling student teachers a lot of stories about my teaching because I don't want them to be me. I want them to figure it out for themselves. I always

> preface what I'm saying by telling them what
> I chose to do and stressing to them that every
> teacher is different.

My own university-based teaching experiences confirm some of Sarah's concerns. To some extent, I too have worked with student teachers who are desperate for recipes that they think they can adopt in their own practice. When stories are an important part of an instructor's repertoire, however, some student teachers might generalize that theory is less important than practice, or that theory and practice are unrelated. When student teachers do this, I am suggesting that stories are problematic because they are practice-oriented and less theory-related. And finally, seconded teachers who tell stories as exemplars of their knowledge may be unknowingly perpetuating the problem that some student teachers have in making connections between theory and practice.

Evaluating Course Achievement

Seconded teachers acknowledge with reservations that as evaluators they possess power over student teachers. Regardless of how they might prefer to conceive of their role, in the end they become evaluators. Let me make it clear that evaluation has two parts. The emphasis here is on evaluating course work and projects. In Chapter 5, I describe how faculty advisors feel responsible to the teaching profession for ensuring that only the very best student teachers receive their recommendation. They

described their frustrations in passing minimally satisfactory student teachers. This is a rather stringent stance. One wonders how successful they would have been had this standard been in place.

Adjusting to Teaching Adults

Teachers began secondment expecting student teachers to display an open-mindedness and resiliency in learning to teach. Very early on as instructors, however, they became aware of what they described as overly competitive student teachers. Student teachers who were more concerned about their grades than about learning how to teach caused a great deal of frustration for them, particularly in multiple section courses. Frank said:

> I've become really frustrated about grades and it's compounded because there is a move in this faculty to reduce grade inflation. This hasn't been a problem for me because I think I mark consistently, and I don't dish out a lot of A's to student teachers. I find student teachers are frustrated because they're getting straight A's in all their other courses and I give them B's and C's.

Overcoming some of the confusion surrounding evaluation is problematic. Brenda observed:

> There are problems stemming from the fact that we don't want to be seen as giving away grades but at the same time we are dealing

> with university graduates. We give them a relatively simple task. We just drilled and drilled those learning objectives until they could write them off the top of their heads. Then, we create an assignment in which they can't really fail unless something goes terribly wrong. I expect them to do well and I'm confused on how I should approach the grading of those assignments.

Seconded teachers' frustration stems, in part, from the problems of assessing student teachers in courses that they themselves had no part in designing. Gerald acknowledged that if he were given the chance to teach the course again, he would mark differently saying, "I used criteria referenced assessment to its worst." When I asked Sarah what she had learned from her evaluative role she said, "if I have to fail a student teacher in the future, I will make sure I fail the person by more than five marks so it will be harder for the person to appeal."

Giving Honest Feedback

Perhaps in order to reduce the powerful impact of evaluation, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald emphasized the importance of being honest with student teachers when giving feedback. Gerald's comments are similar to what the others said:

> I learned that with adults, the best thing is to be honest, even though sometimes it would have been

> easier to be less truthful. For example, it would have been easier for me to inflate the student's mark and to tell him that everything will be fine. But it wouldn't be in the student's best interest. I think I was caring by the virtue of the fact that I told him the truth. It wouldn't have been caring of me to downplay his problems because somebody was going to have to be honest with him somewhere down the line.

Giving feedback to student teachers is an important part of the work seconded teachers do. Openness, tact, and diplomacy are essential ingredients in effective communication.

Listening is as important as talking. Covey (1989) encourages people to go beyond active listening and to engage in the highest level of listening--emphathetic listening. Emphathetic listening is described as listening that "gets inside another person's frame of reference. You look out through it, you can see the world the way they see the world, you understand their paradigm, you understand how they feel" (p. 240). This is the kind of listening that seconded teachers need to model when working with student teachers. Sarah noted the importance of listening:

> During my methods class, a student teacher was describing what she had done during the practicum. It sounded like she had done a wonderful job in engaging her pupils. While

> listening to her, I resisted the urge to interrupt and tell the class about my own experiences which, it seemed to me were similar. I really identified with what the student teacher described. It was like she was describing something that had already happened to me. It was a weird feeling.

One of the aspects that seconded teachers disliked about their role was supporting underachieving student teachers. Brenda, in particular, expressed regret that her best student teachers received less feedback and attention:

> I couldn't believe how much time I spent with this student teacher. Don't get me wrong, I wanted the student teacher to be successful and I know it is part of my job to help, but I couldn't help but feel uneasy because I had plenty of exemplary student teachers who were just as entitled to my support. I remember feeling guilty that I didn't have enough time to spend with those student teachers. I felt like I was abandoning them somehow.

Dealing with Student Failure

Seconded teachers are reluctant to fail student teachers because they know that a failed course grade on their transcripts will prevent them from continuing in the program. Frank's comments highlight his discomfort in the evaluator role:

> It is a difficult role because I realize that the decisions I make have a huge impact on student teachers' lives. For some, they have given up good jobs to pursue a teaching career. They have families and financial commitments. They feel like they have to be successful; they are under a lot of pressure.

Seconded teachers, however, were frustrated when they felt they had no other choice but to pass "minimally competent" student teachers. Frank made this point quite succinctly, "When we say that a student teacher has satisfied the requirements of the Faculty of Education, we are not necessarily saying that person has the professional qualities to become a good teacher." Seconded teachers were in unanimous agreement that unless a student teacher was a "total disaster" they would pass their courses. Understandably, they were concerned about the professional repercussions of passing people they described as merely satisfactory student teachers. Gerald pointed out that, "we don't need all the teachers who graduate these days. We can afford to be more discriminating in who should receive a teaching certificate."

Chapter Summary

Seconded teachers brought realism to the teacher education program. They began secondment aware of student teachers' criticism of "out of touch" faculty. Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald took on the roles of mentor,

coach, counselor, and evaluator in an effort to ease the transition from student to beginning teacher. One of the most powerful ways they shared their knowledge with student teachers was through the stories they told. Seconded teachers told stories not only about their classroom adventures, but also about their experiences as cooperating teachers, and even about their student teaching days. They presented fundamentals of teaching by focusing on the curriculum and the learner, but they were careful to offer "suggestions" rather than "recipes." Part of becoming an effective teacher, they believed, was being able to match the "best teaching strategy" to the particular set of classroom circumstances. In an effort to problematize teaching they downplayed their expertise, acknowledging that they did not have all the answers. This meant that Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald presented an image of teaching that very considerably relied on firsthand experience.

CHAPTER 5 - TAKING ON THE IDENTITY OF THE FACULTY ADVISOR

In this chapter, I contrast two major themes characterizing the function of the faculty advisor as understood by seconded teachers: mutuality and support; and evaluation of practicum experiences. Communication is a umbrella concept that occurs in both themes. First, I will describe three styles of communication (authoritarian, laissez-faire, and democratic) that characterize seconded teachers' work as faculty advisors. For each style, seconded teachers employ either a "lock step" or "talking around" structure of communication. Second, reflection as an aspect of communication (developed in Chapter 6) is introduced. I will outline the experience of providing stimuli for reflection and some of the problems of both seconded teachers and student teachers on the journey toward being reflective about their practice.

Approaches to Communication

The faculty advisor's role overlaps that of the cooperating teacher. Both are expected to observe, provide feedback, and encourage and support the student teacher. The nature of feedback varies from being very directive to insisting the student teacher frame the answers to his or her own questions with minimal help (Al-duaij-Abdulaziz, 1986; Blackbourn, 1983; Blumberg, 1980; Ginkel, 1983; Glickman & Bey, 1990, Rossicone, 1985).

Authoritarian.

Less experienced faculty advisors are more structured in the support they provide student teachers. Brenda, a first year faculty advisor, defined meaningful feedback as "talking to student teachers about what I see happening in the lesson and I present my observations to help them recognize the things they don't see. I go through a structured or "lock step" approach to observation so that I have documented evidence." Brenda stressed the importance of communicating her role and the procedural outcomes to student teachers. "I try to be clear to student teachers about the role. I'm very prescriptive about my role and what the student teacher should expect to happen in the practicum." Brenda's approach to providing feedback seems to be toward the authoritatian end of the communication spectrum.

Laissez-faire.

Sarah, a faculty advisor and full-time graduate student working towards a master's degree, stressed a different type of role. "I am a mirror. I reflect back to the student teacher what they did and what they are saying in the debriefing session." Sarah intentionally encouraged her student teachers to take ownership of their own learning and she was somewhat critical of student teachers who viewed learning to teach as merely a technical endeavor, thereby revealing a position toward the opposite end of the communication continuum.

Democratic.

Feedback from experienced faculty advisors tended to be less structured. They were more likely to engage student teachers in conversations about teaching generally, rather than focusing on specific remedies to problems they observed in a student teacher's practice. Although positioning on a continuum is difficult, Frank seemed to be less forceful and direct than Brenda and more willing to give his own views than Sarah, thus positioning himself more centrally. Frank commented:

> I wanted to spend more time with student teachers, just talking about teaching in general. I gave student teachers a chance to reflect on their practice without me pointing to the bigger things that they need to know. I gave them more time to talk about what they're going through and worried about, things that are challenging them. Acting more on the humanistic side.

Faculty advisors like Frank invited cooperating teachers into discussions about teaching. Others, like Sarah, conducted weekly sessions for student teachers and cooperating teachers where the agenda was typically set by them. "These were usually one hour, round table discussions. I would invite school staff with expertise in a certain area or they might be people who hold different perspectives about teaching that could broaden the discussion for student teachers." Sarah delegated

responsibility to student teachers for organizing and chairing the sessions in the belief that student teachers should take more responsibility for their own learning, a common theme among all faculty advisors. Zimpher, deVoss, and Nott (1980) found that the most important role played by faculty advisors derives from the uncritical relationship between cooperating teachers and student teachers. They found that cooperating teachers do not provide critical feedback to student teachers about their teaching, and without faculty advisors, student teachers would be left to their own devices to analyze their teaching performances. In this study, on the contrary, the majority of faculty advisors fell into the positivist approach to supervision, whereby they tended to diagnose problems during observation, prescribe effective courses of action with reinforcement, and evaluate to see if the objectives were mastered.

Before going any further, I wish to clarify two issues related to communication. First, the way in which faculty advisors give feedback to student teachers provides a useful illustration of different language and leadership styles. For instance, when discussing how a lesson progressed with student teachers, a few faculty advisors noted that they tended to be indirect because they did not want to discourage their student teachers. They intentionally "talked around" issues, hoping that student teachers would take a leadership role in trying to make

sense of their teaching. Delpit (1988) contends that, "when acknowledging and expressing power, one tends towards explicitness . . . . When de-emphasizing power, there is a move toward indirect communication" (p. 284). No doubt, this could be a problem for student teachers who likely expect specific and detailed critiques of their performance.

Second, issues of communication and evaluation are intertwined. Student teachers begin the practicum largely unaware that cooperating teachers and faculty advisors might be uncomfortable in the evaluation role. The relationship is complicated when expectations for evaluation are postponed until the relationship has a chance to develop and participants have come to know one another on a personal level. Indeed, some student teachers may be at a loss to explain why they did not receive critical feedback from faculty advisors. Part of the answer may come from Neil, Chamber, Clark, Swarbrick, and Wackett (1993) who suggest that cooperating teachers (and faculty advisors--seconded teachers who were once cooperating teachers) perceive two role types natural to their practicum evaluation responsibility. The first reflects how cooperating teachers (faculty advisors) like to think of themselves, while the second role makes them uneasy because it means being the expert:

> With capable, pedagogically experienced independent candidates, the cooperating

> teacher is called upon to serve as interactive coach. Coaching means mutually selecting objectives, partnerships in class-time, sharing of logs, a lot of oral communication, and fine-tuned curriculum planning and presentation. On the other hand, the less secure candidate with little teaching experience needs more structure. In this case the cooperating teacher is called upon to emphasize his or her role as an evaluator/leader. More modeling is then necessary on the part of the cooperating teacher, with the consistent underlying aim of positively working on the candidate's confidence level. (p. 13)

At its simplest, being the evaluator clashes with faculty advisors' image of partnerships and augments their discomfort with being perceived as experts. Perhaps the reluctance of some faculty advisors to accept their authority in the practicum can be traced to their "vision" of total equality between themselves and student teachers. Neiman (1986) points out that "only a relationship of total equality can be claimed [to] avoid indoctrination" (p. 66), an assertion that might be debated.

Reflection

The theme of reflection will be developed in Chapter 6 but because reflection is an aspect of communication it is appropriate that I make some preliminary comments. Seconded

teachers attempt to prompt student teachers' reflection by focusing attention on theory/practice links; asking student teachers to keep journals; shadowing student teachers; and videotaping student teachers in the classroom.

<u>Focusing Attention on Theory/Practice Links</u>

Seconded teachers consciously alerted student teachers to the connections between university-based course work and the practicum. The following view expressed by Sarah was common to all faculty advisors:

> The practicum is where their learning comes together, where all the things we talked about in courses is [sic] seen such as the role of the teacher, professional issues, planning, classroom management, assessment and evaluation. I enjoy being able to connect student teachers' experiences back to what I've done with them at the university. Student teachers learn to teach by talking about teaching. We learn to teach by listening to other people's stories.

Certainly, one of the ways that student teachers learn about teaching is by talking to and observing experienced individuals and by listening to their stories.

<u>Asking Student Teachers to Keep Journals</u>

Faculty advisors encouraged student teachers to reflect on their practicum experiences in a variety of ways. Sarah, for example, asked her student teachers to keep a journal:

> I ask them to write reflections about their observations. We talk about how to reflect on something and how to be critical. My student teachers write to me and I write back. The dialogue begins with them thinking and writing. During my meetings with student teachers, I talk with them about what they've written.

Shadowing Student Teachers

In an effort to encourage student teachers to be thoughtful about their practice, Frank described an ambitious observation cycle he was organizing for his student teachers:

> I plan to shadow, at least once, every one of my student teachers for half a day so that, not only am I observing one lesson in isolation, but I want to observe the transitions between lessons. I'll also follow them around at lunch and recess to see how they interact with pupils.

