EXPLORING ENGLISH TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN ADULT EDUCATION CONTEXTS

by

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for the degree of Doctor of Education
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This thesis is dedicated to my mother,

Hildegard Maria Mühlbauer

(1929-1991)

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the conceptions of teaching and learning of twelve adult educators who teach in a range of English programs in the public school system and at the community college level. Their perspectives on teaching and learning as well as their "personal philosophy of practice" were compared with the role of the educator and the process of learning, most notably described by Jack Mezirow (1981; 1990; 1996) in his theory of transformational learning and Paulo Freire (1970) in his critical theory of adult learning. One of the theoretical models for understanding the different perspectives that the adult educators held was developed by Pratt and associates (1998).

Transformative learning involves a process whereby individuals reflectively transform existing beliefs, attitudes, and emotional reactions that may be hindering their ability to achieve their potential, personally, intellectually, and socially. Most of the educators did not refer to themselves as "transformative educators" nor did they share a theoretical understanding of Mezirow's transformative learning theory; in this sense, theory is not driving practice. However, significant parallels between some of the teachers' intentions, views on learning, curriculum orientation, and personal philosophy of practice were consistent with the role of the transformative educator and the process of learning described by theorists such as Mezirow (1981), Freire (1970), and Daloz (1986). The teachers also held many reservations about the role of the teacher as "change agent;"

many of the educators suggested that "transformative learning" may be a by-product of many factors (e.g. learners' beliefs and attitudes, content, context) in the learning environment rather than a result of a specific teaching behavior, attitude, or style. The practical realities of teaching in an inner city high school for adults and in a city community college also made it difficult for the teachers to apply "transformative learning" approaches.

While a qualitative analysis of the data from three in depth interviews with the twelve teachers was a major part of the data collection, cross verification of the data also included the use of Kolb's (1985) Learning Style Inventory, Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, and Conti's(1990) Principles of Adult Learning Scale.

This study found that English teachers' personal philosophy of practice is influenced by the values, beliefs, and ideals that they hold. The perspectives on teaching and learning that the educators in this study held developed over time and were influenced by factors such as family and educational experience, personality, past teaching experiences, the specific characteristics of their students, and the institution and department that they work in. Important concerns and limitations of transformative learning theory emerge out of this study. The findings of this study also have significant implications relating to the teacher education programs for adult educators, the professional development of adult educators, and the importance of grounding theoretical knowledge in teachers' and students' experiences.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments

Chapter One: Introduction

Background

Many adult education theorists emphasize the importance of an interactive, supportive, and challenging climate as a prerequisite for fostering critical thinking skills and transformative learning among adult learners (Meyers, 1986; Brookfield 1990, 1995; Mezirow, 1991, 1996; Cranton, 1994). Transformative learning involves a process where individuals reflectively transform existing beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and emotional reactions that may limit their ability to participate more fully in society and to achieve their personal and intellectual potential. The educator can play a key role in this process. Theorists like Mezirow (1991) contend that a central goal of adult education should involve creating conditions to help adult learners become more critically reflective and "advance developmentally" toward more "integrated and discriminating meaning perspectives" (p. 225). Much earlier, Lindeman (1926) wrote that the central aim of adult education was to help individuals in their capacity to feel more deeply and think more clearly. Traditional education systems, noted Lindeman, reflected "a perverted and shallow pragmatism... profitable to an industrial order which required technicians, not educated men and women" (p. 27). Self-expression, experience, creativity, and critical reflection were weakened in this context. Lindeman was optimistic that adult education could set a new precedent to help individuals understand themselves and their world more clearly, and perhaps search for new meanings in a society that glorified science, specialism, and industrialization. "To be educated is not to be informed but to find illumination in informed living" (Lindeman, 1961, p. 116).

Despite the critical traditions that much of the theory in adult education derives from, little research has been carried out to understand adult educators' personal beliefs about the purpose of adult education, and more specifically the role of the adult educator and the process of teaching and learning. Kreber (1993) and Cranton (1994) emphasize that further research is needed to investigate whether a "critically challenging atmosphere" and "the goal of transformative change" are shared by adult educators. While critical thinking, self-direction, and transformative learning are frequently cited phrases in the adult education literature, more research into exploring teachers' own beliefs and

understandings of these terms is needed (Conti, 1985; Pratt and Associates, 1998; Robertson, 1996).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of my study will be to explore the conceptions of teaching and learning from the viewpoint of twelve English teachers in different adult education settings.

Research Questions

The research questions for this study are:

1. Do adult educators' conceptualizations of the teaching-learning process reflect the assumptions about the role of the educator and the process of learning described in transformational learning theories?

2. Do adult educators see themselves as transformative educators?

3. Do the conceptions of teaching and learning that individual adult educators hold relate to their personal teaching philosophy?

4. How might individual English teachers' philosophies be reflected in the curriculum choices that they make, and in their preferred teaching and learning strategies?

Assumptions of the Present Study

The assumptions underlying this study are as follows:

1. The personality, beliefs, values, and life experiences of teachers shape their "personal philosophy of teaching," perhaps more than the teachers' theoretical understanding of a particular learning theory or formal philosophy of education. George Kelly's (1955) notion that "every person is a psychologist" is related to this assumption. Teachers are researchers in the sense that through their experiences and observations in teaching, they develop "hypotheses and theories" about their teaching strengths, their learners, and other aspects of their teaching environment. They may transform existing beliefs through a process of observation and reflection. Pratt (1998) notes that "teaching is guided by one's perspectives on teaching, which is defined by actions, intentions, and beliefs regarding: a) knowledge and learning, b) the purposes of adult education or training, and c) appropriate roles, responsibilities, and relationships of instructors of adults" (p. 11).

2. Teachers are leaders in the sense that they intend to effect change in their students, " whether this be an increase in knowledge, the acquisition or improvement of a skill, or a change in attitude and behavior" (Zinn, 1990, p. 41).

3. Teachers demonstrate different patterns of strengths, and the ultimate outcome of good teaching–good learning–can be achieved through a variety of approaches. "There is no single, universal, best perspective on teaching adults" (Pratt, 1998, p. 11).

4. Teachers' personal philosophy of practice which reflects certain key values and beliefs may be relatively stable or it may change over time. The identification of one's personal philosophy of practice does not represent a definitive statement that will necessarily hold true for all situations. (Zinn, 1983; Spurgeon, 1994).

Conceptions of Teaching and Learning in Adult Education

This study explores ABE (Adult Basic Education) English, ESL (English as a Second Language), and college level teachers' conceptions of their professional world, rather than their specific teaching behaviour in the classroom. Phenomenographic researchers like Marton and Saljö (1981) and Larsson (1984) take the viewpoint that teachers' conceptions of the world "are complementary to the study of the world as it is" (Larsson, 1984, p. 124). Understanding variations of conceptions among teachers can be a base for further reflection and an opportunity for teachers to articulate their beliefs and compare their perceptions with other practitioners. The definition of a "conception" in the adult education literature conveys the meaning of a comprehensive, organized, and unified body of knowledge about an object, idea, or phenomenon. These conceptions may influence an individual's actions (Freeman and Richards, 1993). Larsson (1984) writes that:

> A conception describes the way teachers conceive of some phenomenon, i.e. it is the unit of description to use when you want to characterize how things appear to teachers. As a special cognitive interest, however, the description can be used by teachers to reflect upon... This reflection as a change can probably be compared to the 'emancipatory cognitive interest' category of Habermas. (p.126)

Researchers like Freeman and Richards (1993) note that conceptions of effective teaching, teacher education, and curriculum development are generally tacit and often go unquestioned. Writing about second language teachers, these researchers state that "to

date there has been virtually no organized examination of the conceptions of teaching which undergirds second language instruction" (p. 193). Moreover, Freeman and Richards maintain that a shift in the focus of discussions of teaching from behaviour and activity to the thinking and reasoning which may organize and motivate practice is needed.

Teaching has been defined as a science, a technology, a craft or an art (Zahorik, 1986). Each of these conceptualizations reflects an idea and an assumption about the essential skills of effective teaching, curriculum organization, and the dynamics of learning. These conceptions also describe essential dimensions of knowledge that teachers should possess.

Pratt (1998) notes that too often the theory and research in adult education bypass the core belief systems that individual teachers have about teaching and learning. In a workshop on teaching effectiveness, he observed that there was no mention of beliefs or values, or even the possibility that practitioners might hold diverse views on what it meant to teach, to learn, or to know something. "Effective teaching had been reduced to a set of value-neutral skills, most of which could be captured on videotape for review and further practice... Teaching is thus conceived as a politically neutral, skilled performance... giving lectures, asking questions, providing feedback, and so on" (p.16).

Pratt (1998) contends that perspectives or conceptualizations of teaching represent "powerful but largely invisible frames of reference through which all of us make meaning of our worlds. They limit our perceptions in much the same way; until we encounter a basis for comparison, our own assumptions remain invisible" (p. 37). Based on data gathered from teaching and research in Canada, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, and The U.S., Pratt and his associates (1998) identified five perspectives of teaching, each representing "a legitimate form or commitment and valuing in teaching and corresponding ways of thinking, acting, and believing about the instruction of adults" (p. xiii). The perspectives that Pratt and associates identified - the transmission, the apprenticeship, the developmental, the nurturing, and the social reform are discussed in detail in Chapter Two. Critiquing the perspectives of researches like Apps (1991), Fox (1983), and Fenstermacher and Soltis (1986), Pratt (1998) argues that it is misleading to suggest that one perspective or conceptualization of teaching is superior to another. Explored critically, each conceptualization has its strengths and limitations in a given context:

There is no basis for assuming a single, universal perspective on teaching adults. Both the philosophical and empirical evidence argues against it. What is needed instead is a plurality of perspectives on teaching adults that recognizes diversity, within teachers, learners, content, context, ideals, and purposes. Adult and higher education are pluralistic in purpose and procedure, in context and in content, and in regard for what is considered effective teaching. Such diversity compels us to think broadly when considering what teaching means. (pp. 3- 4)

My study is epistemological in that it focuses on teachers' knowledge. The descriptive and interpretive focus outlined by researchers such as Guba and Lincoln (1989), Willis (1991), Eisner (1991), and Van Manen (1991) provided a methodological foundation that enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning and the social context that they work in. "In providing concrete examples of distinctly human experiences which appeal directly to the perceptions of other human beings, they provide us with powerful invitations to similarly experience the primary experience of others and so change the course of our own life worlds" (Willis, 1991, pp. 175-176). I entered this research not as an "evaluator" of effective adult education principles and practices, but as an interested participant trying to explore and understand the beliefs and assumptions that other adult educators teaching English have about their own practice. I want to emphasize the reciprocal nature of this study and the importance of mutual respect, openness, and sincerity as a base for understanding and interpreting the ideas that emerged. In his book The Enlightened Eye, Eisner (1991) states that "the ultimate test of a set of educational ideas is the degree to which it illuminates and positively influences the educational experiences of those who live and work in our schools" (p. 2). It is the intent of this study to provide another lens for understanding the links between theory and practice that emerge as teachers begin to talk about and reflect on their teaching.

Rationale for the Study

This study may provide an insight into the ways instructors interpret and apply theoretical concepts into their own personal teaching theories and practises. For instance, it may be that instructors interpret "transformational learning" and "critical thinking" in different ways. A study focussing on exploring and understanding instructors' conception

of teaching and learning can enrich the theoretical base of adult learning theory by illuminating certain limitations and contradictions in theoretical perspectives. In addition, new conceptualizations of teaching can emerge which may help improve the quality of professional practice. Thus, theory can be grounded from the professional experience of practitioners. Finally, this study may have important implications for those seeking to improve the processes of professional development for adult educators. Calderhead (1987) and Pope (1993) note that professional education normally takes little account of teachers' or student teachers' preconceptions about teaching or the knowledge bases they have about themselves, students, classroom contexts, and the political constraints on education. Unless professional programs are designed to challenge teachers' thinking about practice and encourage them to analyze and appraise their professional teaching, existing ineffectual practices may be perpetuated and students left relatively unaffected by teaching itself.

Personal Philosophy of Teaching

Brookfield (1990) emphasizes that developing a personal vision of philosophy of teaching is one way that teachers can establish commitment and credibility with their students and peers. A commitment to a shared rationale for teaching is also important for the development of a collective identity and for the development of professional strength among teachers. He notes that if teachers narrowly define themselves as content experts, they cut themselves off from some broader identity as change agents involved in helping students shape the world they live in. Brookfield's critical rationale for the importance of developing a personal philosophy of teaching relates to the overall theme of this study:

> Develop a philosophy of practice, a critical rationale for why you are doing what you are doing... Your vision will also help your students feel that they are under the influence of someone who is moved by well-thought out convictions and commitments. Without a personal organizing vision we are rudderless vessels tossed around on the waves and currents of whatever political whims and fashions are prevalent at the time. (1990, pp. 195-196)

Brookfield (1990;1995) emphasized the development of critical thinking as an underlying rationale for teaching, providing both its method and organizing vision. "Such thinking is also central to building a democratic society with a political culture that is

informed in values of freedom, fairness, justice, and compassion" (Brookfield, 1990, pp. 195-196).

Theoretical Foundations

The foundation for many of the qualitative studies on teachers' thinking is rooted in George Kelly's (1955) theory of personal constructs. According to Kelly, individuals understand their environment by means of thoughts, reflections, actions and interpretations through the use of a system of personal constructs. Personal construct theory examines the thoughts behind the actions of individuals, and can be applied to analyze teachers' thinking about their role, choice of curriculum materials, the process of learning, and so on. Kelly's theory emphasizes that the interaction between the individual and the environment is an experiential cycle in which people develop their personal construct system. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle is another closely related conceptual model for understanding individual teacher's thoughts, reflections, and actions. The theoretical and research base of my study will include many of the concepts in both Kelly's personal construct theory and Kolb's experiential learning model.

The theoretical and research base of my study draws from the qualitative and interpretivist studies of teachers' thinking and conceptions of teaching and learning (Elbaz, 1981, 1991; Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; Larsson, 1984; Pratt and Associates, 1998). Freire's (1970) critical theory of education and Mezirow's (1981) theory of perspective transformation will provide a basis for understanding the idea of a "transformative" educator and the process of transformational learning. The five conceptions of teaching that Pratt and his associates present provide a conceptual framework for interpreting and understanding the teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning. Since this is a study of English teachers' conceptions, it is important to address some of the contemporary paradigms of teaching English. Louise Rosenblatt's (1938; 1992) transactional model of teaching English (reader response theory) and Peim's (1993) critical theory of teaching English most closely relate to the transformative learning theories of Freire(1970) and Mezirow (1981). In sum, this study draws from research in Applied Psychology, Adult Education, and Curriculum Studies in the teaching of English. Each area enabled me to explore from a slightly different angle the thoughts and reflections of each teacher.

Emergence of the Study

This study evolved out of my work as an English and ESL teacher with adults for sixteen years and from my studies in literature, Educational Psychology, and Adult Education. While my studies provided me with an academic base with which to teach adults, it was my practical experience in the classroom that also influenced my teaching style. The themes reflected in existential and humanist writings in literature and psychology and in critical theories of philosophy and education have formed part of my "working philosophy" of teaching adults. Roger's (1961) description of the "core conditions" that promote significant personal learning in therapy and in education - congruence, empathy, and positive regard for individuals - most reflected my own approach to working with adult learners. I also recognize that as individuals and educators, we are part of a global community that is facing environmental, social, and political crises that demand urgent attention. As teachers, we cannot ignore the global issues that confront us daily. Through teaching literature, I have tried to integrate the course content to the larger context of my students' lives and the global issues that impact upon them. Students in literacy classes often have "first hand" experience of violence, alienation, drug abuse, unemployment, and poverty. They return to school in part, to activate some change in their own lives. Part of the challenge that I have had as an educator is in helping learners empower themselves and take an active part in improving their communities in some way. Northrop Frye (1978) writes that "literature can give shape and coherence to psychology, history, anthropology, theology, and political theory" (pp. 74-75). From this perspective, teaching English goes beyond transmitting "rules of grammar" and points on the structure of a novel to an exploration of values, ideas, and cultural myths and beliefs. My own approach to teaching English reflects this latter position. Studying literature can be a vehicle for critical reflection and transformative change because it deals with the world of possibilities.

Working as an adult educator within the public school system has also given me an understanding of some of the dilemmas faced by teachers in similar contexts. In the public school system, adult education is often marginalized. Old buildings or makeshift trailers for classes, the constant fear of teacher cutbacks, part time contracts, the lack of appropriate curriculum material for adults, and the lack of in-service programs geared

toward teachers of adults are among the problems that adult educators, both in the public schools and the community college system experience. In the public school system, there is the implicit belief that teaching adults is not considered as important as teaching children. This belief is reinforced by administrators who remind teachers how lucky they are not to be back teaching in a high school. Teachers who are transferred from junior and senior high school classrooms to adult education centres often view this transfer as " a gift from heaven" as there would be no more discipline problems and no more "hassles with parents." No special certification or courses in adult education are necessary and there is the hidden assumption that "anyone" can teach adults. Although I knew this was not the case, I found this attitude to be very demoralizing. There was a minimization of the myriad of skills that went into teaching adults who had returned to school hoping to upgrade their educational qualifications.

In contrast to finding teaching "easy" and unchallenging, I had found working with adults interesting and rewarding. The stories behind each of my student's decisions to return to school to complete a long held goal of finishing Grade 12 or to upgrade credentials to move on to a college or technical program left an impression on me. I was always trying to find new ways of adapting the English curriculum to address the interests of adults from so many different cultural backgrounds. My teaching experiences gave me a unique opportunity to understand the barriers that many adults face when they return to schools. Psychological and health related problems, cultural conflicts, financial stresses, and family conflict were common problems among adult students but rarely discussed among staff. I began to investigate research in adult learning and motivation. In 1993, I initiated a study on the factors relating to drop outs at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre. In doing this study I was able to gain a more in-depth understanding of the factors that lead adults to drop out of upgrading programs. While " dropping out" is a common occurrence in adult basic education settings, the complex factors leading to resistance and nonparticipation are not well understood.

In recent years I have had the opportunity to teach at the university and work with adult educators from diverse areas in business, industry, and the community college and public school system. My observation is that not enough emphasis is placed upon teachers' expressing and reflecting on the values and beliefs that guide their practice.

Certainly in the public school system, professional development is for the most part a "top-down" process. "Experts" present prescriptive models of what effective teaching entails. Topics such as learning and teaching styles and multiple intelligences are presented in a "federal express" approach that negates or minimizes the teachers' own expertise. At one in-service workshop, I recall being handed a photocopy of a learning pyramid identifying "the best and worst methods of teaching." The lecture method, situated at the top of the pyramid, was identified as "the least likely" strategy to facilitate student learning, while "group work" situated at the bottom levels, was identified as the "best method" to facilitate learning. Teachers were informed that on their next teaching evaluation, they would have to show evidence of incorporating the bottom learning pyramid in their lesson planning. There was no discussion or response from teachers regarding the beliefs and assumptions behind the research. However, the message was very clear - teachers were not the experts; administrators evaluating teachers and researchers in academia were. The lack of power or voice experienced by teachers regarding their own expertise and personal practical knowledge surfaces throughout a teacher's career. Teachers experience many "double bind" situations where no matter what they do, they cannot win. They are told to individualize instruction and tap into individual differences, yet their own individual expertise is undermined. In reflecting on the difficulties she had articulating her ideas while writing her doctoral dissertation, Webb (1995) states that "it is very hard for teachers to overcome the forms of authority which inhibit them from becoming authors of their own knowledge/experience. Teacher evaluation, as I experienced it, is just one of the ways authorities in education deny teachers' knowledge" (p. 11). Aronowitz and Giroux's (1993) idea of teachers becoming "transformative intellectuals" seems unrealizable unless teachers are given more opportunities to articulate their ideas and critically reflect on their experience. In my study, I want to present the teachers' point of view; I want their voices to be heard. I take the view that teachers have a wealth of knowledge and experience in areas such as: adapting and creating curriculum, experimenting with new teaching strategies, and working with students who have different learning styles. Van Manen (1990) states that a goal of phenomenology is to make visible the "meaning structures" that are embedded in an individual's life world. My research reflects this standpoint in so much as I try to

understand and interpret the teachers' perspectives with an acknowledgment of the contexts that they live and work in.

The Teachers in the Study

The twelve English teachers in my study have taught adults for eight years or longer. They teach English in a range of programs that include basic literacy, ESL, university preparatory English., and college level English. I felt that by interviewing teachers in a range of courses, I would gain a deeper insight into how a particular course level and student group might influence a teacher's choice of curriculum material or a particular teaching approach.

Five of the teachers in my study work within the Winnipeg School Division #1. Four of the teachers work at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, an "adult high school" that offers ESL programs and upgrading courses ranging from basic literacy to university entrance. The fifth teacher works at a core area technical vocational high school that offers adult upgrading programs. The other seven work in various departments of English at Red River Community College in Winnipeg, and at Vancouver Community College, the largest provider of ESL and literacy programs for adults in British Columbia. While the institutions offer many English courses that are parallel in nature, interesting differences between the institutions and their influence on teachers' program planning emerged as my study progressed.

I met with each of the teachers three times. Each interview lasted between 1½ and 2 hours. For my interview schedule, I adapted the questions Pratt and associates (1998) used in their study of adult educators' conceptions of teaching and learning. At the end of the first interview, I asked each teacher to complete Kolb's (1985) Learning Style Inventory, Conti's Principles of Adult Learning Scale, Zinn's (1995) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, and a critical incident questionnaire. During the second interview these were used as a vehicle for further discussing the teacher's views and approaches to teaching and learning. The third interview focussed in a more in depth way on how the teacher plans a particular study unit such as a novel, play, or a selection of articles.

Paradigms for Understanding Teachers' Knowledge

Although a research focus on teachers' knowledge may be "[t]he single factor which seems to have the greatest power to carry forward our understanding of the

teacher's role" (Elbaz, 1991, p. 11), constructivist or interpretivist paradigms of studying teachers' knowledge contrast with positivist/behavioural paradigms in fundamentally different ways. An appreciation of the rich resource of understanding a teacher's personal knowledge from an interpretive paradigm requires an insight into the limitations of the positive approach.

Guba and Lincoln (1989) refer to a paradigm as "a basic set of beliefs or assumptions that we are willing to make which serve as a touchstone in guiding that activity" (p. 80). In understanding paradigms of knowledge such as positivist or constructive paradigms, they state that three basic questions can be asked: (1) What is there that can be known? (the ontological question); (2) What is the relationship of the knower to the known (or the knowable)? (the epistemological question) and (3) What are the ways of finding out knowledge? (the methodological question) (Lincoln and Guba, 1989, p. 84).

The paradigm that has been most influential in shaping scientific theory, philosophical discourse, and in the modern social sciences has been the conventional or positivist paradigm. By looking at the ontology, epistemology, and methodology dimensions, Guba and Lincoln (1989) contrast the positivist paradigm with the constructivist paradigm which has also been called the naturalistic, hermeneutic, or interpretive paradigm.

While the positivist paradigm presents a dualistic (subject - object) "objectivist" epistemology that discounts value consideration that may influence the "detached"observer, the constructivist epistemology contends that the "inquirer and the inquired -into are interlocked" (p. 84) in a dynamic way that creates the inquiry process. The positivist paradigm asserts that a single reality exists that is independent of any observer and values or interest. The positivist paradigm resulted in a representational model of cognition where the "mind as computer" metaphor became part of theoretical discourse on cognitive processes (Davis & Sumara, 1997, p. 107). Information is stored, processed and retrieved. Knowledge is compiled and structured. Citing Rorty (1989), Davis and Sumara (1997) note that "the metaphors are and eventually become literalised and woven seamlessly into our every day beliefs and practices" (p. 108). Certainly, the "mind as computer" metaphor has influenced education theory and curriculum

development with its emphasis on diagnostic and achievement tests, programmed textbooks, and in teacher education programs that avoid in depth analysis of individual or teacher's assumptions about learning and teaching.

In contrast, the constructivist paradigm asserts an existence of multiple, socially constructed realities ungoverned by any natural laws on "immutable truths". Truth is defined as the best informed and most sophisticated construction on which there is a consensus. The constructivist model of knowledge rejects the mechanistic metaphor of representationism in favour of "thinking and thinking in terms of constant change and complex interdependencies" (p. 109). Cognition is seen as "a process of organizing and reorganizing one's own subject world of experience, involving the simultaneous revision, reorganization, and reinterpretation of past, present and projected actions and conceptions" (p. 109).

Eisner (1991) and Lincoln and Guba (1989) assert that a scientifically derived knowledge base for teachers has been inadequate in legitimizing the teaching profession or contributing to the development of teachers. The scientific process-product paradigms also reinforce a paternalistic relationship between the teacher and the researcher.

The positivist paradigm in research on teachers' thinking traditionally focussed on knowledge as external to the teacher (the term teacher "training" captures this view) and it has attempted to quantify and categorize what the teacher needs to know (Shulman, 1987; Lincoln and Guba, 1989). Writers like Freeman (1994) and Shor (1992) assert that what teachers know cannot necessarily be quantified or transferred to teachers.

Schön (1987) argues that because our view of knowledge has been based on a model of technical rationality that values the practitioner in "implementing scientifically-derived theory and technique, the practitioner faces a crisis of confidence in professional knowledge" (p. 4). Guba and Lincoln (1989) state that the "chimera of accountability" prevents positivist researchers from understanding the broader social scope of the problems they are exploring. For instance, if schools are not producing student who can read, write, and think critically, it is because "a link has broken down" and the task of the positivist researcher is to find a "cause and effect" in order to intervene and remedy the problem. "The questions to be asked - how, and of whom, are determined not by the teachers... but by others in the hierarchy - who often have much to gain and everything to

lose if blame is not fixed at some point in the organization remote from their position"
(p. 126).

In her study of teaching conceptions of second language teachers, Golumbek
(1995) found that the polarization of theory and practice that exists is dysfunctional.
Researchers are seldom second language teachers; consequently this can lead to "a
hierarchy of expertise" where experienced teachers are seen as "less expert" than the
researchers. The teachers' voices are silenced and the scholarly body of knowledge
becomes decontextualised to the point where it ignores the experiences of individual
teachers and the groups involved in the teaching situation. Golumbek states that "the
value placed on scientifically derived knowledge reflects the hegemonic definitions and has
resulted in a decontextualization of knowledge in the fields. Knowledge accumulated to
legitimize a field as a high status profession carries the risk of becoming abstract"(p. 6).

In sum, the rationale for shifting the focus from positivist paradigms to
hermeneutic - interpretivist paradigms of understanding teachers' knowledge lies in the
"authenticity" that can emerge from documenting teachers' experiences. Theory and
practice should be seen as a dialectic and not in polarized compartments. Innovations and
solutions to problems within the education context are more likely to be found if teachers
are actively involved as "reflective practitioners" whose voice is respected.

Studies of teachers' personal practical knowledge and subjective theories of
teaching have gained increasing interest in recent years: teachers' personal narratives of
experience (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990); second language teachers' personal practical
knowledge in narrative and practice (Elliot, 1993; Golumbek, 1995); teacher knowledge
and curriculum development (Elbaz, 1991; Webb, 1995); experienced teachers' views on
effective teaching (Delso, 1993); models of teacher reflection based on personal practice
(Golumbek, 1995), and adult educators' conceptions of teaching and learning (Pratt and
Associates, 1998). A common thread in all of these studies in the individual emphasis
placed on contextualizing teachers' knowledge in their practice. Theory is not detached
from practice; personal practical knowledge is conceptualized as experiential, dialogical,
situational, and fluid. These studies value the teachers' voices; the narratives and
conceptions that different teachers have about teaching and about the subject area that

they teach in adds a richness of detail that is often lacking in "process-product" perspectives of teachers' thinking.

Definition of Terms

Critical Theory

Van Manen (1997) notes that critical theory has identified itself with the Marxist legacy of attempting to form a dialectical synthesis of philosophy and a scientific understanding of society. The key characteristics of this synthesis include: a) an appeal to a widening notion of rationality, b) a resistance to all forms of domination, c) an orientation to "praxis," and d) the centrality of the concept of emancipation (p. 176).

Critical Thinking

Dewey (1910) defined critical thinking as "suspended judgment" or "healthy scepticism" (cited in Meyers, 1986,p.8). Reflective thought observed Dewey , involves active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it. Building on the ideas of Dewey, Brookfield (1987) noted that critical thinking involves both an affective and cognitive component; there is a willingness to critically examine and question deeply held beliefs and to consider alternative ways of thinking and acting. Critical thinking involves the ability to define a problem, select relevant information, identify and challenge assumptions, make inferences, and draw valid conclusions by assessing the validity of inferences (Watson and Glaser, 1980).

Emancipatory Education

Education which frees people from personal, institutional, or environmental forces that prevent them from seeing new directions, from gaining control of their lives, their society, and their world (Shor, 1987, p. 151).

Learning Style

Learning styles can be viewed as adaptive cognitive, affective, behavioral, and physiological states or orientations that help individuals interact with the world around them.

Meaning Perspective

"The structure of assumptions within which one's past experience assimilates and transforms new experience. A meaning perspective is a habitual set of expectations that

constitutes an orienting frame of reference that we use in projecting our symbolic models and that serves as a (usually tacit) belief system for interpreting and evaluating the meaning of experience" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 42).

Meaning Schemes

"Meaning perspectives determine the essential conditions for construing meaning for an experience. By defining our expectations, a meaning perspective selectively orders what we learn and the way we learn it. Each meaning perspective contains a number of meaning schemes. A meaning scheme is the particular knowledge, beliefs, value judgments, and feelings that become articulated in an interpretation" (Mezirow, 1991, p.144). A meaning scheme may pertain to:

- how to do something (instrumental action)
- a particular interpretation of meaning (communicative learning)
- reflection on beliefs, values, orientations (emancipatory learning)

Perspective Transformation

"A structural reorganization in the way that a person looks at him/herself and his/her relationships" (Cranton, 1994, p.24). "Perspective transformation is the process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about the world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative perspective; and finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings" (Mezirow, 1991, p.167).

Phenomenography

Phenomenography is a research approach designed to "map" the qualitatively different ways in which people experience, conceptualize, perceive, and understand various aspects of, and phenomena in , the world around them.

Phenomenology

Merleau-Ponty (1962) states that "phenomenology is the study of essences" (cited in Van Manen, 1997, p. 11). "Lived experience is the starting point and end point of phenomenological research. The aim of phenomenology is to transform lived experience into a textual expression of it essence—in such a way that the effect of the text is at once reflexive re-living and a reflective appropriation of something meaningful—a notion by

which a reader is powerfully animated in his or her own lived experience" (Van Manen, p.136). Phenomenology is concerned with the relations that exist between human beings and the world around them.

Philosophy of Adult Education

a) The application of philosophical method and outlook to the practice of adult education, for the purpose of clarifying meaning, organizing knowledge, and /or discovering the basic premises or assumptions upon which beliefs about adult education rest; b) a set or system of beliefs about adult education (Zinn, 1977, 1983, p. 7;). In the present study, the philosophy of teaching or educational philosophy will refer to teachers' own assumptions, beliefs, values, explanations, and justifications that guide them in practice (see Spurgeon,1994, p. 20).

Teaching Perspective

Pratt and associates (1998) describe teaching perspective as incorporating the teachers' values, beliefs, intentions, ideals, and behaviors. Teaching perspective may include the individual teacher's rationale and personal philosophy of practice. The five perspectives of teaching that are referred to in this study are detailed by Pratt and associates (1998) in their book Five Perspectives on Teaching in Adult and Higher Education. The five perspectives include:

A Transmission Perspective: Delivering Content. In this perspective, an emphasis is placed on delivery of content and on the ability of the learners to accurately reproduce the content. "Teachers are expected to be expert in their content area; they are expected to know their content well enough to answer most questions, provide multiple examples, give clear and detailed explanations and specify with authority and precision just what people are expected to learn" (Pratt, 1998, p. 41). In the transmission perspective, content credibility demonstrated by the teacher is of primary importance.

An Apprenticeship Perspective: Modelling Ways of Being. In the apprenticeship perspective, teaching "is the process of enculturating learners into a specific community" (Pratt, 1998, p. 43). Learning is a process of acquiring ways of thinking and behaving in a given context and community. Teaching, context, and content are inseparable in this perspective. The teachers as Pratt explains, are expected to embody the knowledge and values of the particular community. This community may refer to a trade or vocation, a

profession, or a specific cultural group. "Teachers try to move learners from the periphery to more central roles, from low risk to high risk procedures, and from simple to complex ways of understanding, in an attempt to have learners take on ways of thinking and problem solving that are necessary for membership in a community of practice" (Pratt, 1998, p.45).

A Developmental Perspective: Cultivating Ways of Thinking. Teachers who are committed to this perspective often express an interest in helping learners think and problem solve in ways that resemble expert thinking or problem solving in a discipline or profession. Key concepts in this perspective include learner-centeredness, fostering the intellectual development and personal autonomy of the learners, and stimulating the learners' curiosity for a desire to inquire further. "Learning is a process of considering new knowledge, skills, or attitudes within existing cognitive structures and revising or replacing those structures" (Pratt, 1998, p. 47). Effective teachers, as Pratt explains, have the skill to "build bridges" between the learners' present way of thinking and "more desirable" ways of thinking within a particular discipline or area of practice (p. 47).

A Nurturing Perspective: Facilitating Personal Agency. Rooted in humanistic perspectives on learning from Rogers (1961) and Maslow (1955), and represented in adult education in the works of J. Roby Kidd (1973) and Malcolm Knowles (1979),the nurturing perspective emphasizes that learning is most influenced by the learner's self-concept and sense of self-efficacy. The teacher "seeks a balance between caring and challenging," careful to be neither permissive nor possessive (p. 49).

A Social Reform Perspective: Seeking a Better Society. In the social reform perspective, social, cultural, political, or moral ideals take precedence over all other dimensions in the teaching-learning process. "The focus of commitment and therefore teaching, shift from micro to macro concerns...learners and content are secondary to a broader agenda as the commitment and agenda shifts its focus from the individual to the collective" (Pratt, 1998, p. 59). While Social Reform teachers may be pleased with their students' learning, it is not sufficient; they must have an impact on society to accomplish their larger teaching mission.

Teaching Style

The concept of teaching style has been described by Conti (1990) as "overall traits and qualities that a teacher displays in the classroom and that are consistent for various situations" (p. 3). These traits and qualities include behaviors, attitudes, personality characteristics, and characteristic style of presentation that a teacher demonstrates in the classroom.

Transformational Learning

"Transformational learning involves reflectively transforming the beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and emotional reactions that constitute our meaning schemes or transforming our meaning perspectives (sets of related meaning schemes). The relationship between educator and adult learner in this kind of learning is like that of a mentor trying to help a friend decide how to deal with a significant life problem that the friend may not yet have clearly identified as the source of his or her dilemma. The educator helps the learner focus upon and examine the assumptions—epistemological, social, and psychological–that underlie beliefs, feelings, and actions; assess the consequences of these assumptions; identify and explore alternative sets of assumptions; and test the validity of assumptions through effective participation in reflective dialogue" (Mezirow, 1991, p.224). In the present study, the term "transformative educator" will refer to a teacher who identifies with (either in a tacit or more explicit way) and applies the ideas and concepts described by Mezirow in his theory of transformational learning and in his description of the role of the educator.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review is organized into four major sections: the social context of teaching, transformative theories of adult learning and the role of the adult educator, perspectives of teaching English, and research on teachers' thinking and their personal philosophy of practice. The literature review draws on significant research in three related areas that have relevance to this study: Adult Education, Applied Psychology, and Curriculum Studies in the teaching of English.

The Social Context: Teaching in a Post-Modernist World

Davis and Sumara (1997) assert that knowledge, teaching, and learning have become more complex as a result of socio-cultural diversity, rapid advances of information technology, the density of population, and the subsequent advances of communities and cultures: Any study involving students, teachers, and educational systems must take into account these factors:

> The cultural practice of 'education' occurs within and among complex systems that span several phenomenal levels; there are individuals, there are collectives of individuals (including classrooms, schools, etc), there are communities in which schools exist, and there are larger cultural contexts... A complexified awareness of such levels, of how one exists simultaneously in and across these levels and how part and whole co-emerge and co-specify one another is needed by those who claim to be participating in the collective and individual reproductive and transformative process known as formal education. (p. 120)

Critical theorists like Carr and Kemis (1983), Sullivan (1990) and Aronowitz and Giroux (1993) emphasize that there are external features of social reality that influence the way individuals interpret experience; individuals cannot be separate from the dynamics of social conflict and change. Sullivan(1990) states that "a critical interpretive psychology takes cognisance of the fact that much of human action is outside the conscious control of personal agency and is embedded in social conditions outside human consciousness. These structural determinants are class dynamics, sexism, racism, and adultocentrism" (pp. 123-124).

The "grand narratives" of the Enlightenment period in the 18th century held the promise of personal and social emancipation through reason and rational discourse, yet the realities of the 20th century prove that "reason and rational discourse" have not resulted in a safer of a more just world. Writers like Thomas Berry (1988) and Susan Griffin (1992, 1995) have written extensively of the consequences of a world view preoccupied with technical rationality. Environmental degradation, widespread violence and war, unemployment and poverty continue to erode the ideals of peace and democracy. Rorty (1993) questions whether the moral, spiritual, and social advancement of societies can ever parallel their technological, scientific, and economic advancement (Kreber, 1993). Berry (1988) suggests that an urgent need to reexamine our values and work toward a world view based on a reverence for all life forms is necessary.

Flax (1995) asserts that if individuals are to take responsibility and move toward positive change, they must situate themselves within contingent and imperfect contexts to acknowledge differential privileges of race, gender, geographic location, and social identities. Flax comments on the vulnerable state of the times that we live in:

> The modern Western sense of self-certainty has been undermined by political and intellectual events... Psychoanalysts, feminists, and postmodernists have undermined the 'foundations' of Western thought by challenging their constituting and interdependent girders. As the Enlightenment metanarrative continues to decay, the essential contestability of notions such as reason, truth, self, gender, science, culture, power, history, and knowledge are exposed. (p.152)

To naively hope or believe that the world is not of our own making is dangerous, notes Flax. Laws, political institutions, and cultural or artistic triumphs cannot compensate for a lack of responsibility and initiative. Each person must take the initiative to work toward a more unified and peaceful world where a reverence for all life forms exists. "Each person's well being is ultimately dependent on the development of a sense of tolerance, empathy, and friendly concern in others" (p. 163). Foucault (1980) notes that it is in the force of resistance that change occurs and that systems of knowledge also transform. Post modernist thought and the emergence of divergent ways of knowing are in Foucault's words "abolishing the sovereignty of the signifier" (p. 229). No one discourse may be viewed as the ultimate truth. Foucault notes that theses changes are

evident in areas such as History which is continually enlarging the "field of events" to discover new layers and dimensions of reality.

The themes of the writings presented above emphasize the point that teachers do not work in an isolated context. A consideration of the times that we are living in and how complex social forces shape and influence the teaching-learning dynamic are critical. Indeed, the adult education literature has emphasized the importance of developing critical literacy and cultural analysis as ways of helping individuals understand how broader social, political, and economic changes impact their lives (Brookfield, 1987, 1995). Kretovics (1985) states that educators need to help students acquire "conceptual tools necessary to critique and engage society along with its inequalities and injustices" (p. 51). Television, advertisements, and other forms of the mass media have profoundly influenced the values, beliefs, and lifestyles of individuals. The consumerist culture that we live in often ignores or minimizes the consequences of acquisitiveness in all of its dimensions. Sullivan (1990) suggests that the shift from an industrial society to a communications society has given rise to "a privatizing of consciousness and human experience" (p. 211).

Earlier, Northrop Frye (1967) wrote that the "self-consciousness" of modern society has given rise to two contrasting cultural dialectics - "an intellectual antagonism between two mental attitudes" (p. 18). While one attitude is critically conscious and is interested in finding ways to develop a healthier and more self-respecting way of life, the other attitude is more passive, negative, and susceptible to mass media forms that "stun and demoralize" the critical conscience of individuals. Frye maintains that the political and economic forces that often drive the mass communications media have the potential to "break down the associative structures of the inner mind and replace them by the prefabricated structures of the media" (p. 38). Frye sees the potential of education and the critical study of literature and the mass media as one way of creating new possibilities in a society captivated by the "myth of progress". It is the "uncritical attitude" that becomes a "dangerous enemy" (Frye, 1967, p. 19). He further writes that:

> As we enter a second century contemplating a world where power and success
> express themselves so much in stentorian lying, hypnotized leadership, and panic-
> stricken suppression of freedom and criticism, the uncreated identity of Canada
> may be after all not so bad a heritage to take with us. (Frye, 1967, p.123)

It is in these unrealized or uncreated worlds of possibility that transformative changes can occur. Educational systems and educators, note Frye, can play a critical role in this change. Teachers as transformative intellectuals provide the conditions for students to be able to speak, write, and critically assert their own histories, voices, and experiences. Aronowitz and Giroux (1993) further state that:

> The starting point pedagogically for such intellectuals is not with the isolated student but with collective actors in their various cultural, class, racial, historical, and gendered settings, alongside with the particularity of their diverse problems, hopes, and dreams. It is at this point that the language of critique unites with the language of possibility. (p. 46)

The present study seeks, in part, to understand how teachers define their own role and responsibility in this time of change and uncertainty. To what extent do the teachers in this study address social and personal challenges in a "critically reflective" way in, for example, the curriculum choices they make or in the teaching and learning strategies that they apply in the classroom context?

Transformational Learning Theory and the Role of the Adult Educator

Transformational learning has become a focal point of theoretical and practical study in adult education over the last twenty years. The critical education theory of Paulo Freire (1970), Jack Mezirow's (1978, 1981) theory of perspective transformation and Laurent Daloz's (1984) holistic perspective have analysed different dimensions of transformative learning in adults. Their ideas have been applied to adult education contexts that include: literacy education, social change movements, environmental education, women's consciousness raising groups, the workplace, and critical media literacy (Mezirow and Associates, 1990). In the literature on adult development and learning, transformation is related to change, growth, and an expansion of self-definition (Gould 1980; Clark 1992; Merriam 1991). Thomas (1991) suggests that all learning "no matter how trivial, transforms a person... a 'new person' is created with each act of learning" (p. 6). This learning can involve a change in the existing skills, values, attitudes, beliefs, and actions of individuals.

The transformational learning perspectives presented by Freire (1970;1997), Mezirow(1981;1990;1996), and Daloz (1984) focus on the dynamic interplay of

psychological and social factors that explain how and why these changes occur in adults. Reflection, critical thinking, and dialogic discourse are viewed as prerequisites for meaningful change or transformation on an individual and social level. Mezirow (1991) defines "emancipatory education" as "an organized effort to help the learner challenge presuppositions, explore alternative perspectives, transform old ways of understanding, and act on new perspectives" (p. 167). He further emphasizes that perspective transformation represents the "hallmark of adult development." While Mezirow's theory which draws on the social philosophy of Jurgen Habermas (1971) attempts to explore the process of individual change, Freire's critical pedagogy is more radical with emphasis on "emancipatory" education being a catalyst for revolutionary change from oppressive societal structures. For Freire, education is not ideologically neutral; it can act to either liberate or oppress individuals. From Daloz's perspective, educational institutions should provide opportunities for individuals to develop both intellectually and personally. The educator plays a key role in facilitating transformative change in each perspective. Daloz views the teacher as a knowledgeable mentor and guide who can help foster intellectual and personal development by providing support, challenge, and vision:

> We can acknowledge the power of our presence in students' lives and accept the responsibility for providing them with the vision they may lack. But we can also recognize that we are only a single force among many and that our ultimate task is to understand those forces so that they can travel ahead on their own. (1986, p.240)

Freire's Idea of Conscientization and the Role of the Adult Educator. In Freire's (1970, 1973) view, the educator assumes the role of a co-learner who with empathy and insight understands the existential reality of the learners. Freire uses the term "conscientization" to refer to the process of becoming critically aware of one's life world through an in-depth interpretation of problems and through dialogue with others. Education becomes democratic when educators participate collaboratively with adult learners in "critical and liberating dialogue that varies in accordance with historical conditions and the level at which the oppressed perceive reality" (Freire 1970, p. 52). The adult learners are actively involved in defining their own needs, interests, and goals. Through "praxis" or the interplay between critical reflection and action individuals are able

to move from being objects who are "carried along in the wake of change" to subjects who create and intervene in situations. Shor (1987) emphasizes that the teacher's conviction that she or he can learn important things from the student is a keystone in Freire's problem-posing process of critical education:

> The teacher who changes to liberatory modes accepts responsibility for a process which converts students from manipulated objects into active, critical subjects... The ideal development of teacher and students, where both mutually evolve the class, permits the students to grow into an intellectual character which is not mere mimicry of the professorial style. Through a prolonged process, the transfer of initiative opens up unfamiliar personality development. (Shor, 1987, p. 103)

Freire's (1970) analysis of the role of the educator and the shift from a teacher/centred environment to a student-centred one reflects the humanistic orientation he takes. "This teaching cannot be done from the top down, but only from the inside out, by the illiterate himself, with the collaboration of the educator" (1970, p. 404). He criticizes the "banking concept" of educators that view the students as the depositories who receive, memorize, and repeat "deposits" made by the teacher. In contrast, "problem-posing" dialogue enables learners to critically reflect on the way they exist in the world and develop strategies to transform it. Cunningham (1988) also reinforces the importance of facilitating critical thinking among students as a central component of effective adult education programs:

> Participant produced knowledge competes with, confronts, and forces change onto the official knowledge, the participants in recognizing that they have produced and celebrated their view of the world empower themselves. This exercising of power...can produce independence and informed critical thinkers, as opposed to dependent and "coping" underclass. (p. 137)

Freire emphasizes that words, and thematic topics for writing and discussion, be "laden with the meaning of people's existential experience, not the teacher's experience" (1970, p. 59). While teachers can suggest, they should not determine the themes which serve to organize the content of the discussion. He further states that "education must begin with the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of contradiction so that both are simultaneously teachers and students" (1970, p. 59). For

Freire, imposing literacy programs without listening to the learner's own language, thoughts, aspirations, and experiences results in indifference and passivity. He is also critical of programs that concentrate on persons acquiring some definable skill which can be tapped and utilized in the interests of the economy. The aims of the program are to make people become more efficient and productive citizens and workers under the prevailing governments. In this context "functional" literacy does not allow for critical thinking; instead, it is a retreat from democracy.

The ideas expressed by Freire (1970) contributed to a critical analysis of North American literacy programs (Kozol, 1980, 1985; Giroux, 1983; Fingeret, 1984; Kazemak, 1988; Quigley, 1990; Ferdman, 1990; Malicky, Katz, Norton, and Norman, 1997). All of these researchers have in some way questioned the underlying assumptions about the nature of literacy, the role of the instructor, the nature of resistance and nonparticipation, and the social and political implications of literacy education. Kozol (1985) and Kazemak (1988) found that many literary programs explicitly or implicitly perpetuate a distortion of social reality by "blaming the victim" for being poor, unemployed and undereducated rather than critically examining economic and political structures that limit employment and education for disenfranchised groups. Malicky and Norman (1994) found that there is little evidence that suggests that literacy programs have a positive impact on employment and higher paying jobs. These researchers suggest that rather than focussing on grade attainment, more focus should be on issues concerning the "qualitative" uses of literacy skills. Kazemak (1988) suggests that a "perspective transformation" among those educators and administrators who view literacy as the "transmission" of a set of cognitive skills from the "literate" to the "illiterate" individual. Ferdman (1990) emphasizes that an individual's identity as a member of an ethno cultural group is intertwined with the meaning and consequences of becoming literate, and educators need to be sensitive to "both the symbolic aspects and the content of what is being taught and learned" (p. 182).

Ellsworth's (1992) critique emphasizes that while the literature of critical pedagogy recognizes that teachers have much to learn from their students' experiences, it does not address the ways teachers or professors could never know about the experiences, oppressions, and understandings of other participants in the class. This "partial knowing" would make it difficult or impossible for "any single voice in the classroom — including

that of the professor — to assume the position of center or origin of knowledge or authority, of having privileged access to authentic experience or appropriate language" (p. 510). Ellsworth contends that the "mythical norms" of the "critical teacher," "dialogue discourse" and "conscientization" as a means of attaining personal empowerment can become dangerously flawed if educators avoid exploring and recognizing the contradictions in critical theory. As a white woman and a professor, Ellsworth found it difficult to speak about gender oppression given her position of institutional power relative to the students in her class.

Citing Giroux's (1988) emphasis that in order for dialogue to be possible, classroom participants need to demonstrate "trust, sharing, and commitment to improving the quality of human life," Ellsworth notes that this trust and openness may be very difficult to establish. Reflecting on her experiences teaching a course on "Media and Anti-Racist Pedagogies," Ellsworth observed that the silence of many participants was related to their fear of disclosing too much and being vulnerable. Other facts included:

> Memories of bad experiences in other contexts of speaking out; resentment that other oppressions (sexism, hetero sexism, fat oppression, classism, anti-Semitism) were being marginalized in the name of addressing racism — and guilt for feeling such resentment; confusion about levels of trust and commitment surrounding those who were allies to another group's struggles; resentment by some students of colour for feeling that they were expected to disclose 'more' and once again take the burden of doing the pedagogic work of educating white students/ professors about the consequences of White middle-class privilege; and resentment by White students for feeling that they have to prove that they were not the enemy. (p. 514)

While Freire emphasizes the importance of the learners' involvement in the planning process, he does not discuss the problems that can arise when individuals within an oppressed group hold different perspectives. Freire assumes that when the oppressed perceive themselves in relation to the world, they will act together to collectively to transform it. If collective social action is the goal, to what extent is the individual's personal experience of "critical consciousness" undermined? Freire does not account for within group variance. Individuals who hold beliefs that are in conflict with the group may feel ostracized or compelled to accept the group stance. Freire speaks of conscientization

as a group process designed for adult learners. Elias (1980) maintains that Freire does not explain the extent to which individuals can be conscientized outside the group. Elias states that "Freire appears to have little interest in speaking of education as a one-to-one relationship or as self-education" (p. 9). Certainly many of Freire's principles can be applied to individually oriented programs, but concern is more with political group action. In his analysis of culture and literacy, Ferdman (1990) emphasizes that from a social psychological perspective, it is important to explore "the intersection of the group and individual levels of analysis at once considering both between group and within group diversity" (p. 184). Freire also does not identify the contradictions that can exist between the "oppressed" and "oppressors." Mayo (1993) also contends that regardless of the educational, political, or social context, there will always be a tension between the forces of "liberation" and "domestication." Contradictions in Freire's critical pedagogy invite ongoing critical reflection.

From Mezirow's perspective, the educator is described as an "empathic provocateur and role model, a collaborative learner who is critically self-reflective and encourages other to consider alternative perspectives" (1991, p. 206). Mezirow (1990) defines transformational education as a "psycho educational process" of helping individual learners develop more advanced and integrated meaning perspectives. Through premise reflection and rational discourse, individuals are able to understand and challenge distortions in their life worlds.

Mezirow's Theory of Perspective Transformation. In his theory of perspective transformation, Mezirow (1981) integrates the ideas of theorists such as Jurgen Habermas, George Kelly, and Roger Gould. His ideas reflect both humanistic and constructivist themes of learning. In his theory, Mezirow differentiates between instrumental, communicative, and emancipatory learning. While in instrumental learning, knowledge may be used to control and manipulate the environment in some way, in communicative learning, "the learner actively and purposefully negotiates his or her way through a series of specific encounters using language and gesture and by anticipating the actions of others" (p. 79). Social norms provide a frame of reference where individuals seek to reciprocate and understand perspectives. "Reaching an understanding is the inherent purpose of communicative action" (p.96). In emancipatory or transformative learning, a

critical examination of values and beliefs through critically reflective and rational discourse may result in transformed meaning perspectives.

Mezirow (1990) asserts that adulthood is a time for reassessing the assumptions of our formative years that may have resulted in distorted self-perceptions and limited perceptions of our "life worlds". Perspective transformation is "the emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting the structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understanding" (1990, p. 14). In his work with college re-entry women, Mezirow (1978) describes the dramatic changes in women's self-perceptions as they began to redefine their identity and challenge culturally prescribed assumptions of what constitutes the "appropriate" role for women (e.g. the "good" obedient wife, the self-sacrificing mother, the nurturer, etc.). Mezirow notes that the women's movement in the 60s and 70s provided a supportive atmosphere which encouraged and helped women re-evaluate their lives and set a "new agenda" for themselves. Rather than conform to narrowly defined roles and passively accept feeling devalued in a patriarchal society, these women began to explore the sociopolitical dynamics that reinforced oppression.

Mezirow (1990) states that perspective transformation can be triggered by a "disorienting dilemma" or crisis such as a divorce, death of someone close, a job loss or a move. These situations challenge individuals to change existing patterns of thought and behaviour to meet the new demands. The crisis or disorienting dilemma may also be triggered by a provocative discussion, book, painting, or poem. Mezirow (1981) identifies ten stages in the process of perspective transformation. These include:

1) A disorienting dilemma.

2) Self examination.

3) A critical assessment of personally internalized role assumptions and a sense of alienation from traditional social expectations.

4) Relating one's discontent to similar experiences of others or to public issues—recognizing that one's problem is shared and not exclusively a private matter.

5) Exploring options for new ways of acting.

6) Building competence and self-confidence in new roles.

7) Planning a course of action.

8) Acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans.

9) Provisional efforts to try new roles and to assess feedback.

10) A reintegration into society on the basis of conditions dictated by the new perspective.

Eighty years earlier, William James (1902) describes a process of religious conversion similar to Mezirow's (1981) description of the process of perspective transformation. In sudden or radical religious conversion or "transformation" (James, 1902, p. 196) " a self hitherto divided" becomes "unified" (p. 189). These changes occur when groups of ideas and values that form "the habitual centre of personal energy" (p. 196) give way to new ideas and perceptions. James refers to the mind as a dynamic system of ideas that can be altered by experience - both conscious and unconscious (James, 1899, p. 77). The following description by James (1902) captures the essence of personal transformation:

> A new perception, a sudden emotional shock, or an occasion which lays bare the organic alteration will make the whole fabric fall together; and then the centre of gravity sinks into an attitude more stable, for the new ideas that reach the centre in the rearrangement seem now to be locked there, and the new structure remains permanent. (pp. 197-198)

Mezirow's (1981) theory of perspective transformation, Kelly's (1955) theory of personal constructs and Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model reflect many of the ideas developed by James in books like The Variety of Religious Experiences and in Talks to Teachers.

Like Freire (1970), Mezirow (1981) acknowledges the influence of social, political, and cultural forces that may hinder, distort, or limit an individual's capacity to progress and gain a sense of agency over their lives. These distortions are acquired through socialization processes and the uncritical acceptance of another's view. Mezirow (1990) identifies three common distortions that can be challenged through rational discourse: epistemic distortions (related to the nature and use of knowledge), sociocultural distortions which arise from the uncritical acceptance of belief systems that

relate to power and social relationships, and psychological distortions which relate to internalized feelings and thoughts that continue to generate fear, depression, and anxiety. Creating the conditions for discourse can free individuals from these distortions. The ideal conditions for rational discourse enable participants to:

- have accurate and complete information;

- be able to weigh evidence and assess arguments objectively;

- be open to alternative perspectives;

- be able to become critically reflective upon presuppositions and their consequences;

- have equal opportunity to participate (including the change to challenge, question, refute, and reflect and to hear others do the same); and

- be able to accept an informed, objective, and rational consensus as a legitimate test of reality (1991, pp. 77-78).

Indeed, these are ideal conditions given the complex interplay of factors such as: participant bias; the diversity of learning styles; compatibility in personality; the level of readiness individuals possess if they are to understand and apply transformative learning concepts; the curriculum goals; and the skill of the adult educator to model critical thinking and to establish an educations atmosphere conducive to rational discourse.

Questions arise concerning the role of the adult educator and the goals of transformative learning. If a central goal is to facilitate critical reflection and discourse, how skilled should the facilitator be in critically reflecting on his/her thoughts, beliefs, and actions? Clark (1992) notes: "We must first attend to our own struggles to make meaning of our experience... Then having attended to our own meaning making process, we'll be in a position to facilitate that process in others" (p. 214). How do the dynamics of power in the teacher-learner relationship impact learning? Not all educators share similar interests and goals, and to be an effective educator from Mezirow's perspective, a broad range of skills and experience in addition to the "preferable" personality style (e.g. empathic, nonauthoritarian, etc.) is needed. If a major goal in transformative learning is to help challenge individual learners' psychological distortions that impede their educational progress, how skilled and knowledgeable about psychological theory and psychotherapeutic technique should the facilitator be?

What training should be provided to ensure that facilitators have adequate knowledge in psychotherapy? Mezirow (1991) maintains that adult educators should have "sufficient psychological knowledge...to be able to help healthy learners deal with common psychic distortion...and [they] should be able to distinguish between these learners and those whose mental problems require professional therapeutic treatment" (p. 225). Mezirow tends to underplay the difficulties involved in the organizational needs (e.g. professional development, specialized courses, etc.) to ensure that facilitators/ educators have sufficient training and knowledge in areas such as ethics, group dynamics, critical thinking, and psychology.

Mezirow's (1981) theory of perspective transformation has been criticized by Griffin (1987), Clark and Wilson (1991), Collard and Law (1989), Hart (1990) and Cranton (1994). Many of these theorists suggest that Mezirow's (1981) "charter for andragogy" which emphasizes the role of adult educators as helping individuals is more a "prescription for good practice" rather than a theory of adult learning. Cranton suggests that philosopher Thomas Kuhn's notion of "paradigm-transition" presents a more comprehensive understanding of adult learning. Hart (1990) and Clark and Wilson (1991) state that Mezirow's "rationalist-masculinist" emphasis on communicative action undermines the role of emotions and the ethic of caring in favour or individual autonomy and the dominant values of our culture — masculine, white, and middle class.