Frank helped his student teachers to be accountable for examining their own teaching practice by focusing their attention on the connection between theory and practice. In an effort to develop a broader base from which to reflect, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald encouraged student teachers to observe other cooperating teachers and student teachers across subject areas and grade levels. In addition

to exposing student teachers to a variety of teaching styles, they also encouraged peer support and collegiality.

Videotaping Student Teachers in the Classroom

Videotaping was another strategy used by some faculty advisors to encourage student teachers to analyze and reflect on their practice. Faculty advisors employed videotaping in different ways. Frank, for example, explained:

> I go through the video with the student teacher and we talk about what happened. I zero in on specific points that support my own observations. I think it's really important that I have evidence to support whatever claims I make about student teachers' performances. Videotaping was just another way of collecting data.

In this instance, Frank used videotaping to confirm his observations and impressions of student teachers. I can only speculate about the extent to which the student teacher might have benefited from the exercise. Brenda, a first year faculty advisor, told me she was reluctant at first to videotape a student teacher, but after doing so she was generally pleased with the result. She decided to videotape a student teacher who was having difficulty adjusting to being the teacher. "I was quite honest with the student teacher and I suggested that more practice working with students would be beneficial because I could see that there was some growth but it was slower than other

student teachers." While Frank encouraged student teachers to view the videotape alone in the hope that they would be astute enough to identify what was happening, other faculty advisors like Brenda preferred to view the tape with the student teacher. Overall, they used videotaping sparingly and of their own volition. It was not a requirement or expectation from the Faculty of Education. Equipment was scarce and it was logistically difficult to schedule observation visits for student teachers scattered across school districts.

Although seconded teachers acknowledged the value associated with reflection, it was not without its problems. The challenges that Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald faced in making the shift from "mentor" to "evaluator" created problems, some of which will be discussed next.

While faculty advisors told me that they encouraged student teachers to reflect on their practicum experiences, they did not appear to question their own assumptions about the extent to which student teachers were able to reflect in a meaningful manner about their teaching practice. Researchers have suggested, however, that student teachers are generally prompted to engage in a very limited range of classroom activities which makes reflection problematic (Howey, 1986; Killian & McIntyre, 1986; Tabachnick, Popkewitz, & Zeichner, 1979-1980). In addition, seconded teachers were not always sure what they should look for in

a student teachers' performance. Often, they relied on student teachers to tell them what they should focus on. Sarah, for example, said, "When I confirmed with the student teacher that I would be observing them teach, I asked them first to give me suggestions on things they wanted me to look for. Typically it was classroom management, or things like questioning techniques."

I now wish to turn my attention to the first major theme emerging from the data collected from seconded teachers employed as faculty advisors.

Mutuality and Support: The First Hat

All faculty advisors described their relationships with student teachers as partnerships. The similarity among their answers highlights the common conception of faculty advisors with regard to their role.

Why Support?

Their desire to be seen mentors and coaches rather than experts is due, in part, to their viewing student teachers as pseudo-colleagues. One might speculate why this is so. Possibly they experienced unsupportive faculty advisors when they were student teachers or perhaps their emphasis on being mentors and coaches is rooted in their current philosophies of learning and teaching. Either way, faculty advisors defined themselves as "mutually supportive" of student teachers. During our interviews, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald often described their own student teaching experiences when I asked them about their

roles as faculty advisors. They all echoed the sentiments of Frank, who said, "I really tried to be supportive by being there for the student teachers because I realized that the practicum was going to be a turning point for them." Brenda, a faculty advisor in the first year of her secondment described her role, "I am like a coach. The students are my future colleagues. I try to emphasize the fact that it's one teacher helping another one out." As partners and facilitators, faculty advisors prefer to stress a personal and caring dimension of the faculty advising role. According to Sarah, "I help them become more independent in their teaching practice . . . I hold up mirrors for student teachers, for them to see what they're doing . . . it's really a supportive role." Gerald described his role in a similar fashion. "I am the advocate for the student teacher. If student teachers can't rely on me for whatever they need, then they don't have anyone else to go to." Gerald's comment is interesting because cooperating teachers are typically identified in the literature as being the most supportive person in the practicum. Indeed, all faculty advisors perceived themselves as being at least as important as cooperating teachers in supporting student teachers' learning to teach.

Ways to Support

In the belief that their support and encouragement will assist student teachers in the transition from student

to beginning teacher, faculty advisors support student teachers in a number of ways. For some, like Frank,

> it usually comes down to situations when they teach a lesson and things don't go as they planned. I get them to think about what really went wrong. I go over the lesson and I point out things that were problematic and I focus their thinking on different issues that resulted in a failed lesson. This is especially important when the cooperating teacher sees things differently than the student teacher or myself.

The advocacy role is taken very seriously by faculty advisors, in part, perhaps because they are cognizant of the sometimes problematic nature of the relationship between cooperating teacher and student teacher. They commonly point to potentially divisive issues such as personality conflicts, scheduling problems, and unsupportive cooperating teachers. Being an advocate involves looking out for the best interests of student teachers, and occasionally mediating between them and cooperating teachers.

Although it was sometimes difficult for faculty advisors to arrange meeting times when both cooperating teachers and student teachers could attend, it was during three-way debriefing sessions that faculty advisors provided clarification about the teacher education program

as well as specific feedback regarding student teacher performance levels. Anticipating the possible isolation and lack of support some beginning teachers will experience, faculty advisors want to provide strong support for their student teachers' initial teaching experiences. Lack of professional support is identified in the literature as a major reason cited by teachers for leaving the profession (Billingsley & Cross, 1991; Darling-Hammond, 1984; Gold & Roth, 1993). Comments from faculty advisors are consistent with Gold's (1996) findings concerning the need for professional support for student teachers:

> Beginning teachers need to develop the skill and understanding needed to acquire and to deliberate on their continually expanding knowledge base, to think critically and reflectively about their own practice, and to analyze how they impart the academic content to their students. They also must be assisted with evaluating their actions through the use of sound theory and research, developing the capacity to be reflective, evaluating themselves based on objective understanding, and learning how to handle the consequences of their actions. (p. 562)

In sum, faculty advisors provided two major types of support to student teachers: 1) pedagogical support that includes helping student teachers with knowledge, skills, and strategies that are necessary to be effective teachers; and 2) psychological support, the purpose of which is to

build the student teacher's self confidence and sense of efficacy.

Pedagogical versus psychological support.

During the initial phase of student teaching, faculty advisors anticipated that psychological support of student teachers would be most important, believing that they were already competent in planning lessons and units. They discovered, however, that their initial expectations for student teachers were inaccurate, leading them to give more instructionally-related support than they had thought necessary. Frank, for example, noted:

> I was surprised to find out that the very student teachers I taught on campus, the ones with which I spent a great deal of time on lesson planning were in fact having problems. How could I not have noticed that they didn't fully understand lesson and unit planning?

Throughout the practicum, faculty advisors provided ongoing psychological support, but they focused primarily on instructionally-related support. This type of support typically involved discussing with student teachers their lesson objectives, instructional strategies, and assessment techniques. It was clear from talking to faculty advisors that they felt personally responsible for the success or failure of their student teachers. This possibly "paternalistic" attitude can be linked to their role as

methods instructors. They introduce student teachers to subject matter content and pedagogy and willingly take responsibility for student teachers' achieving the related learning objectives.

Holding power and sharing it.

My findings reveal that faculty advisors are very interested in the general welfare of their student teachers. Their focus on a supportive role means that they are interested in the "total person," which may account for their sensitivity to the student teacher's feelings and concerns. Miller (1988) suggests that this type of support has a power dimension:

> Women have been most comfortable using . . . their power if [they] believe they are using [power] in the service of others. . . . In caretaking and mutuality, one major component is acting and interacting to foster the growth of another on many levels--emotionally, psychologically, and intellectually. I believe this is a very powerful thing to do, and women have been doing it for all time, but no one is accustomed to including such effective action within the notion of power. (p. 3)

Certainly the faculty advisors in my study who were somewhat uncomfortable about acknowledging and talking about power were not thinking of power in this way. To some degree, they viewed themselves as powerless because they

felt constrained by institutional expectations for their student teachers in the practicum. (This theme was explained in Chapter 3)

Faculty advisors talked about the importance of creating a positive and friendly environment in which student teachers would feel confident enough to take risks in planning lessons.

By virtue of the fact that these faculty advisors are more interested in mutuality and support, they tended to reject a "top-down" approach to leadership when fulfilling the faculty advising role. Instead, they appeared to believe in a style of leadership whereby everyone is encouraged to participate. Dunlap and Goldman (1991) suggest, "Power as a system of facilitation is characterized by mutuality and synergy within the structured organizational context of public schools" (p. 6). For Robertson (1992), "Women's leadership styles are expressed through communication patterns which are more typical of collegial than autocratic endeavors" (p. 52).

Actually cooperating teachers, faculty advisors, and student teachers, in a variety of ways, do not have equal power. Faculty advisors seem to believe that to be an authority means to put down others. Petra Munro, a university supervisor of student teachers, is an illustration of the linking of authority with the fear of "putting down." Munro (1991) asked, "What right do I have to impose my values on these student teachers? and How

could they freely construct their own knowledge when I was modeling and directing them to attain a certain consciousness (1991, pp. 81-82)?" Munro concluded that being an authority did not mean she was dominating her student teachers. Instead, she recognized that using her expertise to engage them in thinking for themselves did just the opposite--it broadened their perspectives on the practicum experience.

Evaluation of Practicum Achievement: The Second Hat

Faculty advisors are remarkably consistent in their views and perceptions concerning their role in the practicum. They all recognize that the role involves evaluation; and they all expressed some uneasiness about evaluating student teachers.

Problems Associated with Being the Evaluator

The challenges that Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald encountered in making the transition from "mentor" to "evaluator" will be discussed next.

Switching from mentor to judge.

It is clear from their comments that they believe one of their responsibilities is to "screen" prospective teachers. Brenda, a first year faculty advisor, sums it up this way:

> I take the gatekeeper role very seriously, even though I feel that I also have a great responsibility as an advocate to my student teachers. When push comes to shove, I'm

> obligated to put the needs of the profession ahead of the needs of the student teacher. Sometimes, it's a tough position to be in.

Faculty advisors expect their student teachers to be successful in the practicum. When they are not successful, the gatekeeping role is a common source of stress. On the one hand, faculty advisors want to ensure that student teachers experience an optimal practicum placement but on the other hand, they acknowledge that not all student teachers will be equally successful. For faculty advisors like Frank,

> student teachers can meet all the criteria on a checklist, but there is still something missing that is absolutely central to being an effective teacher. When a student teacher has satisfied the requirements of the Faculty of Education, it is not necessarily the same thing as saying that the student teacher has the professional qualities to become a teacher.

This tension, the tension between the Faculty of Education's criteria and advisors' personal and professional expectations for beginning teachers is a constant source of stress. Other faculty advisors, like Sarah, compared evaluating elementary pupils and student teachers:

> It's one thing working with an eight year old who is struggling, because the following year

> I might be teaching them again in a grade 3/4 split. When I'm working with children, there is plenty of time for evaluation. It's different with student teachers because they have to be able to teach now!

Striking a fair standard of performance.

The pressure on student teachers to perform as "effective" teachers at the outset of their practicum was a common concern among faculty advisors. Faculty advisors described the first five years of their teaching careers as a time when they learned and refined their teaching practice, and to expect student teachers to be fully competent after a one year program was in their words, "ridiculous." They also pointed out that having a surplus of qualified teachers in the province means that school districts can be very discriminating in their hiring practices.

Faculty advisors expected student teachers to display characteristics that they associate with good teaching including an open-mindedness to teaching and learning, the ability to accept constructive criticism about their performances, a thorough understanding of their subject areas, and the ability to develop trust and rapport with pupils. Faculty advisors said they were very disappointed when student teachers did not live up to these basic expectations. Gerald, for example, remembered his relationship with a unsuccessful student teacher:

> I had a student teacher who ended up withdrawing from the program. This person should not have been in the classroom in the first place. He didn't do the work, and he didn't get along with the children. His students were bored, which led to problems.

Frank also described his experiences with a weak student teacher:

> Right from the beginning, I had a feeling that there was going to be a problem. The student teacher had no rapport with his pupils. Also, he was weak in planning lessons and units. To make a long story short, I spent incredible amounts of time with him, showing him how to go about organizing lessons. One day, for example, I sat with him for over three hours. I felt like I was working a lot harder than he was. He didn't improve and after a while his cooperating teachers and myself recommended to him that he withdraw from the program. He reluctantly accepted our recommendation.

Having common and realistic standards with cooperating teachers is sometimes problematic. This will be discussed at greater length later in this chapter.

Facing failure.

Because faculty advisors preferred to think of themselves as supportive, they found it very stressful when

they felt they had no other choice but to fail a student teacher. Instead, they preferred student teachers to withdraw from the program of their own accord. Sarah sums up her feelings this way, "I wanted the student teacher to make the decision herself. I can't take the responsibility for her life decisions, but I did the right thing in being honest with her." Some faculty advisors expressed concern and frustration when they passed student teachers whom they characterized as minimally satisfactory. Frank remembered, "I felt that I was dishonest because the student teacher passed the practicum. I had no basis on which to fail him because he met the criteria. I made my concerns clear, however, in the final report I wrote." Faculty advisors typically measured the student teacher's performance by asking the question: "Would I want my children taught by this person?" For faculty advisors, having the dual responsibility of helper and evaluator sometimes creates problems in establishing a close relationship with student teachers. The evaluative function that faculty advisors are expected to perform may lead some student teachers to tell advisors what they think they want to hear (Badali, 1994) rather than reflecting on their personal practice in meaningful ways. Gerald recalled,

> the student teacher was telling me about how he felt about the lesson I had just seen him teach. He told me he had spent a great deal of time thinking about his objectives for the lesson

> and he was a little disappointed when the lesson did not work as well as he had expected. The longer we talked, it was pretty obvious that he didn't really understand the implications of his choice of instructional strategies. I'm not sure what he was reflecting on because there was no evidence of it in his teaching. He didn't see the reasons why the lesson was less successful than he hoped.