Cranton (1994) maintains that Mezirow (1981) does not address individual differences in his theory. She suggests that transformational learning may be experienced differently among individuals of different psychological types, an that the process dynamics will vary from one person to another. "It may be that some people are less likely to be aware of or to question their values and assumptions or to respond to dilemmas with reflection; the process of transformative learning must be different for them" (p. 108). Moreover, not all learning is transformative, and many adult educators may not perceive themselves as "emancipatory" oriented. Cranton asserts that educators who view themselves as "subject-oriented" see their role as someone who disseminates and clarifies knowledge. Educators who see learning as being initiated by the expressed needs of individuals tend to view education and learning as "consumer oriented" and their role centres around responding to and meeting those needs. Educators who view learning as

leading to freedom from personal or societal constraints will view the goal of education as emancipatory learning and will describe their role as one of helping learners become more aware of their constraints.

Hart (1990) suggests that Mezirow does not adequately deal with Habermas' concept of "dominance-free communication" which is "based on and allow[s] for an authentic consensus among all those concerned about what norms shall guide their actions" (p. 136). She emphasizes that educators, in particular, need to examine how the "politics of power" influence the teaching and learning transaction. Collard and Law (1989) also fault Mezirow for underplaying the importance of social context and social change.

Tennant (1993) argues that Mezirow does not sufficiently explore the social origins of the life course which leads him to find instances of perspective transformation in growth events that we would call normative psychological development. In trying to link perspective transformation with adult development, Mezirow (1991) states: "The test of a developmentally progressive perspective is not only that it is more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative of experience but also that it is permeable (open) to alternative perspective so that inclusivity, discrimination, and integration continually increase" (p. 156). Yet, as Tennant emphasizes, "integrative of experience" depends on the social and historical context in which the experience occurs. For instance, feminist writers like Jean Baker Miller (1986) and Carol Gilligan (1993) have pointed out that developmental theories proposed by Erik Erikson, Daniel Levinson and Lawrence Kohlberg did not "integrate" women's experiences in devising normative stages of adult development. The emphasis on qualities like autonomy, individuation, and independence emphasized the experiences of men. Tennant and Pogson (1995) suggest that adult educators who work in areas where there is a link between personal and social change (e.g. migrant education, literacy programs, labour education, racism and sexism workshops, programs for the unemployed) and who wish to realize the radical intent of perspective transformation, need to be aware of the ways in which the life course and the norms of adult development are socially constructed both in theory and in the lives of individuals.

Pietrykowski (1996) notes that in presenting the theory of perspective transformation, Mezirow advances a humanist vision of education and human development associated with Freire and Habermas. Pietrykowski emphasizes the need for educators to focus more on the multiple dimensions of power that are part of everyday discourse:

> Educators can help to identify the multiple sources of power that are linked to knowledge construction, suggest alternative meanings and help develop critical competencies oriented at these diverse micro-technologies of power. Critical media literacy and consumer literacy are examples of the types of symbolic spaces open to a postmodern analysis. Postmodern adult education can help to dissipate power and extend the visible use of power but cannot exist outside of relations of power. Attention paid to the pervasive role of power in adult learning processes need not lead to nihilism and a politics of despair so often attributed to postmodern theory. Rather, it requires that we turn our gaze away from some ultimate goal of creating ideal speech conditions and toward the undeniably political task of understanding the deep structures of power that govern our lives. (p. 94)

The concerns that Pietrykowski raises are similar to those written by Ellsworth (1992), Macedo (1993), and Mayo (1993). They also emphasize the need for adult educators to possess a range of interpersonal skills, sensitivities, and a depth of insight and knowledge in a wide range of disciplines that include philosophy, political science, sociology, and psychology. The complex dimensions of teaching further highlight the importance of understanding and exploring teachers' voices.

Phenomenological Research Perspectives of Teaching and Learning

The research on teaching and learning presented by Entwistle (1984), Marton and Säljö (1984), Hounsell (1984), Ramsden (1984; 1988) and Marton, Dall'Alba and Beatty (1991) relate to the transformative perspectives in their emphasis on the direct exploration of students' and teachers' experiences of learning. While in traditional research paradigms, explaining behaviour comes from an "objective" observer on the outside, the phenomenological approach seeks an empathic understanding of what is involved in the individual's description of learning. The shift is not just of methodology but of perspective.

In his research, Säljö (1979; 1984) posed the question "What does learning mean?" to a group of university students. He identified five different conceptions of learning which represented the relations between individuals and aspects of their world:

1) The increase of knowledge.

2) Memorizing.

3) Acquisition of facts, and procedures, which can be accepted in practice.

4) Abstraction of meaning.

5) An interpretive process aimed at understanding reality.

In their 1991 study, Marton *et al* added a sixth conception of learning: changing as a person. This conceptualization is similar to Mezirow's "perspective transformation" and Freire's "conscientization." Marton and his associates state that "at a certain point, regarding oneself as a more capable person implies a fundamental change from seeing oneself as an object of what is happening... to seeing oneself as an agent of what is happening"(p. 291). While this conceptualization does not necessarily mean having the power to control what will happen, the very understanding of how things are related enables individuals to feel a sense of agency. One of the respondents in the Marton et al. (1991) study illustrates this position:

> I suppose it's what lights you... it's something personal and it's something that's continuous. Once it starts it carries on and it might lead to other things. It might be like a root that has other branches coming off it. You should be doing (e.g. learning) not for the exam but for the person before and for the person afterwards. (p. 293)

When learning was discussed, the students interpreted it in the context of academic learning. Marton and Säljö (1984) found that whether students took a "surface" (corresponding to levels 1 and 2) or "deep" (corresponding to conceptions of learning in levels 4 and 5) approach to learning was dependent on such factors as: past experience, motivational orientation, absence of anxiety, and individual's perceptions of task demands and evaluation procedures.

Learning and Motivation. An interesting association between motivation and approaches to learning was made by Entwistle (1984). Extrinsic motivation, which was associated with surface level approaches to learning, describes the seeking after external

reinforcement for learning from school marks, grades, or qualification requirements. Intrinsic motivation, often associated with deeper level approaches to learning, emphasized the interest, perceived relevance of the subject content, and self-confidence of the individual. Entwistle notes that it is important to consider the converse of motivation - (de)motivation which may have developed over the repeated experience of failure and humiliation. There is also the possibility that highly anxious individuals go through their education driven more by a fear of failure rather than by a hope of success. Entwistle (1984) noted that learners who become "cue conscious" are aware of the implicit rules governing learning, at least in the school context. They learn to distinguish between the stated and the hidden agenda in the formal learning environment:

> The unrecognized contrast between intent and the effects of teaching is often expressed as a distinction between the formal and the 'hidden' curriculum. Snyder (1971) at MIT pointed out that the formal curriculum, as defined by the staff, demanded originality, problem solving, independence of thought, and analytic skills. In contrast, the hidden curriculum - the message received implicitly but strongly by students - depended on the teaching methods and assessment procedures, and these encouraged question spotting and rote memorization of facts and theories considered important by teachers. (p.4)

Schmeck (1988) notes that if we repeatedly encourage students to process the subject matter at a surface level, we are nurturing a "reproducing orientation" to studying. In contrast, if we encourage a deep engagement, we nurture a meaning orientation to life in general.

Ramsden (1988) identified three related contextual domains that influence learning strategies used by individuals: the teaching (method of transmission of what is learned), the assessment (the method of evaluation of what is learned), and the curriculum (the content and structure of what is learned). For Ramsden, effective teaching places students in situations where they are encouraged to develop more complex conceptions of learning and practice the use of deep, holistic approach that emphasize the interpretation and relevance of subject content. Too often, instructors fail to encourage conceptual changes in students, and they leave college or university "conceptually underdeveloped" even though they know more facts. Facts are taught, notes Ramsden, without considering the

conceptions that make these facts interesting and meaningful. The "bridges" that should link students' prior experience and knowledge with unfamiliar concepts are not being built. Ramsden (1988) and Marton (1988) suggest that teachers could facilitate more on their own teaching by asking themselves: "why am I teaching these facts; what do they imply; what do they mean?" These reflective questions are part of the process by which teachers can develop a personal philosophy of teaching.

Constructivist Themes. Both Candy (1991) and Nuthall (1995) expand on the research above in their comprehensive analysis of constructivist approaches to teaching and learning. Nuthall notes that the influence of disciplines like social anthropology, sociolinguistics, and critical theory as well as the range of methodologies like discourse analysis, phenomenography, and ethnomethodology have challenged educators to look at learning from many different angles. The sociocultural perspectives of Vygotsky (1981) emphasizes that psychological or mental processes derive from the social interaction of individuals. The social becomes psychological through "cultural tools" such as language, art, mathematical symbols, and so on. "It is the motivation for social interaction that help the "expert" and "novice" co-ordinate perceptions, understanding and skills" (Nuthall, 1995, p. 25). Cultural norms and artifacts play a key role in shaping cognitive processes. Reciprocal teaching, collaborative learning projects, and modelling the role of an expert are ways of integrating the sociocultural perspective of learning into the classroom.

The sociocultural perspectives presented by Lave (1991), Rogoff (1994) and Brown (1994) stress the important role of language as a sociocultural tool that enables individuals to "enter" communities of practice where meanings are negotiated. As a cultural artifact, language is viewed as a set of discoveries that define or characterize concepts, ways of thinking, acting, and valuing in different curriculum areas. These "genres" or discourses are "cognitive metasystems that control, verify, and select the products of other cognitive systems in accordance with socially constructed and regulated linguistic structures and norm." Wells (1994) suggests that each curriculum area is composed of discourses that delineate specific ways of thinking and perceiving. Students become "semiotic apprentices" who attempt to learn the cultural practices, language and symbol systems in areas like mathematics, science, history or English. Citing Wells (1994), Nuthall (1995) states that "semiotic apprenticeship involves the appropriation and

mastering of the ways of making meaning through activities and representations that define each discipline" (p. 36). Classroom discourse becomes a link between the "informal genres of everyday life" to the "formal genres of the curriculums" (Nuthall, 1995, p. 38).

Drawing on the theory of Jean Piaget (1970), Nuthall (1995) writes that a major problem that the teacher faces is how to structure activities and "guide the student's mental processes" so that an equilibrium between the new knowledge and the underlying conceptual structures and anticipatory schemes that the students use to understand and assimilate their experience. Citing the work of Kelly (1955), Ausubel (1968), Von Glaserfeld (1984), Candy (1991) writes that the mental activity of integrating two or more schemas together to search for similarities and differences in at the core of constructivist thought. "The development and refinement of the learner's cognitive map occurs through a constant process of interaction between hierarchic integration or subsumption on the one hand and cognitive discrimination on the other" (p. 272).

In terms of implications for teaching practice, Candy (1991) emphasizes that the challenge for educators is to be able to understand the existing understandings, and meaning systems of the learner through the use of activities such as repertory grids, concept maps, and learning journals. He suggests that educators need to convey to learners a sense of confidence about the learner's ability to achieve. Many adults have been socialized in an educational system that robs learners of "a sense of personal potency" (p. 391). Just as passivity and dependency have been learned, they can also be unlearned. The shift from passivity and dependency to engagement and self-direction can be achieved in part through a greater awareness of different strategies that would foster intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation (Ramsden, 1984; Candy, 1991; Forsyth and McMillan, 1993).

Wlodkowski (1993) and Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (1995) suggest that instructors need to develop motivational plans that can be applied at different stages in the learning program. They must begin with themselves by being able to demonstrate expertise, enthusiasm, empathy, and clarity. Building learner involvement and fostering positive attitudes toward learning would require the instructor to look more closely at the way individual students are experiencing the class. Culturally responsive teaching takes into account how gender and cultural diversity affect learning. Incorporating ideas from

Gardner's (1982) multiple intelligences theory is one way that teachers can facilitate learning.

Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (1995) refer to Gardner's (1982) theory of multiple intelligences to develop their framework for culturally responsive teaching. Rather than conceptualizing intelligence in a linear way, Gardener (1982; 1993) proposes the idea of multiple intelligences to account for the diverse learning potential and talent that individuals have; spatial, linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal are among the intelligences that Gardner describes. He suggests that topics in the natural or social sciences can be approached from "five entry points': At the narrational entry point, the teacher or student can present a story of narrative about the concept in question; at the logical quantitative entry point, numerical considerations or deductive and/or inductive reasoning processes could be used; at the foundational entry point, the philosophical and terminological aspects of a concept could be explored; at the aesthetic entry point, visual or artistic dimensions would be highlighted; and finally, at the experiential entry point, direct practical experience would help individuals deal more directly with the topic. Wlodkowski and Ginsberg state that multiple entry points are a powerful means for dealing with learner and teacher misconceptions, biases and stereotypes. "By encouraging learners to develop multiple representations and having them relate these representations to one another, we can move away from the correct-answer tyranny of post secondary education and arrive at a fuller understanding of our world" (Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 1995, p. 142).

Critical Thinking: A Dimension of Transformative Learning

Despite the frequency with which the term critical thinking surfaces in transformative theories and research studies of adult education, the concept of critical thinking is confusing and there are multiple perspectives on what it actually means (McPeck, 1981; Garrison, 1991; Atkinson, 1997; Fox, 1994). The link between critical thinking, problem finding, wisdom, and creativity has been explored (Arlin, 1975; Sternberg, 1990, Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Questioning assumptions, divergent thinking, and the ability to transform information in unique and creative ways are shared characteristics of "critical thinkers," "wise persons" and "creative minds." Kurfiss (1988), Brookfield (1987), and Garrison (1991) present extensive overviews of the theory and

research on critical thinking in adult and higher education. These researchers emphasize that any discussion involving critical thinking should have a framework for defining, identifying characteristics, and assessing it in learners. It may be more useful for theorists who study critical thinking to contextualize its meaning and consider it as one dimension in an individual's ongoing personality and cognitive development.

Garrison (1991) suggests that it might be useful for researchers to clarify the nature of thinking first and then add critical to it. Drawing on Dewey's (1933) connection of critical reflection to "suspended judgement", Garrison states that "perhaps the most notable characteristic or critical thought is that it involves a certain scepticism, or suspension of assent, toward a given statement, established norms or mode of doing things" (p. 288). This scepticism implies a more proactive type of thought that leaves room for considering alternative possibilities, creative problem solving or for an expanded understanding of information.

Dewey (1916) identified five phases of reflective thought that are part of the critical thinking process:

> The general features of a reflective experience are... i) perplexity, confusion, doubt, due to the fact that one is implicated in an incomplete situation whose full character is not yet determined; ii) conjectural anticipation - a tentative interpretation of the given elements, attributing to them a tendency to effect certain consequences; iii) a careful survey (examination, inspection, exploration, analysis) of all attainable consideration which will define and clarify the problem in hand; iv) a consequent elaboration of the tentative process hypothesis to make it more precise; v) taking one stand upon the projected hypothesis as a plan of action... doing something overtly ... and thereby testing the hypothesis. (p. 150)

Dewey's (1916; 1933) analysis is an attempt to encourage a greater balance between internal and external frames of reference. Both Garrison (1991) and Brookfield (1987) present modern variations of Dewey's description of reflective thinking. There are also numerous parallels between Dewey's (1916) description of reflective thinking and Mezirow's (1981) theory of perspective transformation and Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model. Brookfield's (1987) five phases of critical thinking include: the triggering event; appraisal of the situation, an exploration to explain discrepancies or inconsistencies;

developing alternative perspectives; and finally, the integration of alternative ways of thinking or living. "In the weak sense critical thinking is a set of discrete micro-logical skills concerned with technical reasons, while in the strong sense critical thinking is a set of integrated macro-logical skills concerned with insight and the development of emancipatory reason" (Brookfield, 1987, p. 291). In the adult education context, it is this latter definition that is applied in most theoretical positions. The characteristics of critical thinkers that Brookfield (1987) describes also parallels Sternberg's (1990) descriptions of wise person. Reasoning ability, intuition, good judgement, and perceptiveness are among the common characteristics (Sternberg, 1990). Sternberg (1990) writes that "the wise person is characterized by a metacognitive stance...They apply the processes of intellect in a way that eschews automatization" (p. 157).

Critical Thinking, Creativity, and Problem Solving. Kurfiss (1988) suggests that critical thinking combines the creativity found in the discovery process and the justification found in the evaluative and logical reasoning process. Paul (1992) also observed that creativity and criticality are "interwoven into a seamless fabric" (p. 18). Taylor (1988) notes that creative thinking involves "sensing difficulties, problem, gaps in the information, missing elements; making guesses and formulating hypotheses about these deficiencies; evaluating and testing these guesses and hypotheses; possibly revising and retesting them; and finally communicating the results" (Taylor 1988 cited in Sternberg, 1988, p. 110). Critical thinking, then, consists of more skills than are used in the problem solving approach suggested by Watson and Glaser (1980). Decades earlier, Lindeman (1926) wrote that too often adults become "too earnest in their search for rationality" and "abandoned the joy of things" (p. 59). He stated that "it is useless to discuss feelings and emotions as if these are aspects of personality separate from thinking and reasoning...these are interdependent functions" (pp. 66-67). Citing Bronowski (1971), Fisher (1995) emphasizes that objectivist thinking and discourse cannot evolve without activating the imagination:

> It is a free play of the mind, an invention outside the logical processes. This is the central act of imagination in science, and it is in all respects like any similar act in literature; it can in fact be taken as a definition of imagination. In this respect science and literature are alike: in both of them, the mind decides to enrich the

system as it stands by an addition which is made by an unmechanized act of free choice. (Bronowski, 1971 cited in Fisher 1995, p. 174)

Critical Thinking and Adult Development. Is critical thinking unique to the realm of adult development? Can children think critically? Studies by Piaget (1970) and Perry (1970) suggests that not even 50% of adults may reach the formal operations phase where abstract though and more complex reasoning processes occur. Does this mean that pre-adults may not be capable of or prepared for critical thinking? Should critical thinking be taught as a separate subject or set of skills as Watson and Glaser (1980) and de Bono (1967) suggest? Kreber (1993) contends that critical thinking may need to be preceded by a phase of instruction in which the students become familiar with the subject matter first, and then the teacher must find ways of creatively integrating critical thinking processes into the subject matter domain. McPeck (1981) also asserts that a precondition for critical thinking is foundational knowledge and information. Meyers (1986) states that logical reasoning and problem solving should not be taught in and of themselves separately from specific subject matter, since "they take different forms in the contest of different academic disciplines" (p. 58). Sternberg (1986) also supports this position by writing that "if innumerable studies of transfer of training have revealed anything, it is that transfer is exceedingly difficult to attain" (Sternberg cited in Garrison, 1991, p.299). Critical thinking skills, notes Sternberg, need to be learned in a way that maximizes the probability of their transfer to real life situations.

From a cognitive perspective, Kurfiss (1988) maintains that three kinds of knowledge interact in developing a model of critical thinking: 1) declarative knowledge: knowing the facts and concepts in the discipline; 2) procedural knowledge: knowing how to reason, inquire, and present knowledge in the discipline; and, 3) meta-cognition: cognitive control strategies, such as setting goals, determining when additional information is needed, and assessing the value of this inquiry. Kurfiss maintains that while students acquire considerable declarative knowledge in the course of their education, procedural knowledge is rarely taught and many students' metacognitive skills are poorly developed. As a result, "students cannot draw upon the full extent of their knowledge when called upon to complete assignments that require critical thinking" (p.i v). Moreover, researchers like Entwistle (1984) noted that instructors rarely model critical

thinking in their own classrooms. "It seemed that lecturers looked for critical thinking, yet taught and assessed conformity in ideas and in the acquisition of detailed factual knowledge" (p. 24).

Brookfield (1987) suggests a number of strategies that would foster critical thinking. These would include teachers creating a supportive atmosphere, listening and watching attentively for verbal and nonverbal cues in order to pose critical questions, and sensitively challenging learners' perspectives by reflecting back to learners their own beliefs, values, and attitudes.

<u>Cultural Considerations and Critical Thinking</u>. Atkinson (1997) suggests that teachers in multicultural or ESL contexts need to use caution if they wish to apply critical thinking techniques/approaches in the classroom. He identifies four factors that criticize the urgency that many researchers emphasize about the need to foster critical thinking. Atkinson maintains that: a) critical thinking may be more a "non-overt social practice" rather than a clearly-defined set of behaviours; b) critical thinking has been criticized for its exclusive and reductive character; c) teaching critical thinking to non-native speaker may be fought with cultural problems; and d) once having been taught, thinking skills may not transfer effectively beyond the contexts of instruction.

Fox (1994) also maintains that the concept and application of critical thinking contains many biases and assumptions that put forth a "correct" and "superior" way of knowing:

> This thing we call 'critical thinking' or 'analysis' has strong cultural components. It is more than just a set of writing and thinking techniques - it is a voice, a stance, a relationship with texts and family member, friends, teachers, the media, even the history of one's country. This is why 'critical analysis' is so hard for faculty members to talk about; because it is learned intuitively it is easy to recognize, like a face or a personality, but it is not so easily defined and is not all simple to explain to someone who has been brought up differently. (p. 125)

Atkinson (1997) contends that just as children may be socialized into traditional gender roles, so too may there be an almost unconscious or tacit acceptance of critical thinking being culturally valued similar to a "self-evident foundation" of Western thought such as freedom of speech. Fox (1994) contends that there is little consensus on what

critical thinking actually means, even though the term is commonly used to denote a "higher order" thinking process. In her research study, Fox (1994) asked university writing professors to define terms like analysis and analytical writing - terms often associated with critical thinking. She found that these questions were surprisingly difficult for them to answer despite their confidence in using these terms in the language of the assignments and in the assessment of student writing. Atkinson (1997) states that "because (critical thinking skills) are not seriously theorized concepts but exist rather at the level of common sense and tacitly learned behaviour, it is practically speaking beyond the capacity of most teachers to teach them in more than an anecdotal and hit or miss way"(p. 77).

The criticism focussing on teaching critical thinking in ESL classroom has centred around three areas that highlight discrepancies between non-Western and Western cultural groups: a) opposing conceptions of relations between the individual and the social system, b) contrasting norms of self-expression across cultures and c) divergent perspectives on the use of language as a means of learning (Atkinson 1997; Harklau 1994).

Primary socialization has a profound impact in the ways individuals define themselves in relation to their social and physical worlds. For instance, In eastern societies like Japan and China, normative social values of empathy and conformity may conflict with the Western individual emphasis of self-expression and independence. In his study of Japanese university students' and their approach to politeness, Matsumoto (1988) notes that Western conceptualizations of self assume that the individual is the basic unit of society; in contrast, in Japanese society, "acknowledgment and maintenance of the relative position of others, rather than preservation of an individual's proper territory, governs all social interation" (p.405). Citing research studies of Native North American cultures, Atkinson (1997) states that scholars have shown how self-expression may violate highly valued cultural norms, at least in cases where individuals are not know to each other or differ recognizably in relative social status (p. 83).

Debates, speeches, and the emphasis in the written language as a tool for creative and intellectual exploration may also generate conflict and confusion to non-Western learners who may not have been exposed to discussion and writing that encourage discovery, invention, and self-expression. In an ethnographic study of Chinese immigrant

teenagers in U.S. high schools, Harklau (1994) noted that one of the most significant findings was the "their reticence and lack of interaction with native speaking peers" (pp. 262-263). Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) found that a different emphasis is placed on writing-to-learn for nonnative students in their comparative ethnographic study of a freshman writing program and an ESL institute at a large U.S. university:

> In the freshman writing program, whose clientele was over 80% native speakers of English, writers were constantly prodded to 'deepen' their thinking, to 'go beyond' surface-level observations , and to be 'insightful,' 'original,' and 'thought-provoking' in their written work. In the ESL program, on the other hand, although similar concepts were not wholly absent from instruction, the overall emphasis was on the clear written communication of ideas, in a style described in the study as 'workpersonlike prose.'(p. 85)

Despite the emphasis that researchers like Garrison (1991) and Brookfield (1995) on the "emotional" aspect of critically reflective learning, there is still the criticism that critical thinking and the teaching of it reflects an exclusive and reductive bias that has little relevance to non-literate and non-technological cultures. In their study of womens' thinking processes, Belenky et al. (1986) contend that critical thinking is traditionally associated with linear "separate ways of knowing" most prevalent in Western philosophical discourse. Separate knowing is described as a detached aloof, and impersonal approach where the individual "follows certain rule or procedures to ensure that her judgements are unbiased. All disciplines and vocations have these impersonal procedures for analyzing thinking" (Clinchy, 1994, p. 36). In contrast, the connected owner demonstrates empathy in exploring and trying to understand the other person's perspective. Clinchy (1994) asserts that the voice of separate knowing is argument while the voice of connected knowing is narrative. Rather than asking the individual to defend her position and prove her standpoint right, the connected knower tries to understand the story and experience that led the individual to her position. "Connected knowers are not dispassionate, unbiased observers; they deliberately bias themselves in favour of the thing they are examining....This imaginative attachment is at the heart of connected knowing" (Clinchy, 1994, p.122).

In facilitating more connected ways of knowing, Belenky et al. (1986) refer to Freire's(1970) vision of the teacher as the empathic provocateur; like a midwife, the teacher is able to help student articulate and develop their own narratives. Tacit knowledge becomes explicit. In mutual connected knowing, each person becomes a midwife to the others' thoughts and each builds on the other's ideas. Reciprocal dialogue, risk, surprise, and spontaneity are part of these learning conversations. "Connected teachers use a technique similar to the participant observation method anthropologist use. Participant-observers maintain a "dynamic tension" between the separate stance of an observer and the connected, "subjective" stance of participant" (Belenky, McVicker Clinchy, Rule Goldberger, & Mattuck Tarule, 1986, p. 224).

The literature on critical thinking suggests that further research is needed to uncover the different conceptualization of critical thinking that practitioners hold. How do factors like culture, gender, and learner readiness influence the strategies and assessment techniques that instructors use? If critical thinking is cited as a curriculum or course goal, how is it integrated in the course? The separate vs. connected ways of knowing that Belenky and her colleagues (1986) explored reflect the contrast and emphasis that theorists and practitioners may place on emotion/affective dimension vs. logic/linear thinking or vice versa on their classroom practices. Gardner's (1983) Multiple Intelligences Theory and Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model could perhaps provide a more practical foundation for teachers to revisit critical thinking in new ways.

Perspectives on Teaching English

"*Literature, we say, neither reflects nor escapes from ordinary life: what it does reflect is the world as human imagination conceives it, in mythical, romantic, heroic, and ironic as well as realistic and fantastic terms. This world is the universe in human form, stretching from complete fulfilment of human desire to... the vision of reality that elsewhere I have called, for reasons rooted in my study of Blake, apocalyptic.* " (Frye, 1978, pp. 11-12)

Northrop Frye (1991) observes that if you want to find out about life, you should read literature. "Literature has swallowed life, life is inside literature" (Frye, 1991, p. 7). Frye (1988) suggests that all of our beliefs and actions take shape around a dynamic and dialectic social vision constructed by the imagination. "Literature is the language of the

imaginative inner life. Myth and metaphor...call forth the active and constructive response from its readers that only the imagination gives" (p. 120). In presenting a curriculum framework for teaching literature, Frye (1972) emphasizes a critical exploration of the social vision and cultural myths in a larger global context. This would include examining "the rhetorical devices of advertising, propaganda, official releases, news media, and everything else in a citizen's verbal experience that he is compelled to confront..." (p. 18).

How do adult educators approach teaching English ? Do they share a similar critical vision with Frye? How do they interpret and design English curriculum to address the different skill level and interests of adults from diverse sociocultural backgrounds? No doubt, the approach that an adult educator takes to teaching English will be influenced by a variety of factors: their own social vision, their background experiences in studying and teaching English, the styles of teaching that they have been exposed to in secondary and post secondary institutions, the educational context that they work in, and so on. Educators are also continually making decisions about how issues of the contemporary world might be integrated into the curriculum. The present study explores these factors and in an attempt to provide more clarity in interpreting the teachers' responses, a review of the different frameworks for teaching English is essential.

Understanding Content Knowledge in Teaching English. A constructivist perspective on the teacher's role in developing curriculum takes the view that teachers are critical thinking agents who use their unique backgrounds to construct their own understanding of the methods, materials, and approaches to teaching (Shulman, 1987; Noel, 1995; O'Loughlin, 1989). Shulman (1987) notes that "the key to distinguishing the knowledge base of teaching lies at the interaction of content and pedagogy, in the capacity of the teacher to transform the content knowledge he or she possesses into forms that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to the variations in ability and the background presented by the students" (p. 15). As a member of a scholarly community, teachers must be able to answer questions like: What are the important ideas and skills in this domain? How can I present these ideas by maintaining the integrity of the discipline as well as by addressing student diversity? Based on case studies of experienced English teachers, Gudmundsdottir and Shulman (1987) found that teachers developed a body of knowledge in English that differed from the knowledge of academic scholars in English. The model

of pedagogical reasoning that Gudmundsdottir and Shulman propose, involves six dimensions.

The process starts with the comprehension of text intended for teaching. Teachers then transform the text by critically interpreting and analysing it independently. They must also represent the ideas in the text through examples, analogies, demonstrations, and metaphors. In selecting topics for teaching, teachers must decide on the most appropriate teaching strategies that would engage the learners while still maintaining the integrity of the subject discipline. Gudmundsdottir and Shulman (1986) refer to the process of adapting and tailoring the text to the learners characteristics. Assessment and evaluation of student learning is another part of this process. The fifth aspect of Gudmunsdottir and Shulman's model involves the teachers' critical reflection upon their own teaching process. This reflection may lead to the sixth aspect - a new or deeper comprehension of the text, of teaching, of the students, and of the self.

The model proposed by Gudmundsdottir and Shulman (1987) has relevance for English teachers in adult education contexts. Often, English and ESL teachers of adults must create new curricula and adapt existing high school English curricula to meet the interest and literacy needs of an adult student group. ESL teachers may integrate literary texts with linguistic principles and meanings. Teachers must also be able to provide a context to help students from culturally diverse backgrounds understand the social, political, and historical events that shape the meaning of a literary text. In sum, teaching English is not simply a matter of "running through" a pre-packaged curriculum or "transmitting" tools of literacy or literary analysis to students. Teaching involves an exploration of ideas that requires careful planning and ingenuity on the part of the teacher.

Conceptions of Teaching English. A review of the literature on teaching English reveals a range of orientations that reflect the positivist/behavioral, constructivist, and transformational/critical paradigms of knowledge (Grossman, Reynolds, Ringstaff, and Sykes, 1985; McEwan 1992, Peim, 1993; McCormick, 1994; Freeman and Richards, 1994). Researchers like Gee (1989), McEwan (1992), and Peim (1993) maintain that there is a real need for teachers to clarify what the different conceptions of English are, and how these relate to their own beliefs about teaching English if English teaching is to

become more effective. The conflicting theories and conceptualizations about the goal of teaching English and the "most effective" strategies need to be examined more critically.

Larson (1993) notes that research into the teaching of writing has undergone a paradigm shift in the last decade. Rather than focussing on the final product, research is more attuned to the recursive patterns of writing - discovering more about how writers find ideas, think about ways of organizing them, and imagining ways of expressing them. Despite this shift in research from product to process, there is still much variation among practitioners about teaching English most effectively. Without a unified vision of the nature of the subject English, curriculum theorists note that ideas on teaching English become a "storage closet of stray topics" (McEwan, 1992). Moral education, critical thinking skills, "survival skills" journalism, library research, creative writing, and public speaking are a few examples that reflect the diversity of English curriculum topics and goals. McEwan(1992)states that "ambiguity of purpose is as old as the subject itself and lies in the conflicting disciplinary allegiances, political aims, and epistemological values that gave rise to English as a subject at the end of the nineteenth century" (p. 103). She emphasizes that teachers of English need to become theorists about their subjects and probe more thoroughly the philosophical and theoretical grounds of their practice.

Based on teacher interviews and classroom research on teaching English, McEwan (1992) identifies various metaphors that have influenced and informed the practical and theoretical framework for teaching English. These metaphors/models are analyzed in the next section.

<u>English as a Hierarchy of Communication Skills</u>. The "machine metaphor" of teaching English has been influenced primarily by behaviourist psychology. Meaning and understanding are conceptualized as "behavioral units"; learning is seen as a hierarchical structure that could translate into easily recognizable competency standards and measures. Emphasis is placed on teaching and learning strategies such as phonics instruction, repetitive grammar exercises, memorization, and the application of rules. The behavioral objectives movement, most notably associated with Benjamin Bloom and his colleagues (1956), translated behavioral principles into practice by replacing vague language about goals with explicit statements that define measurable and quantifiable outcomes.

Critics of this model have objected to it being reductionistic; in addition, they have questioned the goal of functional literacy as an oversimplification of a complex task (Britton, 1980; Hirsch, 1988). Moreover, research developments in linguistics and psychology have replaced behavioral models of learning with more sophisticated explanation of language acquisition. Critics like Apple (1982) observe that the "behaviourist agenda" thinly disguises a political agenda aimed at manipulating and controlling individuals as they move through different societal institutions. McEwan (1992) asserts that some teachers are drawn to the behavioral model because it appears to remove the mystique and confusion of teaching English - especially if there is a more literature based curriculum. "Skills talk" takes precedence over an exploration of ideas. McEwan states that "behaviourist ways of thinking persist and the machine metaphor is a convenient one to exploit by those interested in maintaining the current hierarchies in English" (p. 110).

Language for Learning: Growth as a Metaphor for English. The "language for growth" metaphor continues to be a dominant force in teaching English. James Britton's (1975) model is derived not only from case studies of students' writing, but from contemporary research in sociolinguistics, psychology, and the philosophy of language. Britton describes three categories of language functions - the transactional, the poetic, and the expressive. A strength in Britton's model is that it is both conceptual and empirical: "It derives a notion of structure neither from a formal analysis of the component subject matters of English, nor from a reduction of language use into discrete skills, but from the actual language use and a conception of the purposes of language, the variety of complex linguistic processes or functions embedded in their social contexts" (Britton, 1975, p. 111).

Britton (1982) maintains that the transactional expressive, and poetic function as developments of informal expressive language. He states that a key goal of English is to "master language by using it to make the most of our lives" (p. 205). This is done in two ways: "As participants we apply our values systems; as spectators we are concerned to generate values and refine our value systems; as spectators we are concerned to generate values and refine our value systems" (p. 206). Critics like Abbs (1982) and Pradl (1982)

are concerned that Britton's approach de-emphasizes the role of literature in the curriculum in favour of transactional forms.

Teaching English from a Transformative Perspective: The Work of Louise Rosenblatt and Reader Response Theory. The shift from teaching to the text to focussing on the personal interpretation of the text by the reader is rooted in Louise Rosenblatt's (1938; 1968) reader response theory. Many of her ideas are consistent with the constructivist and transformative views of adult learning presented by theorists like Candy (1991) and Mezirow and associates (1991). Rosenblatt's views also parallel the ideas about the social/transformative role that literature can play in the writings of Northrop Frye.

Rosenblatt's (1938; 1968) reader response theory emphasizes the relationship between a literary text and the individual's psychological, social, and cultural worlds. While ultimately the interpretation of a text rests with the "minds and emotions" of the reader, personal meanings evolve out of social dialogue:

> The individual's share in the language, them, is that part, or set of features, of the public system that has been internalized in the individual's experiences with words in life situations. The residue of such transactions in particular natural and social contexts constitutes a kind of linguistic-experiential reservoir. Embodying our fueled assumptions, attitudes, and expectations about the world - and about language - this inner capital is all that each of us has to start from in speaking, listening, writing, and reading. We make meaning, we make sense of a new situation or transaction, by applying, reorganizing, revising, or extending elements drawn from, selected from, our personal linguistic experiential reservoir.(1968, p. 3)

Rosenblatt (1968) redirected the focus from teaching literature in a detached and "objective" way that analyzed component parts (e.g., "correct" interpretations, theme, tone, setting, etc.) to a more holistic conceptualization that addressed transactional processes, "active" participation, and personal interpretation:

> A novel or poem or play remains inkspots on paper until a reader transforms them into a set of meaningful symbols; and those symbolic channel (his) thoughts and feelings. Out of this complex process emerges a more or less organized

imaginative experience. When the reader refers to a poem, (like) Byzantium, (he) is designating such an experience in relation to a text. (p. 25)

The teacher's task is to "foster fruitful interactions or transactions" between the reader and the text (p. 26). Teaching becomes "a matter of improving the individual's capacity to evoke meaning from the text by leading him to reflect self-critically on this process" (1968, p. 26-27).

Rather than viewing literature as a "collection of moralistic pamphlets" Rosenblatt emphasizes that reading can be a catalyst for critical reflection and perspectives sharing. "Literature provides a living through not simply knowledge about" (p. 38). Pradl (1992) Wilinsky (1992), and Salvatori (1992) assert that Rosenblatt's transactional approach to teaching literature captured the progress and democratic themes found in Dewey's writing. Rosenblatt (1968) asserts that if individuals are going to be able to construct and participate in democratic processes, they need to become critically aware of their life worlds. Literature reading can help individuals gain social and psychological insights, as well as a sense of personal agency. "Any form of conduct, any social mechanism, any custom, or institution, should be measured in terms of the actural effect on the individuals that make up the society" (Rosenblatt, 1968, pp. 165-166).

Rosenblatt's pioneering work not only challenged the objectivist assumptions of the "new criticism" that emphasized deconstructing literature by analyzing the facts (tone, theme, plot, etc.) but she also avoids the pessimism and alienation reinforced by postmodern "cultural critics" who suggest that teaching literature is a form of political indoctrination. In fact, Rosenblatt strongly emphasized an ongoing critical dialogue and inquiry of the values and ideas expressed in the texts. Literacy texts would be a vehicle for democratic discourse, social change, and personal agency. This view closely parallels Frye's (1971) comment that "we cannot take any part in a society as verbal as ours without knowing how to read and write: but unless we also learn how to read continuously, selectively, and critically, and to write articulately, we can never take any free or independent part in that society" (p. 19).

Pradl (1992) asserts that Rosenblatt viewed literary texts as central to education for democracy by affirming the uniqueness of the individual's interpretation and "re-creation" of a text through the process of reading, and through an ongoing critically

reflective dialogue and conversation with others to share ideas and make underlying assumptions and disagreements explicit. "Hence the possibility of change and of revision of the criteria. Such self-awareness on the part of readers can also foster communication across social, cultural, and historical differences between reader and author, and among readers" (Pradl, 1992, p. 6-7).

Fairbanks (1995) observes that when students respond to the stories, poems, or plays that they read and write about, they reveal not only the meanings that they have constructed in transaction with the text, but they also reveal something about themselves. "Because their responses are the means by which we teachers determine their acts of reading, when we interpret students' readings, we read students. As we do so, we construct images of students and make inferences about what they know or understand. We also assess what they need from us" (p. 40). He further notes that "writers are situated beings whose performances are shaped by their interpretations of their readings and their own system of values" (p. 41). A dilemma arises when written work does not "measure up" to the standards of academic discourse. Fairbanks states that the values, culture, and personality of students may lead them to resist conventional notions regarding appropriate interpretations of texts. The "relational waters" of culture, context, and gender shape interpretations of literature.

Greene (1994) exemplifies the emancipatory potential of literature by exploring works such as Dostoevsky's The Brothers Karamazov and Orwell's 1984 in addition to the writing of Toni Morrison and Maya Angelou. Encounters with fiction can and do familiarize people with alternative ways of seeing, feeling, and understanding. Citing Herbert Marcuse's (1978) analysis of art, Greene (1994) notes that "literature breaks open a dimension inaccessible to other experience, a dimension in which human beings, nature and things not longer stand under the law of the established reality principle" (Marcuse, 1978, p. 72 in Greene, p. 212). The incongruence or asymmetry that may exist between the reader's personal experience and the world portrayed in the literary text becomes a critical point for learning. Greene (1994) further states that "works of art, of all human creations, are occasions for exploration, not for completion. Indeed, they remind us that history and the human story can never be completed. So literature, with other works of art, can become a harbinger of the possible" (p.218). Rorty (1993) also emphasizes the

value of analyzing and exploring literature as a way of understanding human nature. He refers to a utopia of "moral progress" toward greater human solidarity which challenges individuals to an identification with fellow human beings, regardless of colour, geographic distance, and ethnic background. He suggests that "a sense of solidarity can be created by increasing our sensitivity to the particular details of the pain and humilation of other, unfamiliar sorts of people" (xvii).

Literature and ESL Learners. The wider the range of genres accepted as literature, the greater the potential for influence in classrooms beyond English and institutions beyond schools. While novels, poetry, and short stories provide opportunities for dialogue, interior monologue, stories, and descriptions, arguments, editorials, biography, history, and sets of directions call for explanation, comparative analysis, and narratives of events and places as well as of people. Heath (1996) notes that unfamiliar texts for ESL learners such as biography, history, and argument require need to be introduced by the teacher with sensitivity and with realistic expectations. Not all social groups in cultures around the world value argument, explicit explanation, or comparative analysis.

The cultural background and prior experience that a student have can also complicate comprehension of particular texts. Wilson and Thomas (1995) found that the idiosyncratic and often unexpected interpretations that students generated supported their contention that although prior experience and knowledge of similar situations (being able to identify in some way with a character or situation portrayed in a text) usually contributes positively to reading comprehension, the degree of emotional commitment, and the existence of prior assumptions or cultural myths that they bring to reading texts can complicate comprehension. Fairbanks (1995) states that as English teachers "in order to read our students' readings/writings, we have to construct and reconstruct our understanding of who is reading and in relation to what contextual factors. We have to disentangle actual readers from a construct of "the reader". The values, culture, and character of students may lead them to revisit conventional wisdom about what counts as appropriate responses to text(s)" (p. 41).

Parry (1996) notes that English teachers who teach students from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds soon realize that the "best teaching method" is an unattainable ideal considering how cultural membership may influence learning. Instead

of trying to determine the social consequences of literacy as a single variable, researchers are now exploring "different literacies" (Scribner and Cole, 1981; Street, 1984, 1993) and the specific social customs and events that involve the use of the written text. This social-transactional purpose influences the way the readers interpret a text.

English as Process and Content: The Metaphor of the Text. With an emphasis on authentic learning, diversity, and the construction of knowledge, this model reflects many of the ideas in postmodernist thinking and in constructivist learning theory. There are many overlaps between the critical perspective presented in this section and the constructivist views presented in the previous section. The critical perspective focuses more on the social/political implications of teaching English. Many of the critical theorists have drawn from works like Michael Foucault's (1972) treatise "The Discourse on Language" with its critique of social systems that perpetuate the superiority and power of certain texts and discourses over others. Theorists like Marilyn French (1985) have applied Foucault's ideas to explain the prevalence of masculine discourse in academic and literary writing. Historically, the voices of women poets and novelists were excluded and their discourse ignored because of their oppression and marginality.

There is a reconciliation of the important dynamic of both content and process. A central question that researchers like Hirsch (1988), Pradl (1992), and Eagleton (1990) ask concerns the meaning of text. In this paradigm, text moves beyond a narrow definition of literacy texts to include a "large range of symbol systems including human institutions and practices. We may construe background knowledge as a text, or the act of reading as a transaction in which a text is constructed in the mind of a reader" (McEwan, 1992, p. 115). Hirsch (1988) explores the meaning of cultural literacy and he asserts that a lack of a clear understanding of important social and cultural background knowledge that individuals should acquire had led to a fragmentation of the curriculum. What do people need to know in order to be "included" as members of society?

Purves (1990) suggests that cultural literacy include wide range of texts such as scientific articles, comic strips, and advertisements to increase cultural awareness. Eagleton (1990) argues that we need to shift our conception of English literature as elitist and include in the English curriculum not only a diversity of texts, but a focus on developing students' critical awareness of the place that texts have in our society and the

power they hold over us. Pradl (1986) refers to English as the "experience of myth and myth-making" in emphasizing the importance of individuals being able to tell their stories and use language to foster an understanding of ourselves, our values, and our place in it as social agents. This emphasis concurs with Richard Rorty's (1989) assertion that textual interpretation is one way of understanding human society and diminishing intolerance and cruelty.

   Critical Theory and Teaching English. By drawing on critical theory and constructivist principles, Peim (1993) developed a model of English teaching that clearly addresses the connections between language, textuality, and social practice. English teachers, observes Peim, need to become more familiar with terms such as phenomenology, psychoanalysis, semiotics, discourses, and deconstruction. When teachers become more familiar with these dimensions and the interrelationships between them, they are in a position of helping learners uncover a deeper understanding of a text. For instance, in exploring semiotics, the terms "man" and "woman" could be explored by asking students to jot down the associations they have for each. The idea of discourse could be addressed by highlighting how different discourses produce not just statements or forms of exchange, but also "positions" for their subjects. Different perspectives on discourses represent varied interpretations and experiences. Peim suggests that the language of critical theory could be introduced in dialogue with what the students inexplicitly already know. For instance, an analysis of the discourse on romance novels or fairy tales - their general structures, the kinds of stereotypes they use, the types of closure they work toward - may lead into ideas about transformation. Through discussion, critique and analytic writing, students may create a new text that contests the dominant form of the discourse.

   A key point that researchers linking constructivist learning principles and critical theory in teaching English is that a text (used to denote a multiplicity of meanings) can hold the possibility of being coercive or liberating (Peim, 1993; Davies, 1993; hooks, 1992; Harmon and Edelsky, 1989, 1994). Readings differ according to where one is positioned in relation to them - as author, male or female reader, etc. While texts may be interpreted in ways that may differ from the author's intent, teachers, students, writers, etc.

are often "coerced by discursive structures, by powerful others such as publishers, critics, employers, other readers as well as their own patterns of desire" (Davies, 1993, p. 157).

Curriculum Content. Peim (1993) sees numerous contradictions between the goals and ideals that superficially weave through the curriculum and the reality of the underlying assumptions of the curriculum and the realities of the student's experience in the school system. On the surface, English taught as a subject is supposed to represent an integration of traditional, liberal, and progressive values. English is seen to be a vehicle for promoting a humane and enlightening experience of language and literature. Emotions and attitudes become a part of self-expression in creative writing, reading, and journals. Through literature, students may identify with the themes and characters that appear in the novel, or play. Students also discover others' experiences of the world as recorded in their personal narrative - the opportunity to develop empathy, etc. Yet, the English classroom does not exist in isolation to other classes, the school environment, and so on. No text is value free, and student and writing, however much it may be a measure of self-expression, may be subject to evaluation by a set of specific criteria.

The choice of texts that reappear on a syllabus year after year reflect a conception of culture that excludes many individuals; consequently, their window of opportunity to understand and appreciate the special "humanizing" qualities of "great works of literature" may be narrowed. The opportunity to gain the "cultural capital" needed to progress through the educational and social spheres will be limited.

Instances of the way in which literature covertly functions to exclude those who are not part of the dominant culture - primarily women and ethnic minorities are presented in the writings of Davies (1993) and hooks (1992). In her review of English curriculum texts in England and North America, Davies (1993) found that the recurring themes in literature reflect the duality of socially constructed conceptualizations of masculine and feminine. While attempts are made to introduce discourses that represent a range of cultural experiences and a "multiplicity of voices," a hierarchical ordering of voices that are considered superior or more legitimate exists. Citing Hilshire's (1989) study of myths and sex stereotyping, Davies (1993) notes that "knowledge" or accepted wisdom was associated with masculine characteristics, while ignorance, passivity, and the "realm of the irrational" were associated with feminine stereotypes. Davies (1993) asserts that as long

as femaleness and femininity are viewed as the negative half of the male/female dualism, a critical analysis that incorporates liberal, radical, and post structuralist perspectives must be undertaken. She contends that resistance to male hegemony requires an analysis of the underlying power positions and ideologies that operate to undermine equality and access for women. In this way they might invent, rethink, and rewrite a new world.

While attempts have been made to develop a more integrated curriculum that acknowledges gender and diversity, critical theorists like Peim (1993) argue that too often the literacy texts that resurface feature male protagonists working through a crisis to find independence, strength, or meaning in life. Popular culture forms like rap music or music videos that have been integrated into mainstream curriculum also contain gender stereotyping and violence. "There may be a danger that the substitution of the study of media texts from popular culture simply displaces one set of texts for another, without considering fully the implications of a deconstructive revision of the field as a totality" (Peim, 1993, p. 186).

English Curriculum and Assessment. Ideas of correctness, ideas of accuracy, or ideas that are considered to be "valuable," "worthy," or "appropriate" are still powerful in the teaching of English - even though liberal models of teaching English may resist enforcing them. Critical theorists have asserted that language assessment criteria are related to social stratification, equating language teaching and assessment with the dynamics of power and discrimination (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1993; Peim, 1993). These theorists suggest it is an illusion to think that English exams and the way that they are interpreted and scored are "objective" and "neutral." "There is a politics of literacy, a politics constantly at work institutionally and ideologically in the daily practices of schools. Grading systems, curriculum content, society and its needs all figure into the formula of defining cultural literacy" (Peim, 1993, p. 136).

Citing Willis's (1981) study of working class boys in the school system, Peim (1993) asserts that a key function of schooling is to reinforce the acceptance of hierarchy. Education may offer cultural capital, but achievement and success depend on the "capital" that you already have to invest in the system. From a sociological perspective, most educational institutions are designed to organize and reproduce particular patterns of social organize through the dual means of force and consent. Success and achievement are

narrowly defined, and with a system designed around competition and exclusivity, the legitimation of inequality exists.

Aronowitz and Giroux (1993) observe that current trends of the "back to basics" movement are erroneously preoccupied with the question of functional literacy rather than a historical and critical/conceptual view of illiteracy. The assumption is that the problem of dead-end jobs, low income, and insecurity is caused by some failure in the individual (e.g., motivational, intellectual, or social) rather than the social structure. The authors emphasize that: "functional illiteracy is produced by the constitution of the job market by economic and social inequality and political powerlessness" (p. 64). If individual students are to transform this inequity, they need to acquire hope and a critical understanding of the social and the external, natural world. Those who do not conform may drop out or form a counter-culture group of resistance. Peim(1993) states that these groups that resist dominant values "lose out" on the social acceptance and prestige that comes with successful educational achievement.

Critical Perspectives on Literacy Education. Harmon and Edelsky (1994) cite research studies by Graff (1986) and Street (1984) in their assertion that the membership into the dominant culture along with the political, economic, academic, and social rewards goes well beyond learning to read and write:

> The consequences of literacy have always been related to what it is used for, what value is placed on it, and who is permitted to become literate...If other stigmata - such as color, sex, or class betray one's membership in a subordinate culture, one may not be able to take (or read or write) one's way across the frontier. (p. 393)

Moreover, literacy curricula also favour speakers who have been socialized in practising Standard English; they have an advantage over those who try to learn it at school. Those individuals who may feel the literacy effects of literacy and their ability to use language may begin to feel alienated from their friends and family. Harmon and Edelsky (1989, 1994) note that literacy programs can inadvertently compel individuals to reject their cultural and linguistic past. They assert some literacy programs "romanticize" the rejection of one's roots; "Americanization," upward self-improvement, independence, and financial success may be values that are implicitly conveyed through such literacy programs. Family and friends may express resentment, jealousy, abandonment or

incomprehension as a close family member seems to "move away." There are many ethical issues that arise for the literacy teacher. Finding ways to help adult learners reconnect with their community is one more challenge that they may face.

The studies of resistance and nonparticipation in ABE programs by Quigley (1990) and Malicky, Katz, Norton, and Norman (1997) also reinforce this point. The adult learners' awareness of the incongruity between their own cultural values and the "middle class" values that may be reflected in the curriculum may lead to resistance and nonparticipation. Quigley (1990) notes that nonparticipation is not simply a "barriers" or "motivational" issue; there may be a hidden logic to nonparticipation that involves personal allegiance to a culture and system of values. The question for educators then becomes: What form of learning activity might be more acceptable to those who choose not to participate? Malicky and associates (1997) emphasize the value of community literacy programs that are grounded in values relevant to the individual learners.

In sum, the research on English teaching concludes that it is very much interwoven with the political, cultural, and social movements of the time. The critical theorists assert that all literature is embedded in a historical and sociological context that must be analyzed more carefully by classroom teachers and education theorists. The contradictions and complexities that impact teaching English - whether it be basic literacy, ESL or college level - seem to increase as we have closer toward the 21st century. If teaching English is to become more transformational, teachers need to be engaged in a dialogue that addresses questions such as:

*What values does English Literature support? How were they established and by whom? How are the values of English maintained - by whom, in what institutional contexts? Do the values of English Literature depend on a body of texts or a body of ideas? Do the values of literature address different groups of people in different ways?

*What ideas about culture are promoted by the values and practices of English? Does English explicitly acknowledge its position in relation to ideas about culture? How might cultural differences be addressed in schooling?

*Where does English stand in relation to questions of race, class and gender? Could those issues be central to English in its present forms? What ideas and practices

might make those issues central? The present study addresses their issues through an in-depth exploration of the adult educators' perspectives on teaching English.

Teachers' Thinking and Personal Philosophy of Practice

The two main streams of teachers' thinking evolved from the cognitive/behavioural paradigm and the hermeneutic/phenomenological paradigm (Goodman and Fisher, 1995) Earlier studies of teachers' thinking from a cognitive perspective focussed on studying teachers' interactive thoughts and their process of decision making. The research studies in this area used research methods such as process tracing, thinking aloud, and simulated recall to understand teachers' thought processes and their influence on factors like classroom dynamics and student achievement (Marland, 1977). A comprehensive review of the research in this area is presented by Clark and Peterson (1986).

Clark and Peterson's (1986) transactional model of teachers' thought processes and their actions and observable effects marked a departure from the linear "process-product" paradigm which focussed on the relationship between a teacher's classroom behaviour, students' classroom behaviour, and student achievement. Clark and Peterson conceptualized the domain of teachers' thought processes as including:

a)   teacher planning (proactive and postactive thoughts);

b)   teachers' interactive thoughts and decisions; and

c)   teachers' personal theories and beliefs.

A strength in Peterson and Clark's transactional model is their acknowledgement of the reciprocal or mutual influence that teachers and students have on each other.

The shift from looking at teachers' thinking from a behavioural/cognitive perspective to one that is more personal and interpersonal can be traced to Elbaz's (1980) case study of the personal practical knowledge of a high school English teacher named Sarah. From her in-depth interviews with the teacher, Elbaz identified situational, social, personal, and experiential dimensions in teaching. Elbaz (1983) writes that:

> Practical knowledge is a conception which seeks to bridge gaps existing between
> areas of knowledge which particular points of view as separate - theoretical and
> practical knowledge, the cognitive and the affective domains, knowledge viewed
> (empiric - analytically) as product and knowledge viewed (phenomenologically) as
> process. (p. 23)

Elbaz's (1980) case study presented a rich detailed account of a teacher as an autonomous agent who applies her own personal and theoretical knowledge to the teaching context. "In the practical context it is the teacher not the learning theorist who is the final authority on learning" (p. 17). Elbaz refers to Dewey's (1933) observation that all knowledge originates in felt problems. Her study was also critical of educational research that judged the teacher against an external standard - invariable, the teacher was found to be lacking. "It was largely to avoid this judgmental posture that I chose an interpretive style of research which would credit the teacher with autonomy by taking up her own perspectives" (Elbaz, 1980, p. 165).

The Structure of Practical Knowledge. Elbaz (1981) uses three terms to identify the structure of practical knowledge - rule of practice, practical principle, and image. Each reflects a different way of applying knowledge in the classroom. Elbaz also maintains that this knowledge has a "hierarchical structure". Without this structure, teachers would act inconsistently. The most specific structure, a rule of practice is "simply what the term suggests... a brief, clearly formulated statement of what to do or how to do it in a particular situation frequently encountered in practice" (p. 132). A rule of practice may be very idiosyncratic and apply to a specific situation. While rules of practice are more idiosyncratic, a practical principle is more inclusive. Practical principles, notes Elbaz, derive from theory or intuitively out of practice, or from an interaction of theory and practice. A rule of practice reflects the relationship between teachers' actions and their personal goals and beliefs (e.g. First and foremost, the student should feel positive about the teacher and the classroom). The image or metaphor reflects the values, beliefs, and feelings to which the teacher responds. In Elbaz's (1980) study, Sarah characterized herself as "a good, energetic teacher" and as "an ally, working together to allow them to beat whatever system is outside" (p. 138). Through Sarah's images of the curriculum, subject matter, instruction, social milieu, and self, Elbaz describes her "cognitive style" (similar to teaching style) as that of an artist striving to create new work and maintain a healthy tension in the classroom. Elbaz's study provides a valuable insight into the way teachers integrate theory and practice.

As a phenomenological studies like Elbaz's (1980) gained more acceptance in educational research, teachers' narratives reflected in biographies, autobiographies,

journals, interviews, and participant observation became recognized as a rich resource for understanding the complex dynamics of teaching and learning. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) refer to narrative inquiry as both a phenomenon and a method. While the phenomenon is the story, the inquiry is the narrative. Narrative inquiry is based on the assumption that people lead storied lives. Narrative researchers describe, collect, and tell stories of them and write narratives of experience. "Education and educational researcher is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories; learners, teachers, and researchers are storytellers and characters in their own and others' stories" (Connolly and Clandinin,1990, p. 2). Witherell and Noddings (1992) write that the images, myths, and metaphors that arise from personal narrative can broaden our own and others' knowledge base. This view is reinforced by Bateson (1989) in her book Composing a Life. She maintains that individuals read and write biographies to gain a perspective on their own lives. "Each reading provokes a dialogue of comparison and recognition, a process of memory and articulation that makes one's own experience available as a lens of empathy" (p. 5). In recent years, there has been a research interest that integrates constructivist ideas with narrative inquiry in both teacher thinking and teacher education (see Goodman, 1992; Calderhead and Day, 1993; Clandinin, 1995; Noel, 1995; O'Loughlin, 1992; Shulman, 1995; Richards, 1996; and Davis and Sumara, 1997).

Personal Philosophy of Practice and Conceptions of Teaching and Learning in Adult Education

Current research on teacher thinking in adult education has also placed a greater understanding on the ways teachers construct knowledge and apply it to their classroom practice (Richards, 1996). Conceptions of teaching and learning, personal philosophy of teaching and personal practical knowledge are the terms that adult education researchers use to identify the qualitative differences in the way teachers regard their role, the process of learning and their orientation to the curriculum. For example, Larsson (1984) identified variations among teachers' conceptions of the way student experience could be used in the classroom. In his study, Larsson (1984) conducted semi-structured interviews with twenty nine adult educators in diverse fields such as Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, History, and the Social Sciences. Five different conceptions were identified as:

1)   Conception A: This conception of Larsson's emphasized the value of
     relating and integrating students' prior knowledge and expertise in the
     lesson.