Without exception, faculty advisors defined their role in supportive terms while simultaneously acknowledging the evaluative responsibility expected of them by the university.

There are two areas of concern for faculty advisors when evaluating student teachers. First, faculty advisors are uncomfortable in being perceived as experts--as authorities on teaching. Experts have not necessarily stopped learning; indeed, they are likely to be continuous learners. They emphasized the tremendous opportunities for personal and professional growth available to them on a daily basis when they work with student teachers. The second reason for faculty advisors expressing uneasiness about evaluating student teachers is their discomfort with violating their own conceptions of their roles. Faculty advisors did not want to "put down" student teachers because to do so challenged their vision of mutuality and support. They really confirm student expectations when they

are evaluators. While participants in the practicum are expected to function in a cooperative fashion, the relationship is often transformed by the diverse expectations that each person brings to the practicum. A realistic role description in the current program includes evaluation, so to describe the role otherwise is likely to create dissonance.

Working with a diversity of cooperating teachers.

Another sub-theme that emerged from faculty advisors' descriptions of their evaluative role was the significance of their influence as contrasted to that of cooperating teachers. While some studies (Bennie, 1964; Boschee et al., 1978; Friebus, 1977; Griffen et al., 1983) show that faculty advisors have a significant influence over student teachers, other studies (Koehler, 1984; Yee, 1969; Zimpher et al., 1980) indicate that cooperating teachers have the major influence on student teachers. Faculty advisors who participated in this study described two distinct types of cooperating teachers. The first type of cooperating teacher volunteers out of a sense of professional responsibility. Gerald noted, "These were people who typically were prepared to spend significant amounts of time with student teachers in the hope of making them effective beginning teachers." For Frank, "I've worked with wonderfully committed cooperating teachers. They give so much of themselves to their student teachers. Their

commitment is unquestionable. These are people who are usually motivated to give something back to the teaching profession." The second type of cooperating teacher, according to faculty advisors, is often conscripted by administrative or department personnel. Because these cooperating teachers are not necessarily committed to the role, problems sometimes result for their student teachers. This is a sub-theme of evaluation in that faculty advisors say it is necessary to perform their role differently with "conscripted" cooperating teachers. They are concerned that these types of cooperating teachers are less likely to provide the supportive feedback that student teachers expect. I wish to move beyond discussing committed versus non-committed cooperating teachers. Faculty advisors in this study acknowledge a variety of shortcomings in the cooperating teachers with whom they worked. Sarah, for example noted, "Most cooperating teachers have not had any formal preparation for their role. They learn their role as they go along through trial and error, or mostly from copying what happened to them when they, themselves, were student teachers."

Faculty advisors pointed out other problems such as cooperating teachers' incompetence and therefore poor planning. Gerald observed:

> There are situations where cooperating teachers had low expectations for student teachers. As well,

> their teaching practice is far from ideal. This is a problem because the student teacher sees their cooperating teacher teach in a certain way, and think it's okay for them too. That can be a real problem.

Frank was frustrated by this type of situation:

> We can spend a great deal of time working with student teachers to help them to understand what's involved in being an effective teacher but it can be totally negated by the practice that they observe from their cooperating teacher.

Brenda described her feelings in a similar fashion:

> I think that the amount of learning that happens on the practicum varies, depending on the faculty advisor and the cooperating teacher. The practicum is not necessarily educative, and in some situations, student teachers are learning things that are detrimental to their development as teachers.

Indeed, as Brenda pointed out, all participants in the practicum triad should be held accountable for their actions. "The cooperating teacher is the only person in the triad relationship that is not formally evaluated. I think this is rather odd."

Faculty advisors reported being frustrated in working with less than ideal cooperating teachers. Frank criticized

the assumption that

> first rate teachers end up working with student teachers and that we never use people who are second rate. This assumption gives us a very limited view of the world because it starts to look like all our student teachers work with first rate cooperating teachers and that is simply not true.

Although faculty advisors acknowledge that being an excellent teacher is an important ingredient in being a cooperating teacher, that in itself is not enough to carry out the role in a thoughtful manner. Gerald's comments are similar to what the others said, "Some people are really good teachers but they are not good cooperating teachers because they don't know how to let go of their class and stand back in order to let the student teacher take over."

Complicating the matter still further is the fact that some cooperating teachers are inexperienced themselves. Although most cooperating teachers in whose classes the faculty advisors in this study worked had extensive teaching experience, they reported working with some cooperating teachers with only one year of teaching experience. As a result of these concerns, faculty advisors favored formal requirements for cooperating teachers. They most frequently suggested mandatory student teacher supervision courses.

Finally, I wish to comment about the advocacy role performed by the faculty advisor. The most frequently mentioned problem by faculty advisors was personality clashes between student teacher and cooperating teacher. When problems of this nature surfaced, faculty advisors usually recommended the student teacher for another practicum placement. Frank commented:

> Sometimes cooperating teachers and student teachers don't match. I don't think there is any point banging your head against the wall for the entire practicum trying to make the relationship work. It's better to give the student teacher a positive experience because it can be really devastating for a student teacher if they have a bad placement.

Gerald described the potential for conflict from a recent experience with a cooperating teacher:

> The cooperating teacher was very much in control of her pupils and [she] treated the student teacher more like a high school pupil than like a student teacher. The cooperating teacher basically insisted that the student teacher use her teaching methodology all the time. It was clear to me that the student teacher was not going to get much opportunity to try new ideas. A role shift of sorts occurs.

Having previously played the role of cooperating teacher, faculty advisors had memories of the cooperating teacher-student teacher relationship and felt more distant, like an "outsider" or a "third wheel." Perhaps it is more difficult to assume this role when one has been a recent cooperating teacher. The point I want to stress is that the faculty advisor-student teacher relationship is different from the student teacher-cooperating teacher relationship, a role that all seconded teachers had previously fulfilled.

Chapter Summary

Seconded teachers, as faculty advisors, are torn between being a "mentor" or "coach" and "evaluator." During the practicum, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald adopted various communication and leadership styles in the hope of engaging student teachers in their own learning. You will recall that as university instructors they were reluctant to give student teachers "recipes." When working with student teachers in schools, they adopted a similar philosophy. In an effort to make all participants aware of practicum expectations, they found themselves having to defend university policies with which they sometimes did not agree.

The lack of clear goals, roles, and responsibilities hinders teacher education programs in general, but more specifically hampers the effectiveness of the triad relationship. During student teaching, a major focus is on supervision; however, the potential to support student

teachers may not be met due to problems of communication and description of roles and responsibilities of student teachers, cooperating teachers, and faculty advisors.

CHAPTER 6 - MAKING SENSE OF REFLECTION: CATALYSTS AND CONTENT

This chapter is an analysis of the shared reflections of the participants in this study. In their roles as university instructors and faculty advisors, Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald are called upon to be reflective in their interactions with student teachers. In other words, being reflective about their classroom practice is an important part of their role as seconded teachers. Not only reflective content (checking foundations of one's beliefs and practice, improving planning skills, and validating intuitive decisions), but also catalysts for reflection are identified and discussed.

Although a number of teacher education programs encourage reflective practice among student teachers (Elliott, 1991; Knowles, Cole, & Presswood, 1994; Wells, 1994; Zeichner & Liston, 1987), there is little inquiry into the reflective practice of teacher educators (Brause & Mayher, 1991; Dana & Floyd, 1994; Heald-Taylor, Neate, Innerd, & Shantz, 1996; Valli, 1990). The inclusion of the reflective practice of teacher educators is a more recent development; indeed perhaps it was assumed teacher educators would be inherently reflective. Also there is little emphasis on the shared aspect of reflection, that is reflection as stimulated by others, be they students, colleagues, mentors or supervisors. If, however, teachers, when they inquire into their profession and practice as

teachers, become "owners of their own knowledge" (Chetcuti, 1992), it is a truly central component in learning to teach.

Some Approaches to Reflection

An ample literature exists around the concept of teacher reflection. The notion can be traced to Dewey's (1933) definition of reflective teaching as "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it" (p. 7). Although Dewey's work has remained influential, the resurgence of interest in teachers as reflective practitioners can be traced more recently to the writing of Schon (1983, 1987), who argued that the majority of teachers' learning results from ongoing action and reflection on their daily problems. According to Schon (1983), reflective practitioners analyze their taken-for-granted practices by being thoughtful about their implicit actions. Through the reflective process, understandings are surfaced, analyzed, and restructured leading to future action (Schon, 1983). While early views of how knowledge informs teaching and learning assumed that knowledge originates from research, Schon (1987) moved beyond this "technical rational approach" because it ignored the experiential knowledge developed by practitioners in educational settings.

There are many other perspectives on reflective teaching reported in the literature. Research on teacher

thought processes (Clarke & Peterson, 1986), for example, sought to inform teacher educators, not about what knowledge teachers should have, but instead about the kinds of knowledge teachers can utilize in their practice. Grimmett and MacKinnon (1992) reviewed the literature that characterized teaching as craft. They suggested that Shulman's (1987) conception of pedagogical content knowledge is suitable to a conception of craft knowledge because it is rooted in the experience of practice. Grimmett and MacKinnon, however, argued for an extension of Shulman's claims to a learner knowledge which they define in the following manner:

> Whereas pedagogical content knowledge concerns itself with teachers' representations of subject matter content in terms of how it might be effectively taught, pedagogical learner knowledge revolves around procedural ways in which teachers deal rigorously and supportively with learners. Though the "maxims" of craft knowledge are useful in guiding practice, they cannot replace the role of experience in the *development* of craft. Thus, pedagogical learner knowledge can be defined as *pedagogical procedural information useful in enhancing learner-focused learning in the dailiness of classroom action.* (p. 387)

Clearly, one of the ways that craft knowledge is integrated into teacher preparation programs is through the contributions of seconded teachers as instructors and faculty advisors.

Munby (1987) and Munby and Russell (1991) explored metaphors for teaching when they described their work as teachers. Louden (1991) investigated personal aspects of teaching and decision making. He found that teachers reflected on personal and problematic concerns more than on technical or critical issues. Another commonly occurring reflective activity is dialogue with other practitioners. The benefit of teacher dialogue (Gitlin, 1990; Little, 1986) has been studied in school settings, but it has been ignored in teacher education.

As teacher educators, seconded teachers are guided by personal frames of reference which are rooted in their day-to-day experiences as classroom teachers. Frames of reference include attitudes and beliefs about various issues such as curriculum goals, processes of learning, visions of good and bad teaching, collegial relationships and notions of school community. Taken together, these frames of reference constitute a type of theory, a theory that is constructed from interpretations of past classroom events. The nature of teachers' work dictates that a significant number of theories, commonly referred to as implicit theories (see Marland, 1995) are tacitly held by practitioners. The underlying assumption of implicit

theories is that teachers, through them, will be in a better position to understand what they do, thus becoming more effective teachers.

The avenues of reflection that have just been outlined are useful in understanding how seconded teachers interact with student teachers as both instructors and faculty advisors. Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald began with the assumption that one of the best ways of learning how to teach is to "problematize the act of teaching." Whenever possible, they presented to student teachers personal scenarios and vignettes of practice, products of their reflections. Their reflection, however, benefited not only student teachers. As well, seconded teachers themselves developed a clearer understanding of their previous classroom practice. The key point I wish to emphasize is that seconded teachers viewed the activity of reflection as professional development.

Before I describe catalysts for seconded teachers' reflection, I want to point out that the role of teachers in their own professional development has undergone some profound changes. Professional development is no longer seen as something done to teachers but as something that teachers can do for themselves. The seconded teachers who participated in this study made a conscious effort to share their insights about teaching not only with student teachers but also with other seconded teachers, cooperating teachers, and university faculty.

Springboards to Reflection

Seconded teachers believe that reflection is an essential part of teachers' professional growth and development. Therefore, as seconded teachers, they attempt to model good reflective practice for student teachers. In part, this means helping prospective candidates to "think like teachers." In the first part of this chapter, I outline two factors that trigger seconded teachers' reflection on their practice as classroom teachers and teacher educators: (1) teaching university courses, and (2) watching others teach.

Teaching University Courses: A Refresher Course

The seconded teachers who participated in this study described their time at the university as "revitalizing," and "intellectually stimulating," as well as "professionally rewarding." They linked reflection to notions of professional development. For Sarah, having the time to be thoughtful about her practice meant:

> I'm more focused because I'm forced to think about what I'm doing, and why I'm doing it. I'm verbalizing my practice for my student teachers. This is a valuable experience and one that I think will stay with me for a long time.

At its simplest, seconded teachers noted that it was impossible for them to teach courses and interact with student teachers without reflecting.

Planning.

The act of planning to teach, they said, required them to think about and articulate their practice. Seconded teachers prepared to teach their classes in a number of ways. For example, they read textbooks, researched articles, attended department meetings, and listened to guest speakers. In remembering a methods class she taught, Brenda said:

> When I prepared my lessons, I would sort through the textbook looking for ideas. I was struck by the similarity of my experiences with what was being portrayed in the text. As I gained confidence, I relied more and more on my own experiences in deciding what to present to student teachers. I used the textbook, but mainly to satisfy those student teachers who needed a crutch.

Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald's comments suggest that they devoted a significant portion of their day preparing for their classes. It was common for them to say that they spent three hours in preparation for every one hour of class time.

Frank's experience was similar to Brenda's. "It felt good to see myself in the research literature. It boosted my confidence. I came to realize that a lot of the research is just of bunch of teacher's stories." What is important, however, is that a person must first be in a position to

reflect. What I mean to say is that reflection does not randomly occur. Instead, it is a deliberative process of thoughtfulness. It is important to note that seconded teachers are unable to sustain a reflective disposition after they return to their classroom communities. Gerald noted:

> It's not that I am just too busy to engage in reflective practice but I think it has more to do with my colleagues. I don't want to sound overly harsh but they don't seem to be very interested in discussing their teaching practices. They're more focused on things like workloads, and dealing with difficult parents and children. Being at the university gave me a real appreciation about how important reflection can be, and yet, here I am. It seems like a distant memory.

The act of planning became somewhat easier for teachers in the second year of secondment. After adjusting to the tempo and workload of their university appointments, they reported feeling less stress and anxiety.

Selecting course materials.

As I mentioned at the outset, course materials are a catalyst for reflection. Case studies, for example, were used by all seconded teachers who taught the Principles of Teaching course, a required foundational course for all elementary and secondary student teachers. One of the

things that seconded teachers said they really liked about using case studies was that they recognized themselves in the cases. They thought that a case-based approach was a good method to expose student teachers to real life classroom dilemmas. As Gerald noted, "Cases point student teachers in the right direction. They are asked to consider complex problems from multiple perspectives. This helps them when they are confronted with similar situations during their practicum."

According to Brenda, textbook materials compliment case studies. "I look through the textbook and I say to myself, I do that, that, and, that." Frank also attempted to model good practice for his student teachers. "It's interesting teaching a course when you are dealing with both the cognitive level and the metacognitive level in trying to model for them and instructing them in how to do it in the classroom." Gerald admitted that he was not accustomed to thinking about his practice in such detail:

> I was looking at a textbook and I remembered what the author was talking about. Yes, that was me. I know how to do things because things that worked stayed with me and I would go back to that so it becomes natural. It was like riding a bike. For the last twenty years, I probably wasn't consciously aware of what I was doing, now I consciously look for the connections.

Recognizing clear connections between their theory and practice bolstered seconded teachers' confidence as teachers and teacher educators.

Validating self-identity.

Clearly, seconded teachers' identity was validated when they recognized themselves in the research literature. Sarah, for example, recalled how she felt after previewing an article she had assigned to student teachers in her methods class. "Now that I'm re-reading the literature in my subject area, I see that what I do is proven by research, that what I do does in fact work." Sarah, like the other seconded teachers, said that being more confident would make her a more effective teacher. Frank described his secondment as a "refresher course" on teaching:

> I felt much sharper after being introduced to terms and ways of thinking that were new to me. I loved it! I was somewhat dazzled by all the new thinking. I also remember feeling a little bad that I didn't know the current research.

Although acknowledging that he was "out of touch" with current research on teaching, Frank did not view this as a problem. "Since coming to the university, I've read vast amounts of material. This is something I haven't done for a long time. Most teachers do not read very much. I feel like I've made up for lost time." He went on to make the analogy, "When I'm teaching in the schools I'm learning 5%

and working 95% of the time. As a seconded teacher, it's a 50-50 proposition between learning and teaching. This is why I enjoy it so much."

Next, I turn my attention to the second factor that triggers seconded teachers' reflection on their practice.

Watching Others Teach

The secondment experience gave each of these teachers opportunities to reflect on their own practice, viewing it from different perspectives, and comparing themselves to other experienced teachers. The teaching profession has commonly been characterized as a profession whereby teachers work in isolation from one another (Lortie, 1975; Rosenholtz, 1989). We know that school cultures do not promote teacher reflection.

Observing colleagues as professional development.

The seconded teachers who participated in this study embraced the opportunity to observe both student teachers and cooperating teachers, as a personal form of professional development. Sarah lamented the fact that teachers rarely observe their colleagues in classroom settings:

> Ideally, classroom teachers should be in each other's classrooms all the time but the reality is that doesn't happen. I think that's the best kind of professional development there is. I've really benefited from watching other people teach because I've been in my

> classroom alone for a number of years. It's good to talk about teaching in a real context. I hardly ever have conversations with colleagues about teaching. It's a sad state of affairs but there isn't time in a typical day.

Similarly, Brenda said:

> It's like a 'helicopter vision,' when you get up above and hover and see everything. The fact that I've gone into various schools has given me the opportunity to work with different people in various subject areas. It has been valuable talking to both beginning and seasoned teachers. The experience has been very rewarding.

Gerald expressed a similar view. "If every teacher had the opportunity to watch someone else teach, I think we would have a much richer profession." Beyond this, McCullough and Mintz (1992) suggest that teacher education programs need to focus on giving student teachers opportunities to not only practice reflectivity but also to observe it in experienced teachers.

<u>Conferencing with student teachers.</u>

Observation alone, however, does not necessarily contribute to professional development. One might observe failures. The chance to discuss what happened and why an approach was taken are key.

While seconded teachers described the benefits of observing other teachers "in action," they were disappointed with non-communicative cooperating teachers who did not display a "reflective disposition." This is interesting because they acknowledged that when they were cooperating teachers, they also had difficulty finding the time to be reflective. Nevertheless, seconded teachers expected cooperating teachers to demonstrate a reflective disposition and to talk about their teaching and roles as teacher educators. In this regard, Gerald noted:

> I worked with some cooperating teachers who were either not 'great role models' or they were too busy to do a good job supporting the student teacher. They didn't seem to get very much out of the experience. I sometimes wondered why they were cooperating teachers in the first place.

Perhaps Gerald's propensity to be reflective in his dealings with future student teachers has been enhanced.

Seconded teachers recognize the time commitment that cooperating teachers assume in being responsible for a student teacher. Problems can arise, however, if cooperating teachers do not demonstrate or communicate enough of their practice, in effect not repaying the student teacher labor.

Reflective Content

The most common theme emerging through the stories of Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald is that their work as seconded teachers caused them to examine the foundations of their own beliefs and practice.

Checking Foundations of One's Beliefs and Practice

Seconded teachers characterized secondment as the "best professional development" of their careers. Like the others, Frank defined his experiences as professionally rewarding. "It was the first time in my career that I had the time to reflect on my classroom teaching practice." In anticipation of returning to the school community, Frank said:

> I've learned a great deal about teaching since coming to the university. What I mean is that I now realize that I know a lot about teaching. I just hadn't thought about it before. It will be interesting to see how I teach when I return to my classroom.

Gerald was revitalized by secondment:

> I can't believe how much I've learned about some basic things. It's embarrassing. In a course like Principles of Teaching, there are issues that I haven't consciously thought about since I went through the program, things like writing clear objectives, and developing and sharing assessment and evaluation criteria with pupils. Maybe these

> things were in the back of my mind but they have been pushed to the forefront because I've had to teach them in my methods course. I've also learned from my student teachers. Sometimes I think that we, as teachers, get into a 'rut.' We need to consider alternative ways of thinking about things.

Brenda, too, acknowledged that secondment was a learning experience:

> I've learned a great deal. Secondment has taught me to really look at the different components of teaching. Before I came to the university I was prone to focus on the subject matter content of the courses I taught. This experience has forced me to examine many of the strategies I used as a teacher, things like how I planned, my goals, assessment techniques and so on. I haven't consciously thought about some of these things since my own teacher education program. That sounds awful, doesn't it? What I mean is that it's been useful sharing my beliefs about teaching with student teachers. It has made me sharper as a teacher because I'm more aware of other people's perspectives. I think I'm more willing to entertain other perspectives.

To some extent, seconded teachers felt indebted to student teachers because of the questions they asked.

Improving Planning Skills

In describing how his practice changed, Gerald indicated that he planned more meticulously than before:

> I'm certainly more thoughtful about planning and teaching and about how all the different aspects of teaching fit together. Planning and organizing the curriculum was a big part of my job as a methods instructor. Before I was seconded, I didn't think about planning issues very often. After the first few years of teaching, it just seems to come naturally. Much of what happened in my classroom just happened. Now I'm very conscious of my objectives, strategies, and assessment. I know I've changed my teaching.

This is not meant to suggest that classroom teachers are unreflective. The issue here has just as much to do with communication as with reflection. The two are intertwined. Part of the joy of secondment for Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald was being able to tell their stories, a situation that is uncommon in the school community.

Sharing experiences and personal stories with student teachers was viewed as a professional duty. In addition, it affirmed their identities as classroom teachers. Sarah acknowledged:

> It's been quite wonderful, quite dramatic because secondment has both validated my teaching experience and pushed me even more.

> It's made me feel that what I have to offer from my experience in teaching is important and valuable but it has also made me realize that these student teachers better have state of the art information as the best practice in my field.

Early on in her secondment, Brenda recognized the value of sharing her practical insights with prospective candidates:

> I think I've been very successful in sharing what I do as a teacher with student teachers. A lot of the things I did as a teacher, I did intuitively. I know they were the right things to do. That's my teaching style and I feel comfortable with it. I forgot about the theory years ago. Teaching courses that involve a lot of theory, however, has brought it back to the formalized level for me and I feel I'm better able to articulate it professionally than I was when working with children.

Seconded teachers' comments illustrate a personally-constructed sense of teaching. Over the last several years, there has been the recognition that a great deal can be learned from the wisdom of teachers themselves.

Inspiring Critical Approaches

Seconded teachers acknowledged the importance of developing a critical mindset, as illustrated particularly

in critiquing research versus reality, their student teaching experiences, and teacher education programs.

Critiquing research versus reality.

Teachers acknowledged the importance of theory in learning to teach, but they were somewhat frustrated when they read educational literature that contradicted their own experiences. Brenda, for example, worried about student teachers who might be prone to oversimplifying research findings:

> Sometimes I think researchers lead student teachers down the garden path. What they sometimes describe is not very accurate. For example, some of the things written about classroom management appear so straightforward but in fact, it is one of the most complicated aspects of teaching. Student teachers are not sure whom to believe. They read articles and textbooks but I suspect they rely on their own intuition and previous experiences. That's why the practicum is so important. I don't think that student teachers can ever be fully prepared in advance of the practicum. That's why the practicum is so important to their growth as teachers.

In an effort to minimize the sometimes difficult transition from student to beginning teacher, seconded teachers emphasized "practical strategies" that worked for them. In

some ways, this was problematic for seconded teachers because they, too, were in transition from being a teacher to being a teacher educator. Frank observed:

> I'm always reading things in my subject area when I'm in the secondary school and I look for ways to use the ideas. I try out suggestions for lessons and things; and I find it quite interesting. But when I read the same kinds of material as a methods instructor, it might still be interesting but now I'm interested in how I can take the idea and teach it to student teachers so that they can actually use it. I'm using the same material but looking at with a different slant.

In some ways, Frank's comments reflect his pedagogical content knowledge. Whereas Shulman talked about pedagogical content knowledge of teachers, there is yet to emerge a coherent literature of teacher educators' pedagogical content knowledge.

Critiquing one's own student teaching experiences.

Another theme among seconded teachers was that they remembered their own student teaching. Sarah, for example, described her teacher education program in less than glowing terms:

> I was very frustrated by my own teacher education program. I thought that most of

> it was useless. When I was a student teacher, I felt like I was treated like I wasn't very intelligent. For example, many of my methods instructors taught me like they taught their grade 3's. They gave me strategies but I wasn't satisfied. When I think about how I teach here, I'm teaching the way I wanted to be taught as a new teacher.

Frank, as well, criticized his initial teacher education program:

> It was 'mickey mouse.' Now I look at the program as a teacher educator. Some of my criticisms still hold. For example, I think there needs to be opportunities for depth and [critical] thinking. It doesn't make much sense to me if our goal is merely to make student teachers conform. We need a profession that can stand up to the critics. One of the ways to answer educational critics is to be critical ourselves about our practice.

Critiquing teacher education programs.

Seconded teachers also reflected on teacher education programs more generally. In critiquing the teacher education program, Sarah noted:

> It sounds obvious but we have to individualize the program. We have to find out who these student teachers are. We can't just have this program and do it to student teachers as if

> they are a homogeneous group of adults because they are not. This is one of the biggest problems of teacher education programs. I think there need to be programs within programs.

Gerald also felt the need to individualize programs when, for example, he recalled his initial impression of working with student teachers:

> A lot of what student teachers do in the classroom is a result of who they are as people. A lot of what they bring to the program is fantastic . . . I think the key is finding out who they are. We need to do more as institutions to find out who they are. It's amazing when you discover that you have people in your class with graduate degrees, as well as people who have fabulous life experiences. You have student teachers who have taught ESL in Japan, others have worked in Third World Countries, some are accomplished musicians, the list goes on. I think we have a very talented group of people. The key is to somehow recognize their unique talents so that they can be encouraged to make a positive contribution to the profession.

Frank, too, suggested, "We need to individualize the program and allow for differences and actually be glad that

we have such a diverse student teacher population. I don't think we acknowledge how diverse they really are."

Chapter Summary

Let me conclude by saying something about the differences between a "technical rational" approach to teacher education and reflective teacher education programs. A technical rational orientation is limiting because it focuses on the HOW of teaching rather than on the WHY of teaching which embodies a reflective component or stance.

Although some researchers like Kagan (1992) have suggested that teacher education programs should focus on skill development and leave reflective practice for experienced teachers, the seconded teachers who participated in this study suggested that student teachers are capable of reflecting on their emerging practice. Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald believe that helping prospective teachers develop a reflective disposition to teaching, and encouraging them to develop their own programs of professional development are key preparatory ingredients for a solid professional career. At its simplest, seconded teachers believe a major goal of teacher education programs should be to prepare reflective practitioners who are committed to continued professional growth.

CHAPTER 7 - RE-ENTERING THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Much has been written about the transition from student teaching to beginning teaching (Greene & Campbell, 1993; Sarason, 1993), but little research examines the experience of teachers moving from the classroom to the university and then back again to the classroom (DiPardo, 1993; Greene & Purvis, 1995; Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992). In this chapter, I present five major themes emerging from the data collected from seconded teachers: preparing for re-entry to the school community; returning to the school community; assessing the benefits of secondment; missing follow-up by the university and school districts; and dreaming of extending secondment.

Preparing for Re-Entry to the School Community

As seconded teachers neared the end of their university appointments, they prepared themselves to return to the school community. However, neither they nor their respective schools were the same as when they left to begin secondment. Frank, for example, referred to the impact of school district and provincial budget cuts on teachers' morale:

> The district is ripping the heart and soul out of the system. Budget cuts are demoralizing. I'm sure glad that I'm not there at the moment. It's going to be tough going back to a department that looks and operates differently than it did when I left just a short while ago.

> As much as I had some apprehension about coming to the university, I'm almost as apprehensive about going back because it's not a very good atmosphere at the moment.