2)   Conception B: Experiences that can be used in tracking are experiences
     which most students in the class have had and which can be used to direct
     the students' attention to the relevant context while a subject in taught.

3)   Conception C: Job experience can develop practical knowledge which the
     students may use in the educational context.

4)   Conception D: The student brings into the classroom an outlook on the
     world that is in conflict with the view of the subject being taught.

5)   Conception E: The student brings into the classroom an outlook on the
     world that is in conflict with the view of the subject taught.

Larsson (1984) also identified two qualitatively different conceptions of the
purpose of teaching adults. Conception A takes the view that the teacher is responsible
for interpreting and structuring the work for students. Clarity, organization, and structure
are key points. In Conception B, teaching involves the students' role in interpreting and
structuring the work. If they are not involved, deeper level changes / learning experiences
will not occur. Out of the twenty four teachers, eight teachers held Conception A views
and sixteen held Conception B views. Interestingly, many of the sixteen teachers who held
Conception B views (the more learner-centred approach) felt compelled to teach in a
Conception A way, not because they believed that it was superior but because they felt
restricted by time and by students' and administrators' expectations. A lecture centred
"transmission" approach seemed more efficient and less problematic. What is interesting
in Larsson's study is the contrast conflict that can arise between a teacher's intentions and
their actual behavior; their personal philosophy of teaching may not be reflected in their
practice because of particular restrictions.

Citing research by Zahorik (1986), Freeman and Richards (1993) differentiate
between three different teaching conceptions. Each view holds a different idea of how
knowledge develops and what effective teaching entails.

According to scientifically based conceptions, teachers should:

• understand learning principles derived from a particular body of research

- develop criteria for tasks and activities based on these findings

- monitor students' performance on tasks to see that prescribed learning outcomes are attained.

From a theory or values-based conception, teachers should:

- understand the coherent theory and principles on which a particular set of practices is based

- select curriculum materials, teaching and learning strategies based on the theory/principles

- monitor one's teaching to see if it conforms to the theory/principles.

From a values perspective, teachers should:

- understand the values/beliefs that undergird a particular set of practices

- select teaching and learning strategies, assessment procedures that are congruent with particular, values/beliefs.

Finally, from an art/craft conception, teachers should:

- treat each teaching situation as unique and identify the teaching and learning strategies that would reflect the uniqueness of the teaching context

- reflect on the activities in an attempt to understand whether these strategies and techniques meet the needs of individual learners

- through the process of reflection and action (praxis) a personal/creative approach to teaching evolves (adapted from Freeman and Richards, 1993, p. 209).

More research is needed to see whether or not the different conceptions of teaching evolve developmentally within the framework of a teacher's professional life span. To what extent do teachers' conceptions change based on personal experience or contextual constraints? For instance, are novice teachers more likely to accept or embrace scientific approaches that offer more "prescriptive packages" of teaching while experienced practitioners improvise and develop a more critical or creative approach?

Richards (1996) asserts that two different kinds of knowledge influence teachers' understanding and practice of teaching. While one focuses on curriculum goals, lesson plans, materials, instructional activities and teaching techniques, the other relates to the teacher's own personal conceptualization of what is meant by effective teaching. In his

study of ESL teachers' thinking, Richards found that often experienced teachers' belief systems lead to the development of rational principles or "maxims". These maxims serve as a source of decision making and interacted with students. Some of the maxims that teachers expressed included "Follow the learners' interests to maintain student involvement"; "Make the most efficient use of class time" or "Be flexible, play it by ear, and maintain a sense of humour". Richards refers to these maxims as part of a personal belief system which serve as "stable norms of reference of teachers", are built up gradually or over time, and relate to such dimension as the teachers' theory of language, cultural background and beliefs in effective teaching practices, teacher-student relations.

The Work of Fox, Rando and Menges and Pratt and Associates. Fox (1983) presents a conceptual model for thinking about the process of teaching and learning based on teachers' responses to the question: "What do you mean by teaching?" Ranging from "simple" to more "developed and complex," Fox identified four basic theories of teaching based on interviews with new polytechnic teachers in England. In the transfer theory, knowledge is viewed as a commodity to be transferred from the teacher to the student. Using metaphoric language, Fox found that these teachers talked about students as if they were vessels or containers waiting to be filled. One chemistry professor stated that it was his job to "give the elements of physical chemistry to students." In the shaping theory, teachers viewed students as clay or wood that needed to be "moulded" to fit a predetermined pattern. Fox suggested that the transfer and shaping theories were "simple" in that the student is more the passive recipient of the expert "active" teacher's knowledge. Many of the teachers who held the simple theories were new and inexperienced.

In contrast, the more experienced teachers were more likely to hold the complex and developed theories that were student rather than teacher centred. Some teachers viewed themselves as a travelling companion or expert guide who together with the learner would travel unexplored territory in the hope of gaining new insights and knowledge (the travelling theory). Finally, there were teachers who emphasized the importance of cultivating the intellectual and emotional development of the learners (the growing theory). In the growing theory intellectual and emotional development is emphasized, while in the travelling theory unexplored subject matter is central. Fox

maintained that the dominant theory or conception of teaching that teachers held would influence their attitudes toward their students as well as the teaching strategies they used. Gleason-Weimer (1987) criticized Fox for being too simplistic in his study. For instance, depending on the particular subject discipline, teachers may be oriented to a particular approach that would best meet the needs of the students. This approach need to be rigidly categorized as "simple" or "complex." She suggested that the best theory might combine elements from each of the four approaches. She also emphasizes that it is important to realize that "the world of teaching is far too complex to imagine there are only four theories of teaching" (p. 2).

In their study of graduate teaching assistants, Menges and Rando (1989) identified three orientations to teaching. When asked to explain what was meant by the terms teaching, their responses reflected an orientation toward content, process, or motivation. One example of a content-oriented response is "Teaching is my giving them knowledge and their understanding and being able to apply it." Responses showing the process orientation included statements such as "Teaching is making people think for themselves" and "To teach is to help someone help himself." The motivation-oriented responses emphasized engaging the student's interest in the subject (e.g. "The first priority seems to be to interest students in the subject").

Rando and Menges (1991) argue that while personal theories often serve as guides to practice, if they remain implicit and are not challenged critically, they may become inaccurate and counterproductive. While our personal theories serve as a protective shield from situations that may be anxiety provoking, they may also oversimplify complex issues and distort reality:

> Implicit theories are outside our awareness, and the assumptions on which they are founded are taken for granted. We are no more likely to verify them than we are to check the air before we breathe or the ground before we move our feet. Unfortunately, unlike the air and the ground, implicit theories are our own creations and prone to error... Over the years, one may come to believe implicitly that male students are smarter than female students or that a student's pattern of interaction means that he is being manipulative. These assumptions can influence how be design courses or interact with students, and the results only reconfirm our

original theories. The process of circular confirmation allows inaccurate implicit theories to grow in strength and number (p. 10).

The inaccuracy of implicit theories has also been addressed by critical theorists like Carr (1983) and Kemmis (1985). Cultural norms and institutional ideologies and practices hold "implicit theories" that become over the years resistant to critical challenge and change.

Menges (1990) suggests that teachers in faculty discussion groups can uncover and "test" their implicit theories through a process of reflection and questioning. The four steps that participants could take in these discussion groups would include: articulating a belief about teaching, identifying a problematic teaching situation, reporting the behaviour intended to resolve the problem, and finding a rationale to support their action plan.

The Work of Pratt and Associates. Each of the five conceptions identified by Pratt and Associates (1998) represent unique compositions of actions, intentions, and beliefs about the teaching and learning process. An strength of Pratt's (1998) model is that it is derived from an empirical study of adult educators perspectives of teaching and learning in diverse settings such as Mathematics education, Business Communications, and Medicine. Pratt's model of teaching evolved out of interviewing over 250 adult educators "from Seattle to Singapore" with a goal to understand how different educators approach teaching. Pratt identified five propositions that emerged from his research and that guided his theoretical analysis:

*Proposition One: There is no single, universal, best perspective on teaching adults.

*Proposition Two: Teaching is guided by one's perspectives on teaching, which is defined by actions, intentions, and beliefs regarding: a) knowledge and learning, b) the purposes of adult education or training, and c) appropriate roles, responsibilities, and relationships for instructors of adults.

*Proposition Three: Some of these beliefs are more central to one's being than others, and therefore, are less open to change.

*Proposition Four: Improvements in instruction can focus on actions(e.g., improving lectures), intentions (e.g. clarifying exactly what one wants to accomplish), or beliefs (e.g., articulating what is taken for granted about learning).

*Proposition Five: Development as an instructor can mean improving current ways of teaching or it can mean challenging fundamental beliefs about instruction and/or learning. (Pratt and associates, 1998, pp. 11-12)

While analyzing the strengths and limitations of each teaching perspective or "lens," Pratt (1998) avoids making value judgments of one approach being "superior" to another; his emphasis is on understanding key elements: the teacher, the learner, the content, and the context of the educational system. Pratt takes the work of theorists like Rando and Menges (1989) and Fox (1983) a step further by providing rich details from the experiences of teachers who are committed to a particular perspective of teaching. Each perspective is rooted in a particular theory of learning and reflects a particular view of knowledge. Perspectives of teaching also reflect historical and cultural contexts. The five perspectives of teaching that Pratt identified are briefly summarized as follows:

1. The Transmission Perspective: In the transmission conceptualization of teaching, the instructor's role is to "deliver and defend" the content in an accurate, compelling, and efficient manner. Learning is evaluated in an "objective and technical" way. Within this paradigm, power is associated with the expertise and knowledge of the teacher. Effective teaching is evident in "organized and enthusiastic lecturers that animate their subject, or individuals that are so committed to their craft or profession that we cannot but embrace and consider that commitment and the subject matter" (p. 180). Pratt further notes that if teaching is reduced to covering a body of content or achieving a set of "irrelevant or nonproblematic" goals, the result can be dull and tedious (p. 180). The transmission approach is often associated with instructors in higher education and in content areas like the pure sciences.

2. The Apprenticeship Perspective: Teachers committed to the apprenticeship perspective view themselves as role models who will introduce and teach novice learners to their particular craft. Problem based learning, role playing, and case studies are ways that novice learners gain practical experience in an "authentic setting." "Knowledge is a set of competencies, skills, and way of relating, as well as performing, within the community" (p.227). Citing Lave and Wenger (1991), Pratt explains that "the product of learning is a change in role and identity; learners must dwell in situations of authentic practice if they are to learn the knowledge that characterizes that practice. Learning is not

merely a condition for membership, but is itself an evolving form of membership and identity within a community" (Pratt, 1998, p. 229). The apprenticeship perspective is prevalent in professional and vocational educational contexts as well as in contexts that emphasize the importance of mentoring (e.g. medicine, law, teaching, art, etc.) (Brown & Duguid, 1988). Power is located in the relationship between teachers, knowledge, and membership within the specific community of practice. Effective teaching involves the teacher being perceptive to know how and when to give learners more responsibility and challenge to achieve mastery in the skill or profession (Pratt, 1998, p. 228).

   3. The Developmental Perspective: In the developmental perspective, the role of the instructor is to help facilitate intellectual development. Developing critical thinking skills and problem solving skills is central to helping learners understand themselves and their life worlds. Based on constructivist approaches to teaching and learning outlined by Marton and Säljö (1984), Ramsden (1984), Entwistle (1984), and Candy (1991) the developmental perspective emphasizes a set of beliefs and assumptions about the way in which learners construe (interpret) and construct (reconfigure, create) meaning. Ausubel and Robinson's (1969, p. 143) point that "the most important factor influencing the meaningful learning of any new idea is the state of the individual's existing cognitive structure" reinforces an underlying assumption of the developmental perspective described here. The seven constructivist principles outlined by Arseneau and Rodenburg (1998) include:

   a. Prior knowledge is key to learning.

   b. Prior knowledge must be activated.

   c. Learners need to construct their own understanding of new content.

   d. Making more, and stronger, links between ideas requires time.

   e. Context provides important links for storing and retrieving information.

   f. Motivation and anxiety are associated with approaches to learning.

   g. Teaching should become increasingly unnecessary; that means, the object of instruction is the development of learner autonomy as well as intellect. (Pratt and Associates, 1998 p. 112)

Learning "bridges" are built to help the individual move to more sophisticated levels of thinking and reasoning, and from "surface" to "deep" levels of understanding.

Within this conceptualization, teachers are challenged to explore the individual's current conception of content in a critically reflective way. In contrast to the transmission and apprenticeship approach, the locus of power has shifted from primarily with the teacher to a sharing of power with the learner. The developmental approach outlined by Arseneau and Rodenburg (1998) shares similarities with cognitive developmental perspectives of Perry (1980), Belenky *et al* (1986), and Mezirow (1981). Pratt (1998) observes that the most difficult challenge for teachers committed to the developmental perspective is in the assessment of learning. "While they may be able to bridge from the learner's prior knowledge to more desirable ways of understanding and thinking, they may not be able to develop critical questions, assignments, tests, and other means of assessment that allow learners to demonstrate how their thinking has changed or how they now can think and reason like a professional" (p. 239).

Theorists like Prawat (1992) have integrated the constructivist and apprenticeship perspectives in their research. Prawat asserts that a major problem with lateral transfer theories of learning is their assumption that knowledge is independent of the situation in which it is used and acquired. Knowledge is disconnected or lifted from its situational context. "When one encounters the same concept on skill in different contexts, the specifics drop skill in different contexts, the specifics drop away. Transfer is only successful to the extent that these specifics ("contextual barriers") can be overcome" (Prawat, 1992, p. 374). Contextualized ways of knowing can be facilitated in different ways through apprenticeship programs in business and other professions, situated cognition, and instructors' modelling of "expert" problem solving processes. The boundaries between the classroom and the larger society would become more fluid and assessment more authentic. Situated learning might involve teachers trying to create a classroom that is a microcosm of the disciplinary culture. Key ideas in each subject discipline could be embedded in authentic activity; students can use these ideas to understand more specific real world problems. Prawatt explains that:

> Teachers could also play the role of a disciplinary practitioner modelling the
> process of a mathematician might go through in solving a problem; or that of a
> historian in accounting for why a particular event occurred. The goal of
> enculturation is not to produce miniature mathematicians or historians - the

purpose is simply to create a more meaningful educational environment. (Prawat, 1992, p. 378)

Prawat (1992) argues that too much emphasis has been placed in education faculties and in schools on the "packaging and delivery of content," instead of on more substantive issues of knowledge selection and construction. The dichotomous view of the learner and the curriculum has to be integrated in such a way that learning revolves around ideas that are situated in real-world phenomena. Constructivist teachers, according to Prawat, do not see the curriculum as a fixed agenda, consisting of predetermined unit; instead, they view the classroom as "a center of intellectual inquiry–a place where teachers and students engage in the in-depth exploration of important ideas from the different subject matter domains" (p.389).

4. The Nurturing Perspective: This perspective parallels the humanist orientation to adult education presented in the theories of Rogers (1969), Kidd (1973), and Knowles (1980). Nurturing teachers attempt to empower the learner, both in the process and the product of learning. An ethic of caring, empathy, and genuine regard for the learner is central within this framework. Learning involves an emotional as well as a cognitive component, and the role of the educator is to help guild the learner's self-esteem and reduce the threat of anxiety and fear of failure. An educational climate that fosters trust, openness and sensitivity is needed if individuals are able to develop both emotionally and intellectually. Problems with this approach may develop if the institutional assessment procedures conflict with the teacher's humanistic orientation. In addition, the boundaries between teaching and counselling can become blurred, and teachers may find it difficult to strike a balance between being caring and critically challenging.

5. The Social Reform Perspective: Pratt (1998) explains social reform educators have "a unique sense of mission" in the form of a well articulated ideal; these educators often have a "missionary sense" of what is needed to achieve a better world. Pratt identifies six "key beliefs" that radical and social reform educators most often have:

a. No education is ideologically neutral (not even mathematics)

b. Educational systems reflects the views and interests of those in possession of social, economic, and political power.

c. All knowledge is socially constructed

d. All education is infused with issues of power

e. Injustice is intimately linked to issues of power

f. Education can only redress injustice if it addresses issues of power.

(Pratt, 1998, p. 249)

The social reform conceptualization of teaching is most often associated with the writings of radical humanist educators like Paulo Freire and Ira Shor. Social reform educators have a "unique sense of mission" which describes and directs their teaching. Literacy education, community development, environmental education and the civil rights movement often reflect the social reform perspectives. Social and political transformation toward a more just and humane society are central goals from this perspective. Issues of power, control and elitism, and the way these work to perpetuate injustice are critically explored through dialogic discourse.

While in the apprenticeship perspective, learning is understood to be a process of enculturation into the norms and practice of a particular role, group, setting, and set of relationships, from a radical social reform perspective, learning must critically examine the values, norms, and practices that may operate to maintain an "unjust" status quo. The social reform perspective has been criticized for its potential to manipulate individuals and place social and political transformation ahead of individual interests (Elias and Merriam, 1980). Social reform educators in "traditional" institutions may also experience conflict if their beliefs and intentions oppose the status quo of the organization.

Of the five perspectives, the developmental, nurturing, and social reform are most frequently cited as "preferred" approaches to teaching in the adult education literature (Conti 1985; Meriam & Cafarella 1991; Cranton 1994, Brookfield, 1995). However, further research is needed to explore the ways in which instructors articulate and conceptualize effective teaching and learning. Conti (1985) found that despite the variation among teaching styles, much of the adult education literature supports the collaborative mode as the "most effective" style for teaching adults. Referring to the work of Lindeman, Bergevin, Kidd, Houle, Knowles, and Freire, Conti(1985) states that "collectively they argue that curriculum should be learner-centered, that learning episodes should capitalize on the learners' experience. Learners should participate in needs diagnosis, goals, formation and outcomes evaluation, that adults are problem-centered,

and that the teacher should serve as a facilitator rather than a repository of facts" (p. 221). In his study of teaching styles and adult learning, Conti found that while his findings were congruent with the adult education literature base for basic literacy and English as a Second Language, it was incongruent in the GED (General Developmental Test) where students preferred a more structured and teacher centered environment. The students tended to be more concerned with the immediate goal of completing the GED examination. Conti (1985) suggests that adult educators need to carefully examine the variables in a specific teaching situation before selecting one instructional strategy over another.

While instructors may hold more than one conceptualization of teaching, Pratt (1998) maintains that the fundamental difference between perspectives or conceptualizations is based on the assumption that some elements and relationships are more important than others. The commitment or sense of loyalty to a particular conception of teaching is revealed through the way a person teaches (actions), what he/she is trying to accomplish (intentions) and statements of why those actions and intentions are important and justifiable beliefs. For instance, in the transmission approach, the teacher may be more committed to the content and their expertise in articulating and explaining the content to the learners. In the developmental and nurturing perspectives, an emphasis is placed more on the learning and the people they have taught rather than on what (content) they taught. Instructors who are committed to the nurturing perspective might focus on helping individuals gain confidence on getting them back into the workforce. By reflecting on their actions, intentions, and beliefs, instructors can make explicit their "implicit" personal theories of teaching. In reflecting on their belief structures, teachers may be open to "transforming" core beliefs and consider alternative approaches that might improve their teaching.

The Work of George Kelly and David Kolb: Toward a Theoretical Understanding of Teachers' Thinking. Many of the recent qualitative studies in teachers' thinking are rooted in George Kelly's (1955) theory of personal constructs and in David Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle. Kelly's theory of personal constructs emphasizes the idea of the "person as scientist." Individuals understand themselves, other people, and the world around them by constructing personal and tentative theories and models. These theories

serve as guides to predict and control events. Kelly also asserted that any event is open to as many reconstructions of it as possible. "We take the stand that there are always some alternative constructions available to choose among in dealing with the world. No one needs to be completely hemmed in by circumstances; no one needs to be the victim of his biography. We call this philosophical position constructive alternativism" (Kelly, 1955, p. 15). Despite the fact that individuals could be very resistant to change and to the idea of giving up personal theories that may be distorted or limiting, Kelly emphasized the possibility of change through personal choice. In many respects, Kelly's ideas surrounding the concept of constructive alternativism parallel William James' (1899) understanding of personal transformative change resulting from an ongoing dynamic of new information influencing the mind's "system of ideas".

Kelly (1955) also rejected the idea that knowledge was an accumulation of "nuggets of truth" or "accumulative fragmentation". A linear view of knowledge could not explain the complexity of human behaviour. Kelly's ideas have important implications for studying teachers' thinking. Indeed, teacher thinking can be seen as the development of personal construct systems as they relate to a teacher's self-perceptions, view of knowledge, orientation toward the curriculum, and views of students and other teachers. While experiences may result in changes in a teacher's constructs, some constructs may be more fixed. In the context of their profession, teachers are "forecasting events" and testing these forecasts in an attempt to validate their idiosyncratic construct frameworks (Ben-Peretz, 1984).

Kelly's (1955) theory of personal constructs and his idea of constructive alternativism can be used as a framework for exploring teacher's implicit theories and as a vehicle for facilitating critical reflection. Pope and Scott (1984) applied Kelly's idea of constructive alternativism in their study of teachers' constructs of knowledge and teaching. They assert that teachers who saw their role as transmitting accumulated bodies of knowledge or absolute facts would be threatened by the view that knowledge is tentative and subject to ongoing critical exploration. If control rather than negotiation is valued by a teacher, teachers would be more likely to hold a view of teaching and learning that is positivist.

Problems arise when a teacher or a group of teachers operate with one "subsystem of constructs" and try to impose or communicate these assumptions to others without any acknowledgement or understanding of an alternative framework or set of assumptions which hold different values (p. 114). Pope and Scott (1984) suggest that change and innovation is likely to occur only when teachers can express their implicit theories and dialogue with other teachers to explore the rationale for valuing a particular approach to teaching or to interpreting the curriculum.

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle: Applications to Teachers' Thinking. David Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle provides a useful model for understanding the learning process that teachers go through in developing their personal practical knowledge. Researchers like Hunt (1987; 1992) and Svinicki and Dixon (1987) have applied the ideas of both Kelly and Kolb in helping teachers articulate their personal approach to teaching. Proceeding from the "inside out" teachers can begin to identify their own learning style and see how this relates to their teaching style. A more in-depth analysis of these applications will be presented in Chapter Three.

Kolb (1984) defines learning as a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Learning, or the creation of knowledge and meaning, occurs through the active extension and grounding of ideas and experiences in the external world, and through internal reflection about these experiences and ideas. Influenced by theorists like Carl Jung, John Dewey, Jean Piaget and Kurt Lewin, Kolb (1984) explores the philosophical, cognitive, behavioral, and phenomenological aspects of learning extensively in his book Experiental Learning.

Kolb (1984) maintains that enduring and preferred patterns of information processing arise from consistent patterns of transactions between individuals and their environment. Learning styles of preferred "possibility-processing structures" are influenced by individuals' hereditary characteristics, past life experiences, cultural background and the demands of their current situation. Cultural differences in learning result more in the situations to which cognitive processes are applied than in the existence of a process in one cultural group and absent in another. Depending on the specific context, an individual's learning style will vary so that individuals who are concrete in their interaction with people socially may be abstract in their working domain.

Like Jean Piaget, Kolb (1984) emphasizes that learning is a process of accommodation and adaptation. He states that "we are thus a learning species, and our survival depends on our ability to adapt not only in the reactive sense of fitting into physical and social worlds, but also in the pro-active sense of creating and shaping those worlds" (p. 2). Kolb suggests that the concept of the learning process has been distorted first by rationalism and then by behaviorism. Having lost touch with their own experience as the source of personal learning and development, individuals "lost the experiential centeredness necessary to counterbalance the loss of scientific centeredness that has been progressively slipping away since Copernicus" (p. 2).

Kolb (1983) emphasizes that for many "non-traditional" students - minorities, the poor and mature adults, experiential learning has become increasingly important in both personal and educational development. Indeed, as the population grows older and "lifelong learning" becomes more prominent as the direction in education will be focussed on adult learning who may insist that the relevance and application of ideas will be demonstrated and tested against their own wisdom (p. 3).

Learning Styles as Possibility-Processing Structures. While Kolb (1984) suggests that individual styles of learning are complex and can vary depending on the context, there are unique and consistent patterns of information-processing that emerge over time as individuals attempt to "grasp reality." These four modes of learning include: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. These four modes of learning process are further defined by Kolb:

1. **Concrete experience (CE):** A receptive, experience-based approach relying heavily on feeling-based judgments. Emphasis on specific examples in which each situation can be considered for its unique features that can help. Feedback and discussion with other learners is preferred.

2. **Abstract conceptualization (AC):** An orientation to abstract conceptualization focuses on using logic, ideas, and concepts. It emphasizes thinking as opposed to feeling—and there is a focus on building theories rather than intuitive understanding. Individuals with this orientation value precision, rigour, and the discipline of analyzing ideas.

3. **Active experimentation (AE):** An active "doing" orientation where individuals express preferences for experimentation and project work.

4. **Reflective observation (RO):** Here, there is an emphasis on the careful assessment of understanding the meaning of ideas and situations by carefully observing and describing them.

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning model can be viewed as a four stage cycle whereby individuals experience something, observe or reflect on it, give it meaning, and then act on it. Individuals may have preferred learning styles or modes of interaction which in turn may influence their personal relationships and their educational and career paths. A description of Kolb's (1985) Learning Style Inventory, a self-report measure that can help individuals identify their learning style preference is presented in Chapter Three.

Variations of Constructivist Themes. The different orientations, conceptions, and models of teaching and learning presented in this review can also be interpreted as the different dimensions or continua in constructivist theories of learning (Phillips, 1995). While constructivism emphasized the importance of an individual's interpretation of the world, this interpretation will be influenced by the historic, social, and cultural context that the individual lives in (Carr and Kemmis, 1985; Sullivan, 1990). Constructivists like Piaget or Vygotsky focus more on the way individuals interact with their environment to construct knowledge. Von Glaserfeld (1995) maintains that the construction of knowledge is the result of the cognitive effort of individuals in an attempt to understand and adapt to their environment. Feminist epistemologists tend to emphasize how sociopolitical processes impact the construction of human knowledge in general. Constructivists like Karl Popper focus on the question of how individuals build up bodies of knowledge and how human communities have constructed public bodies of knowledge in different academic disciplines.

Bereiter (1995) suggests that rather than make distinction between constructivist and sociocultural perspectives, it makes more sense to integrate both perspectives in a pragmatic way that would best address current problems or issues faced by educators. Bereiter notes that schools and colleges should work toward providing more opportunities for individual learners to build knowledge by exploring and perhaps reformulating existing theories, explanations, historical accounts, proofs and problem formulations and solutions.

Deleting the empirical or scientific relevance of constructivist and sociocultural perspectives should give way to a more integrated framework. "Stripped to their essentials, constructivism tells us to pay close attention to the mental activities of the learner, and socioculturalism tells us to pay close attention to cultural practices in the learner's milieu....There is no basis for claiming that one view or another gives us a better account of how things really are" (Bereiter, 1995, p. 21). Thus, a complementary that integrates both the social and cultural basis of personal experience and the construction of social and cultural processes by actively interpreting individuals.

Davis and Sumara (1997) assert that critical theorists like Giroux (1988), Apple (1993) and hooks (1994) have downplayed the interactive emergent factors in the learning process by emphasizing the influences of prevailing sociocultural conditions that shape the values, beliefs and attitudes of individuals. Critical social discourse has often been presented in opposition to radical constructivist theories - a debate rather than a dialogue exists between studies of cognition and cultural critiques. Enactivism emphasizes the idea that there is a complementary dynamic that exists between the cognitive processes of the individual and the evolutionary dynamic of the collective. Davis and Sumara use the metaphor of a conversation to capture the essence of enactivism:

> It is a collective activity that cannot be explained through either mechanistic
> models of human relationality or subjectivist accounts of cognition. The
> conversation might be thought of as a process of 'opening' ourselves to others, at
> the same time opening the possibility of affecting our understanding of the world -
> and hence, our senses of our identities that are cast against the background of that
> world. (p. 110)

A key assertion in the enactivist theory of cognition is Merleau-Ponty's (1962) assertion that each individual is "a complex fabric of relations", fundamentally and inextricable intertwined with all else - both physically/biologically and experientially/phenomenologically" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, p. 112). Davis and Sumara (1997) suggest that their ideas can help teachers and teacher educators rethink and reflect on the meaning of teaching - and interpret the difficulties of applying alternative conceptions of teaching.

Summary of the Literature Review

The literature review presented in the current study draws extensively from the research in Adult Education, Educational Psychology, and Curriculum Studies in the teaching of English. The literature in each of these areas has helped me to refine the research questions in a more comprehensive light. I felt that an integrated approach that addresses key issues in different but related disciplines would offer the reader a richer conceptual base from which to interpret and compare the individual teacher's conceptions of teaching and learning. Many of the studies presented in this chapter reflect the tension between the positivist and phenomenological ways of knowing. This tension is also reflected in the variations that theorists place on "the techniques of teaching" rather than on the "process of learning." Finally, the literature review touches on new directions in understanding teachers' thinking and in the professional development and education of adult educators. These new directions will be further explored in the last chapter of this study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

<u>Overview</u>

This chapter details the qualitative research paradigm that the study is located in. The pilot study, research design, instruments, the data collection procedure, and the selection criteria for the participants are included.

Van Manen (1990, 1997) and Lincoln and Guba (1985, 1989) emphasize that the research methodology should evolve from the research questions being explored rather than the methodology shaping the questions. The knowledge generated through research is a function of the questions researchers ask and the methods researchers use to answer these questions. In this study the following questions were explored:

1. Do adult educators' conceptualizations of the teaching-learning process reflect the assumptions and the role of the educator and the process of learning described in transformational learning theories?

2. Do adult educators view themselves as transformative educators?

3. How do the conceptions or perspectives of teaching and learning that individual adult educators hold related to their personal teaching philosophy?

4. How might the teachers' philosophies be related to the curriculum choices they make and in their preferred teaching and learning strategies?

In order to explore these questions, I needed to develop a methodology that would help me understand the "lived worlds" and perceptual landscapes of a particular group of persons -- English teachers who teach adult learners. I also wanted a methodology that would engage the teachers and encourage them to reflect on their own practice.

I collected qualitative data from three individual interviews with the teachers, one classroom visit, Kolb's (1984) <u>Learning Style Inventory</u> and an accompanying <u>Teaching Strategies Check List</u>. Each teacher also completed a critical incident questionnaire, Zinn's (1990,1994) <u>Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory</u> and Conti's (1990) <u>Principles of Adult Learning Scale</u>. A variation of Kelly's (1956) <u>Repertory Grid Exercise</u> was used to encourage the educators to elaborate on the way they understand their role as

a teacher of adults. I collected samples of course outlines, assignments, and samples of student writing.

The Pilot Study

The pilot study involved ten English and ESL teachers at Vancouver Community College. The teachers taught in programs ranging from basic literary to university preparatory English. I was first introduced to the teachers through the Dean of Academic Programming at Vancouver Community College. I met with the dean in October of 1996 to discuss the scope of my study and the possibility of interviewing interested teachers at the college. She was able to help me in making contacts with the teachers.

The teachers taught in a range of English and ESL programs. These included: LINK (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada), College and Career Access, Basic Education and ESL Community Outreach. While most of the teachers that I interviewed were at the King Edward Campus, I also interviewed teachers in the outreach program located in Vancouver's Chinatown and at the basic literary program at Vancouver Public Library. Each of the teachers taught English to adults for a minimum of five years. Three were department heads of specific English/ESL programs at the college.

The pilot study gave me the opportunity to test my ideas and receive valuable feedback from the teachers. I was also able to develop my interviewing skills and refine the questions that I had in the interview schedule. During this time I was able to learn more about the culture of the community college and the diversity of English/ESL programs available. I was also able to see how the English programs were interlinked and integrated with some of the vocational programs at the college and in business/industry sites in the city. In reviewing the initial interviews from the pilot study, I realized that some of the conversations were too general. Recalling Van Manen's (1997) emphasis on staying close to the lived experience, I began to ask the teachers for more specific examples and anecdotes that related to the thematic topics in the interview. Initially, I had also wanted to include more feedback from the adult students in each of the classes, but I also realized that this would complicate the study and deviate from the specific topic of exploring English teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning. I was able to sit in on a number of the classes that the teachers taught, and this gave me the opportunity to observe the way the teachers put into practice their personal approach to teaching. I had

also made the decision not to make an in-depth comparison of the "personal philosophy of teaching" and the actual teaching behaviour the teachers demonstrated in the classroom.

In conclusion, the pilot study enabled me to develop my skill in administering and interpreting the various questionnaires and inventories that I used in the present study. The pilot study also helped me to become more observant of the link between the teachers' educational philosophy and their overall life philosophy. The ethical, spiritual, and political beliefs that the teachers expressed provided clues to dimensions of their own educational philosophy. In the present study, this interrelationship is very evident in the responses the teachers gave to questions centering around their values, ideals, and beliefs.

Selection of the Participants

The teachers who participated in this study had taught various levels of English to adults for eight years or longer. While I interviewed twenty eight teachers in this study, I decided to select twelve teachers whose views best reflected the diversity of responses represented in the larger sample. The teachers worked at Red River Community College and The Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, both located in Winnipeg, Manitoba and at Vancouver Community College in Vancouver, British Columbia. A brief description of each institution is presented in the following chapters.

I chose experienced adult educators in this study for several reasons. These teachers would have developed considerable expertise in working with adult learners over the years; it would be interesting to explore the way in which teachers view the changes they may have experienced with respect to their role, the institutional context, and the way in which they view the process of learning in adults. The "practical wisdom" that they have gained over the years in teaching adults may provide a basis for comparing theoretical concepts and perspectives with the practical dilemmas that experienced educators face.

The teachers taught English in a range of programs from basic literacy to college level English. The English and ESL teachers at Red River Community College taught in two departments: Academic Development (a high school equivalency program) and Creative Communications (a program designed to prepare individuals for work in journalism, creative writing, public relations, and the media). The teachers at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre taught English courses ranging from basic literacy to

university entrance. At Vancouver Community College, the teachers worked in two departments: Adult Basic Education and College and Career Access.

In finding participants for this study, I first met with the Dean of Academic Development from Vancouver Community College and two English department heads from Red River Community College to discuss my research. I had the opportunity to meet with nine teachers at Red River College to discuss my research. Interested participants phoned me and I made an appointment to discuss my study and their involvement in more depth. I had worked with the English teachers from The Winnipeg Adult Education Centre and spoke with each individually about my study. A biographical profile of each teacher will be presented in the subsequent chapters.

The Qualitative Paradigm and its Implications for the Present Study

The present study is rooted primarily in the naturalistic or qualitative paradigm for several reasons. First, the research questions were designed to explore complex experiences that revolved around teachers' values, beliefs, and attitudes about their role and their work as adult educators. The data collected in the interviews consists of detailed conceptualizations of teaching and learning that would not emerge if I had applied solely a quantitative design. As a educational researcher, my goal was to understand the conceptualizations and beliefs about teaching and learning from the frame of reference of the individual teacher. I wanted to explore some of the dilemmas that so often separate theory from practice. To do this, I approached the interviews from a humanistic stance that regards the quality of the relationship between the researcher and the participant as paramount in terms of its impact on the knowledge and information generated. I needed a research paradigm that centered around connected ways of understanding persons. Empathy rather than detachment, openness rather than secrecy, trust rather than suspicion, and a dynamic interchange of ideas interwoven in conversations best characterize the dimensions of qualitative inquiry in this study. I hoped to gain a holistic rather than fragmented understanding of the experience and insights of the teachers in my study.

Features of Qualitative Inquiry

In the book The Enlightened Eye, Elliot Eisner (1991) has identified six features of qualitative research which are relevant to this study. First, qualitative studies are field focused and non-manipulative, focusing on studying situations and objects intact. Lincoln

and Guba (1985) refer to this as "naturalistic". Observing, interviewing, recording, describing, interpreting, and appraising settings as they appear are part of the qualitative process. In this study I wanted to interview experienced adult educators practicing in the field, specifically teaching different English courses. Secondly, in qualitative studies, the self is used as an instrument. "The self is the instrument that engages the situation and makes sense of it. This is done most often with the aid of an observation schedule; it is not a matter of checking behaviours but rather of perceiving their presence and checking their significance" (Eisner, 1991, p. 34). As a researcher, my task involved interviewing each teacher, reading their documents, and reflecting on the observations that I made, and in turn, sharing these observations with each participant. A third feature of qualitative research is its interpretive character -- the qualitative inquiry goes beyond the surface and results in "Thick description" (Eisner, 1991, p. 35). A fourth feature involves the use of expressive language and the presence of voice in text. Eisner (1991) emphasizes that good qualitative writing helps the reader experience something new -- they can for a moment "step into the shoes" of another person to gain an insight into a different perceptual landscape and in the process enhance their own experience. The detailed descriptions found in qualitative writing contrasts with the resistance and "neutralization of voice" evident in quantitative studies. "The kind of detachment of voice, the aversion to metaphor and adjectives, the absence of the first person singular -- is seldom a feature of qualitative studies. We display our signatures. Our signature makes it clear that a person, not a machine, was behind the words" (p. 36). A fifth feature of qualitative studies is their attention to detail. This contrasts with quantitative studies and their emphasis on collected numerical data that is devoid of the "uniqueness of its particulars" (p. 38). To often pick up on the distinctiveness of the detail, the research must be insightful and perceptive to not only verbal cues but non-verbal cues as well. As I analyzed the initial interviews with each teacher, I tried to pick up on key themes that I would return to in the second interview -- the intent being to work toward a more in-depth understanding of each topic from the frame of reference of the teacher. This approach also reflects the stance taken by Guba and Lincoln (1989) who emphasize that in hermeneutic methodology, there is a continuous interplay of data collection and analysis. Thus, as the data collection proceeds, analysis proceeds at the same pace, resulting in

more complex and stable agendas or a framework that guides future data collection procedures. The findings that do emerge are grounded in the construction of ideas of the respondents themselves. The challenge that I had as a researcher was in trying to establish a climate of trust and openness that would enable each participant to express and articulate their conceptions about teaching and learning in a meaningful way. Finally, the sixth feature of qualitative that Eisner (1991) describes relates to the criteria for judging their success. Good qualitative research reflects coherence, insight, and instrumental utility. "Qualitative inquiry, like conventional quantitative approaches to research is ultimately a matter of persuasion, of seeing things in a way that satisfies, or is useful for the purposes we embrace" (Eisner, 1991, p. 39).

Drawing from Dewey's (1934) Art as Experience, Eisner proposes a transactive model of educational research that emphasizes knowledge as a product of the transaction of our subjective life and a postulated objective world.

Objective

| | Transactive | The Locus
|————————— ————————— of
| | Experience

Subjective (Eisner, 1991, p. 52).
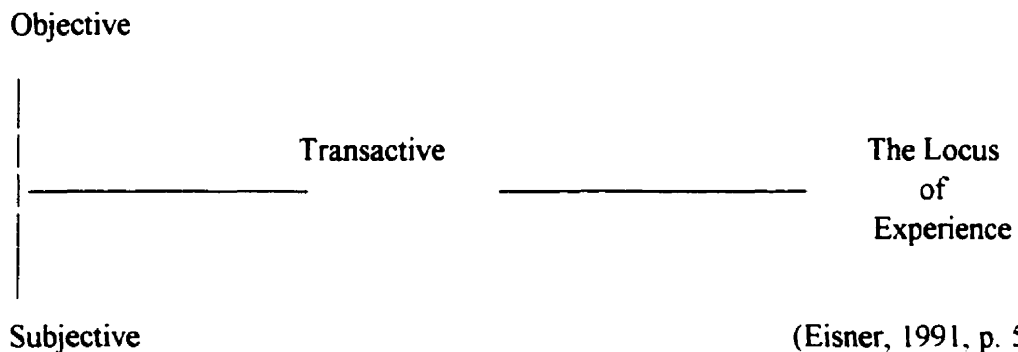
A qualitative study, notes Eisner (1991) can be compared to a guide rather than a map. "Unlike maps, qualitative studies are general, they are not mathematically sealed to match the territory, and they are more interpretive and narrative. Their function is to highlight, to explain, to provide direction the reader can take into account" (p. 59).

Establishing Trustworthiness in a Qualitative Study

While in a conventional research paradigm the criteria for establishing "truth value" and applicability have centered around internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity, Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintain that trustworthiness in a qualitative

study can be achieved in several ways. Trustworthiness centers around the following question: How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are credible and worth paying attention to? What criteria can be established to generate this trustworthiness? Among the techniques that Lincoln and Guba suggest are: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, and member checking. Prolonged engagement refers to "the investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes learning the "culture", testing for misinformation introduced by distortions either of the self or of the respondents, and building trust" (p. 301). As advantage that I had in this study is that I had worked in two of the institutions as a English/ESL teacher and as an instructor in program development teaching a course on instructional strategies with adult learners. I became familiar with the institutional settings and with the curriculum for most of the English/ESL courses offered. I also knew many of the instructors for over a year and I was able to build trust and a positive rapport that would enhance the quality of information obtained in the interviews. Lincoln and Guba (1985) define the technique of persistent observation as the skill in being able to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the issue being explored and focusing on them in detail. Similarly, Eisner (1991) refers to the importance of educational researchers being able to identify "pervasive qualities" or those things that really count. "These goals require that the naturalist continuously engage in tentative labelling of what are taken as salient factors and then exploring them in detail, to the point where either the initial assessment in seen to be erroneous, or the factors are understood in an non-superficial way" (p. 304). As I will indicate further on, the interviews that I conducted gave me the opportunity to pick up on germane issues relating to some of the complex issues related to teaching English to adult learners.

Triangulation. In building the trustworthiness of a qualitative study, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that researchers should take steps to validate information and data against at least one other source (e.g. a second interview) and/or a second method (e.g. an observation of questionnaire in addition to an interview). This cross validation is referred to as triangulation (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 305). Obtaining information from multiple sources improves the contextual validation of the study. By comparing information from multiple sources, not only can the researcher look for consistencies, but ambiguities and

inconsistencies can also be identified and further explored. Guba and Lincoln (1989) further note that naturalistic researchers should be free to use different method which may include quantitative measures so that a broad spectrum of information is gathered.

In the present study several sources of data collection were used. I conducted three interviews with each participant. Each interview lasted for one and a half to two hours. After the initial interview was transcribed and analyzed the key themes were then further clarified and developed in the second interview. I also used other sources and methods as a way of gaining a more in-depth understanding of each teacher's personal approach to teaching adults. The other sources of data collection that I used were: Kolb's (1985) Learning Style Inventory and the corresponding teaching strategy preference check list developed by Svinicki and Dixon (1987), Conti's (1981, 1990) Principles of Adult Learning Scale, Zinn's (1990, 1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, a critical incident questionnaire, and a variation of Kelly's (1956) Repertory Grid Exercise. In addition to these instruments, I also collected artifacts from each teacher that included: course outlines, assignments and projects, tests and exams, and samples of student writing. These artifacts gave me the opportunity to see the way each teacher's personal philosophy is reflected in the topical outlines of the courses and in the assignments and assessments procedures used. These documents provide a stable source of information as well as a rich source of information that is contextually relevant. The student writing samples also reflect some of the learning that has occurred during a individual class of course unit.

I was also able to sit in and observe some of the teachers' classes. This gave me the opportunity to explore the consistency between the teacher's expressed views on teaching and learning and their classroom teaching behaviour. While the focus of this study is on the teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning, I also included feedback from the students. In addition to writing samples, I distributed a learning questionnaire to the students of each of the teachers. Feedback from this questionnaire enabled me to understand the characteristics of the student population that the teachers work with. Insights from the adult students regarding their experience of learning could then be compared to the teacher's observations on the students and their perceptions of the barriers and challenges that the students experience. Through the study I collected information about the history of each institution and its mission statement. I spoke with

department heads, the principles and deans of academic programming at the schools and community colleges. I wanted to be sure that the institutional context of the school or college would be clear. In sum, I tried to collect information from a range of sources in a way that would be meaningful and integrated.

Phenomenology and Hermeneutics

The philosophical orientation underlying qualitative research is phenomenology. Phenomenology is "the study of essences" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962 cited in Van Manen, 1997, p. 184). Influenced by phenomenological philosophers and writers such as Kant, Heidegger, Husserl, Dilthey, Merleau-Ponty, and Sartre, phenomenological inquiry is a form of interpretive inquiry that focuses on human perceptions and the essences of human experiences. For the philosopher Martin Heidegger (1962) phenomenology is ontology -- a study of the modes of "being in the world" or a study of what comprises being human (Chessick, 1987). Basic phenomenological inquiry results in descriptions of individual life world perceptions, but as Willis (1991) notes, these descriptions are metaphorical "for they can provide only evidence of life world experience, not the original primary consciousness itself" (p. 175). In short, all descriptions are transformations of experiences.

In his book <u>Researching Lived Experience,</u> Van Manen (1997) has applied the philosophical tenets of phenomenology to educational research. Van Manen's phenomenological approach to educational inquiry involves three steps: gathering material from one's own and other's life-worlds and an intuitive scanning of it; exploring the underlying structures of these materials; and, formulating recommendations and orientations to practical action. The information gathered could be derived from interviews, journals, diaries, observations, art, poetry, novels, and other aesthetic forms that reflect lived experiences. "In bringing to reflective awareness the nature of the events experienced in our natural attitude, we are able to transform or remake ourselves in the true sense of Bildung (education)" (p. 7). Van Manen (1997) refers to "hermeneutic phenomenology" as "a philosophy of the personal, the individual, which we pursue against the background of an understanding of the evasive character of the logos, of other, the whole, the communal, the social" (p. 7).

The phenomenological focus emphasizes how things appear while the hermeneutic focus examines the interpretation of events or experiences. "The implied contradiction may be resolved if one acknowledges that the (phenomenological) "facts" of lived experience are always already meaningfully (hermeneutically) experienced" (Van Manen, 1997, pp. 180-181). He emphasizes that the hermeneutic phenomenological method does not offer a procedural system; rather its method requires an ability to be reflective, insightful, sensitive to language, and open to the perceptual landscapes of others. Good examples of phenomenological writing can be found in the works of Shakespeare, Balzac, and Conrad or in the paintings of Monet or Cezanne. Each artist is able to capture the essence of a life-world. The themes of uniqueness and essence and the critique of essentialism are characteristic of phenomenological inquiry. Van Manen cautions researchers against drawing "moral conclusions" from studies which attempt to capture the nature of for example, womanhood, childhood, or ethnicity. "Categorical essentials are dangerous in that it tends to see things in absolute terms, and from these fixed proportion one derives moral convictions" (Van Manen, 1997, xvi). While experience is always more immediate and complex than descriptions of these experiences may be, Van Manen states that the human science researcher is a "scholar-author" who attempts to recreate in language that in intelligible and understandable "what seems to be beyond language" (p. xviii).

Smith (1991) points out that like phenomenology, hermeneutics emphasizes the importance of researchers being attentive to the etymological roots of language as well as being able to be insightful, critically aware, and able to "deconstruct" multiple meanings. Smith (1991) states that "in a time when the very act of thinking has become a target of intense commercial and political manipulation, the need is great for persons who can meaningfully deconstruct what is going on and propose alternatives" (p. 199). He further suggests that researchers need to be aware of the narratives of our time which include spirituality (eastern, western, aboriginal), feminism, and the new discourses on east-west relations and global interdependence.

As a researcher, I am also aware that I bring my own beliefs, presuppositions and experience not only about issues related to adult education but of social and global issues. While I may share similar views with the participants, differences will also surface. It was

important for me to "bracket" my beliefs in order to understand and interpret the beliefs and conceptualizations of the participants in this study.

Kvale (1981) questions whether or not the purpose in hermeneutic inquiry is to analyse the individual's understanding of a concept or is the purpose to develop through the statements of the interviewee a broader and deeper understanding of the concept? The particular slant of the interpretation depends upon the aspects of the personal and social world that the researcher/interviewer deems important. In this sense, there will always be a bias in any information gathering technique used -- whether from a positivist or a hermeneutic -- phenomenological approach. In this present study, I hoped to uncover both individual conceptualizations of different concepts related to teaching and learning, and through there understandings arrive at deeper understandings of the concepts within a broader social context.

Finally, a goal of hermeneutic inquiry is to provide a vision and a framework for action. Through an expression of beliefs, attitudes, and conceptions and a reflection on them, new possibilities can occur. The implications of the present study also address this point. On a personal level, teachers who become aware of their own and others assumptions underlying their conceptions of teaching and learning may be more likely to reflect on the way these assumption are translated into their teaching behaviour and the learning comes. Modifications or changes in teaching behaviour may occur. Awareness raising regarding teachers' personal philosophy of practice may also have important social implications. New curricula might be developed on the basis on new assumptions; this could have a direct impact on the teaching (and learning) at the institutional level. As I will discuss further on, the process of experiential learning parallels the process that Kolb (1984) describes.

Methods of Data Collection

The Hermeneutic Interview

The style of interviewing and the relationship between the participant and the researcher are critical to the knowledge that emerges in a research study. Recalling the idea of using the self as instrument, I tried to set a climate where openness and critical reflection could exist. I rejected the idea of the detached "researcher" on the one side and the "subjects" of the study on the other. My approach draws from the research orientation

of Kvale (1983), Lincoln and Guba (1989), and Van Manen (1997) who take the view that all individuals I involved in the study are a team of researchers who engage in an emerging and continuous process of data triangulation until they reach a consensus in the meaning or interpretation of the data collected. Newman's (1990) idea of "interwoven conversations" accurately conveys the interviewing style in this study. Research is a collaboration effort to achieve a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied. "There is a conversational relation between the speakers, and the speakers are involved in a conversational relation with the notion or phenomenon that keeps the personal relation of the conversation intact" (Van Manen, 1997, p. 98). The art of the researcher in the hermeneutic interview is also to keep the question (of the meaning of the phenomenon) open in a way that would facilitate critical reflection and further questioning. I encouraged the participants in this study to express their views on teaching and learning partly from sharing my own experiences as a teacher. The teachers seemed to enjoy completing the inventories and questionnaires and these also became a vehicle for teachers to express their views.

I followed the framework that Kvale (1983) lined in his description of the qualitative interview. The interview, as Kvale notes, implies an implicit phenomenological and hermeneutical mode of understanding. Individuals are able to describe their beliefs, attitudes, and aspects of their life-worlds that relate to the research topic in question.

Kvale (1983) identified twelve key aspects of the qualitative interview which are relevant to the present study. The qualitative interview: 1) should be centered on the interviewee's life world; 2) seeks to understand the meaning of phenomena in the individual's life world; it is 3) qualitative, 4) descriptive, and 5) specific; it is 6) presuppositionless; it is 7) focused on certain themes; it is open for 8) ambiguities, and 9) changes; it depends upon the 10) sensitivity of the interviewer; it takes place in 11) an interpersonal interaction, and it may be 12) a positive experience (p. 175). Kvale emphasizes that the task of the interviewer is to focus upon, or guide toward, certain themes, but not to guide the interviewee toward certain opinions about these themes" (p. 176).

As Kvale (1983) notes, the variation and rich detail that may emerge from an interview depends to a significant degree on the interpersonal rapport established between

the interviewer and the interviewee. The interviewee must also be able to experience or perceive something of the interviewer's interest, genuineness, and respect. Over the course of the three interviews, I had an opportunity to build a positive relationship with each of the teachers. I had emphasized the non-evaluative nature of my research, and I tried to encourage the participants to view themselves as co-researchers. My skill in interviewing also improved as the study progressed. I was able to return to key themes or interesting comments and ask each respondent to elaborate further by detailing on example or anecdote.

The Interview Questions

The interview questions explored instructors' underlying intentions and beliefs regarding: a) *knowledge and learning*, b) *the purposes of adult education and training* and c)*the roles, responsibilities and relationships for instructors of adults*. The questions are based on the models of teaching presented by Apps (1973) and Pratt (1998). These models emphasize five key dimensions in the teaching-learning transaction: the teacher, the learner, context, content, and ideals. Pratt emphasizes the importance of interviewing teachers in a way that would explore their actions, intentions, and beliefs about teaching and learning.

1. Actions -- refers to the activities and repertoire of techniques used in teaching. Actions would be the most concrete and accessible dimensions of individual instructors' conceptions of teaching. Some teaching activities (e.g. lecturing) might be undertaken independent of the outcomes that actions might result in. Questions related to actions might include: How do you prepare for teaching? What motivational strategies do you use? How do you routinely start/finish a session? What kind of activities might characterize your teaching?

2. Intentions --related to the goals teachers are trying to accomplish. Intentions are based on the teacher's sense of purpose or responsibility. The intentions that a teacher has may be synonymous with the goals or objectives set by the sponsoring agency, organization, or government. Questions related to intentions included: What are you trying to accomplish with your teaching? How do you know when you are successful in your teaching? Who are the difficult and challenging learners? How do you handle those situations?

3. <u>Beliefs</u> -- are related to assumptions that individuals hold about teaching. "They were expressed are either normative or causal propositions held with varying degrees of clarity, confidence, and centrality" (Pratt, 1998). For many practitioners, beliefs informed their intentions which then influenced the process of teaching (actions). Pratt (1998) emphasized that beliefs represented the *most stable* and *least flexible* aspect of a person's conceptions of teaching. People were able to accommodate a variety of changes in circumstances as long as they were able to hold o their central beliefs related to teaching. Questions exploring underlying beliefs included: How have you changed as an educator? Do you have a set of beliefs that guide your teaching?

The Interview Process

I conducted three one and a half hour to two hour interviews with each English teacher in this study. Each interview was taped and then transcribed. Notes were also taken during each interview. The typed version of the tapes as well as the notes provided the basis for the analysis and interpretation.

The purpose of the interviews was to gain a deeper insight into the teachers' perception of their role, the context they work in, and their understanding of the process of teaching and learning. The ideas/conceptions of teaching and learning that the participants expressed were analyzed and compared to the conceptions of teaching and learning outlined by Pratt and his associates (1998) as well as the transformational theories of adult learning presented in the literature review.

In the *initial interview*, biographical information was collected. I then focused the questions around the themes relating to teaching and learning in adult education. While the interviews were unstructured, I felt that it was important to focus on the key themes lined in the interview schedule (see Appendix). At the end of the first interview, I asked each participant to complete Kolb's (1985) <u>Learning Style Inventory</u> and the accompanying teaching strategy inventory, the critical incident questionnaire, Conti's(1990) <u>Principles of Adult Learning Inventory</u> and Zinn's(1994) <u>Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory</u>. I arranged to meet the teacher two to three weeks after completing the inventories. Both the <u>Kolb Learning Style Inventory</u> and the Zinn <u>Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory</u> take about twenty minutes to complete.

In the *second interview*, I picked up on key themes from the first interview; the teachers further clarified their ideas, and we discussed the implications of results of Kolb's (1985) Learning Style Inventory to their teaching style. We also discussed how their own personal teaching philosophy compared to the results of Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory and Conti's (1990) Principles of Adult Learning Inventory.

The purpose of the *third interview* was to explore how each teacher planned and carried out a unit of study. The units included teaching novels, media literacy, plays, a series of essays and articles, a research study, and a poetry unit. The teachers also provided me with assignment sheets, assessment instruments, and samples of student writing.

In interviewing each teacher three times, I took note of the changes in their perceptions of the themes we had discussed (e.g. orientation to curriculum context, role as an adult educator, etc.). Such changes notes Kvale are to be expected: "The interviewee cannot repeat the meanings (he) started with in the first interview, because he has during that interview obtained a new insight in, an increased consciousness of the theme in focus for the interview" (p. 177).

As time went by, I observed that the participants became more open. For instance, in the initial interview, some of the participants were hesitant or self-conscious in response to questions. Comments such as "I wasn't supposed to say that, was I?", "I'm not sure what you want me to say", "That's the wrong answer" were frequent. I had to reassure and emphasize the non-evaluative nature of the study by saying, "There are no wrong answers. This research is an exploration of English teachers' ideas about teaching adults." The fact that I am actively teaching adults and could share my own experience and could relate to the concerns that the participants expressed helped build the trust and positive rapport. I was not viewed as a "detached observer" critically evaluating their teaching. Many of the teachers expressed an interested in the topics that we had discussed -- teaching style, motivation and learning, critical thinking, and transformational learning. A number of the teachers went through the inventories -- critically detailing why the statements/questions would not be relevant or accurate as it pertained to their teaching context. These discrepancies became the source of interesting discussions. As the research proceeded, the teachers became more reflective and questioning about their own

teaching practice. Without the in-depth interviews, I do not think that I would have had the rich detail or level or engagement had I exclusively used questionnaires or inventories. The interviews provided me with a rich data base; the challenge that I faced was in systematically organizing and interpreting the themes that would emerge.

Student Writing Samples and Student Learning Questionnaire

Each of the English teachers provided me with samples of student writing based on different assignments and projects throughout the term (Fall and Spring term, 1997 and Spring, 1998). These writing samples gave me the opportunity to more clearly understand what the students had learned and how they had interpreted the intent of the writing project. I was also able to assess the degree of consistency between the learning goals identified by the teacher and the way these goals are translated into the assignments presented and finally, the way the assignment is understood by the student.

The student learning questionnaire is an attempt to include the students' voices in describing their learning experiences. This feedback also helped me to detail the educational climate -- as it is perceived by the adult learner more accurately. I asked each of the teachers to distribute and collect the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed at the end of the teaching term.

Limitations to the Qualitative Method

Each research paradigm has some degrees of validity, limitations, strengths and weaknesses. Depending on the interests guiding the research, some methods work better to achieve particular goals; the qualitative research paradigm that the present study is situated in worked best to understand and articulate the different perspective English teachers have of teaching and learning. Yet, the qualitative paradigm is not without limitations. As Eisner (1991), Van Manen (1997) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) point out, many risks are involved in interpretivist-hermeneutic methodologies. Achieving trust, building rapport and engaging in negotiation and achieving a possible consensus of understanding may be very difficult to achieve. Face-to-face contact, and the skill of the interviewer in facilitating an open and candid dialogue also raises the uncertainty and of personal disclosure. The research and participant cannot hide behind the anonymity of a questionnaire or inventory

Despite precautions against disclosure as Lincoln and Guba (1985) note, the heavy reliance on natural language, direct quotations and continuous hermeneutic feedback loops on participants' constructions may make it easy for one participant to readily identify the other.

Another concern revolves around the tendency to regard qualitative research methodology as a 'superior' way to understand lived experiences. Consciousness may define reality, but as Kemmis and Carr (1986) suggest, consciousness may also distort reality. Self-perceptions and the perceptions of others may be based upon illusory beliefs and premises. Educational researchers need to be careful not to idealize qualitative methods; ongoing critical reflection regarding the instruments used, the feedback from the participants, and the researcher's own interest and biases is necessary if the study is to have "trustworthiness".

Data Collection Instruments Used

Repertory Grid

In this study, the repertory grid is used to identify the instructor's conceptions of particular roles teachers can assume. These roles would include: a facilitator, co-learner, expert, mentor, model, friend, provocateur, planner, instructor, manager, and resource-person. These roles are further elaborated on in the theories of teaching presented by Fox (1983), Rando and Menges (1989), Cranton (1992), and Pratt (1998).

Hunt (1987) and Candy (1990) suggest that practitioners can gain self-awareness about their beliefs, values, and relationships by completing a repertory grid with the researcher. In adult and higher education, repertory grids have ben used to raise the perceptual awareness of teacher in an attempt to facilitate the improvement of teaching effectiveness. (Hunt, 1992; Kreber, 1993; Candy (1991)

Repertory grids were originally used by George Kelly (1955) who developed this technique on the basis of his personal construct theory. Kelly also developed it as a response to the inadequacy of projective psychological tests such as the Rorschach and Thematic Apperception Test which often proved inadequate at revealing the complex psychological dynamics of individuals. The assumption underlying Kelly's Rep Test is that people think within hierarchically ordered constructs which are related to one another. Kelly operationally defined a construct as the way in which two things were similar and

thereby different from a third. He defined a construct by a bipolar dimension, such as helpful and unhelpful or flexible and rigid. Our experiences are interpreted or construed along these continua. Kelly (1963) notes that "a person chooses for himself that alternative in a dichotomized construct through which he anticipates that greater possibility for the extension and definition of his system" (p. 64). With new experiences and information, old constructs may be replaced by new constructs in a way similar to Mezirow's description of the process of perspective transformation. Deriving from past experiences, constructs are unique for each person; they influence the way individuals anticipate events, and they may function as a guide to living. While "personal constructions" are idiosyncratic, common experiences enable individuals to share meaning systems. As Candy (1991) notes, shared systems of personal constructs enable individuals to communicate with one another, created cultural norms, languages, etc.

Candy (1991) effectively describes the procedure for administering a grid. Each element (e.g., teacher roles) is written in a separate column of the grid. Each element is also written on separate cards. The cards are mixed up and the person interviewed is asked to pick two cards. Then the researcher asks: "In what way are two of these similar and thereby different from a third?" This question leads the interviewer to elicit a construct. This construct, two adjectives or phrases which represent opposites to the interviewer, are then written respectively on the left and the right not in the first row of the grid. This process is repeated several times until there is a sufficient number of constructs elicited by the respondent which would allow for a meaningful interpretation of the grid.

Kelly (1963, 1970) notes that although the repertory grid may represent "what has already happened in our experience," it can also serve as a guide to how we may potentially interpret or construe future events. Citing Kelly (1970), Ben-Peretz(1984) states that the REP test can become a powerful technique that can dissolve boundaries between cognition and affect. Ben-Peretz suggests that the Kelly REP test can be used with educators, not only as a way to explore their existing beliefs and assumptions about teaching, but as a technique for change and improvement in the teaching-learning context.

Critical Incident Questionnaire

Brookfield (1990; 1995) notes that a useful way to explore teachers' implicit theories and assumptions about learning is though the use of a critical incident questionnaire. Based on Flanagan's (1954) initial formulation of the method, critical incidents are brief descriptions written by learners of significant events in their lives. Brookfield (1990) states that "as a means of probing learners' assumptive worlds, the critical incident technique is rooted in the phenomenological research tradition and presumes the learners' general assumptions are embedded in, and can be inferred from, their specific descriptions of particular events...the emphasis is on recalling specific situations, events, and people rather than asking learners to identify general assumptions" (p180). The questionnaire (see Appendix) was completed after the first interview session. The form was completed at home and then returned to me. In reading and interpreting the critical incidents, I looked for similar and/or contrasting patterns in their written reports with their responses to the interview questions.

In the present study, the teachers were asked to reflect and write on the following question:

- Think back over your professional life and choose the most successful educational experience in which you were involved, either as teacher or learner. Why did you consider it successful? What features can you point to that were present at that time and that have not been present in other educational situations in which you have been involved? (Brookfield, 1987, pp. 102-103)

This strategy consists of three parts: the educator imagines or describes a situation in which success has occurred; the standards and judgments (criteria) used to determine the success of the situation are described; in addition, indicators (observable behaviors) of these criteria are identified.(An alternative question could ask the teacher to describe a *negative* experience as a teacher or learner, and then identify the features of this experience). After the teachers completed this question, I then recorded and interpreted the analysis and incorporated it with the additional data received (e.g., interviews, learning style inventory, etc.).

Kolb's Learning Style Inventory

Kolb's (1985) Learning Style Inventory was completed by the participants after the interview and the critical incident questionnaire. From the Kolb inventory, further insights into the learning and teaching style of each participant could be recorded. Kolb's Learning Style Inventory consists of twelve items which probe the individual's learning preferences. Each of the twelve items has a slightly different worded stem that in a variation of the phrase "I learn best when" followed by the four phrases that represent the feeling, watching, thinking, and doing dimensions of learning. The inventory can be self-scored and self-interpreted. The scores from the inventory indicate the learning style type that best describes the individual. Kolb suggested that individuals are also more likely to choose educational and career paths that reflect their dominant learning style mode. Based on his research and observations of the learning style inventory scores, Kolb (1984) identified the characteristics of four basic learning style patterns:

Diverger: Kolb maintains that individuals who are more divergent in their learning style are imaginative and able to view a situation from many perspectives. Divergers are interested in people and tend to be creative and feeling-oriented. They have broad cultural interests and they tend to specialize in the arts. In Kolb's (1984) analysis of the learning style of university undergraduates, those individuals majoring in history, English, political science and psychology tended to have divergent learning styles. Professions such as social work, education and nursing tend to attract "divergers".

Converger: The converger learning style mode emphasize abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. Individuals who are convergers demonstrate strengths in problem-solving, decision-making and the practical application of ideas. Professions with a scientific or technical orientation such as accounting, engineering, medicine and management attract individuals who demonstrate converger learning styles.

Assimilator: Individuals with an assimilator learning style have learning strengths in abstract conceptualization and reflective observation. Similar to the convergent learning style, this orientation is less focused on people and more concerned with ideas and abstract concepts. Mathematics, economics, sociology and chemistry majors often demonstrate assimilator learning styles.

Accommodator: Individuals with an accommodator learning style emphasize concrete experience and active experimentation. Kolb emphasizes that the adaptive emphasis of this orientation is in opportunity-seeking, risk-taking and action. Problems are solved by an intuitive trial-and-error manner with a reliance on other people for information rather than on their own analytical ability. Individuals in business management are more likely to have accommodator learning styles.

In sum, Kolb (1984, 1985) suggest that the disciplines of humanities and social sciences are based in concrete experience and reflective observation (the Divergent Learning Style) while the natural sciences and mathematics in reflective observation and abstract conceptualization (Assimilator). The science-based professions are based in abstract conceptualization and active experimentation (Converger) while the social professions are based in active experimentation and concrete experience (Accommodator). Based on Kolb's model, English teachers would fall within either the diverger or accommodator learning style mode.

The Teaching Strategies Check List

In addition to completing Kolb's (1985) Learning Style Inventory, each teacher completed the teaching strategies check list adapted from a conceptual model developed by Svinicki and Dixon (1987). The purpose of the check list was to explore parallels between the teacher's learning style and their most frequently used or preferred teaching strategy. Each of the teaching strategies falls under one of the dimensions of Kolb's experiential learning model.

The relationships between the teachers' own learning style and the way in which they teach can provide valuable information that may result in teachers modifying their teaching behaviour. They may begin to experiment with different teaching (and learning) strategies.

Svinicki and Dixon (1987) have used Kolb's (1984) learning style model as a way of helping teachers explore different teaching and learning strategies. These researchers say that a strength of Kolb's model is its practical use in the classroom. Instructors/teachers can also take advantage of the strategies/resources that they are already familiar with and then integrate new strategies that they see as appropriate to the particular course. Svinicki and Dixon maintain that the limited approach to instructional

methodology that many teachers have could be related to the absence of a theoretical framework for selecting and organizing classroom activities to enhance learning.

Svinicki and Dixon (1987) identify four action verbs that correspond to each dimension of Kolb's cycle. Each verb identifies the specific activity that the learner would be involved in:

Concrete Experience = Experiencing

Reflective Observation = Examining

Abstract Conceptualization = Explaining

Active Experimentation= Application of skills

As I discussed the results of the learning styles inventory and the teaching strategies check list with each of the instructors, the difficulties of applying some of the strategies suggested by Svinicki and Dixon (1987) surfaced.

Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory

The Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory developed by Lorraine Zinn (1983; 1990;1994) was designed to help adult educators identify their preferred philosophical orientation(s). The current study uses Zinn's (1994) revised inventory.   Zinn (1983) developed her inventory by analyzing the five key philosophies of adult education outlined by Elias and Merriam (1980) in their book. Philosophical Foundations in Adult Education. Zinn (1983) field tested the inventory with 78 practitioners in diverse fields on adult education (Human Resources, Industry, Training, Education, etc.).   The inventory was tested for content and construct validity, internal consistency, and stability. (for further information regarding validity and reliability, see Zinn, 1983 and Spurgeon, 1994). A summary of the five philosophies (Liberal, Behaviourist, Progressive, Humanistic, and Radical) is presented below:

> *Liberal Adult Education Philosophy* has its historical origins in the philosophical theories of the classical Greek philosophers, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. This liberal education tradition was adopted and adapted in the Christian schools in early, medieval and modern times...The emphasis is this tradition is upon liberal learning,organized knowledge, and the development of the intellectual powers of the mind.

Progressive Adult Education has its historical origins in the progressive movement in politics, social change and education. This approach to educational philosophy emphasizes such concepts as the relationship between education and society, experience-centered education, vocational education, and democratic education. Leading progressive educators include Lindeman, Bergevin, Dewey, and William Kirkpatrick.

Behaviorist Adult Education has its roots in modern philosophic and scientific movements. Behaviorism in adult education emphasizes such concepts as control, behavioral modification, learning through reinforcement and management by objectives. Early behaviorists include Thorndike, Pavlov, and Watson. The most prominent behaviorist philosophy is that of B.F. Skinner... Various adult education practices are inspired by this philosophic view: programmed learning, behavioral objectives, and competency-based teacher education.

Humanistic Adult Education is related in its development to existential psychology and humanistic psychology. The key concepts that are emphasized in this approach are freedom and autonomy, trust, active cooperation and participation, and self-directed learning. Philosophical roots are found in such writers as Heidegger, Sartre, Camus, Marcquel, and Buber...Among adult educators Malcolm Knowles is prominent in espousing this orientation in his needs-meeting and student-centered andragogical approach to adult learning...

Radical Adult Education has its historical roots in the various radical movements that have emerged in the past three centuries: Anarchism, Marxism, Socialism, and left wing Freudianism. The radicals in education propose education as a force for achieving radical social change. Education in this viewpoint is closely connected with social, political and economic understanding of cultures, and with the development of methods to bring people to an awareness of responsible social action...This philosophic orientation was revived during the 1960s in the efforts of Jonathon Kozol John Holt, Paul Goodman, and Ivan Illich. A prominent adult educator of this philosophic position is Paulo Freire, who has proposed radical conscientization as the true function of education among the oppressed..

Educational practices inspired by this philosophy include the Freedom Schools in

the South during the 1960s, free schools, and Freire's radical approach to literacy education. (Elias and Merriam, 1984, pp. 9-11)

The inventory is self-scoring and a chart summarizing the key concepts are included. Each of the fifteen items on the Inventory begins with an incomplete sentence, followed by five different options that might complete the sentence. The fifteen items focus on issues related to teaching adults planning curriculum, and the process of learning.

The inventory is used in the present study to cross verify information obtained during the interviews with the teachers regarding their personal philosophy and the conceptions of teaching and learning expressed. While not exactly parallel, the five conceptions of teaching and learning developed by Pratt and associates (1998) related to the five philosophy identified by Elias and Merriam (1980). For instance, the radical philosophy is consistent with Pratt and associates' social reform conception of teaching. Likewise, the humanist philosophy parallels the nurturing perspective detailed by Pratt and associates. As a researcher, the challenge for me was to draw out consistent themes in the interview that reflected or integrated one of more of the philosophies/conceptions presented in the literature.

Principles of Adult Learning Scale (PALS)

Conti's (1978; 1990) Principles of Adult Learning Scale was used in conjunction with the philosophy of adult education teaching inventory developed by Zinn (1983, 1990, 1994). Conti developed the PALS by analyzing and grouping together the central principles of adult learning and teaching strategies evident in the writings of Lindeman, Bergevin, Kidd, Houle, Knowles, and Freire. Collectively, these theorists emphasize a highly collaborative teaching approach that is learner centered. Curriculum content is grounded in the needs and interests of students. Critical thinking, problem solving, self-direction and personal developed are emphasized. Teachers try to foster a climate of trust and mutual respect. In contrast, the "teacher-centered approach" focuses on the transmission of information by the teacher-expert and the attainment of competencies that can be evaluated by a criteria-referenced or norm-referenced test. Although a teacher-centered approach is widely practiced in adult education, Conti (1990) notes that the learner-centered approach, influenced by the humanistic psychology of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers is strongly supported.

Conti's (1978; 1990) forty-four item instrument (PALS) measures the frequency with which a teacher practices teaching/learning principles that are described in the adult education literature. High scores on PALS indicate support for a learner-centered approach to teaching while low scores reveal support for a teacher-centered approach. Scores in the mid-range reflect an eclectic approach which draws from both teacher-centered and learner-centered styles.

Conti maintains that an instructor's teaching style can be categorized as either teacher-centered or learner-centered. He states that,

> to identify one's style, the total atmosphere created by the teacher's views on learning and the teacher's approach to teaching must be examined. Because teaching style is comprehensive and is the overt implementation of the teacher's beliefs about teaching, it is directly linked to the teacher's educational philosophy. (p. 81)

The main factors in the PALS that support the collaborative learner-centered mode include:

Factor One: Learner-Centered Activities

Conti (1990) writes that the items that comprise this factor relate to evaluation standards and a comparison of students to external norms. A low score on this factor suggests support of the teacher-centered mode with a preference for formal testing and standardized tests rather than informal testing. The instructor who supports the teacher-centered mode sees value in one basic teaching method (often the transmission approach) and believe that adults learn in similar ways. A high score on this factor reflects support of the student-centered collaborative mode where adult learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and the assessment/evaluation of it (Conti, 1990, p. 84).

Factor Two: Personalizing Instruction

A high score in this factor indicates the teacher's commitment to individualize instruction to best meet the unique needs and interest of the adult learners. Instruction is self-paced, and a diversity of methods, materials, and assignments are used. Cooperation rather than competition is encouraged, and lecturing is viewed generally as a poor method of presenting subject material to students.

Factor Three: Relating to Experience

A high score on this factor indicates the teachers' emphasis on integrating the students' prior learning experiences into the current educational context. Adult learners are encouraged to relate the information acquired to their own experience. Learning episodes are organized according to the problems that students may experience in everyday life. Conti (1990) states that "this focus is not just on coping with current problems or accepting the values of others. Instead, students are encouraged to ask basic questions about the nature of their society. When this is screened through experience, such conscious-raising questions can foster a student's growth from dependence on others to greater independence (p. 84-85).

Factor Four: Assessing Student Needs

Individual conferences and informal counselling to learn more about the unique needs and goals of the student comprise this factor. Existing discrepancies between the desired goals of students and their present levels of performance are assessed. With this knowledge, short-range and long-range objectives are planned. A high score on this factor indicates the teachers' commitment to acknowledging the adult learner's unique life and career plans, as well as the adults' input in planning short and long-term educational goals.

Factor Five: Climate Building

A positive interpersonal climate is fostered based on respect and empathy. Open dialogue, building on students' strengths, and risk taking are encouraged. An informal atmosphere where adult learners can "explore elements related to their self-concept, practice problem-solving skills, and develop interpersonal skills" comprise this factor. A high score on this factor indicates the teacher's commitment to fostering this climate.

Factor Six: Participation in the Learning Process

This factor indicates the degree to which the teacher encourages the student to select content material, course topics, and developing the criteria for evaluating classroom performance and other aspects of learning.

Factor Seven: Flexibility for Personal Development

A low score on this factor indicates that the teachers view themselves more as providers of knowledge rather than facilitators of learning. Little flexibility is presented

and the course is viewed more as a program to be run rather than an exploration of ideas. "A well-disciplined classroom is viewed as a stimulus for learning. Discussions of controversial subjects that involve value judgements or of issues that relate to student's self-concept are avoided" (Conti, 1990, p. 86). A high score on this factor indicates the teachers' commitment to personal fulfilment as a central aim of education. Flexibility and a dynamic orientation to match the curriculum content to the changing needs of students are valued.

High scores on each factor represent support of the "learner-centered" teaching style that Conti (1990) indicates is frequently cited in the adult education literature (most notably in the writing of Lindeman, Kidd, Houle, Knowles, and Freire).

Conti's (1978; 1990) Principles of Adult Learning Scale can be completed in 15 minutes. I asked the teachers to complete the inventory and mail it back to me along with the Zinn(1994) Philosophy of Adult Education inventory and the Kolb(1985) Learning Style Inventory. Scoring the PALS involved converting the values for the positive items and then summing the values of the responses to the items. The scores can range from 0 to 220 with the average being 146. The standard deviation is 20. Conti notes that instructors' overall teaching style and the strength of commitment to either a teacher-centered or learner-centered teaching style can be assessed by comparing each teachers' score to 146. While scores above 146 indicate a tendency toward a leaner-centered mode, lower scores suggest support of the teacher-centered approach.

Summary

This chapter presented a description of the data collection instruments used and a rationale for using them (see Table 1). While the primary source of data collection included the three interviews with each of the adult educators, I also used questionnaires and inventories as a source of cross verification, and to further explore any new or contradictory statements that the teachers made that may not have surfaced had I exclusively used only interviews or only inventories/questionnaires. Furthermore, responses to the interview questions could be compared to the results of the inventories. The use of various methods allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of each teacher's conceptions of teaching and learning.

Table 1

Data Collection Techniques Used

Qualitative Data Collection Instruments	Quantitative Data Collection Instruments
* Interview Questions (based on Pratt's (1998) interview questions)	*Zinn's (1994) *Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory*
*Artifacts and Document (Assignment sheets, teachers' research, tests, and students' writing samples)	*Kolb's (1985) *Learning Style Inventory*
*Reflective Writing / Personal Narratives (responses to and Critical Incident Question/Criteria Analysis)	* *Teaching Strategies Check List* (adapted from Svinicki and Dixon, 1987).
*Adult Learning Questionnaire	*Conti's (1990) *Principles of Adult Learning Scale*

The next three chapters present an analysis of the data collected. A comparison of the findings from the responses between the teachers from the Winnipeg School Division #1 and the teachers from the two community colleges will also be presented in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter Four: Analysis and Results

Chapters four, five, and six present an analysis of the data collected from the interviews, questionnaires, and inventories. Chapter four presents the profiles of the adult educators in the Winnipeg School Division #1. Chapter five and six present the profiles of the adult educators from Red River Community College and Vancouver Community College. A brief description of the institution and the department or program that the teachers work in is included. Chapter six analyzes and summarizes the key findings in the data and compares these findings to the information in the literature review. The framework for the analysis is based on Pratt's (1998) model of the five conceptions of teaching and learning presented in more detail in Chapter Two of the literature review. Each adult educator's views are analyzed from their perspectives on: their role and responsibility as an adult educator, changes as an educator, values, beliefs and ideals that guide practice, views on learning and learners, orientation to curriculum, the teaching context, and dilemmas. A variation of Kelly's (1955) Repertory Grid Exercise was used to identify the roles that the educators associated themselves with. Roles such as: *facilitator, resource person, instructor, mentor, role model, provocateur, expert, transformative educator*, and other possible roles generated by the teachers were discussed and ranked by the each teacher in relation to their own self-perceptions as an adult educator. The perspectives and personal philosophies of the teachers are also compared to the five philosophies of adult education detailed by Zinn (1983, 1994) and the literature in the field of adult education focusing on transformative learning theories and its application to teaching English. (Mezirow, 1981, 1990; Clark, 1993; Rosenblatt, 1968; McEwan, 1992; and Peim, 1993)

A summary of the results from the Zinn (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, Kolb's (1984) Learning Style Inventory, the Kelly (1955) Repertory Grid Exercise and the Conti (1978, 1990) Principles of Adult Learning Scale are also presented in chart form after each teacher's profile. (See Table 2)

The Winnipeg Adult Education Centre: A Brief Description of the Institution

The Winnipeg Adult Education Centre (WAEC) opened Manitoba's first day school specifically designed to meet the needs of adult students. The school opened in 1966 and operates with the Winnipeg School Division #1 (Rauscher, 1997, p.198). The

WAEC has over 1,200 day school students who attend programs ranging from basic literacy to university entrance. Adult ESL programs are also offered in the evenings. A major premise in establishing the WAEC is that adults learn best in environments with other adult learners. Prior to its establishment, opportunities for adult study were limited, with few exceptions, to evening programs. Increased emphasis on more education and higher entrance requirements at post secondary institutions in Manitoba suggested the necessity to provide more intensive educational courses and better facilities for the education of adult learners.

In his historical overview of the WAEC from 1961 to 1980, Rauscher (1997) notes that the need to establish a facility and program for adult learners was a recurrent theme in school board meetings: "It called for the development of a special school for adults; due to the great difficulties they faced, including: a) waiting for placement into schools until the end of September which placed them in a 'catch-up position'; b) functioning in a 'teenage environment', and c) progressing at an inappropriate rate within regular high school-either too slow or too fast for their needs" (p. 200).

The satellite schools of the WAEC include the Adult Basic Literacy Program (beginner to Grade 8) on Elgin Avenue and the Adolescent Parent Program on Cecil Street. The WAEC's main school is on Vaughan Street in the core of downtown Winnipeg. There are forty full time staff members in the day program and forty part time adult ESL instructors that work in the ESL programs. The students come from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds, and in recent years there has been a demographic shift at the WAEC in the increase of Aboriginal students from the core area and those who have moved from northern communities to the city to further their education and find employment.

Many of the students who attend the WAEC are single parents holding down part time jobs, and individuals who did not complete a secondary education and are returning to complete high school credits. Others are new Canadians coming from countries such as Vietnam, Korea, Central America, Eastern Europe, the former Yugoslavia, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, and Ethiopia and Eritrea. The mission statement of the WAEC sums up its broader aims: "The Winnipeg Adult Education Centre works with adult secondary students who bring with them a variety of life experiences and cultural backgrounds. The

mission of the Centre is to assist these students in achieving their education and career goals by providing the necessary academic foundation in an atmosphere of support, encouragement, and mutual respect" (1997-98 WAEC Student Handbook, p. 2).

Profile #1 Rob

"One of the things that I like to do is provide a framework where people can make discoveries. When people around me are making discoveries, I feel a sense of accomplishment and a sense of having participated in a process that they will acknowledge as significant.... The Winnipeg Adult Education Centre has been referred to as a school of second chance. The term 'second chance' would apply to all of our learners——Canadian born and ESL. There is the saying that 'opportunity knocks only once,' but I disagree. I think that opportunities are always knocking. There are always opportunities for learning and improving one's life."

Background

I met with Rob three times during April -December 1997 to discuss his approach to teaching and learning. Rob has taught at The Winnipeg Adult Education Centre for twenty two years and currently teaches a variety of English courses ranging from ESL to university entrance English courses like the Literary Forms and the English 40G Core. Rob is a reflective individual who is committed to teaching; he describes himself as "a renaissance learner" who enjoys art, music, travelling, and reading. He is a world traveller and since beginning his teaching career, has spent most summers overseas. Rob speaks German and French fluently, and this summer he will be returning to China to study Mandarin in Beijing.

Rob grew up near Lynn Lake, a mining town in northern Manitoba. "Although I connected readily with the world of nature in the north, I felt somewhat isolated by the community itself. My interest in travel and my need to connect with other cultures may be a way of feeling more connected to the wider world. I can remember as a child seeing advertisements in the CNR station in Sheridan and seeing posters advertising the Cunard transatlantic routes and the poster did stay with me. I associated travel with a sense of adventure." Rob studied at the University of Minnesota , and at a religious college in California. He completed his Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Education, and Master's of

Divinity degrees. Prior to teaching at the WAEC, Rob taught in the Adult Basic

Education Program at Keewatin Community College in The Pas, Manitoba.

General Overview of Rob 's Educational Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults

Rob 's perspectives on adult education reflect the humanistic, progressive, and

some elements of the radical philosophies. Based on Pratt's (1998) framework, his views

most closely paralleled the developmental, nurturing, and social reform perspectives.

Rob's holistic view toward adult education was reflected in his recurring references to the

importance of integrating spiritual and philosophical dimensions of learning. A holistic

education would integrate art, science, nature, the individual, and the community. The

key concepts in Rob's perspectives include: fostering personal and intellectual

development, learner-centeredness, respect, and discovery.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Rob sees his work as a "balancing act" of trying to meet the needs of the program

and institution with the individual needs of the adult learner. "On one level, it is fulfilling

my primary duties and responsibilities as prescribed by the state, because I do work in a

framework that views learning as part of an institution and therefore I have to keep that in

mind." Within that context, Rob incorporates his own beliefs and values about adult

learning. As a teacher, Rob also sees himself as a planner and a manager—a manager of

time, teaching strategies, and teaching materials. However, this planning and management

occurs in a context of reflection. "I don't work in the dark. I work in the context of some

kind of reflection."

Rob most identified with the role of the facilitator, someone who is guiding

students to explore "learning landscapes." Learning is very much action oriented and

connected to personal exploration and development:

> I would call myself a facilitator. I am somebody who is there to point directions
>
> to other people. I don't see myself as an expert, but I see myself as somebody who
>
> can direct the person to some sort of an expert. I can direct students to more
>
> information and sources. I suppose that I am like a guide. I'm there to guide
>
> people to help them look at themselves to make their own discoveries. I'm also a
>
> 'people person.' I enjoy learning and I am a natural 'breaker down' of information

for people. Whether I would be teaching or not, I'd be doing that. It seems as though that is a natural part of my life.

Rob also identified with the role of the co-learner. "One always has a cutting edge in their personal/growth learning, and you share this with others. I had a teacher once who said that he had learned more than he had taught them, and I like that attitude. I approach teaching in that way."

Transformative Educator

Rob associated the term "transformative educator" with a teacher who demonstrates authenticity in teaching. " To me, a transformative educator is someone who is sincere and practicing what they really believe in." A transformative educator, from Rob's perspective, is also a person who can provide students with a framework for connecting their learning experiences to the larger world. We also discussed the term "reformer" as it might relate to the adult educator's role. His response was consistent with his role as a facilitator:

> I consider myself a reformer only in the sense that I can help people find out where they want to reform. If we look at some of the movements of our time----the native rights or the women's movement—I feel that I cannot speak for these people but I can help the people speak for themselves within the movement. They have a validation for what they are talking about but a supportive outsider can help facilitate change. Teachers can help learners articulate these experiences.

Changes as an Adult Educator

Rob reflected on the changes that he experienced over the years as an educator, and he acknowledges making a transition from being the "expert" to being more of a facilitator. "I think that in my earlier teaching experiences, I saw myself as a source of information. My role was to know and the student's role was to learn from my knowledge. I would go home at night and read all this material and then the next day, I would tell it to the students." His views on teaching changed when he started working with adult students at Keewatin Community College. He worked with students on an individual basis, and began to understand them as unique individuals who had different experiences and backgrounds. He also connects the concept of pleasure and enjoyment to learning. "I never used to associate learning with pleasure at the beginning of my career.

Enjoying the process of learning is vital for me now. It bothers me that as teachers we have to assign grades and 'evaluate' learning. There is a tension between having to put down a mark for the authorities and then having simply to enjoy the process of doing things and making discoveries that are important to them."

Values, Beliefs, and Ideals

In our discussions, Rob drew a diagram that he said best reflected his ideals and values. The framework represents the value that Rob places on the philosophic, spiritual, and artistic dimensions of life. He sees himself more than "a teacher with a job." His position or role as a teacher does not acknowledge the "whole person"with diverse interests. Rob mentioned that he worked out this framework when he was struggling with his "status" as an educator and the way in which society tends to undermine teaching and teachers. He reflected on this:

> Some years ago I worked out a bit of a frame that applies to my way of looking at the world that can touch on my professional life as a teacher. I imagined a series of concentric circles that start with a circle which I called ' love.' I view this love as transcending and that would take us beyond time. The next circle would be the 'circle of art.' I seem to have a natural affinity and love for art. The next one is education. The last two circle include 'earning a living' and my 'professional status' in the community. Perhaps this last outer circle is the least important for me. At any rate, the circles reflect and integrate with each other.

Rob believes that Adult Education should provide opportunities for individuals to explore their interests and realize their potential. Education should provide individuals with opportunities to explore the options that they have in life. We discussed the emphasis that the school system places on marking, accountability, and evaluation. Rob believes that resistance and drop in adult education result from institutions from "the outside" not really understanding the needs of the client base. He reflected on his experiences teaching at Keewatin Community College and he attributed the success of the literacy program to being grounded in the realities of life in northern Manitoba:

> Ideally, educational programs should come from a need within the community and they should be engineered in a way that people can identify with their own realities, not exclusively, but in a greater way than what we are doing now. We have to

focus on programs where students can find meaning for themselves. We are too work and grade focused. People lose touch with their creative side. We have to examine the meaning of 'improvement' in education. Improvement may not necessarily translate into a grade or economic success. We have to emphasize personal development, awareness and pleasure in learning as equally acceptable goals. We have come along way, but the changes have not been activated by the system, that's for sure.

Rob sees education as having a tremendous potential to change society in a positive way, but only if we can move away from a narrow view that connects "academic excellence" with success. He cited numerous examples of students who had not been successful academically in his class, but had changed their outlook in life and became more optimistic and confident. In his view, literacy education should not be regarded as "a commercial enterprise." He further noted that he sees the classroom as an agent for social change. "Ideally, if we could get beyond the necessity for competition, and explore the areas of personal growth and personal development, we could apply these in a larger context—either societal or global. Right now, our educational institutions reflect the values of a society that is very competitive, consumer oriented, and hierarchical."

Learning and Learners

Rob views learning as more that a process of acquiring information or developing skills and competencies. "Learning means a chance to explore some of one's own interests and discover elements in one's own vocabulary that one hasn't been able to articulate. Learning means developing a certain style of life that centers around a 'joie de vivre'—large or small. The realization came to me several years ago that there is a connection between personal growth and what some would regard as objective or abstract learning. There can be a cutting edge in looking at a painting, or reading a poem, or hearing music that can tap a personal need and that this can be a focus for further exploration."

Often in his English classes, Rob will integrate music, art, and film with teaching poetry and other forms of literature. "Many students are unaware of their interests." He is trying to provide students with an opportunity to see learning as something enjoyable rather than something associated with stress and routine:

I think of teaching literature as tapping areas of the imagination. That is the world of fantasy and projection, the world of societal interpretation—it is very much connected with the world of art. I want students to learn to trust their own judgments and to learn to enjoy. What may be difficult is the language barrier or the difficulty of the content. I try to work around those barriers.

Rob described his learners as "largely young adults who have left high school. Some have been in the workforce and are returning to complete their high school. I also work with a lot of ESL students—adults who have left one culture and are engaged in finding a place in another." Rob addressed some of the barriers that adult learners experience when they return to school. "So much of learning is connected to motivation and our students have so many psychological, family, and financial problems that interfere with their motivation and learning." Despite the barriers that these students may have, their decision to return signified a motivation to affect some type of change in their life. Two of Rob 's classes completed the <u>Adult Learning Questionnaire</u> (see Appendix) that he distributed. Their responses to the questions on reasons for returning and the barriers to learning closely parallel Rob 's own observations about the difficulties and challenges that his students experience:

> Life experience certainly showed me that without an education life is pretty limited. I knew what I wanted to pursue and it involved returning to school. It is not easy raising a family with limited funds. I knew that I wanted to set an example to my children so that they would understand the importance of study...I would say that financial pressures, raising children, low self-esteem, and fear of failure are the major factors influencing adults' inability to learn. I know so many adults who are under so much pressure while going to school.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

> After twenty seven years of marriage to a minister who was emotionally and] physically abusive, I was tired. Healing has taken many forms over the years to be strong enough to leave, not only my spouse, but my children...I've learned that my brain has not atrophied. My journals helped me to express my insights and preserve my sanity. My skills are sharpening as I'm interested in a wider scope of life. For me, healing began in aboriginal workshops with Aboriginal teachers...I

listen to the problems that many of the students here have. Grief, sexual abuse, and violence in families interfere with their ability to study.

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Three years ago I went into treatment for chemical dependency and slowly I began to realize that I was by no means living up to my potential by working in a factory; fortunately, the plant I was working at went bankrupt and that pretty much made the decision for me to return to complete high school. I am pleased with my decision. Going back to school has offered me the self-respect and dignity that I was lacking for a very long time. I have always considered myself an intelligent person; however, with nothing to gauge myself against, I was never sure if it was just wishful thinking...

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I moved back into the city in December 1996, and shortly after I enrolled at the WAEC. I did it because I felt I had to prove to myself that I could do it. During my illness, I was told I probably wouldn't make it. Throughout my life, I did things to prove to others I could do them. My returning to school is to prove to myself that I can do it. I've always maintained my learning over the years; I just didn't have a formal setting in which to test the knowledge that I had acquired through those years...Joseph Campbell pointed out: 'You go to school to get your degree. You leave school and then you get your education.' I went the other way...and with all honesty, I think that education goes far beyond the classroom of any institution. In many cases one is taught only a certain view of history, culture, and the environment. I was more interested with the cultural traditions outside Western Society....school teaches guidance and I wanted answers.

I eventually discovered that if one wants those answers, one must seek them on their own. I've also learned that it's not what you learn or where you learn; it's what you do with the information and knowledge that's you've acquired. That's wisdom, and it's my sincere desire to attain that wisdom some day.

Orientation to Curriculum

Rob approaches teaching English from both a transactional and transformational perspective. His approach integrates aspects of constructivist theories of learning (Candy,

1991) and transformational approaches to teaching English (Greene 1991; Peim,1993). While Rob begins with the student's experience in writing, he encourages students to go beyond their view to consider broader and more critical perspectives. Developing reading comprehension skills, especially at the higher level such as Grade 11 and twelve involves learners being able to think, read, and write on three increasingly difficult levels: 1) the literal level which involves a basic understanding of the literary or non-fiction work; 2) an interpretive level which requires learners to make connections and draw inferences from their reading; and 3) the analytical level which requires individual learners to synthesize, evaluate, and reconstruct salient ideas discovered in the reading of different texts.

The assignments and student writing samples that I reviewed from Rob 's classes were consistent with Rob 's beliefs about literature being a vehicle for developing understandings about the self and the world. While he emphasizes the importance of students being able to understand the structural elements of fiction and non-fiction such as theme, conflict, character, and tone, understanding the terminology is secondary to appreciating and enjoying the literary or prose work. "I start with personal interest and personal reflection, and I offer choices in what students can read and write about." When the students have comprehended the general meaning of the story or poem or essay, then they are more likely to understand the stylistic and structural elements with deeper insight.

Rob teaches from a thematic perspective and the prose selections that he showed me contain a number of interdisciplinary topics that included: Aging, Art and Media, Race and Ethnic Studies, Psychology, and Sociology. The selection of the essays is based on 1) student interest level; 2) currency issue; 3) readability; 4) moderate length; and 5) broad subject variety. The selections contained a balance of male and female authors who were writing from different perspectives. A number of the writing assignments were contextualized; a realistic situation, a specific purpose and audience were part of the writing task. One of the essays focused on television addiction. The writing assignment asked the students to write an essay for a news magazine or local paper examining the causes of another kind of non-substance addiction such as gambling or shopping.

Rob described a successful unit on society that included an analysis of various genres and forms of writing. The final assignment challenged the students to reflect on the topic: "Alienation, media bombardment, aging, violence, capital punishment, dealing with

bureaucracy, and going to war are some of the issues this unit present. Select one issue and discuss how much of a problem the issue is in our society. Decide what can be done by the individual and by society to solve the issue or to prevent it from becoming a major problem." Rob also asked his students to find other poems, songs, essays, or stories that would be relevant to the unit on society.

One of the non-fiction texts that Rob uses with his Grade 11 class is Dimensions: A Book of Essays. The text includes a variety of expository, narrative, descriptive, and persuasive types of writing . The essays are grouped thematically and include topics such as *Valuing Life*, *Technologies and the Future*, *Issues and Answers*, *Lifestyles and Leisure*, *and Relationships and the Individuals.* The essays include an integration of contemporary and classic writers such as Samuel Johnson, Stephen Leacock, Margaret Laurence, and David Suzuki. Each of the essays includes a variety of literal, interpretive, and more analytical questions.

In the Literary Forms class, students are required to write essays and research papers relate to themes in the literature (e.g. *Themes of Survival* in the works of Margaret Laurence; *and The Nature of Evil in Dostoevsky's* Crime and Punishment .When I asked Rob which novels and plays have been most popular with the adults that he teaches he highlighted several factors: "A number of the books, essays, and plays that we explore deal with human interests. A common theme is self-development and self-discovery. Books like Crime and Punishment have been popular with some of my classes I think because many of my students have been in some kind of contact with the justice system and analyzing the novel gives them an opportunity to explore issues and find their own 'raison d'etre.' Some of my students have had brushes with the law and have spent time in jail. The idea of journeys and characters going through stress and disappointment in life also appeals to some of the students who are facing similar situations." Rob also cited that poverty is a reality in many of his students' lives and books like Under the Ribs of Death and Crime and Punishment acknowledge this reality and the students can relate to this. Rob mentioned that many of the students, especially at the lower levels (Grade 9 and 10) have never read a novel or play, and he finds it rewarding when the students respond positively by wanting to read and write more. "I see improvements in my students' writing skills. I see a gradual development in students wanting to take more

initiative and think independently. One of the values of teaching literature is that it gave me a perspective on learning for personal goals and not economic ones; although the two are connected, we have to see the power and stimulus that can come from exploring ideas in novels/literature for oneself."

Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies

Rob uses a range of techniques and teaching /learning strategies. Questioning, group discussions, journal writing, and individual library research are integrated into the lessons. "The techniques might look pretty traditional, but I try to provide a context of choice and variety. I try to engage the learners by asking basic questions when we are studying literature: could this happen? Has this happened to anybody that you know? We might have a reading and then a set of interpretive questions." When teaching a play like Shakespeare's Twelfth Night, Rob will use the film as a vehicle for helping the students understand the basic plot and characters. The writing samples that I reviewed demonstrated the students' ability to think both reflectively and critically.

Dilemmas

While Rob enjoys his work, he described certain limitations and constraints. He would like to have more time to develop his research interests in curriculum development at the higher levels. It is interesting to note that Rob often referred to the school division as an anonymous "system." The educational system, in his view, does not do enough to acknowledge creativity and individual difference—either with teachers or with the learners. "I think that there should be an increasing acknowledgment of adult education by our entire culture–ABE programs do not seem to have the support either financially or morally from our society. I have to work within these tensions." Rob also finds it a challenge to be working in the downtown core area with adult learners from diverse backgrounds. "I enjoy the concept of a downtown education centre for adults. I think that if the civilization loses the vitality of its central exchange centre, it loses a central pillar of society." We had discussed the fragmentation and continued deterioration of the core area of Winnipeg, and the impact that this deterioration has on the students. In recent years, Rob has observed more of his students burdened by multiple problems —financial, psychological, and social. "We have to have an optimistic outlook for renewal and our students need to be part of that."

Summary

Rob's responses to the questions in the interview are consistent with Pratt's(1998) conceptualizations of the nurturing and developmental perspectives on teaching and learning. The high scores on the humanistic, radical , and progressive adult education philosophies are also congruent with the values, beliefs, and ideals that Rob expressed about teaching, learning, and life. Rob's divergent learning style (Concrete Experience and Reflective Observation) is reflected in his preference for teaching/learning strategies that involve brainstorming, reflective questions, and small group discussions. His use of journals and more creative writing projects also reflects his divergent learning style. Kidd (1973) emphasized that adult educators should help assist learners in the process of "being and becoming" and Rob 's attention to the dynamics of learning rather than "the techniques of teaching" reflect this existential perspective.

Although he did not directly refer to a specific learning theory or philosophy of education, his ideas reflect number of the themes in transformative theories of learning. Mezirow (1985) that the crucial sense of transformative learning is "to gain a sense of agency over ourselves and our lives" (p.5) Students are challenged to let go of self-defeating conceptualizations of themselves and search for new understanding. Daloz(1986) maintained that educators can support this process by providing support, challenge, and vision. Rob 's approach to teaching English emphasizes the development of connected and "constructed knowledge" (Belenky and associates, 1986) where individuals integrate new knowledge with the "inner truth" of their own experience and personal reflection. Rob's aim is to foster in students a love for learning and independence. Authenticity, growth, and interest are key themes in his overall perspectives. "I am probably an example of a lifelong learner. I am someone who keeps finding things interesting. I hope that I can convey this interest to my students. I don't necessarily pick up languages quickly or understand art easily, but I want to learn and find out answers."

Profile #2 Ross

> "I *want to engage students , not alienate them......the starting point for me is in assessing the needs and skill level of students.* "

Background

Ross has taught at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre for sixteen years. Prior to being at the WAEC, he worked as a student advisor at the University of Manitoba. He also worked as a librarian and taught English and History for three years at a high school in Morden, Manitoba. Ross grew up in South Carolina and moved to Saskatchewan when his father accepted a position as a Biochemistry professor at the University of Saskatchewan. Ross completed his Bachelor of Arts degree and his Bachelor of Education degrees at the University of Saskatchewan. He also completed a number of courses toward his Master's degree in English from the University of Manitoba. Ross has taught in all of the English programs at the WAEC. His current program includes Grade 12 Transactional English and English 40G Core (Grade 12 University Entrance), and Continuous Intake, a more individualized form of learning that helps students who have enrolled late "catch up" so that they can integrate more smoothly into regular classes.

General Overview of Ross's Educational Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults

Ross takes a very pragmatic approach to teaching. He mentioned that he has "no illusions about teaching adults" and that adults learn best "in an emotionally supportive but controlled environment with clearly stated objectives, clearly understood instructions by the students, and a sense that the instructors is actively interested in each student as an individual." His high scores in the progressive, behavioral, and humanistic adult education philosophies are consistent with his aims and ideals. Based on Pratt's (1998) model, Ross's teaching and learning conceptualizations most closely parallel the transmission and developmental perspectives. Clearly stated objectives, realistic feedback and realistic evaluation, self-direction, and critical thinking were recurring phrases in Ross's descriptions of his approach to teaching. For Ross, being "teacher-centered" is not incompatible with being caring, respectful, and supportive as a teacher.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Ross most identified with the roles of facilitator, researcher, planner, reflective practitioner, and mentor. He preferred the term facilitator rather than instructor because facilitator has an action focus to it while instructor has a authoritative and static quality to it. Good teaching involves an educator who is knowledgeable, perceptive, respectful, and responsible. "I think my primary responsibility is to the students in my charge. I try to

make sure that everything I do is geared to their benefit. I also have a responsibility to the school system and the school, and I have to keep that in mind. I have been hired to do a specific job. I work in an inner city high school for adults, and keeping that in mind, it is part of my job to understand who the clientele is. My approach to teaching and the expectations of learning that I have for my students are modified by the mission of the school and the realities of the clientele."

Ross sees himself as researcher in the sense that he is finding out who his students are and what materials/resources would meet their needs and interests. He describes himself as a "mechanical and intuitive person" who has a practical focus of teaching. Ross told me that he rarely reads educational theory; much of what he has learned about teaching adults has been through careful observation of his behavior and his students. He becomes interested in a theory when it has practical value. For instance, he enjoyed attending a series of workshops on Learning Styles and he applied the information to his own teaching. While he describes himself as "an abstract sequential leaner," he noted that many of his students are "concrete sequential" and that they prefer highly organized and structured outlines and assignments/ tasks that indicate a specific time frame for completion. "The starting point for me is the student—to find out what their needs are. I often will use the Gregorc Learning Style Delineator to help students become more aware of their strengths and preferences and to build on areas that may be 'less developed'." Effective planning emerges out of accurate needs assessment and placement of students. While Ross sees planning as "critical to good teaching", teachers need to have flexibility in their approach. This flexibility evolves from experience and a critical reflection on the part of the teacher about their own practice. "I am always reflecting on what I do in the classroom; what works and what doesn't. I don't want to alienate my students; I want to engage them in learning. A major challenge that I have is seeing how far I can take my students....I try to think of a lot of ways to motivate my students so that they are interested in coming to class."

Transformative Educator

When I asked Ross what the term "transformative educator" meant to him, he connected it with significant change in different areas—not necessarily in thinking more deeply or critically:

To me, a transformative educator is someone who can affect a positive change in a student. This change is related to the skills that they may learn. For example, in my Transactional English class, students learn to recognize and write in different forms and styles of writing. They learn how to distinguish persuasive and argumentative writing from narrative forms. They may also learn to write editorials and respond critically to them. They learn to write a letter of inquiry. They learn to develop their computer skills. They did not have these skills when they entered the class, and in this sense their skill level has been transformed.

It is interesting to note that Ross connects transformative learning to an acquisition in knowledge and information related to completing a specific task----his definition is more consistent with Mezirow's (1981) idea of technical or instrumental learning. Ross's definition of transformation is also consistent with his pragmatic approach of developing skills and competencies in order to perform specific tasks. Ross mentioned that he tries to engage students "on a human level but always with a focus of 'let's get this project completed.'"

Changes as an Adult Educator

Ross believes that teaching expertise develops over the years and is made up of academic understanding, practical experience, and an excellent system of delivery or communication. The development of his own expertise in teaching adults parallels the changes that Pratt (1989) notes of teachers whose teaching expertise evolves from "technical and instrumental" mastery to a more critically reflective orientation:

When I first started teaching adults in 1982, I think that I could characterize myself as someone who was coming in to deliver a class and it was very much based on 'this is what you should know.' Most of my materials were high school based rather than adult based. I tended to treat the adults like teenagers. Over the years I have evolved from what you would call a teacher-based to a student-based approach. I go into a class now trying to meet the individual needs of my students. I am very clear on identifying the skills that they need to develop , but I work in collaboration with the students.

When I asked him if there was a metaphor that best described his role and approach to teaching he identified with a camp counsellor. "I want learning to be fun, but

we have to find common goals and we have to take responsibility in attaining these goals. I enjoy helping students get from Point A to Point B and I want the students to feel that I have an emotional investment in their education."

In addition to learning more about the individual students and their interests and learning styles, Ross also emphasizes the importance of teaching keeping up to date with current issues and events in politics, culture, the media, and the arts. The wider the knowledge base they have in different areas, the more likely they are to help students make connections between subject disciplines and between their own experiences and the larger world. This view is consistent with Berliner's (1990) discussion of expert teachers as individuals who went beyond their own area of specialization.

Values, Beliefs, and Ideals

Ross suggested that his own work ethic can be traced to his home life. Education and self-improvement were values that he learned early on. His father was a Biochemistry professor who "devoted too much time to his work." Seeing his father's workaholic tendencies made him reluctant to "put all his eggs in one basket." He wanted a more balanced life. While the work ethic and taking personal responsibility are valued by Ross, he believes that keeping physically fit and taking time out to enjoy life are also important. He mentioned his love for opera, film, and books.

When he reflected on his school experiences, Ross indicated that he hadn't really been challenged at school; "I discovered that you could get by on doing very little."As a teacher, he is committed to "stretch and broaden my students' minds, not narrow them." He loves reading psychology and literature books and valued the insights about human nature that they could offer. He referred to the works of Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud, and he enjoyed relating the personality theories to his own life. His work as a librarian was a turning point in his decision to become a teacher. Finding it more interesting "to discover what is inside the books" rather than "handling the outside" of books, he decided to follow his love for reading and literature by becoming an English teacher.

Ross also referred to the importance of establishing respect and credibility as a teacher. "Respect is the bottom line of any good relationship. If respect is not there, learning cannot occur. Students will have a hard time learning from someone that they

don't respect. I hope that I can also be a positive role model in terms of punctuality, personal grooming, respectful interaction with others, completing goals, etc."

Learning and Learners

Ross's definition of learning is very holistic and reflects both behavioral and humanistic perspectives on learning. As he reflected on the meaning of learning, a number of insights were expressed:

> Learning to me means understanding how things work so that we can go on to live happy and productive lives. I think it was the Roman historian Seneca who said 'If we forget our past, we are doomed to repeat it.' Learning is the acquisition of different kinds of knowledge. It is also tied to a personal understanding of the world around you. People have learned long before coming to the WAEC and will learn long after they leave the WAEC. People are learning about life every day. There are people who have safe and secure lives but not necessarily productive lives because they have decided to stop learning. There are people that I know who will complain about the rut they are in but they have to discover their interests. This discovery is also a part of life learning. The lack of learning results in a type of spiritual death.

Ross emphasized that he has no illusions teaching adults, and that in his sixteen years of teaching all levels of English courses including a two year experience teaching basic literacy at Stony Mountain Penitentiary, he has met diverse groups of learners. "I see individuals who have come to the realization that there is a possibility for them to have a better life if they can get an education. The degree to which this concept has been internalized often determines whether or not they will succeed in school. Often I see single mothers who are chronically fatigued but they have great mental stamina to accomplish their educational goals." Ross is very much aware of the barriers that his students experience, and while he is sympathetic to their problems, he tries to encourage them to take a more active role in changing their lives:

> I believe that it is one of my roles to motivate students and provide realistic feedback for them. I am not going to say: 'You can come when you want and you'll do fine in the course.' We have to encourage responsibility and goal setting---things that many of the adults coming to this school have never experienced

before. The school culture here represents a different way of life from what many of the students have experienced.

Ross maintains that part of his job is helping students develop realistic action plans to accomplish their goals, and this starts by making sure that the student is placed at the correct level. He will use placements tests to make sure that his students are at the right academic level. When I asked Ross to describe the barriers that his students experience most frequently he cited: physical and emotional health problems, poor study skills, a lack of commitment, drug abuse, and financial problems. He explained that often students who have been labelled "underachievers" or "slow learners" still feel the psychological impact of these labels. Others who are academically very capable lack self-confidence. "It is almost as though they are afraid of success. They constantly underestimate their abilities. Every effort to encourage the 'at risk' student is important." On the other hand, notes, Ross, the teacher has to be realistic. It may be in the best interest of the student to withdraw from classes and seek other options or return later. Ross also emphasizes the importance of understanding how the background that adult learners come from can influence the teaching-learning dynamics:

> If I had to describe the adults in my class from a demographic view, they are primarily young adults who come from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. Many are First Nations people. We also have a high population of new Canadians. These new Canadians seem to have fewer problems and seem to adjust better to life in Canada. If you are escaping to some place that is more peaceful and where there is a promise of a better life, even though moving is stressful, there are elements of optimism and there are so many networks that support immigrant students. Our Aboriginal students have had a traumatic past in their own country of origin. They were forced off their own land to the reserves. There is a lot of anger and internalized self-hatred and I realize that for many Aboriginal students who first meet me, I might project the image of the white capitalist male. Often, students look at me curiously; they are sizing me up. I have to work hard to gain the trust of students, especially if they are from different ethnic groups.

Orientation to Curriculum

Ross's orientation to curriculum reflects both the transmission and developmental perspectives on teaching. When I asked him what he wanted his students to learn most, he replied: "I want my student to learn competency regarding form and organization in writing and I also want them to learn that they can be independent learners outside the classroom." His teaching strategies will vary depending on the group of students. Whether there be a group discussion or individual work on the computer, Ross emphasizes the importance of time management and goal orientation. "The discussion would not go on forever. We would have short and long term goals. The students have a purpose—whether they be working individually or in a group."

His approach to curriculum planning and implementation also reflects the progressive and behavioral philosophy of adult education with its emphasis on content mastery and problem solving skills that have a practical application. It is interesting to note that the factors that Ross scored high on in both the Zinn (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory and the Conti (1978;1990 revised) Teaching Style Inventory were a combination of student-centered and teacher-centered factors. For instance, Ross indicated a strong agreement with both statements: the primary purpose of adult education is to develop the learners' competency and mastery of specific goals and the primary purpose of adult education is to facilitate personal development on the part of the learner. Practice and repetition was also ranked highly in terms of how people learn best (Zinn, 1994). In Ross's view, you are meeting the needs of some students if you approach teaching and learning in a very structured seemingly "teacher-centered way. Some students need more direction and structure than others.

Ross also addressed the difference in critical thinking skills that he observed when he compares the Grade 9 class with the Grade 12 class. The differences that he notes coincide with differences in intellectual development that Perry (1970) noted in his research with undergraduate students. "I suppose I am more 'transmission' oriented at the lower levels. The opinions that students have at the lower levels are very 'tabloid' and stereotyped By the Grade 12 level, the students are more reflective. I don't have the same expectations of critical thinking skills in the Grade 9 and Grade 12 level." He further reflected on some of these differences:

Many of our basic education students are very challenged and I have to recognize their limitations and start to help them build basic skills—time management, study skills, reading comprehension—before we can begin to 'critically analyze' a story or poem. However, I still encourage some kind of critical reflection by coming back to questions like 'What can we learn from this?' 'Why is this important to know?'

Ross related an interesting experience in his Grade 10 class that emphasizes his belief in teachers being able to foster an atmosphere of critical reflection. During one class, the students were complaining about the government—high taxes, unemployment, lack of financial support, etc. "Rather than joining in on their complaints, I asked the students how many of them had voted in the last election. Only two people put up their hands. I then said: 'You can't complain too much if you didn't make the effort to vote and try to change things.' We then had a discussion on the power of people to change governmental decisions and laws. Many of our students live on the margins of society and have never voted. They have had little experience changing their own lives, let alone the government."

This example reveals that at all levels that Ross teaches, he tries to connect the students' classroom experiences with the larger context in society. It is his emphasis on building specific skills at different levels where a shift from transmission to a more developmental and transformative approach is evident. Based on his experience, students at the beginning levels of basic literacy need more structure, direction, and basic reading and writing skill development. As students "move up" they need less direction. Ross sees nothing incompatible about being more a "technician" in terms of teaching grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure to students and his role as a facilitator "guiding" students. When he taught at the basic literacy level, he would often use learning modules that presented very concrete explanations of the parts of speech, sentence patterns, basic exercises in punctuation, and so on. He enjoyed seeing the students progress and feel more secure in their work efforts. He was there to explain, clarify, evaluate, and guide the students to "more advanced levels." To summarize, Ross's approach to teaching English at the basic levels is consistent with Pratt's (1998) view of the transmission perspective. Teachers emphasizing this perspective are expected to know their content well enough to

explain examples clearly and "specify with authority and precision just what people are expected to learn" (p. 41). Teachers "also speak about the integration and coordination of their material or course with other parts of a program or curriculum, thus, implying assumptions about the hierarchical nature of the knowledge they teach" (Pratt, 1998, p. 41)

Ross believes that it is more important to teach the students organization and language skills rather than literature. "I think that it has been discovered by professors and members of the business community that adults don't think clearly and in an organized way. Employers have found that student don't have basic communication skills. The students don't have the mechanics to do simple types of writing asked for in business—letters and memos. Adult learners need to develop organization and writing skills that can be applied to different contexts." Ross sees the shift (less literature in English courses) as a positive one. "If you can slip in along the way the joy of reading for pleasure, then I think that it is fine. But I've noticed in recent years that students can't appreciate "literature" because they don't have the cultural frame of reference."

While Ross teaches within a structured framework outlined by the Department of Education Guidelines for teaching the Grade 12 English elective Transactional Forms, he allows students to make their own choices, and the wide variety of research topics and papers of his students that I reviewed reflect this "student-centered" focus. "Transactional English is matter of teaching effective forms. The forms are primarily non-fiction such as persuasive essays, editorials, annotated bibliographies, research reports, public speaking, interpreting graphs,etc. Then I try to find materials that exemplify these forms and also have a high interest level. When choosing material, I'm always asking myself, 'Will the students be able to relate to this?'"

The outlines and assignments sheets that Ross shared with me were highly organized and specific. For example in weeks 5-10, the students would cover topics such as the media and persuasive communication, editorials, and documentary film reviews. By giving the students examples of specific forms of writing, he is introducing them to different writers' styles and "ways of thinking." Through this process, the students learn to differentiate between different writing styles and form and are thus better able to "reproduce" this style. Students are also given weekly feedback on their progress and the

specific strategies that might help them improve areas of weakness. Ross's approach seems to integrate structure and direction with personal choice and flexibility. This is evident in the major research paper that his Grade 12 students must complete.