Seconded teachers, like Frank, characterized their university appointment as positive, jokingly referring to it as a "vacation." He described his secondment as both exciting and intellectually stimulating. He felt, however, that it was time to return to what he referred to as the "real world."

One aspect of returning to the school community that worried seconded teachers was not knowing to which school they might be posted. Although they knew of this possibility when they began secondment, they had to deal with practical matters such as commuting distance from home to school, and adapting to unfamiliar students, parents, administrators, and staff. Worrying about these kinds of issues was exacerbated by having to go through their school district's posting process, something most of them had not done since early in their teaching careers. They were concerned that they did not have much control or say about where they might be posted after secondment.

Seconded teachers all believed that they should not have had to give up their previous teaching positions in the first place. Sarah described her experience:

> I was really frustrated when I re-applied to my district. Although I've always been an

> elementary teacher, the form asked me to indicate what subjects I wanted to teach, subjects like mathematics, science, history. This was obviously a form meant for secondary teachers. This really bothered me. For the first time, it occurred to me that perhaps I didn't fit into the system anymore.

In addition, Sarah had to compete against people with more seniority. According to Sarah:

> Many high profile district positions have disappeared. They have been eliminated and these people are going back into the classroom. The group I was competing against had twenty or more years of teaching experience, whereas, I had seven years experience. Because of the way the contract works regarding seniority, I was nervous.

Although Sarah acknowledged that the collective bargaining agreement protected her position, she would have preferred to see amendments to it to recognize the unique contribution that she and other seconded teachers make to teacher education. Sarah emphasized that her unique knowledge and special relationships served as integral links among the university, school, and professional communities. She felt that her experience and expertise should somehow be taken into consideration by her school district when deciding where she should be placed.

Seconded teachers wanted "fairer" treatment. They felt that the posting process should be revised to make better use of their knowledge, expertise, and skills. In sum, they describe their experiences of secondment as a resource the districts fail to utilize. Gerald recalled how he felt before he accepted his current posting:

> Not only are you back in the general pool but you're also at the end of the line. You don't lose seniority but you have to go by what's available. Teachers that are in the system get first choice. What is really interesting is that if I had returned to my former school, I would have been given a position that was impossible. I would have been really unhappy because I would have had absolutely no choice about which classes or grade level I would teach. It would have been like a beginning teacher coming into a district. In fact, that reminds me, a number of my student teachers would have had wonderful positions compared to what I would have had.

Gerald returned to a different school in his district after secondment. He echoed many of the concerns raised by Sarah. He was disappointed in his district's suspicion of his university appointment, the "surveillance dimension," as he jokingly referred to it. He was flabbergasted that his district wanted to "see" him teach again before considering him for district positions. "I haven't been in

the trenches for a while, they wanted to see how I perform. It's rather insulting when you think about it!" Other seconded teachers, however, displayed a rather matter-of-fact attitude about it all. Brenda, for whom re-entry was not so immediate, was not concerned about the posting process. "The system owes me a job but it remains to be seen where." She may become more increasingly concerned with the posting process closer to re-entry.

Early on in my discussions with seconded teachers, they indicated that they might consider positions other than regular teaching appointments. Frank, for example, said that he might consider an administrative position:

> There aren't clear pathways for you to follow when you've finished secondment. I'd like to go back to teaching grade 7, but I think I need to do something a little bit different, I need a challenge. I might apply for a vice-principalship.

Like Frank, Sarah said she might also consider an administrative position but was more interested in doing something related to teacher education. "I might apply for an administrative position. You would think that at the district level, they might want to have positions open for people returning from secondment to help with teacher development and professional development." Sarah wanted a position in which she could apply some of her ideas about reforming teacher education programs. The position that

Sarah eventually accepted resulted, in part, from the connections she made as a faculty advisor:

> The principal of the school where I was a faculty advisor was someone I used to teach with years ago. This person has seen me as a teacher, and has seen me operate as a faculty advisor. We re-established our relationship when I was faculty advising. At that point she said it was exciting what I was doing in my master's work. She told me that, when I came back into the district, she wanted me to work with her. She was really interested in my career. She called me about this position. There is a lot of freedom for me in this position. I did this intentionally. I sought out a position where I was going to have a little bit of control about what happens.

She admitted that her work as a faculty advisor showcased her talents to the principal. "The principal watched me as a faculty advisor, she saw me in a leadership role. She told me this is what I should do next." Sarah's comments suggest a feeling of some entitlement which is largely ignored by the districts, none of which seems to have a special policy for the re-entry of previously seconded teachers.

Returning to the School Community

Seconded teachers had mixed emotions when they returned to the school community. Even though they enjoyed secondment, teachers looked forward to renewing relationships with colleagues, parents, and pupils.

Back to Tight Schedules

When Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald began their university appointments, they thought that "university professors had it easy." According to Brenda,

> professors don't teach very much when compared to classroom teachers. That has always been a bit of a sore point with me. Before coming here, I thought their job was pretty "cushy." I guess I am beginning to appreciate that they do a lot of other things besides teach. I can't believe how much time they spend in meetings.

It did not take long for seconded teachers to appreciate the "freedom" and tempo of the university setting. Frank commented:

> For the first time in my career I was treated like a professional. I could take a two hour lunch if I wanted to, or I could go for a swim or a walk between classes. This was very liberating because I couldn't help but think how different my professional life was when I was in the classroom setting. There, I never had enough time to even eat my lunch. There was always

> some kind of interruption. I have to admit I really enjoy the freedom of being here at the university.

Brenda also enjoyed the freedom of the university setting. "I get to the university at 8:30 a.m. and I can sit in my office for forty-five minutes and go over my plans and do some reading. I walk in my classes feeling calm and refreshed." Sarah also compared her university and school experiences:

> When I arrived at my school classroom at 8 a.m., there's students dropping by, there's parents calling for me, I'm stopping fights in the hallway. It's chaos from the minute I walk in to when I leave. There's no quiet space.

Gerald, too, noticed the regimentation of the typical school day. "It was tough giving up the freedom that I had at the university. I really miss it, in that respect. The school schedule is a lot more confining."

<u>More Stress - Less Stress?</u>

Gerald admitted that a part of him had been looking forward to returning to a familiar environment and routines:

> Going back to teaching was a chance not to be under so much stress. Teaching is more routine and it won't be as stressful as secondment was. The routines of that job are not routine. Sometimes I was teaching from 4 to 7 p.m., and other times from 2 to 4 p.m.. Other days I was teaching

> from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and even still students were bringing me things. The emotional demands at the end of those days was physically draining. There is an element of calm that I've enjoyed since returning the classroom.

Nevertheless, Gerald, an experienced teacher, indicated that he encountered some difficulty when re-adjusting to teaching adolescents:

> I'm fairly organized and mature but I felt overwhelmed this year dealing with all the issues in education. If I felt overwhelmed at my age, with my experience, I can't imagine what it's like for student teachers and beginning teachers. I'm going to focus on my pupils, rather than worrying about extra responsibilities.

Tenuous Relations with Colleagues

I asked seconded teachers to speculate about any professional contributions they intended to make when they returned to the school community. Frank said that he did not want to "rock the boat" because he was sensitive to how his colleagues might react to his recent affiliation with the university. Frank predicted that it was going to be a time to slowly settle back into teaching:

> I don't want to intimidate my colleagues. I think I need to go into the school and be really quiet. I think it will be important to just spend time with

> my students. I'll make that my priority, because I don't want to isolate anybody or intimidate people.

Seconded teachers seem to want something, maybe recognition of their experience at the university but yet they back off and do not accept what might come.

Sarah, too, was concerned with the prospect of intimidating her colleagues:

> I'll have to be clear on what I will get involved with. Teachers in my school assume I know a lot about teaching. There are senior teachers whom I have a great deal of respect for, but I can't accept it when they say I know more about teaching than they ever will.

Even though Sarah was the one who got the recognition and encouragement to become a leader, she felt pressured by additional expectations placed on her by colleagues:

> People expect me to take on all these additional roles. I'll have to be very selective about what I agree to do, because I don't want to get to the point of where I was when I left the classroom, being overwhelmed and not having the time to think about what I was doing.

She went on to add, "I should be more positive about my return to teaching, but I'm not looking forward to it at all. Eventually I will get used to it, but it will be difficult."

Clearly, the teachers who participated in this study were aware that they might be perceived as "experts" and "outsiders" by existing school staff. In anticipation that this might be the case, seconded teachers chose to downplay their newly acquired insights about both teaching and the process of learning to teach. It is like a tax on whatever value secondment could contribute to the profession. Gerald, for example, noted that it was just easier to follow a path of least resistance. Gerald summed up what it was like for him when he returned to the school community:

> When I returned I tended to sit towards the back and observe what was going on. I didn't make much of an effort to support or contribute to the school because I didn't know them and they didn't know me. In some ways, I think they were a little suspicious of me because I was being identified as a university person. I thought this was a little ridiculous considering that I had many years of teaching service in the district. In fact, I had more than most of the teachers I now found myself working with. It was almost as if what I had done as a teacher before going to the university was diminished. No, not diminished, I should say almost forgotten. Well I can tell you, I haven't forgotten!

Falling Back Into Bad Habits

Over the course of the first three or four months of Gerald's return to classroom teaching, he wrestled with both his identity and with putting into practice the things he learned about teacher education as a faculty advisor and instructor. When I spoke with him in January, he was somewhat embarrassed that he had fallen short of his own expectations:

> I found it more difficult than I had anticipated. I found myself falling back into some of the types of teaching methods that really weren't the best and knowing it because I've been through this process of working with other teachers and student teachers. I would catch myself and think if someone was evaluating me, they would say that those are things you don't do but I did them. I didn't always have a very valid reason for picking a strategy. For example, it might be that a kid won't stop humming, or is making loud noises for too long and all of a sudden I raise my voice and say sharp things. And yet, I know better.

In reflecting about his university teaching experience, he pointed out how easy it was to talk to student teachers about the sorts of dilemmas they might encounter as teachers but he acknowledged that, even with his expertise, sometimes he did things of which he was not proud. Reverting to previous practice was a common occurrence

among seconded teachers, highlighting the immediacy with which teachers are forced to act. Reluctantly, Gerald noted, "I've gone back to doing things exactly like I was before because they work for me."

Assessing the Benefits of Secondment: Experienced Changes

The secondment experience gave each of these teachers opportunities to reflect on their own practice, viewing it from different perspectives and comparing themselves to other experienced teachers.

Raised Personal Standards of Performance

Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald expected to be more "effective" classroom teachers as a result of the university appointment. Brenda, for example, noted:

> I think it will take me less time to do what I was doing before, because it is clearer to me now. I have a better understanding of the planning process. Secondment has been like a refresher course. Being responsible for teaching courses has forced me to think about what I know about teaching.

Most of Brenda's new knowledge has come from reading and researching topics she has had to teach in her courses. In addition, she was more critical of her own performance:

> I have higher standards of what counts as good teaching. I expect a lot from my student teachers but I also expect a great deal from myself. I thought I was a very effective teacher

> but since coming to the university I have had the opportunity to think about the ways I can be a more effective teacher. I'm looking forward to adapting my practice when I return to the classroom setting.

Seconded teachers all reported that they had become more thoughtful and analytical about their teaching practice. Sarah said:

> I think my teaching will improve because now I am so aware of all the components of teaching. Observing student teachers and analyzing teaching. Because of this, I will be more analytical than I was in the past. Also, taking graduate courses simultaneously has had a big impact on my thinking. I was being forced by professors and classmates to clarify my assumptions and beliefs about teaching in a manner that I've never had to do before. I suspect that my experience as a seconded teacher has been different from the others.

A common theme running through seconded teachers' stories is the importance they attach to watching other people teach. The opportunity to observe student teachers and cooperating teachers during the practicum is important to their professional development. Working with student teachers and cooperating teachers is a catalyst for reflecting on their attitudes and beliefs about teaching.

Frank, in describing his interaction with student teachers and cooperating teachers in the practicum noted:

> I've learned some really good techniques on various components of teaching Shakespeare and poetry. I rarely get the opportunity to observe my colleagues in action. I always thought that the lack of opportunity in observing others is one of the things that hampers our professional growth.

Frank speculated that he might teach differently as a result of watching student teachers and cooperating teachers perform during the practicum:

> For the most part, I preferred to be a teacher who mainly used a direct approach. That's when I was most comfortable. But after seeing other approaches, I have to admit that maybe I should try something different. I really liked how student teachers used group work. Also, I think I will allow pupils to take more direct responsibility for their own learning. A professor friend and I have been talking about constructivist conceptions of teaching.

Seconded teachers expanded their "teaching repertoires" as a result of their secondment. They "picked up" ideas from watching student teachers and cooperating teachers during the practicum, as well as "borrowing" ideas

contained in student teachers' assignments. Brenda, in particular, "scrounged" for resources:

> I'm always looking for better resources, things I can use in my classroom. When I was in the classroom setting, I was always on the lookout for resources. As a university instructor, I'm still looking for these same types of resources, but instead of using them with pupils, I'm adapting them for student teachers. I find this to be an interesting process I've been going through. I'm still a teacher at heart but my audience and purpose has changed. I find myself looking at resources I've put together for my student teachers and thinking about ways I could use the stuff with my pupils when I return to the classroom. It's a win-win situation.

<u>Expanded Resources</u>

Before returning to the school community, seconded teachers expected to share new resources with colleagues. As Frank stated:

> I'm taking away from here a fairly rich library of stuff that I didn't come in with, much of which I think could be helpful to my colleagues. I'm certainly willing to share it and I hope they will be receptive.

There is no evidence in the data, however, that seconded teachers did share new resources with colleagues. The

reason, according to Gerald, "Everyone is just too busy. I talk to the other teachers in my department but I don't really know them very well. On occasion I've made resources available to them but we don't plan together or anything."