For their major research paper, Ross encourages the students to select their own topic. The assignment sheet states: "This should be a topic which holds a great deal of interest for you as it will be the focus of three months of work. This focus must be transactional—that is, it must inform, analyze, evaluate and interpret. You must also give a 45 minute presentation which would include audiovisual aids such as slides, overheads, charts, etc." The students' research papers that I looked at were on a range of topics: Schizophrenia, Attention Deficit Disorder, Sign Language, Space Research, and the Population Explosion. In the forward to his essay on Population Explosion, one student explained the rationale for writing the paper:

> Some years ago, I began to take notice of environmental tragedies occurring in the world. Words like acid rain ,deforestation, and global warming peppered my vocabulary. When I discussed these discoveries with family and friends. These issues appeared so large that I felt there was little I could do to affect the overall scheme of things. However, I had a genuine desire to find the truth of what was actually going on. So I returned to high school to complete my secondary education. I took the opportunity to take courses in World Issues, Geography, and History. After completing these courses, I then had a basic understanding of the major problems plaguing the earth. After this, I was presented with the opportunity to write a research paper and I returned to my previous studies to complete this task. Thus, I was given the excuse needed to review my newly acquired knowledge and put it to good use...This research report is dedicated to my son, Alexander that he may enjoy a green and peaceful planet.

The research paper represents a culmination of the foundational skills that the students have been gradually building throughout the term with such assignments as annotated bibliographies, film reviews, editorials, and persuasive and expository types of writing. The students are also encouraged to go out into the community to interview experts in the field that they are writing about.

Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies

Ross incorporates a range of teaching strategies in the classroom. He does not follow a set pattern in terms of strategies. The strategy used would depend on the students, the subject level, and the content being addressed. His eclectic approach was evident when I asked him what activities I would see if I came into his class:

We might be having an interesting discussion where I would be the class facilitator and I'd have quite a few people wanting to speak. I would encourage them to listen to what the person is saying, even if we do not agree with the opinion. Students might be working quietly at their desks on a project or they might be working on computers. We might be viewing a video and then discussing it afterwards. Students would be taking notes. I try to use a range of activities but my emphasis is on purposeful engagement. I will also speak to each student individually about their progress. I try to make the students very conscious of time management. Discussions would not go on forever. There should be short and long term goals. The students have to have a purpose—whether they be working individually or in a group.

Summary

Ross's philosophy of teaching is best described as "pragmatic realism." He tries to find a mid-way between addressing the needs of his students while at the same time covering curriculum objectives . The progressive philosophy is evident in Ross's concern for his students being able to develop skills that can be applied or transferred outside the classroom. Problem solving, critical thinking, and mastery of skills in reading comprehension and writing through practice and feedback are recurring themes in the learning objectives that he views as being important for his students. Clarity of course expectations, the correct placement of students, an enthusiastic teacher, and challenging assignments that "engage not alienate learners" typify his perspectives on successful adult education.

Profile #3 Suzanne

"I disagree with the notion that a teacher can teach any subject—a jack of all trades, a master of none, so to speak. I think that we need to encourage teachers to become more expert in their knowledge area and in their teaching methodology.

Teachers need to be content and communication experts. They need to be keen observers of the way their students are perceiving and receiving information. "

Background

Suzanne has been teaching at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre for nineteen years. She grew up near Cardiff, Wales and immigrated to Canada in the 1970s. She has lived in Germany and in London, England. Suzanne taught Senior High English and German in London for two years and in Manitoba, she taught English and French for three years at a Junior High. She completed her Bachelor of Arts degree at Reading University in England. She also completed her Bachelor of Education and Master's of Education degrees at the University of Manitoba. She specializes in ESL curriculum development. Currently, she teaches a combination of ESL and regular English classes at the WAEC. Although she teaches in both the regular and ESL programs, she prefers teaching the ESL learners as "they seem to have fewer emotional barriers and they have a higher degree of motivation. I enjoy seeing their improvements and successes. I keep teaching because I enjoy the interaction with the students."

General Overview of Suzanne's Educational Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults

Suzanne's approach to teaching adults can be described as holistic and eclectic. She had relatively high scores in all of the adult education philosophies, and based on Pratt's (1998) model, her perspectives on teaching and learning were most consistent with the developmental , transmission, and nurturing conceptions. Key concepts in Suzanne's approach to teaching adults are content expertise and being able to convey expertise to students, fostering critical awareness and intellectual and emotional growth, and helping students develop competency in language skill acquisition. While she is very understanding toward her students and the barriers they experience, she does not encourage dependency. Her approach is consistent with Pratt's(1998) description of the "nurturing relationship" between the teacher and student as being neither permissive nor possessive. "It is, in its own way, professional and demanding, characterized by a high degree of reciprocal trust and respect, and always seeks a balance between caring and challenging" (Pratt, 1998, p.49). Suzanne made references to Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow when she was describing the educational climate that she tries to

establish in her classroom. Throughout our conversations, it was very clear that Suzanne has high expectations for herself and her students. She believes that English teachers need to be expert in many areas; she would often make comparisons between good or ideal adult educators and those were ineffective. She had a very clear idea of how adults learn best and under what conditions.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Suzanne most identified with the roles of Facilitator, Expert, Reflective Practitioner, and Planner most when we did the Kelly Repertory Grid Exercise. "The key job of an effective adult educator in my opinion is to facilitate learning until the students become confident enough to be an instrument of their own learning." She compared her role to that of a gardener sowing seeds. "You have to be careful of where the seeds are planted. Nothing is going to grow unless the ground is prepared." In Suzanne's view, good teaching incorporates the affective and cognitive dimensions of learning.

Suzanne also emphasized that adult educators also need to be aware of the skills that employers are demanding more—problem solving skills, critical thinking, cooperation. "We also need to zero in on facilitating the development of general literacy skills." Students should be able to take what they have learned beyond the school setting and into the workplace:

> I see my responsibility as raising their level of competence that was not there
> previously. With regard to their attitude and insight, they should be able to
> achieve a greater degree of awareness so that their outlook on life has been
> strengthened in a positive way.

Transformative Educator

Suzanne defined a transformative educator as "someone who wants to be an instrument of change and who wants to transform the way people think. In this respect, I suppose I do see myself as a transformative educator." She exemplified her interest in fostering students' personal and social awareness of different issues by describing a successful teaching experience that she had last term. Her class had been working on a thematic unit on prejudice and discrimination. Suzanne distributed a compilation of short stories, poems, essays, and news articles for the students to read and discuss. While some of the students admitted to having racist views and attitudes in the past, they still held

those views. "They still told jokes, and looked down on different ethnic groups, even though they knew that this was unfair or unjust. But I do believe that after we completed the unit and after we had many discussions, their self-awareness was raised. The students went to the library and did research. I did notice an attitude change in the questions the students raised, in their writing and in the discussions that we had. When they heard the personal experiences of the students in the class who had been victims of discrimination, they began to change their perceptions. Their empathy level increased." Suzanne had shared some of their writing with me, and the following narrative exemplifies the student's ability to express their own voice of what it is like to experience being discriminated against:

> Discrimination against native people, especially native women is among us and been for many years. The problem is society tends to look down upon us as uneducated, lazy, and on welfare, bringing as many children into the world relying on a big welfare cheque at the end of each month. We all want an education, but from past experiences, it is hard to obtain that goal at certain schools. When I was growing up, my mother wanted us to live in better neighborhoods and that meant living in a mostly white community. I would get taunted at school by the other students being called a 'squaw,' 'wagon burner' and other sayings that would bother me and bring my self-esteem down to the point where I didn't want to go back. I dropped out of school at a young age because of the racial slurs and the teachers not paying attention to the needs I had so then I became uneducated.

> Everyone one of us has some form of laziness but to judge people because of their race, creed, or religion is pure ignorance. Native women work very hard to raise their families, and that usually means being both the mother and father. I myself am a single parent raising three children on my own. I work hard at making sure my children are well-fed, have clean clothes on their backs and are getting enough love and attention. The welfare system is abused by all races, not just native people. You hear about it in the statistics and newspapers. Being on welfare doesn't mean that you don't want to find a job. It's sometimes the only alternative to take...I'm glad to say there are more native women achieving their

education to become successful role models. We now have doctors, lawyers, policewomen, and so forth. Perhaps in five to ten years from now, we will be looked upon as members of this productive society, instead of burdens living off taxpayers money.

From Suzanne's perspective, narrative forms of writing such as the one above, enable adult learners to articulate their feelings and thoughts. The personal narratives from Suzanne's class that I reviewed focused on personal journeys and turning points such as being in jail as a result of political and religious persecution, agreeing to an arranged marriage, being saved from suicide by a friend, and so on. The narratives give glimpses into the lives of these adults. Suzanne emphasized that the helping learners "affirm their voice" is a step in the process of self-awareness and social awareness. Her transformative approach to teaching English is evident in the way Suzanne integrates critical reflection and personal relevance with the content.

Changes as an Educator

When I asked Suzanne how she had changed over the years, she said that she had become more reflective and critically self-aware of her work as a teacher. She is not as sensitive to student criticism. "Sometimes a student will come up to me and say how much he or she liked the class, but they were bothered by one thing and then they will go on to explain this. I no longer take these comments in a negative or critical way. One should reflect on whether there is any truth in the students' comments. One shouldn't be too quick to dismiss 'negative' feedback." She also commented on how much she has learned about adult learners and their perceptions. "Well, I have learned that as a teacher, you have to be very careful not to offend adult students—they are very sensitive."

Values, Ideals, and Beliefs

The beliefs that guide Suzanne's practice stem from her education and upbringing in Wales. She said that she learned empathy and kindness from her grandmother and from her parents, she learned determination and responsibility. "My father was a hard worker and he encouraged me to go to university. He said: 'You don't want to end up working in a shop like me.' It never entered my mind that I would not go on to further education. I believe in a principle of trying one's best and trying to look for the positive and not the negative." She reflected on her educational experiences in high school and remembers

being taught in a very "instructor oriented" way. She learned best from teachers who were non-confrontational. Suzanne also describes herself as being more of a realist rather than an idealist.

Suzanne believes that the teacher must possess both personality and academic skills. She views teaching as a complex process of decision making, which requires the educator to be knowledgeable in areas such as learning styles, linguistics, learning and personality theories, and testing and evaluation:

> Teachers must also be expert in interpersonal communication. They need to be keen observers of the way students are receiving and perceiving information. I think that sometimes one can be too involved in transmitting knowledge or in attempting to convey a point without making sure that a firm foundation has been laid. Sometimes a teacher will spend too long on a topic or the students have missed the point. I think back to my image of the seed sower in the biblical parable. If students haven't grasped the point and the teacher does not see this, the student like the seed 'falls by the wayside.'

Effective adult educators, in Suzanne's view, plan the learning outcomes carefully and learning evaluations should be both summative and formative. A student's mark at the end should not be a surprise. They should be well prepared to write the exam, but it starts with clear planning from the teacher. The teacher should itemize learning outcomes, and the criteria from getting from point A to point B. Course outlines, assignments, and so on are necessary. " Having said this, you need flexibility, but I really believe that at the heart of good teaching there is good planning. No student should be shocked by their mark at the end of the course or on an exam."

Suzanne attributes her success in teaching ESL to her ability to recognize her students' skill needs and create lessons around building on those skills. "Also having been a German teacher and having learned German not as a child but as an adult, I found that I understood the problems of second language students better. You also have to keep building on your skills by experimenting with other strategies and techniques."

Suzanne also emphasized that not all second language learners want to be in a classroom where too much emphasis is placed on their "feelings and experiences." "Students want to learn grammar and effective writing strategies. They don't want to be

sitting in a vague discussion group all day." Suzanne raised an interesting observation regarding the discussion around "teacher-centered" and "student centered" teaching (Conti 1985; Pratt, 1998). Traditional teacher centered approaches (e.g. lecture, practice and drill, etc) may in fact be meeting more of the stated needs of the students than the so-called "student-centered" techniques of group discussion and more informal self-directed learning tasks.

Learning and Learners

Suzanne described learning as "achieving a higher degree or level of competence in an area that they had prior to the learning experience taking place. This competence may also be in the interpersonal area." She also noted that learning can happen in an environment where students don't feel stressed.

When I asked Suzanne to describe the learners that she works with and to explain some of the difficulties that they experience in returning to school, she had commented on their "wider world experiences with life" and their perseverance, a quality that she admires in her students. One of her students was a sixty six year old woman who had been a machinist for forty years and now wanted to become a secretary. She spoke about the many students that she has taught from diverse cultures who had been professionals and trades people and who had to reconstruct their lives. "Despite the barriers they experienced, they were always very hard working, hopeful and never missed a day." She also addressed some of the barriers that may interfere with learning. Often, in our conversations she would contrast the ESL adult learner with the "regular" adult learner (Canadian born):

> Adults also tends to be more susceptible to criticism than children; they are afraid of making mistakes. Our 'regular' non- ESL students have often had negative past experiences. When they were at school, they may not have been focused. School was not a priority. Family, drug, alcohol, and emotional problems seem to be common. I am always surprised about how candidly my students will write about very intimate and often traumatic problems and instances in their lives. If they choose to return, the negative memories are still there, and initially, they believe that things will be different. It is different for some, but unfortunately, some students return when they are not quite ready and they end up dropping out again.

In contrast, Suzanne noted, the ESL learner are "relatively well adjusted" and seem to have more in tact family lives. They have part time jobs, children at home, and yet they rarely miss and appear very motivated.

<u>Orientation to Curriculum</u>

Suzanne's approach to teaching English and to curriculum planning incorporates transactional and transformative components. She sees the value of teaching literature as a vehicle for developing personal and social awareness. "When I teach a play like Arthur Miller's <u>Death of a Salesman,</u> we can discuss so many issues relating to work, success, families, disillusionment in life, and so on. This play works well with students from different cultures. We compare different perspectives on success." Suzanne emphasized the importance of students understanding the elements of style, structure, tone, and theme as they apply to teaching works of fiction and non-fiction. With the ESL classes, a greater emphasis is placed on integrating grammatical structures and vocabulary in the literature. Students' writing is evaluated in four areas: content, organization, style, and mechanics. Her students' progress is evaluated on a continuous basis and students are given at least twenty five assignments throughout term "to ensure that they have enough opportunities to develop their style." The texts that Suzanne uses contain prose and fiction that cover narration, exposition, persuasion, and description.

One of the texts that Suzanne uses in her Grade 12 ESL class is called <u>Across Cultures</u> (Smalzer and Lim,1994). The text includes selections of short stories, novellas, poems, and a short excerpt from a novel. The readings have been selected from the literature of countries where English is a first or second language, including the United States, England, Nigeria, Australia, and Ireland. While reading comprehension skills are emphasized throughout the text, listening, speaking, and writing skill development are also integrated throughout the lessons. The approach is experiential rather than literary. Students are asked to use their own experience as a basis for understanding the works. Rather than focusing on the idiosyncracies of cultural differences, the selections highlight universal themes. The editors of the text state that they "drew upon ideas from the integrated skills as well as from the whole-language movement. We wanted to provide students with authentic literature which would naturally engage them in the language learning process as well as afford them an opportunity for increased self-understanding"

(Smalzer and Lim, 1994, p. ix). The questions and assignments at the end of each selection both a developmental and transformative perspective. The discussion and writing sections help the students explore the relevance of the readings in a larger context: to their own lives or to people in general. The questions touch of psychological and sociological issues.

Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies

Suzanne also incorporates roleplays, interviews, and short speeches that encourage students to move "beyond the text" to interpret a character's role at another point in time or to take a stand on an issue from a different view point. Suzanne emphasizes that she wants her students to first relate the text to their prior learning experiences but she wants them to move beyond a more self-centered perspective. "Initially interpretation is in the eye of the beholder so to speak, but I try to raise awareness and consciousness so that each students brings forth their own views on the subject and then with discussion and hearing others' view, their perspectives will be broadened." Suzanne will often begin with narrative forms of writing and then move into persuasive and expository types of writing.

Dilemmas

Suzanne made a number of interesting comments about the influence the students and the program can have on the teacher's attitude and initiative. "Teachers bring different strengths to their work. We don't all teach in the same way, and the key is finding the right match and context for your skills." Suzanne had taught for two years in a basic literacy program that was very incongruous to her own beliefs about adult education and approaches to teaching literacy.

Her observations on individualized programs contrast with other teachers that I interviewed who believe that individualized "modular" programs are "the only way to go" in terms of meeting the needs of adult basic education students. Suzanne described herself as feeling like the "odd person out." The materials were outdated and the writing tasks reflected a mechanical view of teaching English. " The teachers who did seem to enjoy it there were not as focused on academic development I suppose as I was. Students were coming because their social workers told them that this is what they should be doing, because they had been staying home on welfare. I couldn't wait to leave teaching there.

The drop out was high and I would say that only about 10% of the students ended up completing a Grade 9 standing."

Suzanne touched on the idea of coercion and learning. If the intrinsic motivation isn't there and if the students are entering a culture that was very alien or not personally meaningful to them, resistance and drop out are more likely to occur. Quigley's (1990) study of drop out in adult basic education reinforces this observation. The basic assumption is that learning cannot be forced. On the other hand, if the intrinsic motivation is there, but the other problems in the students' lives are too overwhelming, they are at a high risk of dropping out. Congruence both *within* the participant and *between* the participant and the environment determine participation and persistence. Social, psychological, and institutional variables mediate "participation." (see Cross, 1981; Boshier, 1975; Merriam and Cafarella, 1990).

Suzanne's experience also raised interesting issues around the way that students' behavior and attitude can influence the teacher's outlook and behavior. She described feeling "dragged down" by the magnitude of the emotional problems that her students had:

> Many had alcohol problems, many experienced abuse—either they were abused or were abusers. I would say that they majority had children who had been taken away and placed in foster homes. I had some students who were in half way houses. These students had spent time in jail. Two had been convicted for manslaughter. These were individuals who could not seem to get their lives in order. One of my students was murdered and I went to his funeral. Another student who was doing so well (not academically by regular standards) and asked me to write a letter to the judge to dissuade him from going to jail. So I wrote the letter indicating the student's progress and his plans to attend Red River College. The student attended for two more weeks and then I never saw him again! The last I heard was that his wife or girlfriend had kicked him out because he had been abusive and unfaithful. I found myself becoming progressively depressed after a day's work.

Suzanne's experiences emphasize a reality of teaching: students have an impact on teacher's perceptions and feelings of efficacy. Suzanne felt at a loss in helping these students; the level and the program did not coincide with her own interests. The self-

knowledge component in teaching centers on an awareness of the teacher's individual talents and then matching these talents with the appropriate setting.

Summary

Suzanne's approach to teaching English and ESL are consistent with constructivist and humanistic approaches to teaching and learning. The emphasis on prior knowledge and the comprehension of texts being an active an active constructive process and not simply "a matter of memorizing or "acquiring" knowledge" is very much a part of Suzanne's approach. Constructivism is focused on how learners interpret events and ideas and how they "construct" or build structures of meaning. Candy (1991) notes that "learning entails an interactive relationship between new ideas, experiences, and insights, and existing frames of reference, where each interacts and mutually modifies the other" (p.295). Suzanne's emphasis on going beyond a self-centered perspectives to consider the opinions of others –whether they be other writers or students– coincides with Belenky and associates' (1986) description of the transition from "subject knowledge" where "one opinion is just as good as another" to "connected knowledge" that begins with a more empathic understanding of divergent views. Suzanne's description of the changes that she observed in her students after they had completed the thematic unit on discrimination exemplifies this developmental process.

Suzanne also provided a rationale that clarified her relatively high score on the behavioral philosophy with her more humanistic and transformative focus in teaching. She said that when she was answering the questions, she kept thinking of different students and the purpose of the lesson:

> I just don't see the two philosophies (behavioral and radical) as excluding one
> another. They may have opposite intentions, but as a teacher I don't just teach
> with one goal in mind; often I am teaching many different things. I feel that
> different approaches can complement rather than conflict with one another. My
> responses (to the inventories) depended on the questions being asked. I do see the
> importance of feedback, practice, drill, and reinforcement when I am teaching
> conjunctions and transition words, but we do not do this exclusively! In ESL
> teaching, grammatical foundations and feedback are vital. One could discuss
> forever and the students may be very knowledgeable about world issues but they

can't express themselves, and their errors become fossilized. I would feel that they would miss out a lot if they didn't understand the foundations of organization and structure in writing a paragraph or an essay. Mastering these skills is part of a process that can lead them in the end to entrance in a university or college program. We have to balance our approach.

Profile #4 Bruce

"Poetry allows my students to share their deepest fears...some of the most tragic things in their lives. Many of my students are burdened by terrific emotions. They have to be unshackled......Wordsworth said that poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling. I think that the whole idea of teaching literature and creative writing is to inform, uplift, and serve as a useful psychological and spiritual guide. "

<u>Background</u>

In addition to the WAEC, a number of other high schools in the division offer adult education programs. R.B. Russell Vocational School, in the core area of Winnipeg also offers courses for adult learners. Bruce, who formerly taught at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, currently works at R.B. Russell as an English and Creative Writing teacher. He teaches grades 10-12; many of his students are in the age range of 18-23. A high percentage come from an Aboriginal background. Bruce describes himself as "an inner city English/Creative Writing/Life Skills/History teacher with a martial arts background."

Bruce has been teaching English for twenty two years. He grew up in Winnipeg and completed his Honours degree in English Literature at The University of Manitoba. He also completed his Bachelor of Education and courses toward his Master's degree in English from the University of Manitoba. He is a published poet whose work has appeared in both Manitoba and other Canadian literary journals. He also has facilitated numerous poetry writing workshops for teachers in the city. Bruce also taught for several years in rural Manitoba and at St. John's Ravenscourt, a private school in Winnipeg for two years. I met with Bruce three time during June 1997 and January 1998.

General Overview of Bruce's Teaching Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults

Bruce's philosophy of teaching ideals most closely coincide with the radical and humanistic philosophies. Based on Pratt's (1998) model, Bruce's dominant perspectives closely parallel the social reform and nurturing perspective. Bruce sees literature and creative writing as vehicle for personal and social transformation. His approach to teaching English and Creative Writing integrate elements of the developmental perspective (Pratt and associates, 1998) with an emphasis on metacognitive strategies, critical thinking, and developing ways of "thinking like a writer." The theme of the journey and the quest for truth and meaning through literature are cornerstones in Bruce's philosophy of teaching.

Bruce's approach also integrates the two perspectives of transformative learning that Grabove (1997) refers to. While the first strand emphasizes the rational, analytical, and cognitive process of transformative learning, the second highlights the concept that transformative learning is an intuitive, creative, and emotional process. This process often incorporates analytical depth psychology with its focus on images, myths, and fantasy.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Bruce emphasizes the therapeutic value of studying literature and creative writing. He most identified with the roles: guide, provocateur, co-learner, mentor, role model, and expert. Bruce focuses on "demystifying the language of poetry to make it accessible to students from different backgrounds." He describes himself as "a cultural guide or priest" to introduce students to literature and to their own creative powers. "The teaching context allows individuals a tremendous opportunity to think....and I encourage my students to make psychological observations about their world."

Transformative Educator

Bruce is passionate in his crusade or mission of using literature and creative writing as a vehicle for personal understanding and transformation. As an inner city teacher for seventeen years, he describes himself as "teaching in the center of pain and poverty" and this suffering, Bruce emphasizes, needs a voice. "A lot of talented young people grow up with poverty, prejudice, and a lack of hope. They don't feel accepted....Lots of students have lost friends and relatives through suicide. I try to get

them to explore their feelings and share with others by writing about it." He describes the core area of Winnipeg as being fragmented and spiritually desolate:

> When I think of the inner city I can't help but think of Yeats' discussion of civilization in his poem "The Second Coming" where he points out that 'the center will not hold.' I see many of our students who are overwhelmed by their alcohol and drug habits. Students who grew up in parentless homes are now parents themselves. Everywhere I see the streets pulling at them. Some may have committed murder. One of my students told me the other day that he has done enough to put him behind bars for life. As an English teacher, you are in a position to teach skills [for living]....One of the greatest English novelists was Joseph Conrad and he wrote in <u>Heart of Darkness</u> the words 'we live in a flicker.' Conrad's statement that 'we live in a flicker' suggests our particular dilemmas in this last part of the twentieth century. We seem to lack the self-knowledge and knowledge about ourselves as human beings. We are unenlightened about how to change our individual and collective warlike nature.

Bruce suggests that solutions revolve around more discussion to find non-violent answers. "We need more art and more protest and more international communication. We need to critically examine the 20th century stress syndrome which would include corporate greed, solitude, the empty church, starvation, war, sophisticated political propaganda, and media dependency." He sees writing and the study of literature as "an antidote" to malaise, violence, and apathy. "There is a strong connection between freedom, liberty, and the uplifting of the human spirit and the potential of literature and other forms of writing do this. You can participate in democracy." He further reflected on the meaning of transformation and education:

> Teaching is a humanitarian act and I try to transform lives. I try to make my students recognize how vital they are and how, in fact, they can move mountains if they are willing to realize that their negative experiences in childhood can be a resource of tremendous energy and insight. If they can advance that to higher education...then they can become social workers and all sorts of professionals.

Changes as an Educator

While Bruce believes that he is essentially as committed and passionate about teaching diverse groups of students as he was when he started teaching nearly thirty years ago, he commented on the way that schools and have changed for the worse; they are places that contribute to alienation and "demotivation" of both teachers and learners. The one way that he has changed is in becoming more aware and sensitive to the emotional needs of students, and the urgency and need for radical changes in school systems.

Values, Beliefs, and Ideals

Bruce reflected on the role models in his own life that inspired and influenced his beliefs and values. He referred to his father, an orthopedic surgeon and a professor of Medicine at The University of Manitoba. "My father loved ideas and literature. His favourite book was Moby Dick. My dad believed that his interest in reading helped him write better medical articles and it also helped him relate to human beings better." Bruce also mentioned his university experiences and a very influential English professor from Ireland. Bruce describes him as a "philosopher, shaman, social critic, and poet" who inspired him in his own writing and teaching. "John Moriarty was sharing, compassionate, and devastatingly honest in his insights." Bruce emphasized that these "mentor figures" influenced the way he views his role as a guide and "cultural priest." He has tried to share my experiences in the study of psychology, literature, history, and political science in a secondary school context.

In Bruce's view, the personality and the educational background of the teacher are critical to setting a climate of learning. The teacher should be sensitive, compassionate, and knowledgeable. Teachers should be familiar with both classical and contemporary literature, political history, and social psychology. They must also be more willing to listen and learn from their students. "What is wonderful about teaching is the discovery of the intelligence of your students. Your mission is to help these individuals feel hopeful about themselves." Rather than dismiss or trivialize the problems that students may experience, Bruce believes that it is important for the teacher to "honour the pain of racism or abuse."

Wlodkowski (1995) emphasized the effective adult educators share qualities of enthusiasm, empathy, and excellence. As Bruce spoke, I kept relating his ideas to the books by writers like Jerold Apps, Raymond Wlodkowski and Stephen Brookfield about

skillful teachers and teaching. Bruce "walks the talk." He is able to put in practice his ideals about the teaching of literature and creative writing in a very challenging context–the inner city:

> My teaching philosophy is what Picasso talked about—creating enthusiasm. I teach with a kind of Dionysian energy. Enthusiasm is contagious. If you are not interested in what you are teaching, if you have no delight in it, there is no sense in being there. I also teach with a lot of wit, humour, irony, and absurdity. I sometimes think of myself as an entertainer. I become a character in a Shakespeare play. Many of my students say that I am in the wrong profession—that I should be an actor.

Bruce also emphasizes the importance of authenticity. He referred indirectly to the skills that Rogers (1961) identified as being essential to good counsellors----empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence. Bruce also explained that he can relate to the personal anguish that many of his students experience because he has experienced similar feelings:

> I've had an intimate knowledge of depression. I share my emotions. My students know I've been there. It's a destructive energy. I tell them that it doesn't have to be destructive. Depression is inverted rage about the human journey. You have to sort out that inverted rage—redirect it and transform it into creative energy and find meaning in hard work and compassionate doing for others. I am like a dog with a bone. I won't let go. I won't give up. I continue to encourage my students when they are facing tough times. The teaching act is a celebration of the individuality of each of your students, and to make those students recognize the possibilities of their intelligence. If a student comes to me says 'I'm feeling terrible and depressed,'I don't say 'I'm sorry, I can't deal with that right now. I'm preparing Hamlet's "To Be or Not To Be" soliloquy.' I stop and listen and try to understand and work toward a solution.

Learning and Learners

When I asked Bruce to describe what learning meant, his definition highlights the radical and humanistic perspectives of understanding learning as a process of intellectual and spiritual transformation:

Learning is a process of sharing and an affirmation of our best selves. Learning is discovery. Learning is an act of hope. Learning is something which promotes human spirituality. Learning should promote enlightenment and understanding. Keats said that beauty is truth and truth is beauty and that is all you need to know. What he is saying is that we should not back down from anything because it is ugly. We should confront everything that we see with our mind's eye. We have to try to understand who we are and the purpose of our journey. We should try to understand what Shakespeare was saying in Hamlet when he said a human being is infinitely complex. We have to confront the darkness and the Minotaur in the labyrinth. In doing that we don't deny who we are. We have to face what happened in Bosnia and other events throughout the 20th century. In my classes with Grade 10,11, and 12 students I'll say: 'Let's look at the world and see what is there. Let's look at ourselves and see what's there.' I try to make them realize that literature is a mirror held up to human nature.

Bruce has been very vocal in his criticisms of the emphasis placed on transactional/Business English in the high school curriculum. Transactional English, which theorists like James Britton (1981) see as distinct from the expressive and poetic dimensions emphasize audience, purpose, distinct voice, and "accurate communication" with greater logic. While Bruce does not object to the teaching of transactional English, he does object to its overemphasis and the increasing way the business and computer technology are shaping and directing the English curriculum. In Bruce's view, English teachers are increasingly seen as technicians who will implement the technical directives of a curriculum that is being influenced by the corporate world. He describes the current educational climate in Manitoba as "hostile to learning."He further explained:

> We would be lost if we did not have an intellectual and spiritual conscience, yet we are heading for that now with the current government....true collaboration between administrators and teachers does not exist. The educational system functions in the dark seemingly immune to the urgent problems of today. I think that there is merit in teaching business communication, but it reminds me of serving up a meal that is dry and not nutritionally sound for the soul. The beauty of teaching literature is that it is soul food.

Bruce emphasized that the reading and study of technological manual for computers, business, and other technical trade related areas should be studied separately in courses that specifically deal with those disciplines. "The study of literature (and creative writing) should be left alone because literature is an art form that explores the inner and outer dynamics of the human psyche and the human condition, something that a technological reading manual can never do."

Orientation to the Curriculum

Bruce's curriculum orientation most closely parallels the transformative approaches to teaching literature presented by such theorists as Louise Rosenblatt (1968), Maxime Greene (1978;1991) and Nick Peim (1993). Literature is a vehicle for exploration other "landscapes of learning" and "the human mystery." The specific techniques that he uses for teaching creative writing and analyzing literature skillfully integrate constructivist principles of learning with the critical/transformative perspectives of "deconstructing" literature. Bruce maintains that he "plays two games at once". In addition to the study of fiction and non-fiction from a wide range of sources, students also create their own literature—poems, short stories, editorials, etc. He explained his approach further:

> I want students to have exposure to a range of sources and writers—Manitoban, Canadian, international, and different historical periods. Then I believe that it is vital for the students to have the opportunity to develop their own literature. That is why over the years I have edited four volumes of students writing. I want the students to realize that they too can enter the literary process. I guide them through this journey. Writing is an act of seeing. They learn to be good observers. If they are writing about character, they have to look at this person with their eyes and their emotions and intellect and create a picture. I tell the students that writing is a tremendous communication tool. Hemingway talked about writing about what you know, not writing about what you don't know. The students in the inner city have lived horrendous kinds of lives and you wonder on earth how they survived. W.H. Auden writes that poetry is the clear expression of mixed feeling. I want the students to be able to articulate those feelings and in the process heal in some way.

The anthologies of student writing that Bruce has edited over the years reveal a snapshot of the reality of the students' lives and their experience of living in the core area. "The students' images are powerful and come from real life. That is what poetry is. Poetry is not simply an academic exercise." Bruce contends that while creative writing allows the students to relax, think independently and creatively about what is important to them, it also offers the student an opportunity to become involved with language, syntax, style, and logic. Reading his own poems in class and explaining how he organized them, bringing in creative writers from the community, and guiding his students through the study of classical and contemporary texts also give the students an opportunity to study and model different techniques and styles of writing. "The key to good writing is rewriting," Bruce emphasized. The creative writing anthologies focused on themes such as <u>Awareness: A Quest for World Peace</u>, and <u>Awareness III: A Quest for Higher Literacy</u>. Selections from well known writers like Carl Sandburg, William Carlos Williams, and Robert Frost are alternated with the students' own writing. The themes that were more prevalent were ones focusing on absent parents, drug and alcohol addiction, time in jail, prostitution, and loneliness.

Bruce emphasized the importance of integrating contemporary and classical texts in class. He will also include <u>Time</u> and <u>Macleans</u> news articles that focus on contemporary issues. His students had read and analyzed articles such as "Television Viewing as an Addiction" by Marie Winn, "The Titanic and the Strange Allure of Disasters" and "The Enduring Cult of Sherlock Holmes." The materials reflect Bruce's love for literature and his very analytical approach to decoding and analyzing literature and other prose forms. The questions that he develops represent a sequence from more concrete sequential types of questions to more abstract and critically reflective questions.

For each unit studied (e.g. short stories, novels, etc.) Bruce prepares written summaries, notes on the authors, and samples of answers in response to particular question. He wants to give students an opportunity to not only understand the socio-cultural context of the writer's world but also an insight into the thinking and organizational process that writers go through to produce their work. Bruce is helping his students develop a system for understanding and analyzing literary and non-fiction works.

For instance, his notes on Robert Frost's poem "Design" included an analysis of the
meaning of "design":

> Design is defined as a plan, purpose, intention, or aim. Some arguments for the
> existence of God are based on the philosophic argument from design—that
> because the world shows a systematic order, there must be a designer who made it.
> However, the word design can also mean a secret or sinister scheme–such as we
> attribute to a designing person. Frost's poem raises the question of whether there
> is a designer, or an evil Designer, or not Designer at all.

Questions on Arthur Miller's The Crucible challenged the students to consider the
notion of evil. What is it? Does evil exist or occur in the world? Where and why? What
is fear? How is fear different from hysteria? The students were also asked to research on
the Salem witch trials and the conditions that led to them. Bruce weaves in a number of
metacognitive strategies to help students develop a deeper understanding of the text.
Kurfiss(1988) suggests that by encouraging metacognition, educators can foster critical
thinking. Effective readers monitor their comprehension using strategies like summarizing
key points, questioning the meaning and implications of the text, clarifying the text by
rereading when a "triggering event" (such as inability to summarize a passage) signals a
failure in comprehension and predicting what might lie ahead in the text. According to
Kurfiss, teachers who want to facilitate their students' ability to reason and become critical
thinkers can demonstrate and discuss their approaches to solving tough problems, or
reading difficult material. They can facilitate class discussions in which students share
their approaches to assignments that require critical thinking. Bruce's approach to
teaching English incorporates many of these aspects that Kurfiss highlights.

Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies

It is interesting to note that Bruce's scores on Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult
Education Inventory reflected a high level of agreement with the four of the five
philosophies; the highest was in the Behavioral philosophy, a belief system that would
seem to contradict his humanistic and radical ideals. One explanation for his high score in
the behavioral and in the liberal philosophies is connected with his role as an "expert".
Bruce sees himself as an expert guide who is there is clarify, explain, analyze, and to some
extent "direct" the students' progress. The emphasis that he places on creativity and

personal exploration is balanced with his belief in developing structure and techniques of good writing:

> I want to focus and go into the depths of one short story or novel. I don't want five novels being studied at the same time. I don't want to come up with tiny group projects. I know the students are learning because they are participating and I see their writing and minds evolving. I do lecture sometimes and if we examine a biography to get a sense of who Hemingway is, I also want the students to understand why he writes the way he does. Hemingway developed a code but there is also a code to read Hemingway. Through the questions the students ask me about Hemingway and his story "The Battler" I know the students are curious, and this curiosity motivates them to learn. Again and again, in our discussion, my students come up with some marvelous brilliant insights, ideas that I hadn't thought of.

Bruce is skeptical of "teaching methodology fads" be they "small group exercises" or "brain storming techniques." He notes that "the assumption about brainstorming is the person's brain has to be activated before any thinking takes place. In reality, people are always thinking. It is a naive assumption to think that with techniques and tricks, that students will somehow learn better. We have to ask ourselves the question: What is it that we want people to learn in the first place?"

Dilemmas

Bruce's outspoken views have created personal tensions in the workplace. He described numerous examples where he was told by the administration not to be vocal in his criticism of the school system and to "tone down" his focus on creative writing. He mentioned that he often feels alone in his quest for an education system that is attuned to the creative and spiritual facets of both students and teachers:

> Sometimes I feel as though I am the only English teacher with a degree in English in the school. Very few teachers have an understanding of the power of literature. It is a strange phenomenon in the system that you can have Physical Education and Geography teachers teaching English. The assumption of middle management is that if you can speak English you can teach it. There is a devaluing of literature throughout the system. If I could change something in the teaching environment, I

would work to change the administrative structure. I think that the education system has violated the teaching spirit over and over again.

A number of Bruce's criticism about the education system coincide with criticisms that Aronowitz and Giroux (1994) have made about a system that is too technical in focus; schools are compared to factories and teachers are seen as technicians and not as "transformative intellectuals". Bruce sees a basic problem in the imbalance of power and in the basic ideals and values of administrators who are not really focused on learning:

> Institutions have this terrible inclination to try to control the teaching act. The middle managers in the schools—the vice principals and the principals have too much power. The fact that the teachers are not protected by a vibrant union that does not have the political will to go vis a vis face to face with administration and call to task accountability disturbs me. We as teachers are made to account for our actions; we have to be 'evaluated' regularly, yet administrators do have to demonstrate their accountability to use. A fair and democratic civilization promotes justice and the celebration of individuality. I see the teacher as being much closer to the artist, and certainly very distant from the autocratic nature and tendency of many administrators.

Bruce further noted that if it would not be for his commitment to the students and love of teaching, he would find it too stressful to continue. Bruce's dilemma exemplifies the conflict that may result when a teacher's personal philosophy clash with institutional parameters and administrative agendas. Being "a transformative educator" in the radical sense of what Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux describe is a political act which may result in a teacher feeling marginalized.

Summary

The image that I had of Bruce after our conversations was that of a kind and talented musical conductor or a master artist encouraging and guiding his students to hone their skill while developing their own unique style. When I asked Bruce what I might see if I came into to visit his class one day, his response sums up his intentions:

> If you came into my classroom you would see a lot of activities. You would see us reading out loud. We might stop and work on how to read or we would have a class discussion on what is being said—what the point of view or symbolism is. We

154

would be working together on interpretation and analysis. We would be discussing the themes, the characters, the setting, the sense of philosophy, or the intellectual tools that Lawrence or Maupassant or Katherine Mansfield are using. You might see writers like Martha Brooks or Di Brandt speaking to our class. What is it that Carol Shields is conveying in The Stone Diaries? Was George right to kill Lennie in Of Mice and Men? I'm not so much a methodologist as I am a chef serving up literature. Sometimes teachers get so caught up in methodology that they miss the value of reading and exploring literature with students. The methodology that I use is to let the literature flow and speak for itself.

Profile #5 Yvonne

"Learning a second language as an adult is probably one of the most intellectually demanding and daunting tasks ever to be undertaken. It should be no surprise then, that adult immigrants who have been away from a formal education setting over an extended period of time and who may have limited formal education in their first language often approach the ESL classroom with considerable apprehension and fear...In addition to being a language teacher, the ESL teacher fills a role of imparter of the social, cultural, and political aspects of Canadian society. Based on my experience, these two roles are also closely connected and highly interdependent with yet another role—that of an effective counsellor."

Background

I met with Yvonne three times during February-June 1998. Yvonne has been teaching for twenty two years. She is currently the department head for Adult ESL programming at The Winnipeg School Division #1. She has also taught courses in ESL Methodology at The University of Manitoba. Yvonne is an ESL researcher and curriculum specialist. She has worked with CIDA(Canadian International Development Agency) and has spent time in the Dominican Republic helping develop literacy programs. She has written several books on ESL teaching methodology and she has had numerous articles published in various TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language) journals in Canada. Yvonne has been active in giving workshops and presentations at many of the ESL conferences in Manitoba and in other parts of Canada. She completed her B.A., B.ED. and

M.A. degrees at the University of Manitoba. Her studies focused on French, English, and Psychology. She later specialized in curriculum development in Adult ESL.

Yvonne grew up in St. Rose, Manitoba, a small farming community just outside Winnipeg. She is of French Canadian ancestry and her great grandparents immigrated from Brittany to Canada in the 1900s. French is her first language and English is her second. Yvonne went to school in the countryside in St. Rose until the end of grade 8 and then she was sent to a convent school as a boarder. "The experience of being placed in a strict French convent marked my life tremendously. I was the oldest girl in a family of nine children and I was told overnight that I was going to a convent. I had been put in a mother role for my two youngest brothers so when I went to the city, it was almost as though I was leaving my two sons." She describes herself as being "a born teacher." "When I was eight years old, the teacher would ask me to help the six year old children to do Maths and Reading. I went to a country school, and as you know, all these different levels are all in one class. I also used to play teach with my brothers and sisters until I moved away to a convent school in Winnipeg."

General Overview of Yvonne's Educational Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults

Yvonne can be best described as a "humanistic educator" who sees teaching as another aspect of learning; both are in a state of evolution. Based on Pratt's (1998) model, Yvonne's teaching orientation parallels both the nurturing and developmental perspectives. Yvonne's humanistic philosophy of education is rooted in the practical reality of the students' lives and goals.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Yvonne maintains that her primary role as an ESL teacher is to be able to empower others so that they are able to "give of themselves the talents that they have to offer." She sees herself as a supportive non-judgmental person. " I see myself as a manager of the classroom but not of learning. Learning should not be controlled by me. It is a process of discovery. I also see myself as equal to my students. They may be learning about life in Canada, but I am learning about them. I am learning about their culture and changing myself in the process."

Yvonne sees teaching ESL as being rooted in the settlement process and the ESL teacher as a buffer between the culture and language. A good teacher, in Yvonne's view must skillfully integrate empathy, sensitivity, and perceptiveness with superior organization and content knowledge skills. "What am I called upon to offer, what are the objectives of this program, and what role am I to play in achieving these objectives?" It is in the ESL class that the students acquire information about and gain an understanding of the social, cultural, and political aspects of Canadian society. Yvonne most identified with the roles of the co-learner and counsellor. The teacher plays an important role in "filling the vacuum that surrounds the adult who has been transplanted in their adopted country." She referred to the class as "a safe haven" and "a warm nest" where an individual can gain confidence:

> My approach is based on the belief that success breeds success. Every ESL student has the right to experience success in some way every time he or she attends an ESL class. A good ESL teacher is one who can get into the skin of that student. The teacher should be connecting with that human being first and foremost. The content is secondary. What they leave the classroom with is not so much content; students can get so much information from computers today. What students cannot get from the computer is self-image and self-concept. A young man of Aboriginal background came into my office the other day with a painting that he had drawn. I sat down with him and told him that I found his painting beautiful. I asked him if he could draw me one. I don't care if that student and read and write in a superior way; I let him know in a genuine way that he has a gift. That is what is important. I love to find the strength in a person. Every human being brings some gift to the world, and if I can help them find this gift, that is my primary job as teacher. I am not there just to teach them lessons in reading comprehension and grammar.

Yvonne was most critical of the role of the expert in teaching ESL. She associated the roles of Manager, Social Reformer, and Expert with an authoritarian stance. She views the expert as a person who seems "all knowing" or the one with all the power.

> There have been too many experts whether they have been in the field of medicine, education, or science who have destroyed lives. I think of the experience of

colonialization and the devastating impact that it had on the aboriginal people in Manitoba. Religious missionaries came to 'save their souls' and we ended up destroying the spirit of these people. I have known many 'experts' in my life and so often they have little regard for anyone else's opinion except their own. Who are the experts in education? They are not the teachers. It is the people with their Ph.D. degrees. Does any one question how the Ph.D. developed their expertise? We devalue the experience of teachers. No, I don't see myself as an expert. I prefer to think in terms of expertise—the students and my own.

Transformative Educator

Yvonne was wary of the meanings of "transformation" and "transformative educator." While she acknowledged that students can undergo significant changes in the process of learning, she is cautious of the "directive" role of the educator in triggering this process. "It is not my intention to transform lives but I can touch students in a positive way that would give the individual an opportunity to see that he or she has choices and is not alone."

Yvonne had been critical of a number of the factors in both Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory and Conti's (1990) Teaching Style Inventory. On items such as adult educators should "clarify key social and political issues that affect adult learners" she had circled either "never" or "seldom." When I asked her to explain her rationale, she said that many students would consider it very threatening to bring up political and social issues, unless the students really want to discuss these ideas:

> The teacher should not be manipulating any political ideas in the classroom. This may be more appropriate with other groups, but it becomes more difficult when you have a group of adults from ten different cultures who are already dealing with their own personal crisis. Immigrants are already going through a transformation by their very experience of being in a new culture. Their culture is continually being challenged in terms of religion, marriage, child rearing, etc. If you start bringing up these topics, they will say: 'I can't handle this right now.' I've learned this a long time ago. It is not my role to begin to criticize a dictator like Sadaam Hussein. I am not going to discuss politically volatile topics because I have students from regions that may have been at war with each other. People's

emotional attachments are very strong. If a student has lost a parent or sibling or child in the war, you cannot be discussing this in class with people giving opinions and so on. Students will get very angry with each other and you are not necessarily helping just because you address social issues. If people want to discuss those things, there should be opportunities for the students to do so, but I don't think you should use the ESL class to do that.

Changes as an Educator

Throughout the interviews, I noticed the way in which Yvonne would weave her own experiences of spiritual transformation with her work as a teacher and the experience of her students. Through her teaching, Yvette believes that she has developed more compassion and understanding for people. The stories of her students' lives have stayed with her and have inspired her in her own life:

I now understand the Spanish expression to 'struggle with life' instead of struggling against it. I am a partner with life. I am impressed with the courage that so many of my students demonstrate. They have gone through the worst traumas, and yet they are willing to start a new life with optimism. I've often recognized that I couldn't stop the war in Vietnam or Cambodia, but I could do my very best for these people. When people don't have the language they can still sense that you care.

Values, Beliefs, and Ideals

Yvonne describes herself as being "sensitized to other people's pain" and that she learned the gift of compassion and empathy from her mother, a sensitive and spiritual person. The values learned from her mother have remained with her and continue to influence Yvonne's teaching and research. The empathy that Yvonne has for the ESL learner is expressed in the introduction to an article that she wrote about ESL teaching and the settlement process:

Imagine yourself in the middle of Afghanistan, in a class of twenty students from various parts of the world, none of whom speaks English. Four hours a day the teacher, who speaks only Dari, does her utmost to have you understand, speak, read, and write Dari. You try desperately to apply the background you have in the Latin alphabet to Dari script. After one hour of concentration, you are exhausted.

After the second hour, you are frustrated. By the third hour you want to scream, maybe cry, but most of all you want to quit. You have no choice. You must learn Dari because you cannot go back to Canada. You have to live here in Afghanistan. You have to work here. Learning Dari means survival. Sticking it out in the Afghan literacy class is the only way to go. Every year adult immigrants, most of who come from China, Afghanistan, El Salvador, Greece, Vietnam, Cambodia, Eritrea, Portugal, Laos, Iran, Iraq, India, and Pakistan find themselves in a situation that is more difficult than the one described above. (Rampaul, 1998, p. 20)

Yvonne sees language learning as very much interconnected with individuals' sense of identity and self-worth, and because of this the potential for psychological and social damage to students in the teaching-learning process are very great. As I spoke with Yvonne, and read the numerous articles that she has written on the immigrant experience and learning ESL, I couldn't help but make parallels between the tenets of Carl Roger's analysis of "significant learning in therapy and education." Rogers (1961) emphasized that many of the goals in counselling and in education are the same. The therapist in a counselling relationship should be a congruent and integrated person who is able to "step into the client's shoes". Rogers (1977) states that an empathic therapist "senses accurately the feelings and personal meanings that are being experienced by the client and communicates this understanding to the client" (p. 78). For Rogers, empathy dissolves alienation and the non-evaluative and accepting quality of the empathic climate enables individuals to take a prizing and caring attitude toward themselves. The basic idea that therapy is a "process of becoming" and that the therapist is instrumental in helping facilitate this process is a theme that resurfaces in the writing of Malcolm Knowles and J. Roby Kidd.

Learning and Learners

Yvonne commented on an earlier definition that she had of learning as a change of attitude and behavior; now, she sees learning as more of a process of interaction and a process of arriving at shared understandings:

I have a lot more focus on understanding as an important part of learning now.
We can only be at peace when we understand. In the classroom context, if the

students are participating in the process, the more meaning it will have for them. For meaningful and, consequently, effective learning to take place, an atmosphere of sincere caring for the student and of respect and acceptance for his/her background must be present. By being parachuted into a new country, a new culture, a new society, the adult learner feels their own identity is being attacked. Students will often say to me that they feel like 'a fish out of water.' The student may or may not have truly chosen this country; he or she may have known very little about this country and how it operates. We have to give these students an opportunity to express their perceptions and feelings of isolation and uprootedness.

From Yvonne's perspective, the teacher should be able to convey an interest in the students' former occupations, educational and family background, hobbies, and interests. She mentioned how she would keep a journal of events in students' lives. She would keep track of their experiences, interests, and progress. In preparing worksheets or in presenting a lesson on the board, she would then try to build in these experiences that were relevant to their lives.

Orientation to Curriculum

In our discussions of ESL learners and the process of learning, Yvonne emphasized the important interrelationship between the cognitive and affective dimensions of learning. In our conversations and in the articles she has written, she made references to David Ausubel, Jerome Bruner, and Albert Bandura. These learning theorists have influenced the development of constructivist approaches to learning with an emphasis on prior learning experiences, role modeling, and the spiral nature of learning (Candy, 1991). "David Ausubel said that the greatest asset of learners is the knowledge and skills that they bring to the learning situation. Through the use of clear pictures, translations, and translators during the first stages of language learning, the adult can maximize on all that has been learned through their life experiences."

Yvonne's book English for Life has a " settlement- focus" and was developed as a resource source for the beginning and intermediate stages of ESL learning. Yvonne emphasizes an eclectic methodology that is aimed at developing students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The workbooks that Yvonne developed focus on

themes such as personal information, numbers, colors, calendar, family, money, accomodation, emergency, occupations, clothing,etc. A vocabulary is listed alphabetically in the Appendix. Chinese, French, Spanish, and Vietnamese translations of the workbook provide an additional resource for the students. The use of cassettes also provides an opportunity for the students to practice their listening and pronunciation skills. The use of pictures and images of objects and events with the corresponding English equivalents facilitates understanding and retention. "This gives the learner a sense of empowerment and control over the learning process," Yvonne explained.

Yvonne also touched on the importance of mastery learning, and the importance of adult learners having effective role models for correct pronunciation patterns and intonations. She also discussed the importance of understanding the individual background of the adult ESL learner. Not all adults learn alike, and adult learners from different cultures with varying levels of literacy in their first language will approach the learning of a second language with different learning styles, expectations, and perspectives. Gender, age, occupations, years of schooling completed, and country of origin are variables that affect the learning of a second language. The distance between English and the first language, the degree of stress being experienced by the students, natural aptitude for language learning, level of motivation and previous experience in learning English, level of self-confidence, and language learning strategies are all important factors that the teacher must consider.

Yvonne maintains that a learner's literacy history varies not only according to the level and nature of their formal education, but also according to the literacy activities in their society of origin. She shared a recent study that she had just completed with two other researchers from The University of Winnipeg. The congruence between the learner's native culture/literacy and Canadian culture can influence the learner's ability to learn English. In their study, the Bosnian refugees tended to learn English skills more quickly than the Kurdish students. The Bosnian culture is European and closer to mainstream Canadian culture than the Kurdish culture which is more eastern. The Bosnian participants came from a more urban environment, whereas the Kurds came from remote mountain villages, although some had spend time in refugee camps in larger towns and cities. The Bosnian infrastructure, institutions, and strategies for coping with the demands

of modern life would prepare them better than the Kurds for North American city life (Gardner, Polyzio, and Rampaul, 1996). Yvonne and her colleagues also found that the Bosnian learners were able to transfer their previous work experience more readily to the Canadian context, while many of the Kurds were focusing on developing their Basic English skills. An implication of this research is that it is critical in the initial assessment stage to first investigate the learners' first language skills and their prior language learning experiences; it is from this basis that curriculum planning and classroom teaching and learning strategies should evolve.

<u>Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies</u>

Yvonne emphasized that in teaching ESL students , a more structured a "transmission" approach to teaching basic English skills is needed. As the students advance their competencies, she becomes more of a facilitator. She does not think that being more transmission focused, especially at the beginning stages of ESL learning is contradiction to her "learner-centered" philosophy. The grammar is taught within a "settlement focused" context. Correct English usage and the ability to apply the correct structural forms is a type of empowerment, from Yvonne's perspective. Language learning is also focused on learning patterns and application of logical thinking. The ability to learn and apply correct structures does involve practice, drill, and repetition:

> Once students pick up language that is not mastered correctly they may be stuck
> with these bad habits and errors become fossilized. Then how do you correct the
> problem? You have paralyzed the students if you don't focus on grammatical
> accuracy, but the grammar must be taught in context. To me we need to refocus
> ourselves and make the student the center of this whole process of ESL. I don't
> see skill acquisition (mastery of correct English usage) as contrary to social
> awareness and personal development. I think that when you are teaching
> language, you are teaching social and personal awareness and problem solving
> skills. You cannot compartmentalize one skill from the other. Language is the key
> to everything in life----thinking independently and critically, meeting people,
> finding a job, and so on. The student needs to know that he/she can learn some
> basic structures correctly, or he/she will continue to learn broken English. I would
> like to make an analogy between the doctor and the teacher. The doctor should be

listening very carefully to what the patient is telling him. As a professional, we have to be able to recognize the needs and then find the tools to make it possible for students to meet their needs. Why else do we call ourselves professionals? The professional still has a job beyond listening. We must plan strategies to help our students improve. Just as a doctor cannot force a patient to take a particular course of therapy, I cannot force an adult to do practice and drill exercises in learning the correct pronunciation. A student must make choices in the end.

Dilemmas

Yvonne touched on numerous criticisms about the evaluative and competitive nature of society and how this has translated into the classroom. Like Bruce, she believes that the school system lacks critical insight, and is too willing to accept the technocratic directives of the business sector. She is also skeptical of the emphasis placed on the current popularity of Multiple Intelligence theory and on Learning Styles. While on the one hand, these theories can help teachers to think of learning in a more holistic way, it becomes problematic when teachers and counsellors begin to pigeon hole and "evaluate" intelligence and learning style:

> We are too product oriented in life and in education. We evaluate on the product rather than reflect on the process and we rarely reflect on the question: What are the implications of this product orientation in teaching? A school should be a place of discovery and affirmation. It should be a place that opens with the assumption: You are a valuable human being. Let us discover what it is that you can contribute to the world. This valuing of the person is at the fundamental of spirituality. It would be interesting to study how many people failed to succeed in life because fundamentally somewhere in their childhood, their ego was under attack and the person felt crushed. This child then has to spend all their energies trying to defend their ego and then there is no energy left to learn new ideas. It is an abuse of the spirit and the soul that contributes to people not being able to learn.

Summary

In sum, Yvonne's overall teaching philosophy is rooted in existential and humanist perspectives. A final comment by Yvonne crystalizes her beliefs about the goals of adult

education and indeed, education in general: "We have to start looking at the human being—the human being has a body, spirit, and mind that already has experience. We have to access that potential and free it in some way."

<u>Summary of the School Division Teacher's Perspectives</u>

The perspectives and teaching orientations of the adult educators from the Winnipeg School Division #1 were most consistent with the nurturing and developmental conceptualizations outlined by Pratt and associates (1998). The role of the facilitator was most frequently used by the teachers to describe their relationship with the students and their work in the classroom. Their key aim is to facilitate and guide learning rather than to direct it. Other roles that the teachers identified most with included the co-learner, the counsellor, the resource person, and the reflective practitioner. Other constructs elicited included the teacher as artist and the analogy that Yvonne used to compare the teacher to a doctor. The teachers from the school division integrated a variety of teaching and learning strategies that included group discussions, oral presentations, and more individualized work. The content and the assignments that I reviewed from each of the teachers integrated the development of critical thinking skills and deeper level thinking with the development of foundational skills in reading comprehension and writing. An emphasis was also placed on highlighting key contemporary issues focusing on justice, the environment, discrimination, and relationships. The teachers from the school division also had an insight into the many barriers that adult learners have when they return to school. Recurrent themes related to the barriers that adult learners experience included: drug and alcohol problems, financial stresses, and personal and family crisis. Many of the barriers that the adult learners experience can be interpreted using Mezirow's (1990) theory of perspective transformation. The beliefs, theories, and psychological assumptions that these learners have establish "habits of expectation" that can limit or distort their perceptions. The educators in this study differed in their opinion of how and to what extent an educator should intervene to "critically challenge" learners' perceptions. Teachers like Yvonne see a potential danger in trying to critically challenge ESL learners who are already in a process of change. She sees her role as more of a gentle guide and co-learner. In contrast, Bruce will use creative writing as a vehicle for his students to express their anxieties and fears. He takes a more direct role in challenging their beliefs

and presuppositions. His role is similar to Daloz' (1986) description of the mentor who challenges students to "let go of old conceptualizations of self and their world and embrace new understandings" (p. 48). While the teaching orientations of these teachers is consistent with the collaborative mode of teaching described by Knowles (1980) and Conti (1985), the educators held more behavioral orientations in relation to evaluation standards and assessment procedures.