Increased Confidence

Seconded teachers all believed that they had become more confident because of their secondment. The source of their new confidence rests in the feeling of being "current" with regard to educational theory. Gerald had this to say:

> When I went back to the classroom I took all the things I had ordered in my mind about how to teach, the theory of it because it was a great chance to reflect, to read, to learn about reordering all the things I do in the classroom. Finding, in fact, that all the things I was doing were valid. There was a big jump in my confidence. I learned that theory is very important to understanding my practice.

Enhanced Professional Language

The language that seconded teachers used to describe their teaching is important in understanding the differences between school and university communities. Frank, for example, admitted that he did not possess a concise language about teaching, especially when talking about things like constructivism. Over the term of his university appointment, Frank recognized that he had

changed. "I can imagine that some of my colleagues may be somewhat intimidated by the language I might use to describe my teaching. Before coming here I would never have used words like epistemology and constructivism." Like Frank, Sarah acknowledged that she, too, talked differently about teaching because of her university appointment. An important dimension of the university experience for Sarah, however, was her life as a graduate student:

> I should not have to apologize to anyone for speaking in a concise language. Teaching is a specialized field, and it's about time that people recognized that teachers have a specialized language. I'm pretty sure, however, that many of my colleagues will be intimidated by my language, but I don't see why I should have to tone it down.

Sarah seems "hot and cold." At one time she worries about over extending herself; here she is forceful and "in their face."

Missing Follow-up by the University and School District

As seconded teachers neared the end of their university appointments, they indicated that they wished to maintain and somehow extend the professional relationships they had developed in their new roles. Overshadowing their desire to maintain links with the university, however, was the fact that there was no follow up by either the

university or the school district concerning their secondment.

Seconded teachers were frustrated by what they saw as a lack of opportunity to contribute to teacher education after their university appointments ended. Sadly, as Gerald pointed out:

> There is no guarantee that we will even work as cooperating teachers. The teachers in this school, for example, voted as a staff not to host any student teachers this year. This vote was taken before I was placed in this school, but here I am, an experienced teacher and teacher educator, and yet, there are virtually no teacher education opportunities available to me. I find this really distressing. I'm sure that I am not the only one feeling this way.

Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald were unanimous in their condemnation of the lack of follow up by the university. As Gerald observed:

> You would think that the university would like to get feedback on things we might suggest. After all, there were some things that could be improved. For example, I would like to see more formal support offered to beginning seconded teachers before they start their duties, things like coupling them with more experienced seconded teachers and full-time faculty.

In defending the poor follow-up by the university, Frank speculated that the high turn over in seconded teachers creates a condition in which the university becomes lazy about worrying about their concerns and recommendations for improving the seconded teacher role:

> Every year there are lots of new people hired. When I began my second year at the university, I remember sitting in the orientation meeting and looking around and thinking to myself that I didn't know very many people. What happened to all of those people from last year? I know that some of them returned to their school districts but, nevertheless, I was a little shocked to realize that I was now a veteran seconded teacher when compared to all those new people. I wasn't sure if I was supposed to take new people under my wing. I was certainly willing but I was also concerned about getting organized for teaching my own classes. I remember how hectic it was last year. That first semester is a real killer.

Brenda, Frank, Sarah, and Gerald reported having conversations with former seconded teachers before and after they returned to the school community. According to Frank, they, too, were disappointed in the lack of follow up by the university concerning their secondment:

> I can think of lots of former seconded teachers in the same situation. There is a continuing education program at this university, and what a cadre of people seconded teachers who have taught at the university and who have proven themselves in different courses and programs would be. Seconded teachers would be a really good group to work into some continuing programs back in the districts.

Frank's comment reveals a "here I am" stance. He wants the district to make use of his talents.

Seconded teachers were also critical of their school districts because they too did not appear to be interested in their secondment. Gerald described the reception he received when he returned to the school setting. "No one in my school district followed up on my secondment, no, no, no! I guess I'm sort of cynical but people get in their own little niche, they don't even know what questions to ask."

Feeling Cut Off

All seconded teachers viewed the university appointment as "fantastic professional development" and they wanted it to continue. Frank acknowledged, "There was no expectation by the school district as a consideration of granting secondment. It doesn't cost the district anything; the university pays my salary. It costs the university a lot more." Frank speculated that things could be different. What if formerly seconded teachers coordinated other

cooperating teachers? What if they acted as liaisons among faculty advisors, cooperating teachers, and student teachers? What if formerly seconded teachers were employed to teach foundations or methods courses on school sites?

Gerald described the lack of opportunity within his school district:

> I offered my services to the personnel office but people in that office are not really aware of the powerful experiences I had at the university. I offered my services, not to be paid for it. I said I would be happy to work with any of the special projects; I would be happy to do some inservice with enrolling teachers. I would be happy to start a project at my school if the district wanted. I could be the liaison person on staff. I didn't want any extra money or anything. I just wanted to extend and share some of the things I learned while at the university but they took no notice. I'm a regular teacher with normal duties.

It seems to be a "Who do you think you are?" attitude on the part of districts.

One of the reasons that seconded teachers were frustrated about the lack of follow up by the university and school districts was that they knew previously seconded teachers who experienced similar things. Frank joked that he should start a club for "recovering" seconded teachers,

a place where they could come together occasionally to talk about their experiences in light of the transition they make when returning to the classroom but also how they might better prepare and support those individuals who are about to embark on secondment for the first time.

Dreaming of Extending Secondment

Seconded teachers indicated that they would like to continue working with student teachers when they return to the school community. Obviously, the most common way for this to occur would be to again become cooperating teachers. What is important is that seconded teachers have been changed by the faculty advising role, in particular. Working as a faculty advisor has given them new insight into the often difficult adjustments that both student teachers and cooperating teachers make working together in the practicum.

In an effort to promote collaboration among the various participants in teacher education, seconded teachers made suggestions about ways to extend the role. Sarah, for example, suggested that it is an advantage to be a faculty advisor in the same district in which she teaches:

> I bring student teachers into the district as a faculty advisor. Then I have nothing to do with them. It doesn't have to be that way. After working with them for two years as a faculty advisor, the district might hire

> them as teachers-on-call. After I return to the district, they could spend one morning per week with me in my classroom, seeing what I do. We can build on the previous relationship. I would still be supporting them but in a different capacity.

It is not just seconded teachers who might wish to extend the relationship. According to Sarah, student teachers are also interested in maintaining some aspect of the faculty advisor-student teacher relationship:

> They would work with me one morning per week. Student teachers have suggested this to me. They want to be with me in my classroom. They're not seeing this relationship as over. They still want someone standing beside them . . . it's like another phase. It makes sense to me that they move from the practicum arrangement to some type of apprenticeship or way of being in the classroom without taking on the full responsibility.

Frank preferred to think of student teachers as "works in progress." He suggested that he would be ideally suited to working with first year teachers in a part-time capacity:

> A meeting would have to be called in school time, otherwise nobody will show up. The teachers would have to be released as part of a mentor program. I could act as a liaison in bringing together the different student teachers and cooperating teachers.

> My experience as a faculty advisor would be valuable in this regard. Secondment has given me a broad appreciation of the whole learning to teach process, and I think I am well situated to share what I know with the other key participants. When the practicum is on, maybe I could get these people together once or twice a month.

Even in districts where mentoring programs exist, difficulties remain in finding ways to extend the secondment role. As Sarah related:

> My district has a mentoring program but they're not going to release me to participate in it. Even though many people might like the idea, it will not come about because of financial reasons. Even though many educators talk about the importance of good teacher education programs and induction support, I think that most of the talk is just that; it's rhetoric. Are we ever going to get to the point where action replaces the rhetoric? We can't afford, as a profession, to keep on ignoring these kinds of issues. At some point, it is all going to come back and haunt us.

Sarah was referring to the financial constraints under which school districts find themselves operating.

In an effort to maximize skills, expertise, and knowledge acquired and refined during secondment, Sarah

suggested ways should be found to allow seconded teachers to go back and forth between the university and the school. She could think of no reason why secondment has to be a "one-shot deal." As an alternative, Sarah suggested:

> It would be wonderful to have the career path of teaching four years, then be seconded for a year or two. The continual going back and forth between the classroom and the university, the two feeding back into each other. I think that would keep me refreshed, challenged, and on top of things.

Another version suggested by Brenda would see seconded teachers maintain some of their teaching responsibilities at the university while simultaneously teaching children or youth in the school setting. Sarah also suggested:

> I would love to be a type of roving teacher. A teacher educator would come into a school and observe and go through the steps. It would be like re-visiting your practicum every five years. This would be an exciting position but I don't know where it exists.

Her comments reflect her desire to contribute to the professional preparation and maintenance of her colleagues, a responsibility that seconded teachers all took seriously. Sarah added, "I'm not interested in doing one-shot deals. I'm interested in living the life with teachers and entering into deep critical reflection by unpacking the

lesson and looking at it in a different way and reconstructing it."

Chapter Summary

There was a significant amount of frustration and resentment inherent in the comments of seconded teachers as they prepared to return to school districts. Most of their frustration was reserved for the posting process itself. On the one hand, seconded teachers wanted "special treatment," a recognition of their university appointments. On the other hand, however, when they returned to the school community they intentionally downplayed their expertise and "new knowledge about teaching." Their dreams of extending the secondment position were not realized.

CHAPTER 8 - CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The conclusions, discussion, and suggestions for further research that appear in this chapter are drawn from the experiences of the seventeen seconded teachers who participated in this study. This chapter is divided into five sections: conclusions emerging from the research questions, contributions to teacher education, reviewing the assumptions of the study, implications for teacher education, and suggestions for further research.

Conclusions Emerging From The Research Questions

Question One - What General Expectations Are Held As To Their Role Definition and Role Fulfillment By Teachers Seconded To University-Based Teacher Education?

In answer to the first research question, five general expectations emerged: being a role model, being a liaison between schools and the university, having input into practicum placements, experiencing an orientation program, and working with highly committed student teachers.

Expectations for being a role model.

Initially, seconded teachers constructed their roles as university instructors and faculty advisors based upon their own student teaching experiences, and from their work as cooperating teachers. They acted as role models when they attempted to demonstrate "effective" teaching practices and techniques. Teachers viewed a technique as effective if it had worked for them as classroom teachers.

They demonstrated their "favorite" techniques to student teachers, mainly in the methods classes they taught, and to a lesser extent in the Principles of Teaching course. These results are consistent with other studies. For example, Adams (1993) noted that seconded teachers took seriously the fact that they were role models and "facilitators of learning." Seconded teachers discovered, however, that demonstrating classroom techniques in the university setting was sometimes problematic. For example, seconded teachers complained about having to share classroom space with other university instructors. They missed having their own rooms in which they could display students' work and store supplies and other personal possessions.

Teachers had difficulty articulating their practice to student teachers before they went on practicum. The seconded teachers who participated in this study doubted that student teachers had a common frame of reference to understand classroom experiences. Seconded teachers were concerned that student teachers assessed their performance and the strategies they demonstrated from a "student" perspective, instead of trying to think "like a teacher." This issue is not new in teacher education and has been reported by other researchers (Feiman-Nemser & Featherstone, 1992; Lortie, 1975). Teachers described, for example, the chaos resulting from the first time they instructed student teachers about jigsaw cooperative strategies. In sum, seconded teachers re-adjusted their

expectations about student teacher dispositions towards learning and teaching, and about being more patient than they had thought necessary in assisting student teachers to identify the complexities of learning to teach.

Expectations for providing liaison between school and university.

As faculty advisors, seconded teachers performed an important liaison role between schools and the university. For example, they clarified program goals and expectations for cooperating teachers. A good illustration of this occurs when faculty advisors give cooperating teachers copies of their own methods course outlines. They found, however, that there was little time to exchange ideas and engage in meaningful dialogue about anything but the student teachers' performances. On occasion, faculty advisors attempted to "sell" the teacher education program to school administrators and cooperating teachers. This occurred when they found themselves working in unfamiliar schools, or when it was the first time the school had hosted student teachers. A seconded teacher might highlight the strengths of the teacher education program, explain structured course work as a good foundation for student teachers to build on during the practicum and note the emphasis on lesson and unit planning, English as a Second Language issues, and the integration of technology in all subject areas. This is consistent with reports that indicate seconded teachers need effective interpersonal

skills when working collaboratively with different individuals in the various educational communities (Adams, 1993). Other studies, (Beynon, Geddis, & Onslow, 1996; Friesen, 1996) highlighted the importance of nurturing collaborative partnerships between university-based teacher educators and cooperating teachers and other school personnel. The results of this study are consistent with these reports.

As a newcomer to the university community it is difficult to assume the role of faculty advisor. Previous studies on the supervision of student teachers by seconded teachers have shown that they act as important communication links, facilitators, consultants, and advisors (Maynes, McIntosh, & Wimmer, 1998). It takes time for an individual to understand program goals and university policies which are not always followed. For example, secondary student teachers are expected to begin "practice" teaching at 20% of a full teaching load, gradually building to 80% by the end of the practicum. As cooperating teachers, seconded teachers indicated that sometimes they had ignored that policy. As faculty advisors, they were sometimes drawn to follow the preference of cooperating teachers, thus putting student teachers in potentially awkward positions.

Seconded teachers expected to be a direct link between schools and the university. They believed they could narrow the gap between what they often described as the overly

theoretical nature of university-based teacher education and the practical reality of the schools, even though they sometimes acknowledged that they were "rusty" about theory. They indicated they could "pick up" the theory, as needed, and present it to student teachers. According to Ziechner (1990), student teachers are frequently preoccupied with "excessive realism." Seconded teachers, too, believe that the school classroom is the real world.

Expectations for having input into practicum placements.

Seconded teachers believe that cooperating teachers should be carefully selected and their performances monitored. Seconded teachers expected to have some input into practicum placements and were very critical of placing student teachers with cooperating teachers who were poor role models. If, at the conclusion of the first year of secondment, a seconded teacher brought his or her concerns to the practicum coordinator and the following year discovered that an individual whom they had labeled a "terrible cooperating teacher" had been assigned another student teacher, there appears to be reason for dismay.

Expectations for an orientation process.