While most of the adult educators had not heard of the term transformative educator and transformative learning, their views and some of the teaching and learning strategies employed were consistent with ways of fostering transformative learning (Clark, 1993; Cranton, 1994; Green, 1990). Clark (1993) states that "transformative learning shapes people; they are different afterwards, in ways that they and others can recognize" (p.47). The educators differed in their understanding of transformative learning and in their role of fostering a deeper level of consciousness and understanding of oneself and the world. Most believe that as an educator, you can foster a climate for change but the type and degree of change resides within the learner. This view would support Cranton's (1994) assertion that individuals with different personalities, past experiences, interests, and learning styles will experience transformative learning differently. A fundamental concept in transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1981) is that individuals need to be open to alternative perspectives in order to transform their own. This process may be rational, practical, intuitive, or emotional (Cranton, 1994). Interestingly, the educators associated transformation with different types of changes: skill, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Their view of transformation was not solely the rational and analytical process that Mezirow describes where the educator critically challenges "the distorted" perceptions of the learners. The educators in this study were critical of an "manipulative" or reformist type of person who would presume to know "what's best" for the learner. Transformation is conceptualized a gradual process of "smaller" changes in skills, competencies, and perhaps perceptions of the world that occurs in a unique way to each person. The educator is more of a guide rather than a more forceful provocateur.

The next chapter presents the profiles of the community colleges English teachers from Red River Community College in Winnipeg and Vancouver Community College in

Vancouver, British Columbia. A more detailed analysis and comparison of the different perspectives of the educators is presented in chapter six.

Table 2:

Summary of the Teachers' Perspectives from the Winnipeg School Division #1

Teacher: Rob Perspectives of Teaching: Nurturing and Developmental	Role and Responsibility	Transformative Educator	Conception of Learning
Rob	Responsibility	Educator	Learning
Perspectives of Teaching:	*Facilitator-guide	"To me a	"Learning means a
Nurturing and	*Reflective	transformative	chance to explore
Developmental	practitioner	educator is someone	some of one's own
	*Co-learner	who is sincere and	interests and discover
	*Planner	practicing what they	elements in one's own
Philosophy of Adult	"I don't work in the	really	vocabulary that one
Education	dark. I work in the	believe...someone	hasn't been able to
Humanistic=95	context of some kind	who can provide	articulate. Learning
Radical=93	of reflection...I would	students with a	means developing a
Progressive=90	call myself a	framework for	certain style of life
Liberal=86	facilitator. I am	connecting their	that centers around a
Behavioral=86	somebody who is	learning experiences	'joie de vivre.'"
	there to point	to the larger world."	Reading and learning
	directions to other	"I consider myself a	about literature
	people."	reformer only in the	involves "tapping
	Metaphors for the	sense that I can help	areas of the
	classroom: "agent for	people find out what	imagination."
	social change if we	they want to reform."	
	could get beyond the		
	necessity for		
	competition."		

Ross	Role of the Adult	Transformative Educator	Conception of Learning
Perspectives of Teaching: Developmental and Transmission	Educator	"To me a transformative educator is someone who can affect a positive change in a student. This change is related to the skills they may learn ...such as distinguishing persuasive and argumentative writing from narrative forms...They did not have these skills when they entered the class, and in this sense their skill level has been transformed."	"Learning means understanding how things work so that we can go on to lead happy and productive lives. Learning is the acquisition of different kinds of knowledge. It is also tied to a personal understanding of the world around you...There are people who have safe and secure lives but not necessarily productive lives because they have decided to stop learning."
	*Planner- organizer, manager and leader		
	*Facilitator and guide		
Philosophy of *AdultEducation:*	*Motivator: challenger and provocateur.		
Progressive=90	"I work in an inner city		
Behavioral=89	high school for adults and		
Humanistic=83	keeping that in mind, it is		
Liberal=70	part of my job to		
Radical=64	understand who my clientele is. My approach to teaching and the expectations of learning that I have for my students are modified by the mission of the school and the realities of the clientele."		

Suzanne	Role of the Adult	Transformative	Conception of
Perspectives of Teaching: Developmental and Nurturing	Educator	Educator	Learning
	*Facilitator. Expert,	A transformative	Learning involves the
	*Reflective	educator is "someone	acquisition of general
	Practitioner, and	who wants to be an	literacy skills.
	Planner	instrument of change	cooperation, problem
Philosophy of Adult *Education*	"The key job of an effective adult educator is to facilitate learning until the students become confident enough to be an instrument of their own learning."	and who wants to transform the way people think. In this respect. I suppose I do see myself as a transformative educator."	solving, and critical thinking.
Progressive=96			
Behavioral=95			
Radical=95			
Humanistic=94			
Liberal=92			

Bruce Perspectives of Teaching: Nurturing and Social Reform *Philosophy of Adult Education* Behavioral=98 Liberal=96 Radical=93 Progressive=91 Humanistic=72	Role of the Adult Educator *Facilitator: cultural guide or mentor *Artist-creative thinker; poet; craftsperson *Provocateur-challenger; transformative educator;teacher's role involves helping learners develop an increased self-awareness and awareness of society *Counsellor- Healer, *Nurturer *Expert-literary guide and expert *Co-learner-dialogue and exchange of ideas; creating new meanings Metaphor for teaching and learning- journey to find new understandings about self and society.	Transformative Educator "Teaching is a humanitarian act and I try to transform lives... I encourage my students to make psychological observations about their world." "There is a strong connection between freedom, liberty, and the uplifting of the human spirit and the potential of literature and others forms of writing do this. You participate in democracy." "[My] mission is to help these individuals feel hopeful about themselves."	Conception of Learning "Learning is discovery. Learning is a process of sharing and an affirmation of our best selves. Learning is an act of hope..We have to try to understand who we are and the purpose of our journey."

Yvonne Perspectives of Teaching: Nurturing and Developmental Philosophy of Adult Education	Role of the Adult Educator	Transformative Educator	Conception of Learning
Humanistic=75 Behavioral=75 Progressive=74 Radical=66 Liberal=60	*Counsellor-support system; healer; helper *Physician- diagnosis of language skill needs *Facilitator-guide *Manager-organizer of the classroom arrangement and curriculum materials, rather than a manager of learning. *Co-learner- "[My students] may be learning about life in Canada, but I am learning about them. I am learning about their culture and changing myself in the process." *Reflective Practitioner	"It is not my intention to transform lives but I can touch students in a positive way that would give the individual an opportunity to see that he or she has choices...We have to give students an opportunity to express their perceptions and feelings of isolation and uprootedness."	Learning is more than a change in behavior or attitude; learning involves a process of interaction and a process of arriving at shared understandings. "Learning should not be controlled by me. It is a process of discovery."

Chapter Five: Analysis and Results of the Community College Teachers' Perspectives

Chapters five and six present the analysis and discussions resulting from the interviews, inventories, and questionnaires completed by the teachers at Red River Community College and Vancouver Community College. The teachers work in a range of English programs: Creative Communications, Academic Development Services, English as a Second Language, Basic Literacy, and College and Career Access. A comparison of the perspectives held by the community college teachers and the teachers from the Winnipeg School Division group will also be presented. A summary of the findings is presented at the end of this chapter.

Red River Community College

Red River Community College, located in Winnipeg, Manitoba, is the largest business, technical, and trades college in Manitoba. Approximately six thousand full time students are enrolled at the college and about twenty five thousand students attend on a part time basis (Institutional Research Office, Red River Community College, 1997-98-statistics). The college programs include Aboriginal Education and Institutional Diversity, Applied Science, Business and Applied Arts, Developmental and Continuing Education, and Industrial Technologies. A number of the programs such as Aerospace Technology have partnerships with industry in Manitoba. In addition, programs in education and the applied sciences are affiliated with the University of Manitoba. The college's entrepeurneurial and technical emphasis is reflected in the president's message in the information calendar:

> The convergence of computing, communications, and information is creating extremely significant changes in the way work and pleasure will be undertaken in the future. The world is quickly entering a new economy based on the networking of human intelligence. In this digital economy, individuals and enterprises apply knowledge through global networks to create wealth in both manufacturing goods and providing customer-oriented services...Red River Community College is committed to providing a a wide range of programming that is constantly reviewed by the employers of our graduates so that we can stay abreast in the ever changing society of the future. The customer- based approach ensures that

graduates enter the workplace with immediate and transferable skills to be able to continue to learn and grow throughout their lifetime (Red River Community College Calendar, 1997).

The English teachers that participated in the current study work in the departments of Business and Applied Arts (Creative Communication Division) and in Developmental and Continuing Education (Academic Development Programs and English as a Second Language). They teach a range of English and applied English courses that include Adult Basic Education (grades 9-12), English as a Second Language (Intermediate and Advanced/ College Preparatory Level), and college level English and Journalism.

Profile #6 Craig

"As a teacher for most of my adult life, I have few dogmatic beliefs about education, but a number of pragmatic realizations... A large part of the instructor's role is to set goals for the class (or to assist students in setting them); to articulate these goals and to organize instructional processes to meet them. Instructors should also be able to explain the application of classroom activities to real-world situations...Organizing and sequencing instruction are important, but educational theories which claim that teaching can rely solely on a step-by-step 'scientific' process are misguided. The instructor's personality always plays a role in how students learn. Rather than trying to create a neutral classroom persona, then, it is better to highlight those features of one's personality which make the classroom a more welcoming place. For me, this means making a place for humour in the classroom...I think that the ancient connection between delighting and instructing (first formulated by Plato, I believe) is still valid. Through humour, critical challenge, and practical application I try to achieve this balance."

I interviewed Craig four times during January-May 1998. During that time, I had the opportunity to explore his perspectives on teaching and learning as they relate to the community college setting. Craig grew up in Liverpool, England, and immigrated to Canada in the 1960s. He completed in Bachelor of Arts degree in England. He then completed a Master's degree in English literature from the University of Western Ontario and a Ph.D. in English from the University of Manitoba. Craig's dissertation focused on the works of Joseph Conrad. Craig also completed his Certificate in Adult and Continuing Education from The University of Manitoba.

Craig has worked in the Creative Communications Department at Red River Community College for seventeen years. He teaches courses in Canadian Literature, Literary Genres, Multi-Media Studies, Script Writing, Current Events, and Business Communication. Prior to teaching at the college, Craig taught in the department of English at the University of Manitoba and at the University of Western Ontario. He also taught high school in England for several years.

General Overview of Craig' Educational Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults

Based on Pratt's (1998) model, Craig integrates aspects of the developmental and apprenticeship teaching orientations. The integration of these perspectives is reflected in Craig' work of teaching literature and communication skills in a practical department. The department of Creative Communications is involved in educating students to work in journalism, public relations, advertising, and other media related areas. Based on Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, Craig' highest scores were in the liberal, progressive, and behavioral philosophies.

Craig explained that his "relative agreement" with the liberal, progressive, and behavioral philosophies is partly related to the specific content and department expectations and guidelines of the courses that he teaches. While the aims courses like Canadian Literature and Literary Styles reflect more of the humanist and liberal aims, the more "transactional" Business Communication and "effective writing" courses reflect behaviorist principles of teaching. Craig further emphasized:

> The liberal philosophy I suppose represents my ideals of fostering intellectual, aesthetic, and spiritual growth. However, educational programs are not purely a matter of developing students' individual qualities. That may happen, but I cannot say that this is my central aim. I don't see myself as a behaviorist at all, as I would normally think of the word behaviorist. I think of control and Skinnerian psychology, and that's not me at all. But I do have to keep reflecting on the practical outcomes of studying literature for the students who are in this program. The course assignments have to be grounded in the practical experiences of the students and the possible jobs that they may hold in the future. I will say to them: 'If you ever want to do any free lance work for a magazine, you've really got to understand and think about what you are doing. You have to be able to read and

analyze a text carefully.' I suppose that the factors linked with the behavioral philosophy represent the hard nosed realities of the training that I provide adult learners who want to be journalists and copywriters. But I am more in agreement with the liberal and humanistic philosophies, and I think that I also achieve some of these goals in my teaching.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Craig compared his teaching role to "a business communications and creative writing coach." He most identified with the roles of the facilitator, co-learner, planner, and expert. "My job as an educator is to facilitate a climate where a creative thinking process can go on." When I asked Craig to think of a metaphor that would best describe his role and the dynamics of learning in his class, he referred to an on going construction project that is being modified in different ways. While he provides the basic tools for his students, their own expertise develops along the way and a process of "co-creation" occurs:

> It seems to me that we're involved in a kind of construction process, and I've got a set of rough plans in the wake, but in order to make the project work the collective will of the students is needed. I may think that my plan is solid but I'm prepared to alter my decision depending on the input from others. If the project turns out somewhat different from the initial plans, that's great. That is part of the discovery process. I see the construction process as having the potential to be immensely creative. My understanding of post-modern writers is that there are very few things in life that are absolute. I came across a quotation from Brecht the other day. He said something to the effect of 'it's not enough to have one theory. You have to have a pocketful of theories.' [When I am teaching] I think of adding new rooms and finding hidden corridors...it's endless...you keep adding to it...similar to the literary world that changes when new ideas are presented and meanings change. There are interconnections being made that may seem disjointed and haphazard but there is a sense of order being created.

Although he did not directly refer to constructivist and cognitive theories of learning, Craig's approach to teaching and the description of his role is consistent with the constructivist approaches to teaching and learning detailed by Candy (1991) and the idea

of situated cognition (Brown, Collins, and Duguid, 1989). Teaching and learning are interconnected process of construction and meaning making. In constructivist theories, depth of coverage rather than breadth of coverage is emphasized. Rather than a recall of facts, definitions, and fragmented skills, the activities and assignments incorporate a much greater range of tasks (Good and Brophy, 1995). Skills are taught within the context of applying the knowledge content, rather than being practiced in isolation.

While his own views of literature are rooted in existential and humanistic values, Craig is also very practical in making the literature meaningful for the creative communications students, many of whom will go on to work as public relations directors, advertising copywriters, and journalists. Craig also noted that his analytical and logical teaching style may not be shared by all of his students; as a result, he has learned to be flexible in terms of varying the teaching and learning strategies in the classroom:

> Many of the students that I teach are not logical and theoretical; they are more
> creative and practical. Their thinking patterns may be totally different from mine,
> and I have to consciously factor this difference into my teaching. These learners
> are applying sets of rules and expectations that they've learned along the way, and
> part of my job is trying to understand how these individuals think.

Craig views the effective adult educator as a person who is able to integrate expertise in content knowledge with enthusiasm and inspiration. A good educator is someone who will challenge the learners' views and challenge them to use their mind in an original and creative way. Craig added that there is "no neat formula for teaching" and that while he has known teachers over the years who have had technical flaws, their convictions, enthusiasm, and insights inspired him:

> To me there is more to good teaching than having a technical expertise...If an
> instructor is sincere, I think that the students learn to accept the eccentricities of
> the instructor. Having said this, I do believe that a teacher has to start with a
> technical understanding of their subject field or area. This is absolutely basic.
> There is the credibility and authenticity of the instructor. You must start with
> content knowledge. If you don't know it, you can't teach it. I can't understand
> the reasoning behind some educational programs where the students are trying to
> learn the skills of teaching without having the subject area to reflect on.

In terms of developing his own teaching expertise, Craig said that he is always learning new ways of becoming more proficient from a technical point of view. While he uses a variety of techniques such as critical questioning, discussions, group project work, he mentioned that when he is at a workshop and the presenter is doing something that he finds interesting, he will try to emulate that skill in his own classroom.

Transformative Educator

Craig and I discussed the concepts of transformation and transformative educator, and while he stresses the importance of critical challenge and a sympathetic understanding of the individual student's situation, a teacher cannot "will" a person to change into their own perception of "a deeper or more enlightened thinker." He further reflected on the idea of the transformative educator:

I'm not sure what a transformative educator means. I think of a dramatic change like a chrysalis changing into a butterfly. I think that if someone calls himself a transformative educator, that's a pretty demanding claim. I think that if you can help people a few steps along the road on their journey of learning, you're doing well. I see transformation as having a lot to do with the student, and their own readiness, rather than being with the teacher. I am very wary of the role of the educator as change agent. I have to ask myself: what kind of change? Certainly, I critically challenge the students to examine ideas and the nature of society, but I do not think that I should be directive in suggesting that they should change either their lives or society. I am not a moral arbiter. It's different if someone says, 'I don't like the way I am, and I'd like to change.' The initiative to change is not the responsibility of the educator. People will take different meanings from the literature and it may be that a book or poem can affect the person at a deeper level, but you cannot force someone to relate the literature to their own lives. It's not my role of start counselling people about major life changes.

Changes as an Educator

Craig reflected on some of the changes in his perspectives about learners and in his teaching style over the years. When he was teaching at the University of Western Ontario and working with first year English students, he found that he did too much lecturing. He was "telling" them what they should see in the literature. He described a transition from a

transmission orientation to a facilitation process and a process of a mutual exploration of ideas. He changed his approach as a result of his own observations and because of his own personal frustration with the limits of lecturing and the "narrowing of views." Craig also mentioned the realities of working at the community college and the type of student that he works with. "The students that I teach are often older mature learners who have a great deal of learning experiences in life and from the street. They're not willing to sit and listen to some self-professed expert on a podium telling them about life. The students will demand more. It's better to defuse the tension and the power gradient by shifting the power and responsibility from the teacher to the student."

Craig moved toward "opening up questions that we should resolve together." While he still does some formal lecturing, it is done more to supply background knowledge and context. "I realize that you have to empower people in some ways....you can't just transmit knowledge. I like to get away from lecture models as much as possible. While it's not always true, students seem to be more fulfilled if they feel part of a group, and if they have to report back on their own interpretations and understandings. They'll put up with the lecture model for awhile. This is what a lot of people have been exposed to, and it may seem very good to them because all they have to do is sit there and take notes, but even though some students may groan if I say 'OK let's work in groups', it still makes them think more and they end up arguing and discussing with each other instead of just directing their focus at me."

Values, Beliefs, and Ideals

Craig's enthusiasm and interest in the discovery process of reading literature relates back to his experiences at home and throughout his educational experiences. He spoke of his father, a factory worker, who loved books and encouraged Craig to read and further his education. "My dad worked hard all his life. He always had a job even though the factory where he was working burned down twice. My dad was a very quite, stoic, and courageous man. My mother was a dancer and ran a dancing school. I also realized later on that there are a lot of households where reading does not go on. These households can be materially very privileged but you won't see a book anywhere."

Craig had also been influenced by some of his English teachers both in high school and at university. "The individuals who taught me English seemed to have the most

sophisticated and enlightened outlook on the world." Teaching English became a realistic career possibility for Craig when he was in his early twenties. He had no interest in business; instead, he saw himself as being a researcher of some kind–"a cultural archivist"–who would be researching personality and social issues. Craig explained that studying literature provided him with two types of satisfactions—one related to existential questions and one that involved more discovery and speculation:

> The human question...who one is and what make other people tick and so on is a never ending process. Literature also provides shape and form to life's questions. That's what keeps people reading. My approach to teaching involves this exploration. I have a desire to make shape out of different facts. Unlike other kinds of teaching where the curriculum may be very set and specific, there is an element of discovery in teaching English. Freud studied literature as a way of understanding personality and motivation. There is something bigger than an academic discipline in studying literature. We all have a narrative to tell. At its basic level, literature exists to help people understand themselves and the world.

Learning and Learners

Craig's definition of learning parallels is consistent with Marton and Saljo's (1981) and Ramsden's (1984) understanding of deeper level and transformative types of learning. Craig relates learning to a process of growth that may be triggered through discussion out of class or through the individual relating an idea presented in a novel or poem to a personal experience:

> Learning means the application of skills that you already have to new situations or perhaps more importantly to develop new skills and understandings...partly what you've got already and partly from your interactions in the classroom from working on a project or whatever...Learning is more than an accretion of facts...it's changing the architecture around you. Major learning to me means a paradigm shift of sorts. The things that I've valued most have always involved a recognition that now I see the worked in a different way. I can see my students learning if they start challenging me and asking me questions. Sometimes I see it in the assignments where they are applying an activity or skill in a fresh or original way. There's not just regurgitating information or saying the same things that I've

said. They're taking a way of looking a poetry and then they are applying it to a poem.

The analytical and creative features of Craig's description of learning were also evident in many of the samples of student writing that I reviewed. One student in Craig's class wrote an essay titled "Characteristics of Post Modernism in Robert Kroetsch's "Seed Catalogue." The student's writing reflected the core characteristics that characterize effective writing: clear organization, a focus on the general theme of the work, and a critical attention to analysis and detail; in addition, the student also provided the reader with a unique lens with which to interpret Kroetsch's poem and post modernist writers in general.

Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies

Part of our discussions revolved around Craig' teaching process and the objectives that he has for his different classes. His approach to teaching reflects the constructivist principles outlined by Candy (1991) and Good and Brophy(1995). When new learning is complex, the construction of meaning is fostered by clear explanations and modeling from the teacher, as well as opportunities to answer questions about the content, discuss or debate its meaning and apply it in problem solving or decision making. Metacognitive strategies include learners being able to paraphrase information in their own words, explore its relationship to other knowledge and to past experience, appreciate different insights, and then identify its implications for personal decision making(Good and Brophy,1995; Candy,1991;Pratt,1998). The teacher provides whatever structuring and scaffolding the students need in order to accomplish the learning goals. Ultimately, the students engage in more self-directed learning

Craig also reflected on the way in which he integrates critical thinking strategies in his teaching. The "construction" metaphor that he used earlier to describe his approach to teaching surfaced again in our discussion of critical thinking. Critical thinking means questioning assumptions or models," building up models or deconstructing models and theories", learning from other models that might explain the point more clearly and looking for options. He disagrees with the notion of critical thinking that is too "logical and analytical" and that may narrow possibilities or creative ways of thinking:

I'm not trying to tell my students that there's a right way and a wrong way to interpret a text...I'm trying to give them the tools to explore a variety of alternative possibilities and models....and some might be better than others. They should be asking themselves: Which models or theories are more internally consistent? We may end up with a variety of responses but we have thought through the rationale for our response. We try to negotiate a consensus to see how many of these interpretations can be valid.

Orientation to Curriculum

Craig's emphasized that his teaching approach revolves around making literature accessible rather than mystifying it. He tries to demystify literature by showing students that structures and styles such as satire, allegory, and parody that exist in formal literature also exist in television comedies and in other media forms. The archetypes found in formal literature also exist in post-modern works. "We are not living in the "Great Books" society. Many of the students that I teach, even the university graduates, are not voluntary readers. You can't begin a conversation by saying: 'Let's talk about Crime and Punishment.' The students do not have this frame of reference and you can't rely on students having read or being familiar with the works of Shakespeare, Dickens, and Dostoevsky." As a result, Craig emphasized that he is forced to look for different kinds of narratives that his students can relate to. His students are very much a part of the media generation. He further reflected on this point:

They know popular film and TV programs like The Simpsons, so I try to make connections with the texts that they do know. You've got to give up the idea that these students have an understanding of the classics and reach them at a level that they are familiar with and then begin to build from there. I often make links between Poe and Conrad and Twain with the modern shows they are familiar with if I'm introducing concepts like irony, multiple narratives,and so on...

There is a scene in David Suzuki's A Planet for the Taking where he talks about the bushmen of the Kalahari, and what they do at the end of the day. I often tell my students this. What do people with no possessions, no radios, no TVs do at the end of the day? They sit around the fire and tell stories. Everybody loves a good narrative. A narrative is a basic human experience. Much of what students

needs in terms of de-coding and deconstructing literature is there at some level. The basic paradigmatic understandings (knowledge of archetypes for instance) is already there. A lot of my job is to supply a tool kit without necessarily specifying how it should be used or how it should be applied.

When Craig is teaching a novel or short story, he will often use the blackboard to create diagrams that would help the students speculate and predict what the characters would do and what their motives are. "I'll start to build something on the blackboard and say, 'This is what I see happening, but I can't figure a,b,and c out.' Rather than approaching literature from a transmission perspective and saying, for example, "This is what Poe's short story is about", Craig will take the approach : "Let's explore the approach Poe takes in developing tone and narration. Why would he make certain decision about the narrator in "The Tell Tale Heart"? What going on here? In the course outline for Literary Structures, Craig states that the students will have the opportunity to examine elements such as tone, perspective, and diction in both poetry and short fiction in order to reach an understanding not only of the what of a work of literature (its theme or content) but also of the how and why behind the content—the conscious or unconscious choices made by a writer as she or he attempts to articulate a specific image, idea, or realization.

The course outlines, assignments, assessment procedures, and samples of student writing were consistent with Craig' overall philosophy and perspectives. A balance between transactional and literary forms of writing is emphasized. In the Canadian Literature course, students are introduced to the major writers in twentieth century Canada with an emphasis on the individual and cultural assumptions that have shaped their writing. The students are asked to write a critical review of a Canadian literary magazine or a "new" selection of writing from a Canadian literary magazine that has never been reviewed. The students must be able to apply their understanding of literary style and criticism to an original work. In each of the courses, an emphasis is placed on helping students to think and write as journalists and magazine and news editors.

One of the book review assignments illustrates Craig' ability to help students who have varying levels of sophistication in reading and writing. The structure of the question is reflective of Craig' constructivist approach. A foundation based on a clear

understanding of the "novel basics" and the essential components of a book review is first established (e.g. Ascertain basic facts about the book: What is the content? Write yourself a summary. If there's a thesis, write it down. Where does the information come from, and does the writer give the impression of having gained and used it honestly? Does the book seem to be effective within its own sphere of reference and expected audience?). At a deeper level, the students are then challenged to examine the more subtle and abstract elements of style, tone, symbolism , and imagery. Craig' "pattern of inquiry" shows a developmental progression from more basic to more complex ways of thinking and interpreting. Keeping in line with the transactional focus of the Creative Communications department, Craig emphasizes the importance of students being able to write a book review, proposal, or film review for a particular audience (e.g. readers of Maclean's magazine). Analyzing writing is approached from the lens of a journalist or critical reviewer who might well work one day for The Winnipeg Free Press or The Globe and Mail. Craig also presents models of book/film reviews that other writers (including his own work) have published in literary magazines such as The New Yorker or Prairie Fire, a Manitoba literary journal.

While Craig has a very clear idea of learning outcomes and the characteristics that make up effective writing, he allows room for new perspectives and direction in students' responses. The students are analyzing a piece of fiction from different literary angle rather than by simply responding to the question: "Did you enjoy reading this poem or story? Can you relate to it?" The students learn to analyze literature with "specific tools and paradigms."

Dilemmas

In our conversations, Craig was critical of the technical focus of the college and the de-emphasis on the humanities and courses like Literary Structures and Creative Writing. He noted that the Board of Governors consists of people who are either bureaucrats or technocrats and they are not looking at the consequences of eliminating literature courses and the benefit that studying literature may have in helping adults develop culturally or personally. He mentioned that he had developed a new creative program several years ago to fill in the gap for those adults who didn't want to go to university, but who wanted to spend a year or two learning to become writers:

There were fifty proposals for new courses and programs, and I learned through the grapevine that mine ranked at the bottom of the fifty proposals. I was competing with people who couldn't write or who didn't have degrees. The lack of interest reflects the Board of Governor's preference for all things technological. What I learned from this experience is that many of the things that I value in my own life and in teaching are not valued here at all. We have very little of what I would call a general education at the college. I suppose I'm talking about a liberal education that includes economic, cultural, and historical literacy. The college also wants its teachers to be generalists not specialists so that they can shift from one department to another. I'm working in an educational culture that does not encourage intellectual innovation. There is an anti-intellectual bias.

Craig referred to John Ralston Saul's book The Unconscious Civilization to emphasize his concern with the current idealization of computer literacy. Craig mentioned that while the computer can be a liberating tool for individuals who are already knowledgeable and sophisticated, the computer may be a crutch for the more passive and less probing individuals. He referred to a recent experience where one of his students came up to him to say that he couldn't do his research project because his Internet link was down:

> What struck me was his belief that he couldn't do research because he didn't have access to the Internet. There is a by-passing of thinking and the process of research through reading, writing, and speaking to people. Plugging into an Internet Site is not my idea of research. They're certainly not learning critical thinking for the most part, and the sad part is that they will have to apply thinking skills in the major projects for the Creative Communications programs, and many adults are not prepared for this. In my Business Communications course for example, the students have to do a lot of inventing. They have to organize the set up of a company and design the advertising campaign and so on. Students will have to do activities where they cannot rely on Internet sources.

The clash between Craig' values and the values of the college have forced him to develop his professional interests outside the college. He writes reviews for The Winnipeg Free Press and Prairie Fire. He is also preparing an academic paper for a writing

conference in Ottawa. Like Brian and Yvette, Craig feels somewhat demoralized and isolated for challenging aspects of the educational system. "I don't sense much support from my colleagues around the moral and social issues that concern me most." In sum, the sense of fulfillment that Craig receives from teaching his students and his success as a Creative Communications instructor outweighs his sense of frustration at the limitations of the college. He has learned to compromise: "I understand the rules of the game and I try to create my own interests outside the college."

Summary

As Craig reflected on his own process of teaching, many of these characteristics of constructivist teaching and learning paradigms were present. Craig is modeling ways of thinking and problem solving when he involves his students in exploring fiction and non-fiction. He begins by making links to their own prior knowledge. "I try to disclose my own thoughts and perspectives, and in some way I am a role model for my students. I'm encouraging them to do the same thing. What I'd like to see happening is for the students to recognize the skills that they already have, but have not been identified and expressed. For them to discover that they have many of the skills they need to be analytical and critical readers, they have to have de-coding skills." The metaphors of constructing, exploring, and re-building that recur throughout his descriptions of the teaching-learning dynamic most consistently reflect Pratt's (1998) analysis of the developmental perspective of teaching.

Profile #7 Don

"When I first meet my Journalism students, I tell them that I can't teach Journalism but I can facilitate conditions where they can learn. The adult learners that I meet in Creative Communications are so bright; ninety nine percent of my work involves helping them channel their intelligence and creativity. I may set the climate for change and discovery, but one thing that I consciously do is to find out as much as I possibly can about each of my student's specific interests. When I find out the student's interests, I then try to channel the assignments and assist them in whatever way I can to explore their interests. If a person says that they want to work at the CBC, I'll try to arrange a work placement there. My work is transformative in the sense that I'm helping students clarify and refine their vaguely expressed ambitions."

Background

      Don has been teaching in the Creative Communications department at Red River Community College for eight years. Prior to teaching, Don worked at The Winnipeg Sun as a general assignment reporter and then became the business editor. He has also worked as a legislative reporter and a political columnist. Don still writes a weekly column in a local newspaper. He entered teaching when one of the instructors took a leave and the department needed someone with journalism experience to teach. "I thought I was someone who'd be here from industry rotating in for a year. I've been here for eight years, and I love my work. The students keep me coming back. I enjoy the process and I feel that I have a responsibility to help my students pull through."

      Don grew up in Winnipeg, and later moved to Ottawa to complete a four year Journalism degree at Carlton University. His studies focused on Political Science and Economics. He also completed his Master's degree in Canadian Studies at Carlton University in Ottawa. Don also worked for several years as a research writer/reporter in the Prime Minister's Office before returning to Winnipeg. He also completed his Certificate in Adult and Continuing Education from The University of Manitoba.

General Overview of Don's Educational Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults

      Based on Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, Don's highest scores were in the progressive and behavioral philosophies.

      Based on Pratt's (1998) model, Don's perspectives on teaching reflect the apprenticeship and developmental conceptualizations of teaching. Don is modelling ways of thinking and behaving as a journalist. His students are being introduced into a culture that has specific rules and norms. When I asked him what metaphor would most closely describe his role and his classroom, he used the analogy of a newsroom. His compared his role to that of a city editor while his students are apprentice journalists:

      I try to simulate the real world of journalism. A good editor would point out

      areas of improvement and give writing suggestions. My formula is 'go out and do

      the interview, reflect and observe, and then come back and talk about it.' I can be

      brutal in my criticism of student writing. That's the way editors are. They will

      say: 'This story is really boring. We would never run a story like this.' Students

      have to know what it's like in a newsroom. I fail students for spelling a name

wrong, or missing the deadline. 'Get the facts right. Get it in on time.' A lot of what I do is not nurturing at all. My main objective is that I want students to be able to write stories that will be published in a recognized market. That's the standard I set for them.

Don's apprenticeship approach reflects the ideas presented in the learning theory of situated cognition (Brown, Collins, and Duguid, 1989; Lave and Wenger, 1991). Learning involves a process of "entering a cultural meaning system" (Brown, Collins, and Duguid, 1989). Knowledge developed in the context in which it is used, and not apart from the context. Lave and Wenger (1991) view learning as essentially "the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice"(p.29). Through his facilitation, Don's students are discovering the "rules, norms, and practices" of journalists.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Don identified most with the roles of facilitator, researcher, co-learner, mentor, and reflective practitioner. He doesn't see himself as a planner. Don emphasized that being organized is not the same thing as planning. Spontaneity, flexibility, and practical application are valued more highly:

A facilitator is very much how I see and define my role. I create opportunities for my students to learn. I'm a very practical person. If something is happening at the legislature, my students and I will go down there, observe, take notes, and come back and discuss what happened. We learn together. We might be reading the same newspaper, but we're finding out new facts and information. My students may have a very different take on an issue than I would. We do a lot of issues oriented articles. I also want my students to reflect on journalism's role and responsibility. What is our place in society? What is our ethical responsibility? This year we looked at the Diana story and the Clinton scandal. From a critical perspective, why was there so much coverage on Diana? Why has the emphasis on Clinton been on the sex scandal and not on the issue of subornation of perjury by a lawyer and the chief executive? Why are some issues covered while others are not? We look at these questions.

Don emphasizes learning through practical experience. The students perform the skill first and then see what is involved. "I start with the experience first. This may be the

opposite of some educational theories that emphasize the instructor demonstrating the skill, giving the students an opportunity to practice the skill, and then evaluating it." On the very first day, Don's students interview each other. Based on this interview, they write their first story.

Don also sees his role as someone who fosters critical awareness of social issues. Each term, he requires his students to write one article that deals with a group in society that has been marginalized in some way. "I try to foster an awareness of society and its structures. We also examine words and the "politically correct" usage of them. What do words do to people's self-image and how does this affect their ability to interact with others in the community? Students will say: "What should we call someone of native ancestry? Native? Cree? Aboriginal?" I'll say 'Let's talk to some native people and see what they say.'"

An effective adult educator, in Don's view, is someone who has to like students. "It's not just academic knowledge. If you don't like students, you shouldn't be a teacher. You've got to be willing to listen to them and advise them. You have to be approachable.
They learn how to apply their skills in a more refined way. I help sort out their skills. I suppose I am like a mentor and role model for some of my students. Sometimes I've thought about returning to industry on a full time basis but I enjoy teaching here too much to leave."

Transformative Educator

Like Craig, Don sees his primary role as a facilitator of learning rather than a reformer or transformative educator. He sees transformational or deeper level types of learning as being centered more in the readiness of the learner and in the complex dynamics of personality and experience that may trigger change. He explained that personal development and social awareness are not really his aims but rather they may be learning outcomes that occur without any conscious intent on his part to "trigger" them:

> A learner may develop an increased social awareness of issues as a result of working on a particular project, but I certainly don't set our to teach this. I don't start off the course saying: 'Hi, I'm Don, and you are going to learn a lot about yourself and society in this course!' Frankly, I wouldn't know where to begin! Having said that, I know that I've worked with students who were hairdressers or

who worked as waiters and waitresses and who are now successful journalists.
I've seen people shift careers and discover their own writing talents. I recently met
a former students who is working in public relations. She said that I changed her
life! I never set out to 'change' my students, but it is their experiences and
perceptions of me and of other students in the classroom that can influence their
outlook. That student changed her own life; in reality, I may have helped her along
the way. I am not thinking that if I bring in a popular news anchor, maybe
someone will be inspired or transformed in some way. I could not be so
manipulative. People see special qualities in others, and it's hard to pinpoint why
people are more influenced by one person or one book or whatever than another.

Changes as an Adult Educator

Don mentioned that while he had a lot of practical experience to offer his students,
he learned more about instructional strategies and teaching and learning styles in the
courses that he took in the Certificate of Adult Education Program. He describes himself
as an "abstract random learner" and his spontaneity and emphasis on "doing" might
alienate some of his students who are more concrete sequential. He recalled one
instructor in the certificate program who kept giving the students "lists and lists" and a
constant barrage of articles to read. "I couldn't stand the way he was teaching! But then,
I began to see how my own students might see me, especially if they're the more
structured concrete sequential types. What must they be thinking when I say: 'Go out and
do this and good luck!' or 'There is a rally at the legislature...I'll meet you there at 12
noon.' I never write anything down. There's nothing that I do that might help the
concrete sequential learner."

Based on Kolb's (1985) Learning Style Inventory, Don's learning style was in the
assimilator quadrant (an integration of reflective observation and abstract
conceptualization). It is interesting to note that Kolb's analysis of the learning styles in the
professions connects the divergent learning style to journalists and people in the arts and
entertainment fields. Don and I discussed his learning style, and he said that while he is
very practical and experienced based, he is also analytical. He has a Master's in Canadian
Studies and part of his thesis involved critiquing different systems of government. The
description of the assimilator that Kolb(1984) presents is consistent with Don's ability to

take information and make it accessible to diverse reading audiences. Kolb maintains that people with the assimilator learning style are best at understanding a wide range of information and putting it into concise logical form. People with assimilator learning styles are less focused on people and more interested in abstract ideas and concepts. The part of the description that does not coincide with Don's perspective is in the statement "people with this learning style find it more important that a theory have logical soundness than practical value." In contrast, Don's emphasis as a journalist is very practical–he emphasizes the importance of good journalists being able to produce work that is readable to a given audience. Moreover, his teaching style and the strategies that he prefers are based more in the diverger category: practical examples, field work, observations, and discussion. Don felt that a combination of both the diverger and assimilator learning styles best reflect his approach to teaching and learning.

<u>Values, Beliefs, and Ideals</u>

Don emphasized that as a journalist, integrity and honesty are important values; he traced these values back to his family upbringing.

We discussed the power of the media to distort information; I mentioned Donald Macedo's (1997) book <u>Literacies of Power</u>, and his premise that a critical understanding of the world should precede an understanding of the word. Don believes that it is the media's responsibility to point out the "double speak" and the propaganda. He thought about the contradictions and ironies of the media further:

> It's like the phrase the soldier was killed by 'friendly fire.' What it means is that you were killed by one of your own people. Don't hide the fact by using 'friendly fire.' The only refuge for journalists is be more aware of the hidden reality. A journalist could say to her/himself 'I'm not going to use the term 'collateral damage.' I'm going to say: 'a lot of people were killed.' Having said that, being honest may result in lower ratings and in the end, your job. But I emphasize integrity and accuracy of information first.

Don was also critical of the assumptions that Macedo was making about individuals and the way their belief system is influenced by their social and cultural milieu. He values independence of thought and the power of individuals to challenge the status quo:

I don't like theoretical assumptions that suggest that individuals are naive enough to absorb the social-cultural world around them. It seems to be saying: 'You're a white man who was born in Canada, so you'll *have* to think this way.' Not only that, you're incapable of thinking any other way because of the culture you were born into. It resembles a racist mind set. If that's true, I'd still be homophobic and racist and sexist because that was the world that I was born into in 1954! The world that I was born into had not even gone through Brown vs. the School Board. I can't even imagine a world like that anymore where little black children couldn't drink at the same water fountain as white children or that any of the barriers that I've seen broken down in other areas that we've talked about. If everything were culturally determined and everyone would have the same attitude, there would be no debate, no growth, no change.

The values and beliefs that Don holds are reflected in the relationship he has with the students in his classes and in the expectations and learning goals for his courses. His sense of integrity and optimism that individual students have the potential to think independently and critically without "direct intervention" on his part became very evident in our conversations and in the time that I spent in his class.

Learning and Learners

Don views learning at one level as acquiring the skills of writing good news stories. "I emphasize the importance of the journalist to convey quality information. A good news story is vital to democracy and the future of citizenship." Don said that while he could identify with the transmission / behavioral orientation in terms of writing technique and mechanical accuracy in writing, he also wants them to develop problem solving and decision making.

Don challenges students to "cut through" the propaganda and presents the facts. He mentioned that many of his students are very bright and creative, they are not informed enough about history and current events. He tries to encourage his students to read more in the areas of political science, history, and sociology. Don explained that a lot of poor journalism is linked to a lack of understanding on the part of the journalists about the context. The person may know how to write a news story but the content has no substance. " There is not nearly as much critical thinking going on in the newsroom as

there should be. So I believe that it is my responsibility to say to these students: 'Think about the real story here. Don't get caught in the media frenzy.'"

<u>Orientation to Curriculum</u>

Don's orientation to the curriculum in his journalism courses is rooted in practical experience. Students learn by doing. He encourages his students to explore and research, but he does not teach directly. He does not use notes, overheads, nor does he give hand outs. The process is focused on the students. They discover an area of interest and develop their own questions. The "power" in teaching, from Don's perspective, is viewed in terms of the students' own discovery and learning. Don believes that once the students discover that they are capable of writing a good story, they will feel more confident. While he will set the standards for "good writing" in terms of technical and content merit, his process of facilitation is very student directed.

The focus of one of Don's classes that I observed was on writing a current event story with a human interest focus. The class was highly participatory, and I could see how involved and enthusiastic the students were. There were twenty five students in the class ranging in age (approximately) from twenty to forty five years old. Each of the students presented a brief summation of the story that they were working on. The students also identified any problems that they were having in finding sources and resources. Rather than "telling" or "directing" the students, Don opened up the class by questioning: "Can anyone help Margaret find a source? What does she need to do? You need to help each other. As a journalist, you cannot subpoena people to the bench like a judge, so all you have is your honesty and integrity and reputation. Credibility is everything. How can this story that Margaret is working on about gangs be more credible?" I could see how the students worked collaboratively, giving suggestions, and phone numbers of contact people that would provide an important source base for their article. The human interest stories that the students were working on addressed a range of topics: Youth Gang Violence, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Legalization of Marihuana for Medical Use, Literacy Education, the Value of a Liberal Arts Education, Discrimination Against People with Mental Disorders, and Living with Hemophilia. One student interested in the Literacy Program "Beat the Streets" arranged to interview me about my experience working in literacy education. Another student was writing about the dangers of VLTs. His story

focused on the recent suicide of a man who was addicted to gambling machines. His article raised ethical questions regarding the profit vs. compassion dilemmas related to gaming laws in Manitoba. The students were "thinking as journalists", and that while Don provided a basic structure for writing human interest stories, the students chose their topic and worked collaboratively on the process of finding "two sources" to back up their theme.

Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies

The basic framework for Don's approach to article writing is to put the important information first, open with a provocative sentence, get the names and the spelling right, be concise, and use two key sources to build your story. The students are also encouraged to think of who their audience is. Don explained:

> As a journalist, you've always got to think of your audience. You can be the best writer in the world, but if no one can read or understand your work, it's not journalism. Journalism has to have an audience. You might be having fun writing, but you are hoping that your work will be read. I also emphasize the importance of being able to back up your story... I also thought of a recent article in The Dallas Morning News that retracted a story about the trooper's involvement in Clinton's escapades. Then they issued a second story standing by their first story saying that it was essentially correct! I asked myself what does *essentially* correct mean? In my opinion, a story is either correct or it's not! That's the bottom line.

The process of learning that Don's students are involved in mirror Kolb's (1984) learning cycle. As Don pointed out, the students start with a concrete experience—interviewing, researching, and making observations. They reflect on these observations and then develop a "conceptual model"that explains and clarifies why the circumstances or events occur. The "active experimentation" mode is practiced when the apprentice journalist decides to interview further. Rather than approaching a topic like "Youth Gang Violence" from a theoretical or sociological perspective, for this assignment, Don asked the students to write from a human interest perspective. This would involve interviewing the people directly involved (e.g. gang members, police, etc.) . The student writing excerpts that follow are consistent with Don's intentions and his expectation of the "final product" of their writing. Another student's story titled "Freedom to Read"

centered around a woman who decided to return to school. His article describes the woman's background and the barriers that prevented her from continuing her education when she was younger. The student also included comment from literacy practitioners and administrators of literacy programs. The atmosphere of reflection and active questioning that Don fosters is reflected in his students' writing. Learning is a process of discovery and expanding perspectives. The students are researching different facets of contemporary issues that impact our lives. At the same time, the students are also learning to refine their writing skills: style and substance are emphasized.

The apprenticeship approach is also revealed in other projects that the students are working on. They create and produce the college monthly newspaper "The Projector". The paper is organized into sections such as Editorials, Entertainment, Health, News, Diversions, and Opinions. This paper gives the students the practical experience of working for a newspaper, writing the stories, adhering to deadlines, and collaborating with students from different departments such as the Graphic and Applied Computer Design Program. As the students go through the program, they often choose to specialize in a particular area such as Health, Politics, or Sports.

Summary

Don enjoys his work and there is high degree of congruence between his values, beliefs, and ideals, and his experience teaching at the college. He feels that he has learned from his students and that his skills as a journalist are valued. His approach to teaching is most consistent with Pratt's (1998) description of the apprenticeship and developmental teaching perspectives.

Academic Developmental Services

The Academic Development Services Department (formerly called Adult Basic Education) focuses on helping adults upgrade their academic skills in Mathematics, English, and Physical Science. The courses designed to help prepare students for "enhanced education or employment opportunities" (Red River College Brochure). The courses, for the most part, are tailored to meet the entrance requirements and skill expectations of the trades and technical programs at the college. There are about 200-300 students enrolled in the program. Many of the courses are individualized and competency based, with entrance and exit examinations to evaluate the academic skills of the students.

The English programs that I reviewed reflect the "machine metaphor" that McEwan (1992) describes. The Grade 10 program is organized in learning modules, and the method of instruction is individualized. "Each student works independently and progresses at his/her own rate. Group instruction is used in some situations, but the emphasis is on the individualized approach to learning" (Academic Development Services Brochure). In contrast to the academic upgrading programs offered at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, the English courses in the Academic Development Services Department do not include the study of literature. The Grade 10 course called "Communications" emphasizes the development of skills in spelling, grammar, usage and mechanics, sentence and paragraph construction and expository paragraph writing. At the end of each unit, the students write a test. Upon passing that test, they begin work on the next unit. The teacher functions as a guide and a resource person. The current focus is on functional literacy as it relates to the expectations of the trades and technology programs. While the Grade 11 courses focus on the development of English skills in Business Administration and Creative Communications, the Grade 12 "Pre-Technology" program are generally science and technology based.

Profile #8 Rachel

" *In my courses, I ask the students to reflect on their past learning experience, and tell me what worked and what didn't. I have a few basic guiding principles: I try to create a comfortable climate for learning; I try to make sure that what they are learning is relevant and I try to demonstrate my own confidence in my students' ability to learn.*"

Background

Rachel has been teaching in the Academic Development Services department for eight years. She teaches in both the Grade 10 and 11 English programs. The Grade 11 English course that she teaches integrates "job market preparation skills" and study skills. Prior to working at Red River, she worked as a reading resource teacher in an elementary school for ten years. Rachel grew up in Winnipeg and Ottawa, and completed her Bachelor of Arts Degree, majoring in Sociology and Art History, a Bachelor of Education Degree, and her Certificate in Adult Education from the University of Manitoba.

Overview of Rachel's Educational Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults

Based on Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, Rachel had relatively high scores in the behavioral, progressive, and humanistic philosophies. Based on Pratt's (1998) model, Rachel's perspectives on teaching and learning coincide with the nurturing and transmission orientation. Rachel's sense of compassion and understanding for adult learners co-exists with the more behavioral orientation of the department. She told me that although she recognizes that a number of the English courses in the department lack "a creative and literary dimension," she has considerable freedom in the Grade 11 program to be more innovative. She further explained that:

> The courses that I teach are so different from each other....each requires a different mind set. Sometimes I do find it difficult to teach courses that are so fundamentally different from each other, but the course determines my approach to teaching. The controlled environment, and the rote and repetition of the Grade 10 course are very different from the discovery approach that I take with the Grade 11 English courses.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Rachel identified with the roles of counsellor, friend, co-learner, facilitator, and care giver. She prefers the word facilitator more than teacher. "I think that I am helping them rather than instructing. I am helping them learn rather than telling them what to learn." Rachel mentioned that being a good facilitator includes being a friend, co-learner, and counsellor. She also compared herself to a mother who is there "to boost confidence and be there when you're needed." While she describes her learners as being "extremely needy" she also emphasized that "you have to tell students that they can fly on their own. Sometimes you have to be careful. The students can be very manipulative. Children are like that too."

Mutual respect and empathy are valued by Rachel. She spoke about the internalized labelling of adults in her classes who perceive themselves as "stupid and illiterate." As an adult educator, she feels that part of her role is to help her students see themselves in more positive ways. Several times, she referred to the work of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow and their emphasis on looking at the emotional aspects of learning, and the way in which self-esteem and self-image influence motivation and learning:

I want to take away labels. I also tutor students from the educational support program and these adults have serious learning problems...So many of them have been labelled and I don't want to reinforce the negative way they may feel about themselves. Of course you are aware of their problems, but I try not to differentiate between them. I try to give everyone an equal opportunity. I suppose this sense of fairness and belief in mutual respect comes from my work with special needs children. I worked with kids who had attention deficit disorder and other emotional problems. You have to be patient but you also have to treat them fairly and as individuals, not as a label.

When we reviewed the Kolb (1985) Learning Style Inventory, Rachel said that she identified more with the Divergent Learning Style and not what her score had suggested—the assimilator learning style. She could identify with the creative and intuitive characteristics of the Divergent Learning Style Type. When I asked her how her learning style preferences might influence her teaching style, she said that she is very flexible. "In terms of my teaching, I adapt to the course. I can be very concrete when I need to be and then I can be very reflective and abstract. I'm open to new ideas and I adapt to the course and to who the students in my class are." Based on Conti's (1990) Principles of Adult Learning Scale, the factors that Rachel ranked high were consistent with a learner centered approach which emphasized a positive learning climate, encouraging problem solving and personal development, and relating the materials taught in class to the experience of the students.

Rachel compares her work, especially in the tutorials sessions , to the work of a counselor. She explained that many of her students haven't been in an educational institution for ten or even twenty years; it would be important for the teacher to be warm and approachable, so as to minimize alienating or intimidating the student. Rachel also reflected on the way that some adult learners may project their own fears and anxieties onto the teacher. "Even though the student may not know me, he or she may assume that I'm the reincarnation of the terrible teacher that he had in school twenty years ago." She describes some of her students as having "terrible hang ups" and that while as a teacher, she can't become over involved, part of her work is "knocking down those negative walls and helping [students] see life more positively and realistically." Rachel further explained:

The teacher cannot be a distant and detached figure. I am not an authoritarian figure at all. I like the process of getting to know the student individually; I prefer tutorials rather than a group. I just feel that I have more of a handle of the student's problem, programs, and goals when I meet with them individually. I feel more like a counsellor. I get very involved with the projects that they are working on. One of my students is working on a project on Schizophrenia. I'm learning as much as she is about the topic.

The empathy that Rachel feels for many of her students can be traced back to her own experiences in school and in returning to university as a mature student. She reflected on how her own lack of self-confidence and "math anxiety" prevented her from pursuing her education when she was younger:

I can identify with what our students are going through. Family obligations, time, juggling homework with taking care of the children are huge responsibilities. I went through it myself. I'm a role model when I say to my students: 'If I can do it, so can you.' I also tell them that I wasn't good at Math but that didn't stop me from studying Art History and Sociology. Don't let prior negative learning experiences from twenty years ago stop you from pursuing your goal. Now is now and then was then...you're a different person now, so don't be hung up by a bad mark that you had in Grade Seven. I really emphasize this a lot. In talking about my own experiences, I feel that the students are less threatened and more willing to open up and disclose their own fears.

Learning and Learners

Rachel connected learning to a life long search for new knowledge and skills. "Learning is never saying "I've learned enough. My brain is full. I emphasize life long learning to my students. I say: 'Don't think that when you finish this, your learning will be over. You are going to be out in the work force and you will have to adapt to new methods, new situations, and the need to acquire new knowledge will always be there.'" When I asked Rachel what the term transformative learning meant to her, she connected it with problem solving and being able to keep up with the changing needs of society and technology. She also linked learning to motivation and attitude; if fear, anxiety, or a lack of initiative are not there, the student will have difficulties learning. " I make it a point to

tell my classes that attitude is the most important factor that influences progress. You can be bright and have the best skills but if you have a poor attitude, you won't be successful." Rachel reflected on two students who exemplified her point. She recalled a young man who had been to university but because his writing skills were very weak, he was advised to attend the upgrading program at Red River in combination with an electronics course. While his major responsibility was being a student (he did not have any part time jobs), he couldn't focus his attention. He felt apathetic and demotivated.. His parents were very demanding and they expected their succeed to "at least succeed" in an easier program than Engineering:

> This young man was a bit of a Walter Mitty type. He really wasn't interested in
> studying about circuit breakers or anything else for that matter. He wanted to
> travel to Australia but he didn't have the money, and he felt pushed to be here by
> his father. His parents were from the former Yugoslavia and they saw the world in
> a very different way from their son. Education and security were important. I
> worked a lot with this young man on study skills, time management, how he
> should study, when he should study, what he should study. I consulted with
> another tutor who would help him with Physics but nothing seemed to help. I
> haven't seen him around for months. This proves my point about attitude and
> learning. This young man didn't have so many of the barriers that affect our
> students–money, family responsibility, part time job,etc., but his heart wasn't in his
> studies.

Rachel contrasted this example with a mature student of 40 who managed to complete all of her courses in the upgrading program under multiple stresses in her life. "Her husband wasn't supportive and yet she was never discouraged. She also had a part time job at the post office. Her work was always done exceptionally well, not rushed but thorough and polished."

Orientation to Curriculum

Rachel teaches the individualized Grade 10 and the two Grade 11 English courses (Business English and Job Market Preparation). She feels that the Grade 10 program is too focused on "drills and contract work". She explained that the rationale for the "back to basics" courses on a number of factors. Literature is not really thought of as necessary

by many members of her department when you are going into Automotive Technology or the Aerospace program. The English courses are geared to the requirements of the existing trades and technical programs. Students don't see the lack of literature as a weakness. In their view, they don't have as much reading to do. Rachel emphasized that the students see the program from a practical side:

> To some extent they provide security for students if they've been out of school for a long time. The modules are very predictable and when your life has been very erratic and unpredictable, this is a source of security. Students can work at their own pace. They don't have to compete with anyone. Nothing is thrown at the student. The student doesn't have to give a presentation or write an essay. It's all prepackaged and linear. It is for the concrete sequential learner. In contrast, someone who is a dreamer or who might be a good writer may find it very arduous to do pages and pages of exercises and drills on nouns, verbs, and subordinate clauses. They are not competing with anyone. Is it an ideal learning situation? No, certainly, not for everyone.

In the study skills unit, Rachel covers topics such as learning styles, time management, note taking, memory strategies, skimming and scanning, and coping with stress. The texts includes excerpts from articles and essays that emphasize finding the main ideas, and scanning for information:

> I try to make the Study Skills course interesting by focusing on factors that affect students' learning. I want the students to know that I am genuinely interested in their learning. I am perhaps too interested in their background! Maybe I'm a bit too curious. I ask them to write a biography of themselves on the first day of class. I do this as a starting point. They can disclose as much or as little as they want. This opens the door and when I find out more about their interests I will bring in articles or I will ask them questions based on their autobiography.

Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies

Rachel has used Learning Styles Inventories with her students identify their learning strengths. "I try to bring in as many of the senses into learning as I can. I try to use visual, hand on , auditory, and so on to reach as many students as I can. For example, if I were to teach a class on time management, I would explain why it would be important

to be a good time manager. I would ask questions, give examples, and then I would use some overheads to show the students to set up a schedule. Then I would ask them to develop their own schedule. Lecture, discussion, visuals, and practical experience should all be part of the lesson. I also just ask the students to tell me what works best for them and what doesn't." Rachel reflected on a Job Preparation Course that she developed for the Grade 11 Communications English program. She developed the course in as a result of her observation that many adults returning to upgrading have vague or unrealistic career aspirations. She considered the course to be a success because of the positive feedback that she received from the students. Teaching and learning approaches such as lecture, speeches, group discussion, individual field work, guest speakers, videos, and handouts were used to reach students with different learning styles. Rachel also emphasized that the students enjoyed the course because they could apply the knowledge; they were interested in finding out ways of identifying a career choice and the skills that they needed to enter that career avenue.

Both the job preparation and study skills courses that Rachel teach reflect her insights into adult learners and the diverse needs that they have. Interestingly, they do not resemble a "traditional English course" but are more similar to a values clarification workshop course for adult learners. The content and goals of the course are consistent with Rachel's identification with her role as more of "a counsellor" rather than an English teacher. While she does not incorporate literature as a vehicle for exploring values and ideas in the way that some of the others teachers such as Brian, Sheila, and Rob do in their courses at the same level, Rachel does address the values and needs of the adult learner in a different context. In the Job Market Preparation course, the students are required to investigate and write about a job or career field that they are interested in. She reflected further on her approach to helping her students:

> I start with asking the students to identify their strengths and interests. What am I good at? Do I want to work inside or outside? Do I want to work with numbers? Do I want to work with people? Do I want to work with machines? Do I want to work with things, animals, or ideas? Some of our students come here and have no idea of where the are going. About 1/3 of the students have not idea what they want to do. I tell the students: 'If you tell the employer that you are a good

organizer or that you enjoy working with people, what have you got to be able to back those statements up?'

The Grade 11 courses that Rachel has developed are rooted in personal and practical skills development. If students are interested in a career, they are required to interview two people in the field, conduct library research on the profession or trade and write a research paper on this. They are also required to present a speech based on their research. Through this process, students are clarifying their vaguely expressed interests.

Dilemmas

The dilemmas that Rachel identified focus on the courses that she teaches. While on the one hand, she can see the practical value of learning the basics and in an indirect way, students are learning organization and structure in their own lives by having to meet deadlines and adhering to a routine, the course would be more well rounded if it contained a literary and creative writing component. "Their ability to understand grammar determines whether or not they pass the course, and then this affects their ability to enter programs at the college. I feel that a student can write very well without knowing what a relative pronoun is but the student's ability to pass the course will be dependent on recognizing the component parts of grammar."

Rachel described her role in the modular program as "someone who keeps score" and checks the student's progress or helps to explain an exercise in the learning contract:

The idea behind the curriculum is that students have to walk before they can run. The teachers who developed these modules believe that before you can write creatively you have to know the technical parts. If I had a choice, I would teach the program in a very different way. These booklets were written in the 1970s and they've been updated a little, but they are basically the same. I think that including literature would make the program more balanced.

While Rachel finds the Grade 10 program too regimented, she is able to use more group work and experiment with different ideas in the Grade 11 courses. Both the Grade 11 A and Grade 11B are business communications based with students learning letter writing, memos, research papers, and interviewing techniques. These courses are prerequisites for students who want to enter Business Administration and Creative

Communications. Paragraphs, memos, reports, and letter writing are emphasized, but in addition to these topics, additional units are added.

Summary

Rachel's approach integrates the humanistic, behavioral, and progressive philosophies of education. Her interest in helping adult learning gain confidence and clarify their goals and values reflects her interest in being more of a "counsellor" rather than an "instructor" with her students.

Profile #8 Catherine

"I find the students who have really low self-esteem and think that they can't do anything the most challenging. The beauty of teaching in the Adult Education program here is that you see so much change. Once a student sees that he or she can do something correct, their confidence begins to build. I enjoy my role in helping students see that they can accomplish something."

Catherine has been teaching in the Academic Development Services department at Red River Community College for twenty five years. She described her experiences teaching at the college as being wonderful because "you are getting so much back from what you put in. In spite of the fact of all the changes and cut backs, the college is still an exciting place to be. I love my work." Catherine grew up near Thunder Bay Ontario and Winnipeg. She completed her Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in English and Geography from the University of Manitoba. She has her teaching certificate and has completed courses toward her certificate in Adult and Continuing Education from The University of Manitoba. I met with Catherine three times during January-April 1998.

General Overview of Catherine's Educational Philosophy and Teaching Perspectives

Based on Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, Catherine's highest scores were in the progressive, behavioral, and humanistic philosophical orientations. Based on Pratt's model, Catherine's perspectives are consistent with the nurturing and transmission orientations. She believes that the individualized programs (learning contracts) have been very successful in meeting adult learners' needs. In contrast to Rachel, she does not find the Grade 10 program lacking in creativity. "To teach a group of students is not the way to go in Adult Basic Education. In a group, you will bore some students and be over the heads of others. The students are so different that the only

way to truly meet their needs is through an individualized programs where the students can work at their own pace."

Catherine's humanistic focus in understanding adult learners and the barriers that they may bring with them to the learning situation may seem to contradict her belief that the "transmission" oriented approach to curriculum content best meets the needs of the adult learner who is returning to complete academic upgrading. When I asked Catherine if she saw any contradictions between her emphasis on respect and valuing the uniqueness of the individual and the more regimented structure of the learning contracts, she said that her values were in fact very compatible with the program:

> It may not appear so, but the programmed instruction is very compatible with my beliefs. In an individualized situation, you cannot avoid being close to the student. You end up getting to know them very well. This closeness would not occur in a group setting. In an individualized program, you are listening and talking, and you are in an environment where you have to connect.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

When we were discussing the different roles of adult educators, Catherine was candid in her statement: "I don't analyze my role. I just enjoy it. I have a very mathematical perspective. "I have a kind of 1+1 way of thinking and I don't reflect much on things like that." She also believes that good teaching skills are something that you are born with. "The really talented teachers seem to have a natural flair. It is something that they are born with. I could take lessons and lessons in oil painting and I could never be an artist. It's the same in teaching. Special teachers have a quality that cannot be learned from the text book. I really believe this. You can learn all the content, the strategies, and the methodology and you can learn to cope, but if you haven't got that quality that makes you connect with students, you will not be a great success."

Catherine attributes her success as a basic literacy instructor to her insight, empathy, and tolerance. The "mathematical" metaphor that Catherine used to describe her perspectives on teaching surfaced in her analysis of the teacher-student relationship:

> You have to reach down to the level of the student and understand where they are at. It's really quite simple: If the student does their part of the equation and the teacher does her part, things should work out. I don't think that there is any magic

to it. You have to have insight and you have to be perceptive. Through assessment tests and through the interviews, the teacher should know what kind of skills the learner will bring to the situation and what they need to develop. Everyday you can keep track of what the student can learn.

Catherine also described some of her work as "informal counselling". She emphasized the importance of listening to the problems that students may have and referring them to more formal counselling if the problems are more serious. One of the other teachers in the department mentioned that often "difficult" learners are sent to Catherine because she has "the most patience and empathy." Catherine mentioned that her students are "not penalized for being late or not attending nor are they competing with anyone". For the student who is insecure and hasn't been in a formal educational setting for many years, Catherine's emphasizes that her style and approach would be effective.

Changes as an Adult Educator

Catherine feels more confident as an educator today. At the start of her career, she was an elementary teacher and she didn't really enjoy this. She felt that she had to be more of a manager and disciplinarian and this ran contrary to her values. Catherine said that she hadn't really reflected on her career choice at that point in her life. "In those days women went into either Nursing or Teaching and if you didn't, you stayed home and had children. Times were so different then. You didn't question anything. Your options seemed to be closed. I wanted to be in the RCMP but they didn't accept women at the time." When she had the opportunity to work a term at Red River, she "found her calling" and has been here ever since. Catherine said that she is better at really listening to the students' perceptions of their needs and goals and her ability to "develop a battery of strategies that fit with each student's situation." Despite the fact that the curriculum content (the learning modules) remain the same, if a student is having difficulty understanding a concept such as a subordinate clause or a conjunction, Catherine is able to vary her style of explaining the concept to each student "slightly differently."

Learning and Learners

In our discussions, two different conceptualizations that Catherine has of learning emerged. At one level, Catherine connects learning with the development of basic skills. In her view, adult learners need to go through the process of deconstructing component

parts in language (nouns, verbs, objects, etc) in order to understanding and apply "higher level" skills. "It's like learning the times table in Math. You have to know this before you begin to do complex equations." Group discussions, critical thinking, exploring values and ideals are not part of this "instrumental" view of learning. Catherine noted that she rarely has class discussions with her students. "The topic has to be something really special. It has to be a topic that everyone has the skills and information and background to discuss, but that doesn't happen often." On the Conti(1990) Principles of Adult Learning Scale, she expressed a high level of agreement with factors such as "I avoid discussion of controversial subjects that involve value judgments" and "I use methods that foster quiet productive desk-work." What may appear to be "controlling the environment" is an attempt on her part to make the learning environment safe and secure. The criterion for evaluating students, the topics in the curriculum, the tasks, learning objectives and learning outcomes are prescribed. Unless English courses where the development of writing and reading skills is integrated with the development of critical insights, broadening perspectives, and personal development, this technical view of learning is seen as a process of acquiring prescribed facts and reproducing the correct information on a standardized test at the end of each learning module. The intent of the curriculum does not set out to foster critical thinking and personal development. That is not to say that critical awareness and "transformative" types of learning will not occur, but Catherine's focus from an instrumental literacy perspective is on content master and the reproduction of prescribed skills. When I asked Catherine what the term transformative learning meant to her, she connected it with "a change of any kind".

Catherine explained that the adult learners in her program gain confidence and self-esteem. This personal learning develops through the individual relationship that she has with each student. In communicating with students, she notices changes in their attitude and self-confidence:

> When adults return , so much of what we do with them has nothing at all to do with academics. They don't know how to study, they don't know how to manage their time, and they don't have any confidence. They expect to fail and not to pass. As teachers, we really have to deal with self-esteem issues. That is never done as 'an exercise in confidence building'; instead, it is part of what I do

everyday in speaking with the students individually. I am more like a counsellor than a teacher some days. So many of our students have had negative experiences in school and that is why they dropped out. When they get a Grade 12 certificate, it's a badge that says: 'I'm not stupid.' It represents to some the first time that they were successful.

Catherine also emphasized that the individualized program also enable the adult learner to have the time "to sort out their own lives" while they are learning basic skills.

<u>Orientation to Curriculum</u>

The Grade 10 program that Catherine is teaching reflects the behavioral philosophy and is based on the assumption that learning is sequential and hierarchical; basic facts from the foundation for learning about more complex tasks. For instance, being able to understand what a noun and verb are would be necessary in order to understand what a sentence . There is not a literature component and the ten learning modules emphasize correct grammatical usage. The grammar is not contextualized; rather it is presented in its component parts. The units include topics such as : Sentence Structure A and B; Punctuation and Capitalization; Subject and Verb Agreement; Conjunctions; Sentence Combining; and Paragraph Writing. The paragraph writing section required the students to order and combine related sentences based on a sports hero or a historic event. Examples, exercises, and unit tests are included for each unit. Students can work at their own pace, but as Catherine mentioned, if they want to obtain a Grade 10 "Communications" credit, they have to complete all ten units by a specified date each term

Most students who complete the courses, go on to take the Grade 11 A(science and technology based) or 11B (Business Administration and Creative Communications), depending on their career interests. The curriculum focus reflects behavioral concepts and methods: competency-based, mastery learning, behavioral objectives, feedback, reinforcement, and programmed instruction. The competencies identified in the learning objectives of each unit are presented in task-based terms such as "Students will be able to write a paragraph using transition words."Catherine's role is to clarify, guide, provide feedback, and monitor the students' progress as they work through the booklets. The programmed instructional approach is consistent with Catherine's beliefs about learning and beginning with a foundational base and building from there. "I teach English with a

mathematical approach. I like to have structure and I like to have rules and I like to see a progression of ideas. The students do not do a lot of generating of their own ideas but they learn important basics."

Dilemmas

Catherine described her concern with the direction the college is taking to be more entrepeurneurial. She said that even the name of the department (Academic Developmental Services) has more of a business rather than educational connotation to it. The board of governors wanted to "update the name" to emphasize the technical job focused side of the college. She explained:

I think that our students are less likely to approach an office or program called Academic Development Services. The students are frightened of 'academics.' I also didn't like the title that we had a few years ago : Adult Basic Education. Why basic? Why not just call the program Adult Education? Titles of programs have meaning and they affect the students' perceptions. They are adults and they want an education. It's quite straight forward to me.

Catherine sees the trend toward business and professional training that the college is emphasizing as "a tragedy" for those adult learners who just want to learn foundational reading math skills. " We used to offer hairdressing and food services, and students with low level reading and writing skills could enter programs like these, but now these programs are gone." The current programs, she notes, are very competitive and the message conveyed to the low level learner is : "There is no place for you here." She added: " What are people who can't get beyond Grade 10 or 11 academically supposed to do? We can help the student now improve their education and help them learn a trade, or we can pave a different road that will return the student to welfare and poverty."

Summary

While many of Catherine's insights on adult learners reflect the humanistic focus on nurturing the learner's self-concept and making the learning climate supportive, her approach to teaching is rooted in the behavioral adult education philosophy. She believes that her own encouragement and ability to connect with the students on an individual basis is the starting point of learning. Her orientation to curriculum is rooted in the belief that learning "the basics" through programmed instructional model helps adult learners

who have been out of school to gradually ease into the community college system without feeling intimidated or insecure, as they might in a larger group context.

Profile #10 Laura

"I think a lot about the philosophy of what I am doing, and I try to learn from my mistakes. You may get along better with some students because of their personalities, but I really believe that you have to give all learners the benefit of the doubt and get to know them. I believe that every person is important and I try to live by that value."

Background

Laura has been teaching English as a Second Language for nineteen years. She taught English for three years in Japan and for four years at a private college in the United States. She grew up in Manitoba and completed her Bachelor of Education degree and her Master's degree in Adult Education and Curriculum Development in ESL at The University of Manitoba. Laura currently teaches English for Academic Purposes and advanced ESL to students intending to go on to college and university. Her students come from places such as Eastern Europe, China, Korea, Japan, Central and South America, Iran, Iraq, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. Laura recently completed research project involving the federally funded Benchmarks document to assess its implications on the trades and technology programs at Red River College. I met with Laura three times during February-May 1998.

General Overview of Laura's Educational Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults

Laura's highest scores based on the Zinn (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory were in the progressive and behavioral philosophies. Based on Pratt's (1998) model, Laura's perspectives seems to integrate the developmental and transmission perspectives:

> So much of what I do is a type of transmission of culture and I am also involved in helping the students develop social awareness, practical knowledge, and problem solving skills. I think that I do need the structure but I also give the students a lot of control, but once they tell me what they want and need, then I think I have a fairly structured way of presenting it. I do make decisions about the curriculum content and how the material should best be presented. I really take an eclectic

approach. I don't think that it is healthy to look at one theory or theorists as the expert who has all the answers and explanations. I try to draw from many sources----my own experience, the theories that I find interesting, and some of the current research in Learning Styles and Multiple Intelligence Theory. I draw the best from each one.

Laura said that while there are a number of good ideas in the radical philosophy (e.g. students writing their own texts and learning from each other), she was very critical of the emphasis on changing society. She thought that the radical philosophy was "very controlling" and that there could be "a big hidden agenda" in terms of "changing" students. She emphasized that when you are an educator of language, the ultimate focus should not be to change society. " I think that the ultimate focus should be to teach language. You can raise awareness of personal and social issues through language and this is something I do, but this is not my primary goal. I think of myself as a language student in Japan. I would have resented a "radical" educator who was there to direct me in changing society. [The radical] is the philosophy that I most disagree with."

Laura also felt that her score on the Kolb (1985) Learning Style Inventory was consistent with her approach to learning and teaching. The assimilator learning style reflects her interest in theory and analysis. As an ESL researcher and curriculum specialist, she must apply theories that will have practical relevance for teachers. "I think that I'm very organized and prepared. I always try to have an overall plan. When I present something in class, I'm able to break it down into sub-goals. I'm good at deconstructing information. I think that this is an important skill for a teacher to have. Adult learners have the ability to classify and if they can put something into an organizational scheme, they can remember it better rather than if the teacher presents the information randomly."

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Laura could identify most with the roles of reflective practitioner, planner, co-learner, and transformative educator. Like a number of other teachers in this study, Laura believes that at the heart of good teaching is good planning. "I just can't go in without a plan, even if I don't follow it exactly. I have to write down what we're going to be doing.

I know that I'm a very organized person. However, sometimes I don't know whether this is a strength or a weakness."

Transformative Educator

While she hadn't heard of the term transformative educator, she connected it with the teacher's involvement in changing a student's life in some way. "I suppose I am a transformative educator in the sense that I'm trying to broaden my students' awareness of other cultures in the hopes that some of the barriers of ethnocentrism may be reduced. However, I do also enjoy teaching grammar which I suppose wouldn't be considered transformative."

One of the texts that Laura uses called Beyond Words integrates the acquisition of technical language skills while simultaneously fostering personal and social awareness. In this context, she feels that her approach to teaching is transformative. One of the exercises that she said the students really like is where they have to make a statement about another group and then they have to decide on whether it is a stereotype or generalization. Laura emphasized that the students learn that it is very easy to see other people's weaknesses or idiosyncracies but it is more difficult to see their own. "I really think that it is important for students to be aware of ethnocentrism and the deeper cultural issues. I think that students have to think on a deeper level of different rules and these rules are related to cultural differences in philosophy and thought. I also think that it is important to show students that the organization of writing is somewhat cultural." She explained that while the South American writing style is very poetic and flowing, the writing is not as structured and orderly North American writing which emphasizes the declaration of the thesis first and then organizing all of the sub points to relate to the thesis. "I try to stress to my students that I don't want to make value judgments. I tell them that if I went to their culture and I if I was learning how to write, I'd have to change aspects of my own style that have been influenced by Western approaches. If they want to be successful here, they have to learn 'acceptable style'.

Changes as an Adult Educator

Laura explained how over the years she has developed a greater awareness of the potential conflicts and problems that may stem from cultural differences. She described how she has had to work hard at establishing trust so that Asian students, for example,

who Laura said were reluctant to admit their doubts or true feelings. "Being trusting and honest are qualities that some Asian students will learn. With Arabic students, it's the opposite. I find that some can be very forceful. I have to be really firm sometimes; when it comes to conflict over a mark I have to be very firm. If you try to compromise, the conflict just never ends. So with some students, you have to be more direct, while with others, you have to encourage them to be more expressive and assertive."

Values, Ideals, and Beliefs

For Laura, respect and the values of students are of primary importance. "Every person is important and I try to value the culture that each student is from." Technical expertise as well as specific personality traits such as sensitivity and empathy are essential for the ESL teacher of adults. " The learners' self-concept is vulnerable since learners are trying to cope with multiple demands–learning to integrate into a new society, trying to make friends, coping with a lack of financial resources, leaving a family behind, and an uncertain future." Laura explained that her empathy, understanding, and expertise in teaching ESL began to develop when she learned Japanese and when she taught English in Japan for three years. She first lived in Tokyo, and then moved to a rural area. When teaching ESL students, she will often reflect on her experiences as a language learner:

I think just the experience of being a learner in a foreign setting and trying to survive in that situation was something that I drew on in my own teaching. I had to relate to a very different Medical establishment when my daughter was born there. I didn't know the language and didn't always know what was happening. I also had to try to raise my daughter in a culture that had very different views on child rearing. Boys have more privilege than girls. I recall one incident where my daughter was playing with building blocks, and this Japanese boy kept knocking them over. When I went to intervene, his mother stood between us, and she would not allow me to stop her little boy from knocking my daughter's building blocks over. There is very lax discipline in the early years, but then the cultural systems impose a regimentation. Your life revolves around competition in Japan. There are very few situations where adults can act as free spirits. But my experiences in Japan helped me to understand what some of my students go through when they

have to raise their children and deal with cultural systems that they are not accustomed to.

Laura also emphasized that while she went to Japan voluntarily and that there was a sense of adventure in living there, she realizes that for many of her students who were forced to flee political turmoil, the finality of a move to a new country has different psychological affects. "It's a lot harder to adapt if you know you have no choice about returning."

The culture shock and transition process that Laura described had numerous parallels with Mezirow's (1981) theory of perspective transformation. Learning about a new culture is a process of adaptation and a way of expanding horizons or meaning perspectives.. The "sense of disorientation" and the fear and anxiety that many second language learners experience may be associated with their efforts to adapt to a new social context. As individuals seek new information, and share their experiences with others, their perspectives may begin to shift. Laura's insights also reflect Foster's (1997) assertion that the second language teacher can be a buffer between the learners and the language experience. Foster maintains that ESL instructors must be knowledgeable about the process of transformative learning as it relates to language learning. "The role of the instructor is determined in part by the subject matter and in part by learners' needs and motivations. She must be an expert not only in the subject area (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) but also in the affective components of language learning. She must understand how theses two areas –the cognitive and the affective interact" (Foster, 1997,p.37). Foster maintains that it is at this point that the process breaks down. Foster asserts that many language instructors have difficulties coping with the integration of the affective and cognitive aspects of language learning. While not directly referring to transformative learning theories and the concept of situated cognition, many of the ESL teachers in this study did convey expertise in integrating both cognitive and affective aspects of learning.

Aside from ESL teachers being "expert in linguistics and understanding the organizational structure of language" Laura emphasized that the ESL teacher needs to be aware of cross cultural issues and this would include: cultural differences in learning styles, personality and culture, gender issues and culture, cultural differences in writing

style, and cultural differences in communication style. She showed me the biography books that her students had developed. The biographies included photos of the students and descriptions of each of the interests and goals that the students had. The first biography was Laura's own. She explained that if she would share something about her own life with her students, they might be more willing to disclose something of their own life:

> Awareness of cross cultural issues is so important. The teachers should be aware of how that student perceives the teacher, the learning expectations and the content of the lesson. For instance, the Japanese students that I have taught are so respectful of the 'authority' of the teacher. They would find it hard to address the teacher by her first name. As a teacher you want to feel as though you are on an equal or at least a friendship basis with the students, and I think cultural differences are more pronounced if the students comes from a rigidly hierarchical society. Because my students are very advanced academically, we can talk about these power issues, and I can explain some of the differences in roles and expectations in the learning context. I ask them to use my first name. I feel that the informality is something that they should learn about Canadian culture and the classroom is a place where they can start to learn about that.

Learning and Learners

Laura's definition of learning reflects the progressive philosophical emphasize on practical application. She also emphasizes the important of students being about to understand the organization and grammatical structures of English grammar. She also emphasized that not all adults understand or learn English more effectively by understanding the grammatical structure of a language, so she tries to use a variety of approaches (audio tapes, visuals/films, informal conversations, role play,etc). For Laura, learning involves being able to demonstrate some type of skill. "You have to be able to apply your skill and knowledge. If we look at grammar, I don't think there is any point in learning all the rules if you are not going to apply them somewhere. Memorizing vocabulary isn't going to help you unless you can use what you learn when you are reading or listening."

Laura has a formal needs assessment at the start of the class to identify the skills that her students need to develop. She has a form identifying a list of skills pertaining to reading, writing, listening, and speaking. " I ask my students to number from 1-5 what skills that they would like to work on and which skills they need to develop most. I then analyze all the forms and see which skills the students have most frequently identified. I always tell them that we will cover all the skills, but more emphasis will be placed on the skills that the majority of the class emphasized as important." About eight weeks into the course, Laura will have individual conferences with each student and they also have a form where they can evaluate their own progress. She has individual conferences to see if they would like to change direction in the class. " I also have to balance the input they give me with my own expertise and assessment of the skills that they will need in an academic setting."

Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies

Laura includes a variety of teaching techniques and learning strategies in her classroom. When we looked at the key concepts and methodologies under the different educational philosophies, she said that while she uses more behavioral and liberal approaches such as lecturing and formal testing to evaluate, she will also use group investigation and discussion , moral dilemmas, speeches, role playing, and group decision making to balance more "teacher centered" approaches. "I don't use learning styles formally. I find out about their styles through discussion. I will ask the students questions such as : 'When you learn English, what helps you the most?' How many of you look at a sentence and find the correct answer based on how it sounds to you?'" She encourages her students to develop metacognitive strategies to explore how they learn best.

The course outlines and texts that Laura showed me reflect an integration of transactional and transformational approaches to teaching English. The text The Language We Share (Karpinski and Lecompte) integrates grammatical exercises with literature and non-fiction. The book is divided into ten units that focus on themes such as problems of racism and stereotyping, issues surrounding education, family, and work, attitudes toward gender, tradition, and language, and dilemmas centering around cultural memories and Canadian identity. The editors state that "in preparing the compilation of stories, poems, and essays, we have tried to generate questions, discussions, examples,and

writing suggestions that focus both on the process of constructing meaning from texts and relating insights gained from reading and writing to the reality of life in Canada" (Karpinski and Lecompte, 1995, p. xvi). Laura emphasized that the multi cultural scope of the readings provide a framework for empowering students who themselves come from different backgrounds and who are looking for ways to affirm their cultural identity.

Dilemmas

Laura identified a number of dilemmas in her own teaching as well as some of the barriers that her students experience. The teaching dilemmas that Laura identified include knowing when to encourage students "to move beyond their comfort zone without being pushed." She explained that when she the students are asked to write their autobiography and then share their experiences by having them published in a book form, the students have a choice as to whether or not they want their work to be published. If the students feel uncomfortable disclosing information about themselves, Laura will give them another assignment. She also has difficulty knowing how to deal with negative attitudes toward Canadian society that often grow out of culture shock. "The biggest barriers are within the students themselves. I think that the expectations that some students have of themselves is too high. Sometimes they have a very narrow idea of what learning is. Some students think that if they know the rules, they will be good in English, or the belief that the teacher should lecture all the time and "transmit" knowledge. Other students think that if they are having a group discussion with other ESL learners, they are wasting their time. Students will discredit other ESL students and make up their mind that they cannot learn from each other." In order to challenge her students' views, Laura will often invite a guest speaker from the community to show students what ESL learners who have "made it" went through. Laura and I also discussed a recent study by Peirce (1995) who found that a learner's ability to speak is influenced by relations of power between speakers. Structural inequalities such as sexism, classism, and racism can limit an individual's opportunity to practice English. In her study of immigrant women learning English in Canada, Peirce found that the women sometimes had ambivalent feelings about speaking English. The hesitation seemed to result from their resistance to being stereotyped or labelled as "an immigrant," an identity that she understood to have negative connotations. Laura indicated that while "mainstream Canadian society" often

underestimates ESL learners and will make the assumption (often erroneous) that they "do not understand what you are saying", the "silence" is also apparent in men. "I have observed that the men are more likely to hesitate to speak because they have come from situations where they were powerful or where they had prestige and they don't want to look stupid, whereas the women seem more comfortable speaking about everyday things. I do know that a lot of students say that they are afraid to speak because of the negative reactions of people who will either ignore them or tell them that they can't understand them."

Laura discussed a research project that she directed involving the implications of the Canadian Language Benchmarks Document as it related to programs at the college such as Business Administration, Computer Analyst Programmer, Aerospace Technology, and Restaurant Administration. Through interviewing students and instructors and the entrance and leaving standards of each course, Laura identified the English skills (based on the CLBD) adult learners would need to successfully enter and proceed in the program. The Canadian Language Benchmarks document, published by the Federal government in 1996, presents a set of guidelines that would move toward standardized ESL curriculum goals and assessments and evaluation procedures that could be applied through the provinces. Its goals is to encourage a uniformity in the assessment and evaluation of beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of ESL. The focus in the Benchmarks document is transactional; the primacy of purpose and meaning in communication suggests a focus on language function over language forms. (Canadian Language Benchmarks Document, 1996, p. vi)

The assumptions about the process of learning that the Benchmark curriculum directive highlights is related to the concept of situated cognition (Brown, Collins, and Duguid, 1989; Wilson, 1993). Cognition and problem solving are interrelated with the context; learning is viewed as a process of enculturation. The "authentic" learning tasks outlined in the Benchmarks document reflect this process of enculturation: the tasks are situationally defined, tool dependent, and socially interactive. Laura reflected on her concerns about the Benchmarks document:

> The Benchmarks document is very functional. These are the tasks that you have to do at each level. I find that troubling because of my philosophy that emphasizes

helping students develop a total organization of the language. I believe that if students understand the structure an rules of the language, they will be able to apply this knowledge to the task. The Benchmarks philosophy works in reverse. It is task based, and it tends to by-pass the necessary learning steps of the language. Rather than starting with the task, I think that you have to at least combine the structures of the language with the task. The most successful learners will be the ones who can apply the knowledge more quickly, but to do this they already need to have a foundational knowledge base.

Laura explained that "the whole language approach" represents the direction of the Benchmarks document in that it assumes that the patterns and rules of language will be learned by "osmosis" and while some learners might learn in this way, many need to learn the rules and structures. "I do not assume that students will learn by osmosis. I integrate a variety of approaches in my teaching; what my students learn from the whole language approach is fine, but I cannot rely on this. I also teach a lot of "straightforward" grammatical rules and so on. Even though my students will write their own autobiographies and stories, I teach them rules for organization and structure." Laura emphasized that teachers will have to "make room for deconstruction" if they are integrating the Benchmark directives in their English courses.

Summary

Laura's perspectives on teaching and learning reflect an integration of different philosophical orientations and perspectives. The progressive philosophy of adult education that she could relate most to centers on helping learners develop practical knowledge and problem solving skills. The interests and experiences of her students are integrated into her classes and she very much believes in establish a "democratic climate" where individuals can express their views without feeling threatened. Critical thinking and personal reflection are integrated with the students' further development of language structures. In her classes, Laura's students are also broadening their self-perceptions and their awareness of other cultures. There is definitely a "reciprocal" relationship between Laura and her students. Paul Bergevin's (1967) emphasis on adult education as having the dual goals of personal development and social progress is consistent with Laura' goals. While a skill based education is important, Bergevin states that "equally important is the

knowledge of what to do culturally and spiritually with our lives and talents" (p.27). Laura's goal as an adult educator can best be summed up with a statement Malcolm Knowles (1980) made: "one of the tests of everything the adult educator does...is the extent to which the participants leave a given experience with heightened curiosity and with an increased ability to carry on their own learning" (p. 28).

Chapter Summary

The dominant conceptualizations of teaching that the community colleges teachers held were the developmental, transmission, and nurturing perspectives.(See Table 3) Based on Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory the two predominant adult education philosophies that the teachers held were the behavioral and progressive philosophies. Compared to the English adult education teachers at the Winnipeg School Division # 1, there is more of a focus on practical skills and English for a specific focus to prepare the learners to enter programs in the Applied Arts, Business, Computer Science, and Technical Trades. Interesting, English is taught with a focus more on "narrowing" rather than "broadening" the adult's learners focus. While transactional/business English courses are offered at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, there is more of an emphasis in teaching literature both at the ESL and college preparatory programs as a vehicle for students to explore personal and social issues. The English courses at Red River College are designed more specifically to prepare the students to continue at the college and it has designated the "preferred skills" to be more functional. The next chapter analyzes the perspectives of the teachers' from Vancouver Community College. A comparison of the community college teachers' perspectives is presented at the end of chapter six.

Table 3:

Summary of the Teachers' Perspectives from Red River Community College

Teacher- Craig Teaching Perspective: Developmental Philosophy of Adult Education: Liberal=89 Behavioral=83 Progressive=78 Radical=54 Humanistic=52	Role of the Adult Educator *Facilitator; challenger; motivator The teacher should not impose ideas; rather should be more like a expert guide; teaching and learning is a process of co-creation and construction. Metaphor for the classroom : a "construction site" that has the potential to develop in many creative ways.	Transformative Educator "I see transformation as having a lot to do with the student, and their own readiness, rather than being with the teacher. I am very wary of the role of the teacher as change agent... I do not think that I should be directive in suggesting that they change either their lives or society. I am not a moral arbiter."	Conception of Learning "Learning means the application of skills that you already have to new situations or perhaps more importantly to develop new understandings. Learning is more than an accretion of facts...it's changing the architecture around you."

Teacher- Don Teaching Perspective: Apprenticeship and Developmental *Philosophy of Adult Education:* Behavioral=88 Progressive=84 Humanistic=68 Radical=56 Liberal=54	Role of the Adult Educator *Facilitator- promotes effective conditions for learning; does not direct or instruct *Co-learner: teaching and learning are reciprocal and collaborative processes *Mentor-guide, role model Metaphor for role: news editor ; the class is a newsroom.	Transformative Educator "I never set out to 'change' my students, but it is their experiences and perceptions of me and of other students in the classroom that can influence their outlook." "My work is transformative in the sense that I'm helping students clarify and refine their vaguely expressed ambitions."	Conception of Learning Learning involves acquiring technique and mechanical accuracy in writing. Learning also involves problem solving and decision making. Personal and social awareness may be learning outcomes from the students' experience.

Teacher- Rachel	Role of the Adult Educator	Transformative Educator	Conception of Learning
Teaching Perspective- Nurturing *Philosophy of Adult Education* Behavioral=87 Progressive=83 Humanistic=81 Liberal=77 Radical=75	*Counsellor- Care Giver, Resource Person , Career *Counsellor *Mother Figure- supportive and encouraging *Co-learner- Teaching and learning is a partnership where mutual learning takes place. The term Facilitator incorporates many of the above roles.	Rachel sees her role as a "transformative educator" as being more of an "agent" of change. Respect and compassion are critical qualities in helping students see themselves in more positive ways. "I want to take away labels...I don't want to reinforce the negative way they may feel about themselves."	"Learning is never saying 'I've learned enough.' I emphasize life long learning to my students." Learning is connected to "adapting to new methods, new situations, and acquiring new knowledge." Rachel connected transformative learning is connected to problem solving and keeping up with the changing needs of society and technology.

Teacher- Catherine Teaching Perspectives: Nurturing and Transmission Philosophy of Adult Education Behavioral=89 Humanistic=84 Progressive=81 Liberal=73 Radical=70	Role of the Adult Educator *Counsellor-guide; resource person; friend. *Manager-monitors progress; identifies skill areas that need improvement; planner. *Instructor- Explains, clarifies, and conveys information accurately. -The relationship between the teacher and the learner is like a "safe haven."	Transformative Educator "All change is transformation. You cannot evaluate different changes...I don't analyze my role. I enjoy my role in helping students see that they can accomplish something." "As teachers, we really have to deal with self-esteem issues. That is not done as an exercise in confidence building; instead, it is part of what I do every day in speaking with students."	Conceptions of Learning Learning is a process of acquiring different skills. Learning English is a hierarchical and linear process. The basics must be learned before higher level skills are acquired.

Teacher- Laura Teaching Perspectives: Developmental and Transmission Philosophy of Adult Education: Behavioral=80 Progressive=76 Liberal=74 Radical=62 Humanistic=61	Role of the Adult Educator *Planner-manager and organizer of teaching/learning strategies, resources, and assessment tools. *Transformative Educator-challenges students to consider different perspectives. *Reflective Practitioner-growth as a teacher depends on critical awareness of errors and an openness to new ideas for improvement. *Researcher-curriculum specialist in ESL.	Transformative Educator "When you are an educator of language, the ultimate focus should be to teach language. You can raise awareness of personal and social issues through language, and this is something I do, but this is not my primary goal."	Conceptions of Learning Application and problem solving are linked to learning. "You have to be able to apply your skill and knowledge. If we look at grammar, I don't think there is any point in learning all the rules if you are not going to apply them somewhere."

Chapter Six: Analysis And Results (Vancouver Community College)

This chapter will present the profiles of two of the adult educators from Vancouver Community College. A comparison of the findings between the community college educators and the adult educators from the Winnipeg School Division #1 will also be presented. Tables summarizing the teachers' perspectives are included at the end of this chapter (pp. 245-246). Please refer to pages 280-287 for further details.

Description of Vancouver Community College

Vancouver Community College offers instruction in developmental education, Adult Basic Education, English as a second language, special education, vocational, career, technical, and academic programs. There are 5,858 full time students attending the various programs in at the college and over 16,000 students who attend the continuing education and part time programs (figures reported for 1997-98 Institutional Research, VCC). When I spoke with the dean of Academic Studies, she emphasized that the college has the largest ESL and Literacy education programs in the province. Access and responsiveness to the needs of adults from diverse socio-cultural and socio-econonic are evident in the diversity of ESL and upgrading programs that are offered in various locations throughout the city. The mission statement of the college reflects a humanistic and progressive stance toward education:

> Vancouver Community College provides adults with quality student-centered educational opportunities which promote and support lifelong learning, personal development, employability, and responsible citizenship. The college welcomes all members of out diverse and global community irrespective of ability or previous education, including those encountering barriers to their full participation in society...Vancouver Community College students are given opportunities to develop their personal potential, increase self-esteem, enhance learning and life skills and further their employment opportunities. The college fosters a climate of dignity and mutual respect among all members of the college community (Mission Statement, Vancouver Community College, 1995).

The teachers that I interviewed from Vancouver Community College taught various English courses in the Basic Education Department, College and Career Access program, and in the English As a Second Language (College Preparatory Program).

Adult Literacy Education

The basic literacy program at Vancouver Community College offers reading, writing, and mathematics , social sciences, computer studies, and science courses (beginner to Grade 8) on a full or part time basis. Students have a choice of day, afternoon, and evening classes; in addition, students also have a choice to work in small groups or self-paced individualized programs. Students who complete the literacy program may choose to complete their upgrading (Grades 9-12) and can earn entrance to career, technical, and university programs.

A major feature of the Vancouver Community College literacy education program is that many of its courses and programs are community based; classes are offered at the main King Edward Campus, the First United Church, Mount Pleasant Neighborhood House, the Vancouver Public Library, and the Vancouver East Community Skills Connection Centre. A staff of fifteen literacy instructors are employed and between 300-400 students attend the various courses.

Students enrolled in the basic education classes have a choice of individualized or group instruction. The King Edward Campus classes are often group based and the students come at nine in the morning and leave at two. A number of the outreach classes and those at the library are more individualized and the student timetables are flexible. There are both assessment/placement tests and "exit" tests at the end of each course.

Profile #11 Sandra

"We have to fight to keep the word education in our programs. So many programs are becoming 'training' nowadays. The administration keeps asking for key productivity indicators, and this is particularly frustrating w hen you work in basic literacy...As much as I can say that I'm not training people for jobs, we ask our students what they want, they say that they want to find a good job. While on the one hand I do feel that as educators we have a responsibility to talk about unemployment figures and what they mean, we may have to fact the fact that full employment may not be possible...Many of our students have bought into a myth an education guarantees a job.

Maybe, if enough people question how the economy works, major changes would take place. When my students come to my class, I'm hoping that they will find some control over their lives in some other way besides the economic way. "

<u>Background</u>

Sandra has been teaching in the Adult Basic Education program for ten years; prior to working at VCC, she worked as a researcher and coordinator for various literacy organizations in British Columbia. She has worked in Central and South America on a number of literacy projects where a Freirian approach to literacy education was encouraged. In Nicaragua, she worked with local people in the community on a project involving photo journalism and literacy education.

Sandra grew up in British Columbia and completed her Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Education degrees at the University of British Columbia. She also has her Certificate in Adult and Continuing Education from the University of British Columbia. In addition to teaching basic English courses at the Vancouver Public Library, Sandra is also coordinating the peer-tutor literacy program at Vancouver General Hospital. I met with Sandra four times during January 1997 and April 1998.

<u>General Overview of Sandra's Educational Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults</u>

Based on Zinn's (1994) <u>Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory</u>, Sandra's highest scores were in the progressive and behavioral philosophies. Based on Pratt's (1998) model, Sandra's teaching orientation is more consistent with the nurturing perspective. When we discussed the different philosophies and perspectives in our last interview, Sandra said that she recognized a dilemma between her ideals and the practical realities of working with adult learners:

> You know what I think the tension is? The social reform and transformative perspectives are what I dream about when I think of my role as a literacy educator. These are my ideals. The transformative perspective is where I want to be. The behavioral description represents more of the reality of life in downtown Vancouver and working in a community college and responding to students' needs—practical knowledge. Working with basic education students requires a lot of emphasis on concrete experience. That's what the students are asking for. I

don't want to be just an idealist. Idealists and visionaries are often privileged men and I'm disillusioned with visionaries. There's a practical side of me, and that's OK. I don't mind living in dilemmas. In fact, it's like me living my two lives. I have my city life in Vancouver and my country life on Vancouver island. I have learned to value mystery and confusion.

When I first met Sandra at the newly built Vancouver Public Library, I was impressed by the relaxed and friendly atmosphere of the library area where she teaches the literacy courses. At first, she felt ambivalent about putting a learning centre in "a posh trendy place like the library," but the program is working. "Many people are so impressed by the building; they see the light, the shops, the flowers, and the smell of coffee. We talk to nurses, street workers, and the west end community. I'm amazed at the students who come here. They're curious to learn what's going on in this beautiful building." Part of Sandra's work involves making contacts with street and youth workers and senior centres. She emphasized that the philosophy of the basic education department is to connect with the different communities in Vancouver and find out what their literacy needs are. "It really suited my style to be creating programs that were accessible to people in different communities."

Students enrolled in the basic education classes have a choice of being in an individualized or group context. Many of the literacy classes at the King Edward campus are group based. The students begin at nine in the morning and finish at two in the afternoon. The outreach literacy classes in different parts of the city are more individualized and the student time tabling is more flexible. The students have assessment/placement tests and exit tests when they complete a particular level.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Sandra most identified with the roles of the facilitator, co-learner, and resource person. She compared herself to a wilderness guide "pointing out where the trails are." However, Sandra emphasized that she takes her direction from the learners. "The starting place is the learner's experience, but they are also coming here for something new, and I point out direction to find out new routes. I point out to my students that they don't have to memorize in order to learn and that they don't have to worry about failing."

Sandra noted that literacy learners often have difficulty setting goals and articulating the strategies to met these goals. She said that often, institutional programs reinforce a "middle class" goal setting approach. She further explained that when students walk into a learning center or literacy classroom, the standard question is "What are your goals or what do you want to do?" They might respond by saying: "I want to be a lawyer or a doctor." Sandra further reflected on these responses:

> These responses are often related to the lack of control in their own lives. Literacy learners often respond with answers that are 'typically middle class' or with responses that they think will be acceptable by others. You might believe that it's crucial to give people an opportunity to express their voices and name their experiences. So you give them a piece of paper and ask them to write about their experiences. Aren't we asking an enormous task of people to ask them to write about their experiences when they've never done that before? The students that I work with are not used to taking control and using writing or print to express how they truly feel to define themselves. My role is to help them feel comfortable enough to begin to clarify and define their interests and learning needs. Adult literacy learners often have difficulty trusting their own knowledge.

Sandra's recent work in coordinating the peer-tutor partnerships at the hospital reflect her role as a facilitator and guide. She explained that the learners in the project are at a critical junction in their own lives. These individuals are often immigrants who have been in Canada for 25 years and who are doing kitchen and laundry work at the hospital. As a result of cutbacks and institutional changes (e.g. laundry will be sent to their laundry agency and the food will be cooked are prepackaged in another location), their jobs have been declared redundant and obsolete. The workers are given two years of basic education and training before any layoffs. This time period will give individuals time to upgrade their skills so that they can enter another career path. There is no formal curriculum and she takes her direction from the learner's skill needs. She first interviewed all the students and the prospective tutors to find out their expectations and their goals. From that information, she develops more of a plan and structure regarding learning resources and materials. " I also coordinate a three day training sessions for the tutors. I select the tutors based on their interests and availability of their shifts and the shifts of the

literacy learners. I try to mix people up so that they meet people from different departments. The beauty of this program is that it can become self-directed." Once the initial plan is started by Sandra, the tutors and learners can take over from there and make their own changes.

Transformative Educator

Like a number of the adult educators in this study, Sandra felt hesitant to relate her role to a "transformative" educator. One of the points that Mezirow (1981) emphasizes in his theory is that the educator should have sufficient psychological knowledge to help learners deal with emotional barriers. Sandra explained that it was important to separate the role of the counsellor/ therapist and the teacher. While empathy and awareness of problems is critical, she cannot take the place of a therapist. "I'm not trained as a therapist, and if a student is having serious problems, I try to refer them to one of our counsellors." We discussed the dilemma that many literacy teachers find themselves in with respect to their students and the problems that their students are experiencing. How much should a teacher intervene? A counselling article that Sandra brought to one of our interviews centered around the question: To what extent is it the responsibility of literacy workers, funders, and others in the field to recognize that all literacy learning must be carried out in recognition of the needs of survivors of trauma and abuse? Sandra emphasized that while students will disclose personal experiences, she does not feel that it is her responsibility to begin to integrate literacy learning with psychological healing. "I am more of a life emergency type of person. I have resource guides for students who may need a shelter or a doctor. I can give them names and numbers right away." While the traumas that students are experiencing do impact their ability to concentrate and learn, Sandra emphasized that "more time , resources, and education" would be needed if literacy workers are expected to become more like therapists.

Changes as an Adult Educator

Over her twenty year teaching career, Sandra observed that she has become more reflective as an educator. She developed a greater understanding of factors related to poverty and illiteracy. Being critically reflective, noted Sandra, was not part of her family upbringing. "We never talked or reflected about what was going on in the family. I went through life on a pretty superficial plane. I don't know if there was one moment that

changed me, but going to South America and developing friendships with people involved in liberation theory helped me become more reflective. I opened my eyes and learned from the people around me in the community. I began to see how an education could make a difference in a person's life." Sandra mentioned that she had left education for a number of years because she had become disillusioned. "When I had a grade six class in a First Nation's community on the west coast of Vancouver island, I became very disillusioned. I was bringing my British Eurocentric bias into everything and the culture clash was too great." When she began teaching adults and working with literacy organizations she felt more optimistic. Sandra said that she has also learned not to expect changes too quickly. "I learned that changes evolve and take time. The literacy workers that I spoke to last year in Nicaragua expect to struggle for a long time. I don't think that a person can say: 'We've done everything. Now we can stop.' In North America, we have a different time frame. We expect immediate changes and people give up or become frustrated when they can't see these changes. In my opinion, we have to begin to value small victories in literacy education."

Values, Beliefs, and Ideals

Sandra is committed to making a difference in literacy education by acknowledging the reality of the lives of literacy learners and helping set realistic goals. She values respect, hard work, and honesty. Teachers can make a difference, notes Sandra, but lasting changes that result in a better quality in adult learners who are marginalized require transformations in the broader social structure. If she could change one thing, Sandra said that she would change society. She emphasized that there are covert and overt ways that people who are poor and "not mainstream" are discriminated against. She further reflected on this point:

> I'd like to see a value placed on all people who want to participate. I see a lot of
> people in Vancouver who would like to participate but can't. The biggest barriers
> is that there are people who are not allowed to participate. It seems like all the
> work that was once available is not available now because of machines. Parking
> lot attendants' jobs and pumping gas (my first job) are becoming scarce. Your
> self-worth is tied to your job. A real tension for me is that I feel that society thinks
> that my job as an adult educator is trying to help people fit into the system. Am I

teaching them to fit into a society that has contributed to their marginalization? I want to offer students new direction and opportunities, but I have a tension around this issue. I'd rather have a society where everyone is welcomed and needed.

Learners and Learning

Sandra described learning as having the ability to find out what you need to know in order to shape your life." When people find that they have the skills to access information, this success becomes a great motivator. People also return to school for different reasons:

> What makes an adult want to complete their grade 10 at the age of forty? First I thought it was jobs, but I've also seen seniors and disabled people who return and tell me that learning is one of the most wonderful things in life. I have a student who is seventy six years old, and I meet her everyday in the library. She told me that she didn't learn math when she was young, and it's something that she has always wanted to do. Age doesn't seem to matter if the interest is there. In contrast, I meet a lot of young men who feel coerced by their social workers and even their mothers to 'get an education.' They feel the threat: 'You have to go back to school or we'll cut you off welfare.' These individuals often feel angry with the system, and will drop out, go out on the streets, or move to another city or town and sign up for the welfare roll there. You can't force people to go back to school.

Sandra mentioned that many students also have a hard time "seeing the light at the end of the tunnel." Programs like automotive maintenance, the meat cutting program, long term health care, building maintenance, and the bakery program all require Grade 10 as an entry point, and a student who may have a grade 5 or 6 reading level feels that completing a grade 10 program is next to impossible. "Students feel frustrated when they realize that they have a long road ahead of them." Helping students "put things into perspective and set short range goals" is part of Sandra's work.

Perhaps the most difficult barrier to learning noted Sandra "is this complex thing called poverty, whether it's not being able to get day care or a bus pass or not eating properly or living in a house where everyone is partying all night, or living in fear." Sandra described meeting many women who feel too frightened to ride on the bus and go

home at night. " What does democracy mean when you can't leave the house?" She referred to Maslow's hierarchy of needs in explaining that for many students "learning about their potential" was never able to happen because these individuals never felt safe and were abused as children and later, in the case of many of the women that she teaches, by boyfriends and husbands. "We're talking about food, shelter, safety, and feeling a sense of belonging and self-worth. There are a lot of people out there who don't have any needs being met and we're increasingly seeing them out on the streets."

Orientation to Curriculum

When working with literacy learners, Sandra emphasized that the curriculum has to be flexible enough to include the interests of the learners while also being concrete to enable the students to learn basic skills in reading and writing. She emphasized creating learning experiences that build confidence and feelings of being successful using print and written word, emphasizing individual prior knowledge, and sharing knowledge and experience with group work:

> It is important to break down feelings of isolation. Learning should be looked upon as a shared adventure, and I want to encourage a sense of personal control and choice over learning. Right now my students are asking for the basics. They want me to give them spelling quizzes every Monday night. I try to balance a transmission with a more 'transformative' approach. I would hate to think that after class has finished in the evening, all that the students have learned is to spell a word correctly or know what a noun is. We always have a check in and a closure. Issues about their life may come out. Sometimes I ask them how they would rate the way they feel on a scale of one to ten or I ask them what colour they feel. Some students feel more reluctant than others to disclose. We then move into what is going on in the world. I think that it is important for me as a teacher not to carry all the knowledge. I make room for students to tell me about their views on current events.

Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies

Depending on the students and their skill level, Sandra uses different techniques and strategies. She emphasizes the importance of fostering dialogue in her class; this dialogue includes helping students reflect more on social issues. For example, one of her

literacy classes had recently completed a unit on heroes and her students had read about Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks. "We read parts of King's "I Have a Dream" speech and we talked about his dream, and then I asked the students to write about their dream." She showed me her students' writing and the themes reflected the students' interests in the dream of an education as it related to success: "I want to be able to read and to buy a house. My dream is for my children's education for the future one day. My dream is also to improve my English to have a good job, and to continue my class until I finish high school.. That's always been my dream." Sandra noted that when her students tell her that they want financial and personal security, and things like a house, a car, and a good job, "that's their reality and I accept what they tell me." She further noted: " I don't feel that I should be critically challenging their values. I've been privileged. I grew up in the 1960s, and when I wanted a job, I didn't have difficulty finding one. I needed money to travel and I had it. My students' lives are very different."

Sandra also reflected on a successful lesson that she had on the topic "Recognizing and Dealing with Stereotypes." She mentioned that this lesson was in response to a racist stereotype that came up in a class discussion. She used a flip chart that she had prepared ahead of time with a list of about ten common stereotypes such as "boys don't cry," "women aren't good at mechanical things," and "Scottish people are stingy." Together with her students she read these statements while asking: " Have you heard this? What does it mean? What other statements have you heard?" She asked her students to add to the list. "I mentioned that these statements were all stereotypes. I then asked the students to break into groups of three or four to discuss the meaning of stereotype and the dangers of stereotyping." The groups then reported back and many of the students shared their own experiences where they felt like they had been stereotyped. The class then explored the themes and summarized what they had learned. " It was a great learning experience and the students were very involved."

A consideration of the students' interests is paramount in selecting the short reading selections and books. Sandra will bring in current news articles and one of the college newspapers The WestCoast Reader that has articles for adults who are at different literacy levels. Her students read the articles, discuss them, and then write letters to the editor. Sandra will give each student a model for letter writing, and then they can adapt

the model accordingly. Sandra also emphasized that a number of the books have quite a lot of Canadian content, and that some of the books are written and edited by teachers at Vancouver Community College and at Langara Community College. One of the texts entitled Canada: Coast to Coast (Acosta) includes a range of articles such as "Getting to Know Canada," "Toronto's Street Market," "Vikings in Newfoundland," "Dinosaurs Lived in Alberta," and "Street Festival in Canada." Another textbook called Vancouver Stories, edited by one of Sandra's colleagues in her department is based on Vancouver's historical buildings and the history behind each. These books integrate grammar, spelling, and vocabulary with reading comprehension. They can be used in both individualized and group based learning contexts. Sandra emphasized the value of using literature as a escape. She encourages them to follow their reading interests:

> I try to help students broaden their experiences. I can think of a recent experience where a student became fascinated by Tibet when we were reading a story about a woman mountain climber. For one reason or another, this story fascinated her. She had never heard of Tibet before. The student took off with the story, and she called the Tibet support group in Vancouver, and then she went to the library and told all her friends that she was working on a project on Tibet. She found National Geographic magazines and other kinds of materials on Tibet. A whole new world opened up to her.

She also encourages her students to keep a reading journal as a record of their readings and reflections. Sandra emphasized that it is important as an English literacy teacher to use a range of materials and not to select books and stories that "hit too close to home" (e.g. stories that reflect some of the problems that students may be experiencing related to violence or substance abuse). "Often students don't want to talk about their painful experiences when they come back to school. We've had that feedback from students who say: "You know, I come here to kind of get away from my life and find out about other things and read about something interesting and learn new ideas."

Summary

There is a congruence between Sandra's own interests in literacy education and the progressive and humanistic/nurturing perspectives on teaching and learning. Sandra connects learning with the development of practical skills and personal development.

While there are elements of the radical and social reform perspectives that she shares, she addressed a number of limitations in applying radical ideas in the class. She enjoys her work at Vancouver College and finds that the program goals reflect her own interests and beliefs about literacy education. On our last meeting, she brought with her a "Declaration on the Right to Read"which she felt best summed up her belief that all adults have the right to develop fundamental skills in reading and writing in accessible and affordable learning contexts.

Profile #12 Mary

"My belief is that I am always learning about being a good teacher and that I learn as much or more from any encounter with a student as he or she does. I strive to create an atmosphere of kindness and trust, but this is often difficult, given my workload. Of paramount importance is engendering a sense of individual worth and fostering in students a belief that they can achieve. I like to share an educational experience as much as possible, to reduce the teacher-student power dynamic."

Background

Mary has been teaching in British Columbia for twenty years. She has been at Vancouver Community College for fifteen years, and for the last ten years has taught in the College and Career Access program, an individualized self-paced program that leads to Grade 12 completion and university entrance credits. Prior to teaching she taught English, Guidance, and Physical Education at the junior and senior high level.

Mary has a Honour's degree in English literature and a Master's degree in Adult and Higher Education from The University of British Columbia. I met with Mary four times between January 1997- April, 1998.

General Overview of Mary's Educational Philosophy and Perspectives on Teaching Adults

There is an interesting contrast between the humanistic orientation of Mary's views of adult learners and learning and her behavioral orientation in her belief that learners need to develop the basic foundational skills of correct grammar, spelling, and organization. She further explained:

> I believe strongly teaching skills. Maybe I'm old fashioned but I believe that one
> way that people learn is through practice, drill, and trial and error. Maybe this is
> an anathema to most people but I strongly stand by these points. I also don't

believe in mystifying knowledge. To me knowledge and skills are very close. The cognitive and affective side of learning are often viewed as separate. I try to address all aspects of learning and skill development. Students may have gaps in their learning or educational backgrounds. My job is not to judge the student and not to make the student feel inferior. I have to help that student gain confidence through my positive attitude not just toward the content of what I am teaching but in the way I relate to the person individually.

Based on Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, Mary's highest scores were in the behavioral and progressive philosophies. Based on Pratt's (1998) model, Mary's perspectives on teaching and learning were more consistent with the nurturing and transmission orientations.

Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator

Mary feels that a strength that she has as an educator is in working with students on a one-to-one basis. She compared herself to one of her colleague who "is a social activist and who is able to energize students to discuss ways that they can change their environment." She emphasized that her strengths are different, and that the individualized program brings out her "best qualities." Mary emphasized that while many of her beliefs may fall in line with a radical or "reformist" perspective, her personal style of teaching is not like this. She sees effective teaching as establishing a positive interpersonal rapport so that a productive learning climate is created:

> I try to be authentic. I don't try to put on airs. If I am wrong, I'll say so. If something is funny that the student and I can share, I'll always stop for a moment and laugh with the student about some error or funny things. I watch my tone of voice. I'm very self-deprecating. Respect and dignity are critical.

She most identified with the roles of the facilitator, co-learner, researcher, and resource person. Mary emphasized that her work involves far more than teaching English content skills. "I am also a helper and resource person in the sense that I am showing students how to access different resources regarding program requires, legal advice, support services, and so on." She compared teaching in the individualized program as being like "plate spinning." She further explained: " Students cannot come for a week because of day care. If we are really trying to help disadvantaged adults, we can't

simply say: 'These are the hours. Come between 9 and 3 o'clock Monday to Friday.' We are very flexible in our department."

On the one hand she is transmission oriented in her belief that part of her responsibility is "directing the student and directing the learning outcomes because of the prescribed curriculum of our program" but she is also very understanding of students' dilemmas and their need to develop confidence and self-esteem as well as academic skills:

> Part of my job is to convey information. I'm going to drill them on punctuation and capital letters until they get this. I don't see anything wrong with this. The business world demands that they know this material. Students also tell me that they want to learn to write properly. I want students to be able to choose from a range of novels and enjoy what they read and become more informed about the world, but I also want them to have the foundational base to comprehend what they are reading. The teacher as technician to me is a person who sees the course as just content oriented. She might take the stand: 'Here is the information and don't bother me with your problems.' That is not my style at all.

Mary also strongly identified with the role of the researcher. She enjoys researching and writing curriculum for the English courses and has written a number of supplementary texts for different English courses that help students develop their vocabulary as well as maintain their interest. When we went over the Kolb (1985) Learning Style Inventory together, she agreed with the Assimilator learning style quadrant that her scores fell in. She explained that the reflective observation and abstract conceptualization descriptions reflect her work as a curriculum researcher. She enjoys reading, researching, and planning. "However, while I do use a lot of abstract reasoning, I'm flexible enough to apply more concrete learning experiences when I'm teaching. The concrete experience area is more where are students are coming from."

Transformative Educator

From Mary's perspective, a transformative educator is someone who can help students develop self-esteem and self-confidence. She sees that part of her work is doing this:

> Students often think of themselves as losers. We try and reverse that process. Some students have been told all their lives they're losers. We try to send them

away really thinking and feeling: 'I'm a valuable human being and I matter.' However, I'm not trained as a therapist, and it's policy among us not to work as a counsellor. We have to balance our role as a concerned teacher with someone helping students develop the practical skills they need to move on with their lives.

Mary also emphasized that some students feel uncomfortable and even threatened when discussing personal issues. "It's also patronizing and condescending to think that as a teacher I can teach these students about the world in which they live in. I would never presume that a student cannot think deeply . I have a problem with the notion of teaching life skills and 'anger or emotional management'."

Mary emphasized that she wants her students to know that they can learn. "I want them to feel confident enough to learn poetry and novels. I don't want them to think: 'I'm too stupid to learn poetry.' While we could do more to help students challenge their hidden barriers, in our program we try to bend over backwards to help students. If a student feels test anxious, we speak to them and offer test taking strategies or we have a separate offer where the student can write if he or she doesn't want to write with other students."

Changes as an Educator

Mary explained that a major change in her own thinking about education and its potential to either help or hinder individuals from realizing their potential occurred as a result of her experiences both as a teacher and a university student. She noted that often educators and educational theorists operate from the assumption that the educational environment is neutral. Curriculum guides will write that respect and the needs of the individual learner must be taken into account. In reality, students may feel disempowered by a low mark or they may experience disrespect through peer interactions or dealings the student may have with an insensitive teacher. Mary emphasized that it is difficult to assess just how the "power differential" between the teacher and the learner can impact the process of learning:

> Just the very fact that I am the instructor and part of my job is assessing a
> student's skills level , attitude, etc and there is nothing that I can do to change that.
> Evaluation is a fact and I must work under those parameters. I am not under any
> illusions. There are so many 'airy fairy' ideas in educational theory about the 'best

conditions' for learning and the importance of learning styles and the uniqueness of the learner. I'm not throwing the value of these ideas out, but I am saying that we do not pay enough attention to the politics of learning.

She further emphasized that most teachers have had advantages in life that their students haven't had and may never have. " Our students know that. Right away there's a power differential. As a result, I'm constantly trying to be aware of that. There are social-economic differentials that many teachers don't seem to think affects the way they come across to their students."