Seconded teachers expected the Faculty of Education to take an active role in easing their transition from the classroom to the university. Specifically, they wanted information pertaining to teaching adults. Seconded teachers expected a thorough initial orientation program,

as well as ongoing support throughout the year. The necessity of a well organized orientation program for seconded teachers has been highlighted in other studies (Adams, 1993; Cornbleth & Ellsworth, 1994; Maynes, MCIntosh, & Wimmer, 1998).

Because they thought of universities as big institutions with ample budgets and resources, they also assumed that someone like a school vice principal would help them understand the "job" they were expected to perform. Needless to say, they were disappointed when they discovered there was no such person.

Expectations for relationships with full-time faculty.

Seconded teachers believe that collaboration among teachers improves teaching practice. Most of the seconded teachers, especially elementary people, indicated that they were used to planning and collaborating with other teachers. Before beginning secondment, teachers expected to find similar collaborative relationships at the university with full-time faculty. They did not anticipate that the most supportive relationships would be with other seconded teachers, rather than with full-time faculty. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Adams (1993) and Dawson (1996) who reported seconded teachers' concerns with "out of touch" full-time faculty, and the difficulty establishing meaningful professional relationships with professors.

Expectations of student teachers.

The previous five expectations are related to their own practice, whereas this one is related to the students with whom they worked. This study has demonstrated that teachers began secondment expecting all student teachers to be open-minded and enthusiastic learners. General student teacher characteristics have been reported elswhere in the literature (Britzman, 1983; Goodlad, 1990; Howey & Zimpher, 1996; Lanier & Little, 1986; RATE 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990). For the most part, seconded teachers enjoyed working with prospective candidates, but they were very disappointed and concerned that a minority of student teachers lacked initiative, determination, collegial mentality, and a caring disposition towards working with children and youths, all qualities that they said are important to being an effective teacher. It had not occurred to them before beginning secondment that some student teachers might not be particularly interested in working with elementary or secondary pupils, or even in teaching as a career. Seconded teachers expected student teachers to be fully committed.

Seconded teachers also expected student teachers to be risk-takers. As experienced cooperating teachers, they talked about some of the "great" student teachers they had worked with over the years. Inevitably, seconded teachers described student teachers who had displayed initiative, confidence, and a willingness to go "that extra mile for pupils." They expected cooperating teachers to be

supportive of student teachers, just like they said they had been as cooperating teachers.

Question Two - Do Seconded Teachers' Change Their Perceptions Of Their Roles During The Secondment Experience? If So, How Do These Perceptions Change?

In answer to the second question, it was possible to identify three areas where perceptions were modified: re-thinking methods courses, relating to student teachers, and evaluating student teachers' teaching performance.

Re-thinking methods courses.

The transition from classroom teacher to university-based teacher educator was more difficult and complex than teachers had anticipated. By the end of their secondment, teachers acknowledged that they had had almost no lasting impact on the program design or the content of teacher education. All they could say was that in their methods courses, they were successful in introducing the curriculum and some of the "best" techniques to engage pupils in learning. Previous studies about seconded teachers' contribution to preservice teacher education (e.g., Adams, 1993) have shown that seconded teachers define effective teaching as practice that is innovative, responsive, and responsible. This study has demonstrated that seconded teachers go beyond the technical and managerial aspect of teaching when defining and modeling classroom practice to student teachers. Floden, McDiarmid, and Wiemer (1989) and Katz and Raths (1982) reported that methods instructors

often failed to make explicit goals and desired outcomes of methods instruction. The results of this study have demonstrated that seconded teachers' goals for their courses are clearly related to the attributes they believe to be fundamental for competent beginning teaching. I am also saying that secondment, in some ways, confirmed their views about teacher education programs, that the most important parts are methods courses and the practicum, the same views, I suspect, they themselves held as student teachers.

Relating to student teachers.

Seconded teachers acknowledged that they had difficulty establishing and maintaining professional relationships with student teachers, contrary to their expectations. They wondered, sometimes, if they had had any lasting impact on the lives of student teachers. Part of the reason for their feeling this way was that they were unable to develop long-lasting relationships with student teachers. Courses last approximately 13 weeks, and every year a new group begins the program. Unless they happened to come into contact with former student teachers in their school districts, they had little knowledge of what happened to them. A number of studies have highlighted the importance of nurturing professional relationships with student teachers (Adams, 1993; Badali, 1994; Kagan, 1993; Zimpher, deVoss, & Nott, 1980). It is clear in this study that seconded teachers were involved to a lesser degree

with student teachers than they had been with students in their former classrooms.

<u>Evaluating student teachers' teaching performances.</u>

A number of studies have highlighted the complexities of evaluating student teachers' teaching performances (Guba, 1981; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Howey & Zimpher, 1989; McIntyre, Bird, & Fox, 1996; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1982). Earlier in this dissertation, I outlined some of the problems that seconded teachers associated with being an evaluator of student teachers' teaching performances. When they began secondment, teachers expected to perform a gatekeeping role, "weeding out" inappropriate teacher candidates. Cooper (1995) reported that gatekeeping is one of the major functions of teacher education programs, concluding that the possibility of disagreements between cooperating teachers and faculty advisors is quite real, particularly if poor communication has existed.

Seconded teachers' experiences as cooperating teachers had a profound impact on their attitudes. They reported working occasionally with very weak student teachers in the past as cooperating teachers; therefore, they considered it their duty to counsel some student teachers out of the program before it became too late. On a few occasions, they admitted that they felt guilty spending "too much time" with underachieving student teachers and having to "cheat" exemplary student teachers of the attention and support they deserved. In addition, they indicated that they

readjusted their expectations when they discovered that the university's standards were lower than theirs. Seconded teachers, then, perceived themselves as gatekeepers to the profession, but they felt undermined by the criteria established by the university.

Question Three - What Knowledge Of Learning To Teach Is Held By Seconded Teachers On Beginning Secondment?

In answer to the third question, seconded teachers emphasized to student teachers their own personal practical knowledge; that is, knowledge that they have acquired through working with elementary or secondary pupils. I argue that the seconded teachers' knowledge of learning to teach reflects a type of "clinical consciousness" (Freidson, 1970).

As previously outlined in the first chapter, seconded teachers possess practical knowledge about teaching and learning. The knowledge of teaching that they share with student teachers reflects their values, beliefs, and personal philosophies about teaching, views grounded in the world of practice. The identification of personal practical knowledge has been reported by other researchers (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987; Elbaz, 1983; Grimmett & MacKinnon, 1992). The results of this study are consistent with these reports. Seconded teachers consciously impart their knowledge of teaching to student teachers, in the courses they teach and when supervising student teachers on practicum. As university instructors, seconded teachers

focused student teachers on the processes involved in learning to teach, as well as on specific techniques associated with effective teaching.

This study has demonstrated that seconded teachers possess primarily a personal and practical orientation toward learning to teach. For example, as methods instructors, seconded teachers encourage student teachers to take responsibility for their own learning. Although they advocated and modeled specific technical skills, they focused student teachers on what they called the ambiguous and complex nature of teaching. Whenever possible, seconded teachers emphasized the "wisdom" of their classroom practice. The results of this study are consistent with Freidson's (1970) notion of "clinical consciousness."

Question Four - Do Seconded Teachers Change Their Perceptions Of Learning To Teach During Secondment? If So, How Do These Perceptions Change?

In answer to the fourth question, it was clear that seconded teachers' perceptions of learning to teach did not change during secondment. Instead, the experience served to affirm what they already believed is important about teaching and learning: open-mindedness, compassion, caring and acting ethically towards pupils, pedagogical content knowledge, and knowledge of the educational context. One can see this in some of their admissions that after returning to the classroom, they taught in much the same way as before. Secondment, then, was an opportunity for

teachers to refine their thinking, rather than to make revolutionary changes to their beliefs. These results are consistent with other studies. For example, Beynon (1996), Kagan, Dennis, Igou, Moore, and Sparks (1993), and Kagan, Freeman, Horton, and Roundtree (1993) found that the secondment experience gave teachers opportunities to reflect on their own practice, viewing it from different perspectives.

Contributions to Teacher Education

Overall, the themes that have emerged in this study point to five general central issues: the contrast between university and school cultures, strength of reflection on practice, seconded teachers' commitment to classroom teaching, seconded teachers' professional identities, and secondment as professional development. I am now moving beyond the research questions, taking a broader view of the relevant issues.

The Contrast Between University and School Cultures

Seconded teachers make clear distinctions between the university culture and the school culture. One of the major differences they identified was the workload and tempo of the average workday (Apple, 1986; Brookhart & Loadman, 1990; Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986). For most seconded teachers, the flexibility of the workday was a liberating experience. Even though they spent a great deal of time preparing for classes, they also had time to establish new professional relationships, attend lectures, and talk to

students and colleagues. Some teachers, however, missed the school-based community of support that they were used to as classroom teachers. As a result, some seconded teachers felt marginalized in the university setting. They were unsure as to which community they belonged. Contributing to this marginalization was the fact that for those seconded teachers used to working in collaborative relationships, actively seeking new professional working relationships was difficult in the much larger university.

Even though several cultures co-exist simultaneously on university campuses and by extension in faculties of education, teacher educators more or less agree that the ultimate goal of a teacher education program is to produce capable beginning teachers. Problems occur, however, because some components of teacher education programs are more valued than others. Seconded teachers, for instance, reflect the belief that knowledge of practice is what really counts. Some tenured, university-based teacher educators, however, may believe that practical experience alone is not enough to promote a critical and reflective understanding of the teaching experience. In Cornbleth and Ellsworth's (1994) study of the roles, relationships, and careers of clinical faculty members in university teacher education, they found that clinical teachers (seconded teachers) were often described as "helping," "assisting," and "playing a secondary role" to tenured faculty,

supporting the assumption that university-generated knowledge is superior to other forms of knowledge.

Strength of Reflection on Practice

The secondment experience provided teachers with opportunities to reflect on their own practice. By assuming new roles (Huberman, 1992) as university-based methods instructors in teacher education programs, seconded teachers understood more clearly their own teaching practice. Rather than being a career-altering experience, however, secondment was viewed as professional development, an opportunity to affirm what seconded teachers already knew, and a source of theoretical rationales for practice.

What is important for the present argument is that seconded teachers articulate their personal practical knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987; Elbaz, 1983; 1991) when they expose student teachers to the inherently complex and ambiguous nature of teaching and learning. Therefore, using seconded faculty to teach methods courses may be helpful in focusing students initially to "think like teachers," particularly about technical matters of instruction and management. It is in methods courses, in particular, that seconded teachers describe and model their values, beliefs, and personal philosophies directly to student teachers, often through the stories they tell.

Seconded Teachers' Commitment to Classroom Teaching

Seconded teachers constructed their role in terms of the student-teacher and seconded teacher relationship,

regardless of the setting. Evidence of this can be seen in the way seconded teachers describe their satisfaction with student teachers' performance, evoking the same kind of feeling they got when they watched their elementary or secondary students learn.

Seconded teachers were not seeking a career change. They viewed secondment as personal professional development and a renewal opportunity. As a result of the experience, seconded teachers expected to bring a fresh insight back to their classrooms, and to continue working with student teachers as cooperating teachers. They also expected to assume some additional teacher education duties.

Seconded Teachers' Professional Identities

Becoming full members of the university community was certainly problematic for the seconded teachers in this study. They developed professional relationships with other seconded teachers but not with full-time faculty. Gaining full membership in the teacher education community would probably have taken more time than is available and more intentionality than is planned within the context of the teacher education community. The results of this study are consistent with Dawson (1996) who argued that most faculty members remain outside any involvement with seconded teachers. Taking on the roles of a university instructor and faculty advisor was both professionally rewarding and problematic for the seconded teachers who participated in this study. Two dominant identities were observable in

seconded teachers: classroom teacher and graduate student. Each will be discussed separately.

Teacher identity.

Seconded teachers took from the university those viewpoints and orientations to practice that were congruent with previously held images of their work and that provided reinforcement and validation of their experiences. While they were receptive intellectually to the theories and skills presented at the university, they tended to more fully accept methods that had worked for them as teachers. By passing on to student teachers those methods, they reinforced a "clinical consciousness" (Freidson, 1970) and a personal practical orientation (Connelly & Clandinnin, 1987; Elbaz, 1983) toward teaching.

The foundation of seconded teachers' identities rests in the unique individual relationships that characterize their elementary and secondary teaching. As seconded teachers, they continue to derive satisfaction from watching their pupils, in this case student teachers, succeed but were somewhat frustrated by university institutional constraints.

We have seen, however, that seconded teachers' transition from the school to university community is sometimes difficult and they readily acknowledge their inexperience, vulnerability, and doubt. This was most apparent during the first semester of their appointments

when they sought support from unfamiliar university-based colleagues.

Seconded teachers had several coping strategies that were directly related to their personal dispositions and previous experiences, the most common being to seek support from friends and colleagues. Another coping strategy was compromise, whereby they controlled the tension between personal and institutional requirements, choosing, for example, to define themselves as mentors and colleagues, rather than as evaluators.

Graduate student identity.

Some seconded teachers are at the same time graduate students. Their identities are perhaps more likely to be shifting or in flux. They are more likely to have sought secondment, considered leaving classroom teaching, and thought about perhaps pursuing an academic career. They may therefore occasionally downplay their identities as classroom teachers especially when interacting with professors. When working with student teachers, however, they downplayed their graduate student identity, instead promoting themselves as experienced classroom teachers. At times, seconded teachers were somewhat frustrated as they balanced their university teaching and faculty advising with graduate studies.

As instructors and faculty advisors, they spent less time on the "technical" strategies of teaching and more time on the "social" or "critical" dimensions of teaching.

In their methods courses, for example, they discussed some of the moral and ethical aspects of teaching, as well as issues of professional development, issues that they were simultaneously investigating as graduate students.

In sum, seconded teachers maintained their identity as classroom teachers. Early on, they recognized that their greatest source of support was often other seconded teachers. After returning to the school community, seconded teachers referred to their university appointments as "dreamlike," often as a "vacation" from the rigors of classroom teaching.

Secondment as Professional Development

Teachers viewed secondment as professional development because they were forced to take on new roles and responsibilities (Yee, 1990). Taking on the seconded teacher role enabled experienced practitioners to revisit and renew their professional practice. I began this study believing that teachers need to be life-long learners (Smylie, 1995) and that secondment may provide teachers with opportunities for learning. Employing seconded teachers to teach methods courses and supervise student teachers connects preservice teacher education of student teachers to the continuing learning of experienced teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Fullan, 1995).

Seconded teachers were motivated out of a sense of professional development. Their comments suggest that classroom teachers should take responsibility and

initiative for their own professional development. Indeed, I detected an "if I can do it, so can you" stance (the "it" referring to secondment as professional development). They were unable, however, to sustain that attitude after they returned to the school community.

Reviewing The Assumptions of The Study

I began this study with three assumptions about seconded teachers' potential contribution to teacher education. Now that the study is complete, I see the need to re-visit each of the assumptions.

Assumption One - Preservice Teacher Education Programs Will Be Improved If Practitioners' (e.g., Seconded Teachers') Skills And Dispositions Are Made Part Of Classroom Knowledge And Discourse In Teacher Education

Although seconded teachers and full-time faculty have different responsibilities in preservice teacher education, each contributes to the learning of student teachers. The presence of seconded teachers adds credibility to courses that full-time faculty teach. By this, I mean that some student teachers recognize that many of the claims that full-time faculty make about teaching and learning are confirmed by the firsthand experiences of seconded teachers.

The involvement of seconded teachers, then, in teacher education is generally seen to be supplementing the "theory" (often seen as the jurisdiction of the university) with "practice" (commonly viewed as the jurisdiction of the

classroom teacher). It is possible, however, that seconded teachers may widen the gap between theory and practice rather than narrowing it, particularly if they assume legitimacy based on a type of experience that they believe the faculty lacks.

Assumption Two - Faculties Of Education Recognize The Advantage Of Having Cooperating Teachers (Previously Seconded Teachers) Who Understand The Philosophy, Objectives, And Sequence Of The Preservice Programs Of Which The Student Teachers Are A Part

The rationale for involving classroom teachers in university-based teacher education is partly linked to the notion that formerly seconded teachers will possess a better understanding of the teacher education program, potentially enhancing their future performance as cooperating teachers. Part of the professional development continuum I outlined in Chapter 1 suggests that seconded teachers will publicize and explain the continuum among colleagues and cooperating teachers. I think the assumption holds as stated, but it may not be so efficiently accomplished as is envisioned. The new knowledge embodied in the continuum of professional development is not readily shared partly because there are no provisions for doing so. Other avenues for publicizing the program must be kept open. Seconded teachers were somewhat frustrated and disappointed when they returned to the school community. They noted that school districts were not interested in

their new knowledge. Furthermore, some formerly seconded teachers did not have opportunities to host student teachers, which was a "tragedy" in their view, given the insight and expertise they felt they had gained as seconded teachers.

Assumption Three - By Each Entering The Setting Of The Other, Seconded Teachers And University Faculty May Create And Improve Cooperative, Even Collaborative Relationships

Seconded teachers leave the security of their classrooms, where they were likely viewed as established and knowledgeable practitioners, for the uncertainty of the university, where they experience some degree of displacement. It is in this context that seconded teachers attempt to make sense of the university culture. When I began this study, I suspected that seconded teachers would blend into the university culture but, instead, they maintain their teacher identities within the university culture.

As discussed in the third chapter, seconded teachers revert to a "community within a community," never gaining full membership in the university culture. While seconded teachers view their interactions with one another as having an important impact on their professional growth, their impact on the faculty members is minimal and the relationship between the two cultures was considerably weaker than expected.

Implications for Teacher Education

Two implications for teacher education are discussed: absence of a formal recruitment process, and improving secondment.

Absence of a Formal Recruitment, Selection, and Appointment Process

The Associate Dean, Teacher Education is the key person in the recruitment and hiring of seconded teachers at the university where this study was conducted. Vacancies were routinely advertised in local newspapers and teacher journals. Although positions were advertised, most of the participants in this study had an "inside track" on those positions because of their previous contacts with university personnel or sometimes the Associate Dean.

Clearly, power favors the university because the Associate Dean deals directly with individual teachers rather than with schools or school districts. Seconded teachers have less formal power and status in the teacher education setting (Brookhart & Loadman, 1990; Cooper, 1988); for example, when enrollments fluctuate or resources decline, they are vulnerable because their services cost the university a significant amount of money (the university pays their school district salaries). As a result, a recent trend has been to employ more graduate students, retired teachers, and other sessional and part-time faculty, sometimes at a fraction of the cost. In fact, from a purely financial standpoint, school districts could

save money if they hired a replacement teacher who is lower on the salary grid.

In any given year, there are more applicants than seconded positions. The "glamour" and "prestige" associated with the university is enough to "lure" some seconded teachers to the university, but I cannot help but wonder about the possible long-term implications for their careers.

The results of this study suggest that the temporary, short-term nature of secondment, as it now stands, is potentially detrimental to their careers. First, there is the "displacement factor." They risk being assigned to different schools which means that they have to re-establish relationships with administrators, colleagues, students, and parents. Second, the perception among some school districts that secondment is like a "vacation" could be detrimental to a teacher's being considered for promotion. Rather than utilizing the new knowledge and skills that seconded teachers develop during their time at the university, districts provide no clearly defined career paths for individuals after secondment.

I think a better approach would be to more carefully select seconded teachers in the first place. School districts and the Faculty of Education could enter into more formal agreements about the hiring and re-deployment of seconded teachers. This might involve some extended teacher education responsibilities once secondment ends and

could of course have financial implications for both parties.

Complicating the matter still further is the fact that some teachers do not receive official notification of their appointments until well into the summer. This means that they have insufficient time to prepare and organize themselves for the position. Perhaps the appointment should officially commence August 1 instead of September 1, in order to give individuals enough time to organize themselves and learn about the teacher education program and their roles within it.

Improving Secondment

Teachers likened the first year of secondment to their first year of teaching. They said they sometimes felt like beginning teachers in that they were often left to their own devices in learning about institutional expectations for themselves and student teachers. Indeed, seconded teachers commented that they were in a "survival mode" for much of the first year. Their comments suggest that the Faculty of Education could do a better job of educating seconded teachers about not only the preservice teacher education program but, specifically, the expectations and roles for the participants. Organizing individuals in small cohorts and assigning a coordinator would provide seconded teachers with a more personalized and immediate form of support.

Adjusting to the much larger university setting has been cited as a major factor in a seconded teacher's transition from being a teacher to teacher educator. Secondment could be improved if the university employed a version of a mentoring program. Just as seconded teachers act as mentors to student teachers, they would like to be mentored by experienced teacher educators.

The idea that someone from the university can serve as a mentor to seconded teachers is problematic if one begins from the position that mentoring implies certain things. Bruneau's (1992) discussion of faculty advisors' acting as mentors to student teachers is useful in thinking about university personnel acting as mentors to seconded teachers. She wrote,

> . . . the idea that someone is a mentor for/to someone else carries with it the notion that the mentoring (the care, the attention and help) is given (a) over a long period of time, (b) by someone who has a particular interest in the person's total development and/or career choice and (c) includes various kinds of help in addition to "psychological" support. (p. 5)

The temporary nature of secondment makes any long term support unlikely.

Suggestions for Further Research

A number of questions are raised as a result of this study. The following are suggestions for further research regarding seconded teachers' experiences in teacher education: re-entry to the school community and career implications, power relationships in teacher education, and research on teacher educators.

Re-entry to the School Community and Career Implications

Further study of teachers after leaving their secondments would be a useful line of inquiry. Re-adjusting to being a classroom teacher was problematic indicating that the traditional school culture fails to accommodate the broader knowledge and experience that seconded teachers bring with them upon re-entry.

Teachers viewed secondment as a "step up" the career ladder, but it turned out to be more of a lateral career move. Upon re-entry to the school community, teachers sometimes found themselves in less desirable positions than the ones they left. Additional documentation of formerly seconded teachers will provide a better understanding of career implications.

Power Relationships within Teacher Education

Further study about power and power relations within teacher education are worthwhile for three reasons. First, power and authority relationships are linked to the complicated relationships, perceptions, and expectations that participants have for teacher education. Second,

existing power and authority relationships should make us question the political rationale of the practicum and of teacher education programs more generally. Third, understanding power and authority more clearly will help us analyze and question how key participants view goals and objectives for teacher education, as well as how pedagogical practice is undertaken within the program. I believe a deeper understanding of how participants construe their roles within the complicated power structures of teacher education will have implications for any attempt to reform teacher education.

Research on Teacher Educators

Ducharme (1996), Lanier and Little (1986), and Richardson (1996) contend that there is a robust literature on preservice and inservice teachers but missing from the body of research are similar studies of teacher educators. I think that more research on teacher educators' beliefs and practices will have implications for teacher education reform, and be especially helpful in improving educational practice.

In Summary

In the past, one of the most common forms of utilizing practitioners' involvement in teacher education has been through the use of cooperating teachers. The triadic relationship among classroom teacher, preservice teacher, and university supervisor has been a source of research and writing.

Goodlad (1990) called for teacher leaders who are comfortable in both the K-12 system and in higher education. The seconded teachers who participated in this study made an important contribution to the preparation of the student teachers with whom they worked, primarily by sharing their "wisdom" of practice. Seconded teachers are highly competent teacher educators who function where the challenges primarily exist--in classrooms across the province.

This research and writing has prompted me to examine myself as a teacher educator. Like the seconded teachers in this study, I have experienced some of the tensions they described. It would be facile to think that seconded teachers could or should handle the challenges associated with making the transition from teacher to teacher educator without supportive systems in place. To their credit, seconded teachers thrived in their roles as university instructors and faculty advisors because they are strong, innovative, and committed teachers.

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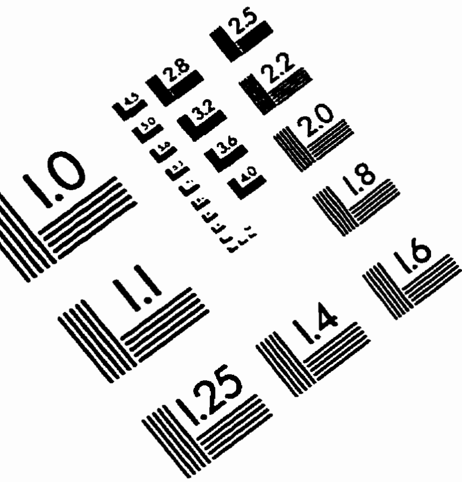
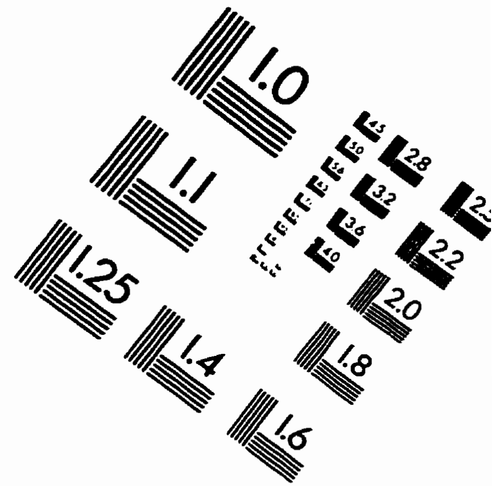
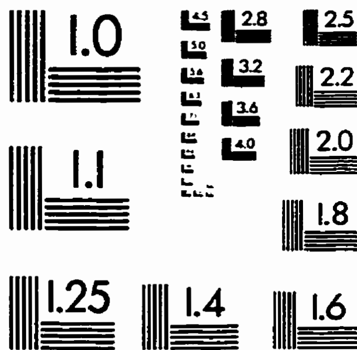
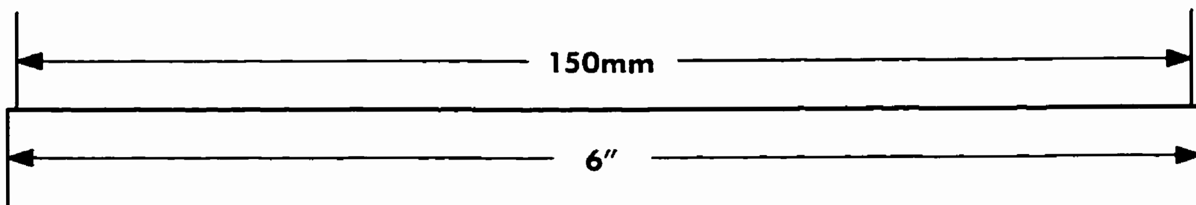
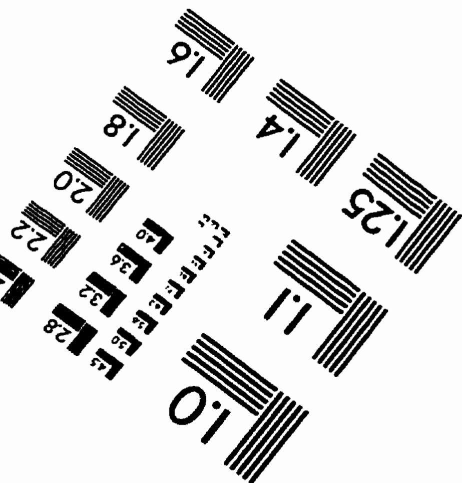
IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)

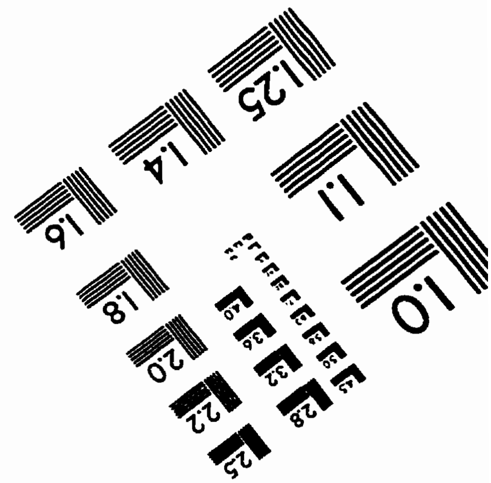












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