Mary related this feeling of disempowerment to her experiences when she returned to complete her Master's degree at the University of British Columbia. She describes her time there as being very unpleasant but it was a valuable learning experience in terms of raising her own awareness of how knowledge, authority,and privilege are interconnected and can result in individuals feels silenced and ostracized. "At first I didn't understand that it was political. It took me a long time to see this. It was near the near the end of my three year program when I took a course called Women and Education and we began to discuss the different ways that women are silenced in our society. I then started to connect my own personal experiences in the department and in my own life with the themes in the course. I also started to think more about how my students experience school and how many of them are silenced not because they can't critically think but because they don't dare politically speak up."

Values, Beliefs, and Ideals

Mary describes herself as being "politically on the left" and she has a strong belief in the egalitarian nature of society and education. As indicated in the previous section, she is also aware of the power and politics as it relates to education and is reflective of how this relates to her own relationship with her students. One of the factors that led Mary to quit teaching in the junior and senior high school system after teaching six years, was that she was expected to play the role of the disciplinarian, and this clashed with her values. "I felt like I had to be a police officer. Rules, regulations and bells. I also did not like the sexism that was rampant in the schools. Teaching in the public schools was too much a clash with my values. I couldn't bear it after six years."

Mary believes that there is a tendency especially among some educators and "the academic elite" to devalue adult basic education. Throughout her years as an adult educator, she has learned to value education from a broader perspective, rather than from a "narrow" perspective that reduces education and learning to grade levels, marks, and competencies. She further noted:

> Why is the word basic seen as low level? There is too much stigmatization of
> literacy learners. There is also the assumption that adult basic education students
> don't think critically. I see the development of basic skills and critical thinking as
> two separate areas. In order to survive daily and cope with his or her environment
> a person has to 'think critically.'

Learning and Learners

From Mary's perspective, "learning means hard work, time, and drills. Learning also involves readiness and being open to new experiences." Mary described a "self-directed" learner that she is working with who energizes her own teaching with his enthusiasm " He's come up with totally original views on Ethel Wilson's Swamp Angel. He also want to know the finer points of documentation regarding quotations and so on. I present my point of view and he disagrees and backs up his argument. I have learned so much from him." Mary emphasized that learning also involves students being able to gain confidence and a clearer direction or focus in their lives. Mary's students who responded to the Adult Learning Survey (see Appendix) also indicated the "personal and practical" rewards of returning to complete their education:

> The special part about the experience of returning to school is that it makes me
> feel part of a group and not an 'outcast' like when I dropped out of high school in
> the early 1982. Everyone here is interested in learning and I feel very motivated.
> When teachers ask me how I'm doing and have a friendly individual relationship
> with me, I find it easier to concentrate and I believe this is because when I am
> relaxed I can concentrate better on the task at hand. The teachers are friendly and
> helpful. They are willing to sit with you and help you until you understand what
> you are doing no matter how long it takes.

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I learned to have confidence. I am surprised at the level of memory and concentration that I've attained...The thing that I have found to be the most helpful to me is developing the right attitude. By this, I mean you have to be able to put all other distractions in your life aside in order to focus on learning.

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I always enjoyed reading books, and writing book reports made me feel like I was the writer of the book, except I was writing the book over again in my own words.

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Like Sandra, Mary identified poverty as the "single biggest barrier" to learning. Here Mary connected learning to attaining an education and being able to enter the "middle class" cultural milieu:

> We make the mistake in thinking that our society is democratic and everyone has access to things such as a college or university education or cultural venues. These venues are very much class structured and our students do not inhabit this milieu. So to suggest that we sit down with students and suggest ways that they could manage their money and afford 'simple luxuries' like hard cover books and the theater is highly patronizing. Poverty affects every aspect of our students' lives. They can't pay for classes, they have problems getting aid or they can't afford to live in a decent apartment in a nice area. Our students live on the margins.

In responses similar to students at the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, the students in Mary's class identified finances, family pressures, work, and emotional problems as having the greatest negative influence on their learning. One single parent explained: "I find time management to be constant battle although I am getting better at it. I also worry about writing tests. I have so many obstacles outside the classroom and this blocks my memory and concentration."

Mary emphasized that the diversity of programs and time schedules at the college minimize institutional barriers, and that while teachers and counsellors can help students work through some emotional problems and help them develop coping strategies for anxiety and so on, if there are multiple barriers, students may drop out.

Orientation to Curriculum

The individualized English program in the College and Career Access department includes a balance and integration of literary and transactional forms of writing. Mary gave me numerous curriculum units that had she had used. The booklets that I reviewed included new curriculum focusing on feminist and anti-racist pedagogy. Mary emphasized that the English courses include a variety of texts to incorporate broader social and cultural themes. One of the units that had been recently developed was on women writers such as Joy Kagawa, Adrienne Rich, and Margaret Atwood. The questions are designed to guide the from a more concrete toward a deeper level of critical reading and interpretive analysis. The themes of the booklets included language and gender, language and race, and the novel and the world. Students have a choice of essays, poems, novels, plays, and stories to read and answer short and longer more reflective essays.

In contrast to the grammatical and business communications focus of the English courses in the Developmental Services Department at Red River Community College, the English courses at the Grade 9-12 levels include literature. In this respect, the English curriculum content is more similar to the curriculum used at The Winnipeg Adult Education Centre. The booklets that I reviewed from the College and Career Access department were consistent with Peim's (1993) and Davies (1992) idea of helping students develop a critical awareness of the interplay of gender, race, socio-economic class and language.

While Mary encourages students to explore their interests and read and write about topics that they would find most interesting, she also emphasized her interest in helping students see the world in a broader perspective. " I find that our students only see things in terms of themselves and I'm constantly trying to ask them to expand their view. Discussing ideas is very important. I ask the students why they formed an opinion about a character and a them. Most students will have an opinion but what they don't have is a supporting argument to back up their opinion."

Mary emphasized that while the program has "prescribed units and tests" with these parameters there are opportunities for choice. However, there are also constraints. " Time is also a factor. We can't do everything. These students need foundational skills of paragraph and essay writing and distinguishing between expository and narrative types of

writing. Often they are not interested in "exploring and creating." They want the skills to pass the GED or their Grade 12 provincial credit. On their feedback forms, they will write: 'I don't want to waste my time with reading journals. What skills can you teach me so that I will pass the exam?'"

Mary also gave me samples of her students' writing on various projects: an issues report critiquing an editorials, poetry and novel essays, and film reviews. The samples of writing reflect Mary's emphasis on organization, style, content, and critical refection.

The other assignments, resource materials, and writing samples that Mary showed me reflect her emphasis on foundational skills in reading comprehension and critical thinking. The questions challenge students to think critically and more deeply about issues and ideas. The questions integrate a variety of cognitive and affective learning objectives. The Grade 12 unit on <u>Women and Writing</u> has an initial section titled "Language and Gender". For a first assignment, the students are asked to read Jeanette Armstrong's essay " Give Back:First Nations Perspectives on Cultural Practices." The questions reflects Peim (1993) and Ramsden and Hounsell's (1984) emphasis on critical and deeper level rather than surface level thinking. These questions included ones such as: "In the beginning of the article, Armstrong discusses an assumption about language. What is this assumption? For Armstrong, what role does language place in "cultural process?" Mary emphasized that while the booklets and units are "prescribed" in the sense that the adult learners need to complete a specific number of assignments in a given format by a specified time, there is an opportunity for learners to choose among alternative texts and questions.

Mary's teaching orientation skillfully integrates the transmission, developmental, and nurturing perspectives of teaching. Her awareness of the differences in power dynamics and the "political" dimensions of teaching also reflect aspects of the social reform and radical philosophy of adult education. She recognizes that the educational context and the content being presented is not value free, and that a learner's ability to understand a given text is dependent on numerous factors. Choice, accessibility, and the "demystification" of literature are part of her approach to teaching English. She further reflected on the importance choice and accessibility:

Many of our students do not know common 'cultural facts' like the Canadian provinces and capital cities in North America and around the world. I'm working with a student right now who doesn't know where Alaska is or who it belongs to. Most of the materials in a typical Grade 10 text assume that a general level of knowledge already exists, but in reality, many of our student do not have a common cultural literacy....The same goes with their vocabulary. Another problem that I have is with the assumption that students need to be told what novels are 'good' and representative of cultural sophistication. How much of the appreciation of literature is class based? We need to include texts that appeal to broader social and cultural groups. We need to include more best sellers and different popular genres. Many students do not have the vocabulary to understand many of the 'classics' and I would not like to see them forced to read some expert's notion of a sophisticated book. This is why I encourage a lot of choice in the courses.

Dilemmas

Mary explained that an ongoing "major dilemma" is knowing how much weight to give to interpersonal factors when marking. "To what extent should a student's work be marked 'objectively' and to what extent do such factors as effort, improvement, or frustration play a role? I tend to weigh all these factors and try to 'mark to encourage' but this is sometimes difficult."

Summary

The individualized College and Career Access Program that Mary works in is congruent with her own identified teaching strengths and interests. Like Catherine, she enjoys getting to know adult learners on a more individual basis. She believes that both academic and personal skill development are important and her role is to foster a climate where this growth or change can occur.

Chapter Summary

Similar to the teachers in the Winnipeg School Division #1 and the teachers at Red River Community College, the role that the teachers at Vancouver Community College most identified with was the facilitator. The teachers at VCC also emphasized the importance of understanding learners' prior learning experiences, barriers, and learning

goals. Both Sandra and Mary were spoke of problems associated with "social reformist" role of the adult educator. Similar to the other teachers, both Sandra and Mary also felt reluctant to act as a counsellor to students who are having serious emotional problems. They recognized that adult learners returning to school may experience barriers that could constrain and hinder a learner's progress, but they questioned the degree of their involvement to counsel or critically challenge the students' views in the way that Mezirow (1981) suggests adult educators should function as a "gentle provocateur." Class size, a lack of training in counselling skills, ethical dilemmas, and a belief that this role of the "counsellor/provocateur" is not their principle responsibility were some of the reasons the educator gave for being critical of the teacher as counsellor. There is also a high degree of congruence between Mary and Sandra's own implicit theories and beliefs about adult learning and their approach to selecting curriculum content and in the teaching/learning strategies that they employed. A detailed synthesis that compares the teachers' conceptions with the literature review will be presented in the next chapter.

Table 4:

Summary of the Teachers' Perspectives from Vancouver Community College

Teacher- Sandra Teaching Perspectives- Nurturing	Role and Responsibility	Transformative Educator	Conceptions of Learning
Philosophy of Adult Education Progressive=91 Behavioral=81 Radical=78 Liberal=78 Humanistic=71	*Facilitator, co-learner, and resource person/guide. "I am like a wilderness guide pointing out where the trails are...the starting place is the learner's experience, but they are also coming here for something new, and I point out direction to find out new routes."	A transformative educator is someone that can help the students gain more self-confidence and insight into the barriers they experience. "The social reform and transformative perspectives are what I dream about when I think of my role as a literacy educator. These are my ideals...the behavioral description represents more of the reality of life working in downtown Vancouver...and responding to students' needs –practical knowledge."	Learning is "having the ability to find out what you need to know."

Teacher: Mary Perspectives of Teaching: Nurturing and Transmission	Role and Responsibility of the Adult Educator	Transformative Educator	Conception of Learning
Philosophy of Adult Education Behavioral=102 Liberal=89 Radical=72 Progressive=66 Humanistic=55	*Facilitator, co-learner, researcher, and resource person. "My work involves far more than teaching English content skills. I am also a helper and resource person in the sense that I am showing students how to access different resources regarding program enquiries, legal advice, support services, etc."	A transformative educator is someone who can help students develop self-esteem and self-confidence. "Students often think of themselves as losers. We try and reverse that process. We try to send them away thinking and feeling that they are valuable."	Learning means "hard work, time, and drills. Learning also involves readiness." There is also an affective side to learning where students view themselves in a more positive way. They gain confidence in their ability to make decisions and accomplish goals.

Chapter Seven: Comparison of the Findings with the Literature Review

This chapter summarizes the key findings of the data and compares the results to the information in the literature review. Sections one, two, and three focus on the views that the teachers in this study have regarding the concept of transformative learning and the role of the adult educator in facilitating this process. Section three concentrates on the roles that the educators in this study most frequently identified with. Sections four and five relates the perspectives of teaching and learning that teachers in this study had to their personal philosophy of practice. The views of teaching and learning that the teachers in this study held are also compared to the literature review on adult learning theories and perspectives on teaching English. Sections six and seven analyze the learning and teaching styles of the educators in this study and compare the results with their personal teaching philosophy, curriculum choices, and preferred teaching and learning strategies. The results are summarized in the tables (pp.281-288). Sections nine and ten presents additional findings that emerged from the interviews with the teachers in this study. In addition, excerpts from students' written responses to the Adult Learning Questionnaire (see Appendix) are presented.

Transformative Learning Theory and the Role of the Adult Educator

Mezirow (1990) emphasizes that the transformation of individual perspectives is the "business of all adult educators" (p.357) and that a central role of the educator involves challenging learners to clarify and critically examine their assumptions and assess the validity of their presuppositions and sources, and in doing so, help learners reformulate their perspectives:

> The educator is an empathic provocateur and role model, a collaborative learner who is critically self-reflective and encourages others to consider alternative perspectives', and a guide who sets and enforces the norms governing rational discourse and encourages the solidarity and group support that is necessary when learners become threatened because comfortable established beliefs and values have been challenged. The educators help learners link self-insights with social concerns and thereby realize that their dilemmas are shared...(p.206).

Transformative learning is the process of learning through critical self-reflection, which results in the individual "advancing developmentally" toward more "integrated and

discriminating meaning perspectives" (Mezirow, 1991, p.225). Techniques and learning strategies which would challenge, raise consciousness and transform would include journal writing, role-playing, problem posing, free association, and brainstorming (Cranton, 1992; Mezirow, 1990). Similarly, Freire (1993) states that "problem-posing education bases itself on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality, thereby responding to the vocation of persons as beings who are authentic only when engaged in inquiry and creative transformation" (p.65). Daloz(1986) emphasizes that "significant learning" promotes personal and cognitive development. For Rogers (1961), significant learning "is more than just an accumulation of facts. It is learning which makes a difference—in the individual's behavior, in the course of action....and in [his] attitudes and in [his] personality" (p. 280).

Based on the responses to the Kelly (1955) Repertory Grid Exercise, and to interview questions centering on learning, critical thinking, transformative learning, and the role of the educator, most of the adult educators in this study did not identify themselves as "transformative educators." The role that the teachers in this study most frequently identified with was "facilitator." Many of the educators had never heard of the terms "transformative learning" or "transformative educator." However, while many of the educators had not heard of these terms, they did apply strategies and express views that reflected, in essence, transformative themes. For instance, questioning techniques, discussions, and the use of journals and critically reflective writing topics that addressed current issues such as discrimination, media literacy, relationships, global issues and the environment were incorporated into the English curriculum by a number of the teachers in this study. The teachers were also able to help their students make cross references to other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and history as well as to their students' prior learning experiences . The curriculum content and the teaching/learning strategies that many of the teachers in this study applied reflected transformative approaches to teaching English presented by theorists like Rosenblatt (1968), Greene (1994), Fairbanks (1996), and Peim (1993). The teachers in this study also reflected Shulman's (1987)

assertion a skill in teaching rests "in the capacity of the teacher to transform the content knowledge he or she possesses into forms that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to the variations in ability and the background presented by the students" (p.15).

Moreover, the educators in this study emphasized the importance of teachers being facilitators and co-learners rather than being managers and experts. Their view of their own role is consistent with Freire's (1978) emphasis on the importance of the teacher in the role of the co-learner, particularly to understand and learn about the culture and the values of the learners with whom they are working. Some of the techniques that the teachers used (journals, autobiographies, research based on topics that the learners had chosen,etc.) were consistent with Freire's (1970) emphasis that the thematic topics for writing and discussion should "be laden with the meaning of people's existential experience, not the teacher's experience" (p. 59).

Despite the effort of a teacher to reduce the power imbalance between the teachers and the students, the educators in this study were realistic in their appraisal of the limitations of "power sharing." Educators in this study like Yvonne, Sandra, Mary and Laura expressed criticisms that were consistent with Ellsworth's (1992) assertion that there will always be an imbalance of power when learners are being "evaluated" in some way, and that there will always be only "partial knowings" about the experiences, oppressions, and understandings of other participants in the class. The "mythical norms" of the "critically challenging teacher," "dialogic discourse" and "conscientization" as part of the process of empowerment can, as Ellsworth notes, become flawed if the educator does not acknowledge the power dilemmas. The educators in this study seemed to be very much aware not only of the barriers that their students experience, but also of the difficult dilemmas involving the imbalance of power and their role in trying to help students gain confidence without being manipulative, controlling, or patronizing. Mezirow's (1991) description of the adult educator as an "empathic provocateur" and "guide who sets and enforces the norms governing rational discourse" seems to be more of an ideal. The teachers in this study touched on the contradictions between "enforcing norms that govern rational discourse" and their role as a "co-learner." Even Mezirow(1991) asks the questions: Do we intentionally stimulate transformative learning without the learner fully aware that transformative learning could result? To what extent

do we present our own perspectives? Do we decide on which beliefs and values of the learner should be critically challenged? The educators in this study raised similar questions. Most saw their role more as helping learners make significant "smaller changes" that may or may not lead to the transformative changes that Mezirow describes.

Critical Thinking: A Dimension of Transformative Learning

While not specifically singling out the term "critical thinking", many of the educators in this study did incorporate critical thinking strategies consistent with the perspectives on critical thinking presented by theorists such as Brookfield (1987), McPeck (1981), and Kurfiss (1988). Educators differed in their emphasis on the degree to which critical thinking strategies were integrated in the context of each class. While most of the educators agreed with the importance of creating a supportive atmosphere where questioning of assumptions and reflecting on different positions regarding an issue could occur, the degree to which this occurred was related to the students, the level of course difficulty, and the content of the curriculum. Critical thinking was not seen as a "rational" or logical linear process. The reciprocal dialogue, metacognitive strategies, and active questioning that many of the teachers in this study used were more consistent with Belenky et al (1986) and Clinchy's (1994) conceptualization of "connected knowing" that is aimed at understanding different perspectives from an empathic rather than a detatched or "separate" way of knowing. Another observation was that as the level of the courses became more difficult, the teachers placed a greater emphasis on "critical thinking" in terms of including divergent perspectives in their essays and research reports and backing up ideas with clearly formulated explanations and arguments. Teachers at the basic literacy level or those who taught ESL at the beginning and intermediate levels were more concerned with teachers being able to help the adult learners develop a foundational knowledge base of basic English skills. This is consistent with McPeck's (1988) assertion that a precondition for critical thinking is foundational knowledge and information. ESL teachers in this study like Yvonne and Laura highlighted some of the difficulties of critical thinking and ESL learners. Questioning assumptions and challenging other students' ideas may be viewed in a threatening way by adult learners from cultures that are highly conformist and authoritarian. One ESL learner who responded to a question in the Adult Student Learning (distributed by the teachers) survey wrote: "I don't like it when the

teachers ask us questions or ask us what we want to do. I feel like saying "That is your job. Don't ask us. You are the teacher. Do your job." The concerns about critical thinking that the ESL teachers in this study raised are consistent with the criticisms of critical thinking and ESL learners that researchers like Atkinson (1997) and Fox (1994) have made. These researchers assert that opposing conceptions of relations between the individual and the social system and the contrasting norms of self-expression between non-Western and Western cultural groups can make it difficult for ESL teachers to incorporate critical thinking strategies in the classroom. The teachers in this study emphasized the difficulties that they had in trying to help learners move from "a comfort zone" to consider alternative views and a broader perspective. One of the ESL teachers in the pilot study at Vancouver Community College articulated the potential problems that may arise if a teacher is too "provocative" in questioning:

> Fostering critical thinking is always a part of our programs. The area where we are cautious is discussions in which there are two disparate points of view in students from different cultures, religions, or political backgrounds. Our classes often include students seated side by side from opposite sides of a country at war. Particularly at the beginning or lower levels of ESL literacy, misunderstandings and conflicts can abound, and as teachers we must be careful not to infuse more tension by their questioning. (Kerry)

Working Toward Transformative Learning

Similar to Mezirow's (1981) emphasis on personal transformation as a prerequisite for larger social transformations, many of the educators in this study emphasized the importance of giving individual learners an opportunity to express their views on topics through discussion and writing in a supportive environment that encouraged questioning and that encouraged students to be more "self-directing". In a sense, the educators in this study were creating a climate that was consistent with Cranton's (1992; 1994) notion of "working toward transformative learning." In examining the educators' responses, the word "transformation" was often connected to any type of change in skills, attitudes, and self-perceptions.

Many of the educators in this study emphasized that transformation could have more to do with the student, and their own readiness, rather than being with the teacher.

A number of the teachers in this study emphasized that it is the beliefs of the learner and their own attitude toward learning that most shapes the learning process. Other educators in this study were more critical of roles such as "reformer" and "transformative educator". Reform was often associated with manipulation, indoctrination, and an imposition of the educators' values onto the students. Mary emphasized that "adult educators have no business trying to transform students." She went on to say: "That's a very personal and political matter. It's patronizing to think that I as a teacher can teach these students about the world in which they live. I would never presume that a student cannot think deeply." Don said: "Let's be sure of what it is that we're supposed to be transforming." In her work with adult ESL learners, Yvonne sees aspects of transformative learning dangerous and potentially damaging to students who are already in a process of transformation in terms of adapting to a new environment, etc. An educator who tends to be critically challenging newly arrived (into Canada) adult learners may be perceived as threatening and critical rather than supportive and understanding. Educators like Sandra who are working with adults who have experienced abuse and trauma feel ambivalent about taking on the role of the therapist or counsellor. She also raised questions about Freire's radical perspectives on literacy education:

> Freire's paradigm is based on his experiences. It is more of an extreme. In North America we live in a more fluid society; the social classes are not as stratified as Marxist theory would describe. Many new Canadians, for example, may be defined as "illiterate" yet in their own community, they are viewed as very successful. I know many students who are willing to work, save money, and put their children through university. They have fulfillment in their lives. There is a certain arrogance in Marxist thinking that extols the view that 'we know what a good society is.'

While many of these educators do not conceptualize their primary role as a transformative educator, they do not discount the reality that for many students, their educational experience may be very significant. Indeed, the educators in this study did incorporate many of the techniques and strategies that are consistent with transformative learning theories such as critically reflective discussions, journals, and setting a climate of trust and mutual collaboration where significant learning is more likely to occur. All of the

educators spoke of students who had experienced "deeper level" changes in attitude and self-concept but they questioned the extent of their own involvement with this change. Suzanne noticed a change in her students' perspectives about racism and discrimination after her class completed research and writing on the topic. The student writing samples that I reviewed showed that many of the students were exploring new ideas in a critically reflective way and in addition, relating these ideas to their own situation. The idea that the transformative types of learning described by Mezirow (1981) may be a by-product of many different processes and that transformative changes may lie more in the "readiness" of the learner is consistent with Cranton's (1994) assertion that individuals with different personalities and learning styles experience transformative learning differently.

Conceptualizations of Learning

The conceptualizations of learning that the educators in this study presented could be categorized in eight qualitatively different ways that include:

1. Learning to acquire a specific skill (e.g. writing a paragraph, poem, letter, editorial, essay, research paper,etc).
2. Learning as a process of applying skills in a different context (e.g. writing a speech for a specific audience, writing an article for a magazine,etc).
3. Learning as a process of developing problem solving and decision making skills.
4. Learning as a process of building on prior learning experiences and transforming these skills into new forms of knowledge.
5. Learning as a process of creating new ideas and meanings (discovery).
6. Learning as a process of broadening perspectives of oneself and other (e.g. perspectives sharing, appreciating cultural differences, critically examining assumptions and beliefs).
7. Learning as an exploration of social issues and relating events to one's life.
8. Learning as a change in self-perceptions, attitudes, and goals.

The conceptualizations of learning that the teachers expressed reflect Mezirow's (1991) description of instrumental, communicative, and emancipatory learning. In instrumental learning, knowledge is used to control and manipulate the environment in some way. In communicative learning "the learner actively and purposefully negotiates his or her way through a series of specific encounters using language and gesture and by anticipating the actions of others" (p.79). Social norms provide a frame of reference where individuals seek to reciprocate experiences and understand perspectives. "Reaching an understanding is the inherent purpose of communicative action" (Mezirow, 1991, p.96). Problem solving or learning in the communicative domain involves individuals'

validity testing their assertions by a continuous process of consensus. In transformative learning, a critical examination through critically reflective and rational discourse of our assumptions can result in transformed meaning perspectives. "Reflection involves the critique of assumptions about the content or process of problem solving....The critique of premises or presuppositions pertains to problem posing as distinct from problem solving" (Mezirow, 1991, p.105). Mezirow contends that most significant learning in adulthood falls in the communicative rather than the emancipatory domain.

Based on the responses to the question "What is learning?" many of the teachers in this study described learning processes that went beyond the instrumental view of learning as "an accumulation of facts" and they conceptualize their role as someone who is more than a transmitter of information. Learning was associated with words such as growth, problem posing, exploration, insight, self-knowledge, and transformation. Their definitions of learning are also consistent with the conceptualizations of learning that Marton and Saljo (1984) and Beaty, Dall'Aba, and Marton (1990) identified in their research with university students. Learning can be viewed as:

1. An increase in knowledge
2. Memorizing
3. Acquisition of facts and procedures, which can be accepted in practice
4. Abstraction of meaning
5. An interpretive process aimed at understanding reality
6. Changing as a person

Factors such as past experience, motivation, interest level, absence of anxiety, and an individual's perception of the content and the evaluation processes influence learning. The definitions of learning presented by Craig, Bruce, and Rob exemplify different dimensions of learning that include instrumental, constructivist, and transformative themes (see individuals profiles of the teachers presented in Chapters four, five, and six).

Learning as a process of developing a skill or learning as a change in attitude can both be perceived as significant changes, and as a number of the adult educators in this study emphasized, it is difficult to separate instrumental and communicative or transformative types of learning. For example, "communicative learning" may occur in a group discussion regarding interpreting a film that the class has seen. A mutual understanding of the film may be arrived at through discussion. Mezirow (1991) states

that "the focus of communicative learning is not in establishing cause-effect relationships but increasing insight and attaining common ground through symbolic interaction" (p.80). Even if the educators and other students in the class "critically question" each other's views, a transformation of meaning perspectives may not necessarily occur. Whether or not the change is viewed as transformative may rest more with the perception of the individual learner rather than with the intent of the teacher to be "transformative". It also becomes more difficult to understand how the different domains of learning interrelate and influence each other. Mezirow (1991) states that emancipatory reflective learning influences both instrumental and communicative learning, but how do instrumental and communicative learning influence emancipatory or transformative learning? What did emerge from the interviews with the adult educators who participated in this study is an awareness of learning as a process that is an outcome of a unique dynamic involving the learner's personality, the other students in the class, the characteristics of the teacher, the content of the course, and the learning context. Educators like Bruce who use literature and creative writing as a vehicle for personal exploration and transformation emphasize more of the spiritual and affective dimensions rather than the rational and critical dimensions of learning. The different views of learning presented by the educators emphasize Dirx's (1997) statement that " there is an inherently illusive and mysterious nature of learning" that takes it beyond the descriptions of critical thinking and analytical thought.

Grabove (1997) also identifies the two streams of transformative learning that have emerged over the years. While Mezirow's (1981;1990) conceptualization focuses on the rational, analytical, and cognitive processes , another stream involves the intuitive and creative processes often incorporating aspects of depth psychology and centering on images, myths, and fantasy. "Although these two stances appear to be distinct, we can see common elements: humanism, emancipation, autonomy, critical reflection, equity, self-knowledge, participation, communication, and discourse. We can also see that the two stances are interconnected—the rational process moves into the imagination, and the creative process incorporates analysis" (Grabove, 1997, p. 91).

Barriers to Learning

The readiness of the learner to change and the difficulty that the adult educator may have in challenging deeply held views is an area that many educators do not feel comfortable dealing with, and indeed, the role of the adult educator as a transformative educator has not been addressed sufficiently in the theories of transformative learning.

All of the educators in this study identified barriers to learning that their students experienced. The barriers that the educators mentioned were consistent with Cross' (1981) description of situational, institutional, and dispositional barriers; they were also consistent with the barriers that the adult learners in the teachers' classes identified. The following excerpts are from adult students' responses to the question: What barriers have most interfered with your learning?

I came close to withdrawing from school for several reasons. The stigma of being thirty two and going back to finish high school began to bother me. I thought: 'I had my chance and I blew it.' Lack of proper work and study habits, combined with time demands meant (at first) corresponding grades that did not reflect my real potential. Fear of running out of money and having to go on welfare contributed to the feeling that my life was beginning to resemble a journey through a dark tunnel with no end in sight.....

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My life is too stressful. I have difficulty studying and concentrating. I get home about 3 p.m. and I have to do the cleaning, cooking, and washing before my kids come home from school. By 6 o'clock I get so tired. When I try to take a nap my kids make a lot of noise. I think I need to have a break from everything! The most awful experience was last month when my house was broken into and everything was stolen. I felt like giving up school and I blamed everything on myself but I realized that I shouldn't. It is taking awhile to cope with this awful situation.....

While the educators felt more competent to help their students deal with situational and some institutional barriers, they felt more reluctant to help learners who had more serious problems like depression, drug and alcohol dependency. Mezirow (1981) states that educators should have "sufficient psychological knowledge" to help learners deal with

"psychic distortions".While some of the barriers that the learners experienced might be classified as "psychic distortions" many of the educators felt that: 1) given the context that they were teaching in and their own teaching orientation, it was not their responsibility to act like a "rational emotive therapist" to challenge learners' distortions and 2) that they did not have the counselling skills to do this.

Robertson (1996) states that the field of adult education neither adequately prepares nor supports adult educators to manage the potential difficulties of transformative learning such as transference, countertransferene, ethical dilemmas,. confidentiality, burnout, supervision,etc.   More research is needed to understand the *phenomenology* of facilitation and "the dynamic intersubjective interplay of the lived experience of teachers and learners" (p. 47). It is important to note that not all educators see being a transformative educator as their primary role. Moreover, adult learners, as many of the educators in this study point out, may seek out different experiences in an educational context which may or may not result in transformative learning experiences of the kind that Mezirow and Freire describe. Robertson also emphasizes that learner readiness and the skills of the adult educators are critical factors in the process of transformative learning:

> Transformative learning is a complicated, intensely emotional process that takes considerable skill and knowledge to facilitate effectively and responsibly. Paradigm shifts, whether in individuals or in communities appear to have a clear pattern. A new paradigm emerges only after the old one becomes overtly dysfunctional. Typically, the transformative educator orchestrates experiences that purposefully challenge the functionality of the learner's current perspective. She or he can only help the learner to accomplish a paradigm shift if the learner perceives the existing paradigm to be significantly inadequate in its ability to explain the learner's experience. (p. 45)

The Role of the Adult Educator

The adult educators in this study did not identify themselves as exclusively having one role—they see their roles as being quite fluid and flexible. Interestingly, the role that they identified most with was the role of the facilitator who acts to guide rather than direct the learning process. The role of an effective facilitator also encompasses the role of the

researcher, co-learner, counsellor, provocateur, and resource person. They did not see one role as excluding the other. Depending on the context, the students, the course, and the content to be covered, the educators would lean more toward one role than another. While the umbrella term of "facilitator" could be used to describe the multiple roles that the educators often play, the skills that are needed to effectively play each role may be quite different and sometimes contradictory in terms of power relations, evaluation, teaching style and strategies and other dimensions of teaching. The art or skill of teaching seems to lie in the ability of the teachers to recognize their teaching strengths while also being able to be flexible enough to move into different roles and adapt accordingly. Viewed as a complex process of decision making, teachers must consider institutional parameters, the characteristics of the students, the nature of the subject area, the methods, and the resources.

This study supports Pratt's (1998) assertion that there is "not one best way to teach adults" and that rather than posing the question "what is the ideal adult educator?", the question should be "what is the ideal adult educator for a particular context (e.g. course, students, and setting) and for intended outcomes and goals?" The selection of teaching methods (e.g. instructor centered, interactive, individualized, and experiential) in addition to materials for instruction are also influenced by the teacher's expertise and preference for one method over another. For example, one of the teachers in the individualized programs said that her best experiences have come from solitary exploration (e.g. reading and independent research and experimenting). Mary goes on to say: "I have seldom had a pleasurable group learning situation. Similarly, I am not as good at facilitating groups as I am with students on a one- to- one basis." Based on the interviews and other data collected, the seven qualitatively different roles that the educators in this study most identified with include: 1. The teacher as a facilitator who is there to create a climate for change and discovery. As a facilitator, the educators guides rather than directs the learning process.

2. The teacher as a counsellor is there to support, give guidance, and nurture the learner's self-esteem.
3. The educator as a planner, manager, and decision maker regarding course objective evaluation procedures, and learning/teaching strategies.
4. The educator as a co-learner who is involved in mutual collaboration and construction of new ideas and understandings.

5. The teacher as a <u>researcher and resource person</u> who is there to identify learners' interests, needs, preferred learning styles, and then to organize instructional processes designed to match the learners' needs and interests.

6. The educator as a <u>provocateur</u> who is there to challenge learners' assumptions and conceptualizations of themselves and the larger social world.

7. The teacher as a <u>content expert</u> who is there to explain, convey, and clarify different concepts, theories, and processes.

The adult educators in this study see their role as primarily fostering a climate where personal empowerment and learning can occur. Yvonne highlights some of the different intentions that she has as an educator:

> It is not my intention to transform lives, but I can touch students in a positive way
>
> that would give the individual an opportunity to see that he or she has choices and
>
> is not alone. I see myself as a manager of the classroom but not of learning.
>
> Learning is not controlled by me. Learning is a process of discovery. I also see
>
> myself as equal to my students. They may be learning about life in Canada, but I
>
> am learning about them. I am learning about their culture and changing myself in
>
> the process.

The Facilitator Role in the Collaborative Teaching-Learning Mode

One of the roles that the teachers in this study most frequently identified with was the facilitator. The role of the facilitator is also consistent with the collaborative teaching-learning mode emphasized by adult education theorists such as Rogers (1961), Kidd (1973), Knowles (1980), and Freire (1978). The humanistic and progressive education philosophies identified by Elias and Merriam (1981) and Pratt's (1998) conceptualization of the nurturing perspective emphasize the role of the educator as facilitator. Conti (1978, 1985) summarizes the characteristics of the collaborative teaching-learning mode:

1. Greater flexibility and variety in procedures and resources are used.
2. The teacher or leader acts as catalyst, a stimulator, and helper, a guide, or coordinator. He or she is not 'the boss'.
3. Each individual is a teacher-learner.
4. Direct participation by all, or as many persons as possible is vital.
5. Sharing ideas, experiences, and information by all persons involved is necessary.
6. The content is based on problems and needs expressed by those who are involved.
7. Subject materials are a means.
8. Some informal education.

9. We become involved because there is a demand or need put upon us by ourselves. Our goals is to satisfy that demand or need, not to get a grade.
10. To an increasing degree, the participants determine the content, the process, procedures, and resources.
11. The participants' evaluation is of great importance (Conti, 1978, pp. 26-27)

Evaluation and Assessment

While the adult educators in this study had views consistent with the collaborative mode with regard to the importance of establishing a positive learning climate and in their emphasis on the educator having empathy and insight into learner needs and barriers, where their views differed from the collaborative mode lay in the structure of the course and the evaluation process of the students. Conti notes that in the collaborative mode "to an increasing degree the participants determine the content, the process, procedures, and resources" (1978, p. 26).

Based on the data collected in this study, it is the educators and not the learners who for the most part determine the content, the process, and methods of evaluation. Dilemmas arose for the educators when they began to consider interpersonal factors such as effort and the sense of discouragement learners would feel if their marks were consistently low. Adult learners whose funding depends on obtaining a certain mark but whose performance and academic skill is considerably lower than a required mark necessary was another dilemma that a number of the educators spoke about. Mary went on to explain: "Focusing on the money is not in the students' best interest, but this problem is always on our minds. When we know that a student has no money and a failure or 50% means dropping out, there is a temptation to pass the student. We are also concerned about how a student perceives a failure and what this does to his or her self-esteem. I try to be both realistic and supportive, but it is difficult sometimes when you have to give a grade."

Depending on the course and the nature of the assignment, the adult learners have more choices. For example, Don, Ron, and Rachel teach courses where the major assignment topics are chosen by the students. Likewise, the majority of educators in this study select resources and learning formats based on the learners' stated interests. Depending on the topic, the role of the educator also shifts from a facilitator or co-learner to more of an "expert" or "instructor" conveying information. The program and course

determinants also influence the degree to which the teacher will become more of a facilitator rather than an instructor or manager.

It is interesting to note that even educators who were identified as "nurturing" or "social reform", based on Pratt's (1998) model, scored high on the behavioral and progressive educational philosophies based on the Zinn (1994) inventory. In fact, the two philosophies that were ranked most frequently as the highest were the behavioral and progressive. Eleven out of twelve teachers ranked the behavioral as either the first (followed by the progressive philosophy) or second order. When I delved more deeply into the rationale for the high score and the specific factors that were ranked high and categorized as behavioral, the educators emphasized the practical realities of working in a public school system or a community college influences the design and mechanics of the course. Moreover, some of the educators believe that direct instruction and "transmission" of information are the best ways to explain a concept or a procedure, and that the students' success on a term or provincial exam is dependent on the degree of their ability to reproduce certain kinds of "prescribed" information. One of the aims would be integrating people to become more efficient and productive citizens and workers. This "functional" view of literacy and adult education represents a contrast to the aims of education expressed by theorists like Freire (1970) and Kozol (1985). The high rankings of the behavioral and progressive philosophies among adult educators are also consistent with research studies conducted by Zinn (1983) and Spurgeon (1994). Zinn (1998, personal correspondence) noted that the two most prevalent philosophies of adult education were the progressive and behavioral philosophy of education. These philosophies reflect the cultural ethos of North American society with its emphasis on self-improvement, work experience, "training", cultural integration, and skill development. Zinn (1994) also noted that the dominant philosophies that an educator holds are more likely to be complimentary rather than contradictory (e.g. progressive and behavioral compliment each other while radical and behavioral contradict each other). However, in analyzing the data and comparing the educators' responses to questions in the interviews to their scores on the Zinn (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory far more contradictions and inconsistencies were evident. For instance, depending on the question, a different belief or perspective was revealed, often contradictory. Teachers like Mary or

Catherine who had very humanistic and nurturing conceptions of the adult learner and the barriers that they experience also held "behavioral" and "transmission" oriented beliefs in their approach to assessment or in the specific teaching methodologies that they employed.

Contradictions in Teachers' Responses to the Questionnaires and Inventories

The contradictions evident in some of the teachers' responses also reflect the contradictions evident in the adult education literature about what constitutes effective teaching (Pratt, 1989, Conti, 1990, Kember and Gow,1993). Pratt (1989) asserts that in adult education, there is an "unusual blend" of humanistic and behavioral psychology. On the one hand there is the emphasis on the facilitator or guide while on the other hand, there is the emphasis on "training" adult educators and the importance of the transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the learner. The focus is on the means (how to teach) with little critical reflection or examination of the ends (what will be learned). While the emphasis on technical mastery and procedural knowledge may be suited to well defined areas like mathematics, carpentry, and work safety procedures, it may not be as effective if critical thinking, creative writing, or even second language learning are being taught. Citing research studies by Conti (1985), Pratt notes that not all ABE and ESL students would, for example, learn best in an instructional environment that stresses self-direction. Conti (1985) found that at the basic literacy and ESL level, a student-centered teaching style seemed to be more effective that the teacher- centered style. Conti explains that at this level "the students are concerned with the long term process of acquiring reading, mathematics, and language skills. This process involves the student's self-concept, and the acceptance by a caring teacher is important" (p.87). In comparison, Conti found that the students who were in the university or college preparatory courses for high school equivalency preferred the teacher centered approach which appeared more goal-oriented and curriculum driven. In the present study, a clear demarcation between being a caring teacher and the teacher's role as a facilitator instructor or "an expert" transmitting information and the level of the course was not evident. The individualized nature of the Grade 10 program at Red River College could be viewed as very "goal oriented" and "curriculum driven" yet the instructor placed a great emphasis on the importance of the adult educator being sensitive and caring. Similarly, many of the ESL teachers emphasized the importance of a structured curriculum with clearly defined objectives and

learning outcomes. Laura emphasized: " I try to create a controlled environment that attracts and holds the learners, moving them systematically toward the objectives. I try to create a clear outline of the content and the concepts to be taught."

Perspectives of Teaching and Learning, Implicit Theories, and Personal Philosophy of Practice

This study found that there are qualitative differences in the way teachers define their own role and the dynamic of teaching and learning. Elbaz' (1981) description of the three terms to identify the structure of practical knowledge-rule of practice, practical principle, and image reflected the way in which the adult educators in this study described their work and their role as an educator. The images of the teacher as artist, guide, care giver, craftsperson, and technician were among the images or metaphors that the educators associated their role with. The teachers also had practical theories and explanations for utilizing different theories and approaches. They were also able to describe in detail "exceptions to the rule" that explained why a particular strategy would not be applicable with a individual student or group of students.

There were also similarities between the conceptions of teaching and learning that the teachers in this study held with Pratt's (1998) five teaching orientations: the *transmission, developmental, nurturing, apprenticeship*, and *social reform*. Pratt (1998) asserts that while instructors often hold more than one conception of teaching (as the present study suggests), the fundamental difference between perspectives or conceptualizations is based on the assumption that some elements and relationships are more important than others. The commitment to a particular perspective is revealed through the way a person teaches, their intentions, and statements or explanations of why the given actions and intentions are justifiable (rationale).

In the present study, the two dominant conceptions included the nurturing and developmental, followed by the nurturing and transmission conceptions. The teachers' implicit theories of teaching and learning were evident in the resources and materials that they used for teaching and in the specific instructional techniques used. There was a high level of consistency between the teachers' beliefs and the curriculum that they organized for their students. For example, a teacher like Suzanne is able to integrate developmental strategies (e.g. encouraging her students to critically examine a novel or essay focusing on

discrimination, and encouraging learners to incorporate new ideas and ways of thinking) in a nurturing environment where the students feel safe enough to disclose their viewpoints. The learning outcomes may also be integrated: academic skills in analyzing and critically interpreting a literary or prose work may co-exist with deeper level or transformative learning processes. Through an integration of all skills–listening, reading, speaking, and writing, a holistic learning cycle is in process.

While not directly referring to a learning theorist or theory, the teachers identified aspects of their role and the process of learning that were consistent with :

1. Roger's (1961) emphasis on the "core conditions" of effective learning in therapy and education.
2. Maslow's (1954,1970) theory of motivation.
3. Skinner's (1968) behavioral view of learning and the emphasis on principles of reinforcement.
4. Constructivist theories of learning in adult education. (Candy, 1991; Nuthall, 1995)
5. Brown and Duguid's (1989) concept of situated cognition.
6. Mezirow's (1981) theory of perspective transformation.

A number of the educators emphasized the importance of being aware of "metacognitive" strategies and techniques to foster metacognitive awareness among individual learners. One of teachers (in the pilot study) from Vancouver Community College explained that:

> We teachers need to connect with our teacher talk, the vehicle with which we convey 'cognitive behaviors' (memorizing, comprehension monitoring, problem-solving, self- control behaviors, etc.). Because these behaviors are such an integral part of our instructional delivery, we generally are no longer aware of them. This lack of awareness may compromise the knowledge of learning strategies we are conveying implicitly to the learners. Compromise here means that the learners may not gain the explicit knowledge necessary for efficient storage, so that the knowledge can become an automatic, routinized part of his/her repertoire of learning strategies. (Warren)

Educators such as Craig, Bruce, Ross, and Suzanne utilized teaching and learning strategies that fostered this metacognitive awareness. The use of journals, concept mapping, and discussions where the learners formulate questions as well as essay and

research assignments that encourage critical reflection are consistent with the suggestions made by Candy (1991) , Hounsell (1984), Marton and Saljo (1984) and Biggs (1987) on ways to foster deeper level learning.

The data also indicated that teachers will often integrate two or more approaches; they did not see one type of learning or knowledge as excluding another. Unlike Fox (1983) who found that teachers had fairly linear perspectives on teaching (e.g the transfer, shaping, and travelling metaphors), most of the educators in this study integrated different approaches and changing roles. One of the metaphors that the teachers in this study most frequently used was the growth or travelling metaphor to emphasize that learning is a process of exploration, and that while the teacher or guide may have expertise, together with the learner new discoveries will be made along the travels. Fox (1983) associated the growth metaphor with more complex theories of teaching. In the growth or exploration metaphor emphasis is placed on the importance of cultivating both the intellectual and emotional development of learners.

Comparison of Teachers' Views on Teaching English with the Literature Review

The teachers in this study also conceptualized the process and central aims of teaching English and related courses like Journalism in ways that reflected one of the above theories and views of learning. The conceptualizations of English included:

1. Learning English to acquire skill and proficiency in grammar, organization, and writing structure of sentences, paragraphs, and essays. This conceptualization emphasizes a behavioral or transmission approach to teaching (McEwan, 1992). Learning is viewed as a hierarchical structure that could translate into easily recognizable competency standards and measures. Practice and drill, standardized testing, and quantifiable outcomes are emphasized in this approach. This approach was most evident in the adult basic education programs at Red River Community College. The behavioral approach is also consistent with the college's emphasis on "training" and outcomes- based education that would result in employment in a specific trade or career.

2. Learning English for a specific purpose, as in preparing students to enter a specific college program such as Business Administration, Computer Technology, or Creative Communications. Here, the content of the English course focused on the development of skills that can be applied in different work contexts (e.g. writing business

letters, writing a news article or a short story review). This approach integrated behavioral learning theory and the concept of situated cognition that stresses the importance of learning a skill in a specific context. James Britton's (1978) transactional model of teaching English is reflected in this perspective. The content and structure of English is rooted in language use and linguistic processes embedded in their social context.

Nuthall's (1995) description of "semiotic apprenticeship" reflect the approach that educators like Don takes in facilitating a course in journalism. A semiotic apprenticeship involves the appropriation and mastering of the ways of thinking and understanding through activities and representations that define each discipline.

3. Learning English as a tool for cultural adaptation and settlement. This conceptualization integrates behaviorist, constructivist, and humanistic concepts of learning and was most evident in the teaching approaches and curriculum content of ESL teachers in both the school division and community college teachers. Theorists such as Vygotsky (1981), Lave (1991), Rogoff (1994) and Brown (1992) view language as a sociocultural tool enabling individuals to enter a specific community or culture where "shared ways of knowing" are emphasized. As a cultural artefact, language is viewed as a set of discoveries that define or characterize concepts, ways of thinking, acting, and valuing in different contexts (Nuthall, 1995). ESL teachers like Yvonne and Laura see their role as a "buffer" between the language and the culture for the students; learning English is also learning about the law, the education system, the work place, and other dimensions of Canadian society.

4. Learning English as a vehicle for personal transformation and personal empowerment.

5. Learning English as a vehicle for understanding social and cultural issues, and potentially social change.

The last two conceptualizations reflect more of the humanistic and transformative perspectives on learning. Rooted in Rosenblatt's (1938;1968) reader response theory, the emphasis is on the personal interpretation of the text and the interrelationship between a literary text and the individual's psychological, social, and cultural worlds.

Interestingly, many of the teachers in this study integrated approaches so that by studying literature, for example, individuals could learn about structure and organization.

Grammar and transactional/business assignments would be integrated into a drama or novel unit. English skills were not compartmentalized; rather, the transactional was woven into the transformative dimensions. Suzanne, Rob, and Ron were among the educators who taught English from this integrated perspective.

The findings of this study also support Larson's (1993) assertion that rather than focusing on a final product, more emphasis is being placed upon the process of writing—discovering more about how writers find ideas, thinking about ways of organizing them, and imagining ways of expressing them. Bruce's poetry writing classes as well as the teaching strategies used by Craig, Laura, and Rob highlight this. Parry's (1996) emphasis on the importance of incorporating "different literacies" that incorporate a range of prose and literary forms from different sources is also evident in the curriculum choices that the educators in this study organized.

Teaching and Learning Strategies and Styles

While the educators in this study utilized a variety of teaching and learning strategies, primarily in the concrete experience and reflective observation mode, it is interesting to examine the connection between the educator's own preferred learning style and the influence this may have in their teaching. In his research studies applying the Kolb's (1985) Learning Style Inventory with students and faculties in university and college settings, Kolb (1984) found that the disciplines of the humanities and the social sciences are based more in concrete experience and reflective observation (divergent learning style mode) while the natural sciences and mathematics utilize more reflective observation and abstract conceptualization (the assimilator learning style mode). Professions like engineering fell into the converger learning style category (abstract conceptualization and active experimentation) while more professions such as administration, banking, and management fell into the concrete experience and active experimentation mode (accomodator).

Seven out of the twelve teachers had learning styles that corresponded to the assimilator learning style, three of the teachers had a divergent learning style preference, and two showed preferences in the converger and accomodator learning style. Interestingly, while one of the professions in the assimilator learning style was teaching, in the diverger learning style category, counselling and social work were among the preferred

professions for people with this learning style. One of the characteristics of individuals that have an assimilator learning style is their ability to understand a wide range of information and put it into concise logical form—a skill that teachers need to be able to do. The seven instructors with this learning style also described themselves as being "logical and analytical" and they enjoyed analyzing theories and creating curriculum. Part of their work as English teachers involves communicating abstract ideas and concepts into a format that can be understood by diverse student groups. The strengths of the assimilator that are consistent with the teachers' work include planning, defining problems, and organizing information. However, the teachers with the assimilator learning style also had strengths in interpersonal communication—a characteristic associated with the divergent learning style.

The characteristics of individuals with divergent learning styles are also consistent with the collaborative teaching style (Conti, 1985; Knowles, 1980, Cranton, 1992) and Pratt's (1998) nurturing teaching orientation. Sensitivity, imaginative ability, open mindedness, and the ability to recognize problems were characteristics that all of the educators in this study expressed. With the exception of those educators working in the individualized programs, the teachers in this study integrated a wide range of teaching and learning strategies and techniques. Educators like Laura, Sandra, and Rachel make a conscious effort to include a range of assignments and instructional activities that would address the different learning styles of their students. This observation also highlights the fact that teachers are in a practical profession; they cannot leave their ideas and theories as "castles in the air" if they want to engage diverse student groups. Through experience, these educators have learned that in order to be effective in teaching, they have had to develop the ability to shift from getting involved (concrete experience), to listening (reflective observation), to creating an idea (abstract conceptualization) to making decisions and acting on them (active experimentation).

Factors Influencing Teaching Orientation

One of the factors influencing the curriculum and to some extent the teaching style of the adult educator relates to the department and institutional directives and mission. In their research study, Kember and Gow (1995) found that the specific guidelines of the department have a "a fairly strong influence over the teaching of individual lecturers"

(p.70). In departments where effective teaching is conceived of as knowledge transmission, didactic teaching methods are more likely to be the "preferred" department teaching orientation. "The extent to which a faculty member's conception of teaching is a reflection of the individual or the department presumably depends upon the balance of individual autonomy and departmental and institutional pressures" (Kember and Gow, 1995, p. 71).

In this study, specific differences in the English programs are evident between, the Winnipeg School Division #1, Vancouver Community College, and Red River Community College. While the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre and Vancouver Community College still integrated a literary component with in their English courses at the basic, ESL, and college preparatory level, no literary component was included in the Academic Developmental Services department at Red River Community College. The exception at Red River was in the Creative Communications department where courses in Canadian Literature and Literary Styles and Structures were offered. In the Academic Developmental Services department at Red River, competency based learning and a mastery of specific English skills that would prepare students for their programs in business and industry are emphasized. A transmission orientation to teaching is emphasized and the value of studying literature for the sake of personal development is not a priority. At the Grade 10 level, the program is presented in a series of competency based program modules that focus on practice and drill and a reproduction of knowledge. The facilitation of critical reflection and transformative learning is not an objective either within the department or the institutional mandate of the college. Business and industry seem to be influencing the content of the English and ESL programs, and to some degree, a "narrowing" rather than a broadening of student learning experiences may be an outcome of technical and trades colleges that emphasize a "market driven" program. English is seen to be the "hand maid" of the technical and trades programs. The teachers in this study emphasized that the trend toward more transactional rather than transformational approaches toward teaching English and ESL will in all likelihood increase.

Congruence Between the Values and Beliefs of the Educator and the Mission of the Institution

The teachers who expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their work had either learned to adapt to the constraints within the institution or department or they felt that the department that they worked in best reflected their own values and beliefs about adult learning. Although educators like Craig and Bruce enjoyed their work and were very successful in their teaching careers, they expressed a conflict between their own values and beliefs and the direction of the institution. Both instructors were critical of the market driven trend of educational institutions and the lack of value placed upon academic and liberal education. In contrast, educators like Catherine expressed a high level of satisfaction with their work context. The programmed instructional style in the Grade 10 course was congruent with Catherine's belief that adult learners need to acquire foundational grammar skills in an individualized setting before they can "advance" to a higher level. She separated personal development from the development of academic or technical knowledge in English. Other teachers that I spoke with in the department seemed to advocate a transactional (business oriented) rather than a literary based English curriculum. Their rationale was that the students would be able to apply skills such as letter and memo writing in a business or technical setting more than the skill of reading and "critically analyzing" a book. Educators like Rachel experienced a conflict between what their ideals as an educator are (e.g. exploring ideas and values, personal transformation, etc.) and the limited parameters of the course content prescribed by the department. While Rachel would like to incorporate literature as a vehicle for exploring personal and social issues, she must cover the grammatical foundations prescribed by the department. The behavioral orientation of the course is in conflict with her humanistic philosophy.

It is interesting to note that while the adult education literature emphasizes the importance of educators critically challenging learners and fostering a climate where transformative "deeper" level learning can occur, the trend in educational institutions is toward more transmission and apprenticeship orientations that emphasize specific competencies and skills ----practical or instrumental knowledge has a higher priority than emancipatory knowledge. Thus, the practical realities of working in a college or school

system that emphasizes accountability and performance will continue to influence the ability of teachers to foster transformative learning if they this is their intention.

Studies by Ramsden (1988), Biggs (1987), and Kember and Gow (1995) also suggest that learners' approaches to studying may be influenced by the preferred orientation to teaching employed by the institution. Kember and Gow (1995) compared the "knowledge transmission" and "learning facilitation" orientation with the way in which students at a technical college approached learning tasks. The departments involved in their study included English, Rehabilitation Services, Diagnostic Science, Accountancy, Design, and Applied Social Sciences. Correlations between student approaches to learning and either the learning facilitation and the knowledge transmission orientation were compared. The learning facilitation orientation is similar to Pratt's (1998) "nurturing" teaching perspective and Conti's (1985) learner-centered teaching style. The five sub scales of the learning facilitation orientation include: problem solving, interactive teaching, facilitative teaching, pastoral interest, and motivator of students. The knowledge transmission orientation includes the sub scales: training for specific jobs, use of media, reporting information, and knowledge of subject. The quality of student learning was analyzed with the Biggs (1987) Study Process Questionnaire (SPQ). The questionnaire examines students' approach to study on two distinct dimensions: a deep and surface level approach to studying. A "deep approach" is utilized by students who have an intrinsic interest in their subject. Personal meaning in learning is emphasized. In contrast, the students who preferred a "surface approach" seemed more extrinsically motivated. These learners focused on the study tasks defined by the lecturers. Memorization of facts highlighted by the lecturers or in books was emphasized. Kember and Gow (1995) found a clear relationship between the knowledge transmission orientation to teaching and surface level approaches to studying while the learning facilitation orientation to teaching was associated with deeper level approaches to studying. Studies like this emphasize that students' approaches to learning are a function of the learners' prior experience, the teachers' orientations, the assessment demands made, and the guidelines established in the department.

While in the adult education literature, topics such as critical thinking, deeper level approaches to studying, intrinsic motivation, and transformative types of learning are

emphasized as being important goals for educators to aim for, in actual practice, many institutions are increasingly leaning toward a transmission orientation to teaching. Partnerships with business, English for a specific purpose, computer literacy, work placement, standardized evaluation and accountability, and mastery learning emphasize a transactional/business focus rather than a transformational focus on teaching English. With this focus, the teacher will continue to be viewed more as a technician and instructor rather than a transformative educator.

Dilemmas

An ongoing dilemma that English and ESL teachers faced is in reconciling their own ideals, values, and beliefs with the vision of the college, the diverse array of students, and the specific curriculum within their departments. While many of the teachers in this study have been able to find a balance between their own values and their work at the institution, educators like Bruce, Rob, and Craig felt that the trend toward teaching English for "technical" purposes is a move away critical reflection and deeper level thinking. Other teachers felt ambivalent about seeing their role as instrumental in fostering personal and social transformation. Gee (1992) notes that English and ESL teachers are gatekeepers in the sense that "short of radical social change, there is no access to power in society without control over the discourse practices in thought, speech, and writing text literacy and its attendant world view" (p.60). He further states that English teachers stand "at the very heart of the most crucial educational, cultural, and political issues of our time" and that while they can see themselves as "language teachers" with no connection to political and social issues, an alternative is that they can accept their role as persons who socialize learners into a world view that "must be looked at critically, comparatively, and with a constant sense of the possibilities for change" (p.60). The reality is that teachers are increasingly expected to follow guidelines and institutional directives that advocate a technical vision that does not acknowledge or promote the role of the educator as "a transformative intellectual" (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1994).

Developing Expertise: Changes as an Educator

Another finding in this study centers around the changes that the adult educators described with respect to their style of teaching. More than half of the educators in this study described moving from the role of the content expert who is there to transmit

information to one as a facilitator and co-learner. This change was activated in part by the confidence that they had gained over the years and their willingness to explore different techniques, through feedback from students, and their own critical observations and reflections on their "successes and failures" in teaching over the years. This finding is consistent with Pratt's (1989) assertion that teacher effectiveness or competence may transform as teachers move through "developmental stages" that include: mastery of skills and procedures, clinical problem solving, and critical reflection (p.78). In the early stages of a teaching career, competence is most often associated with the mastery of teaching, skills, and procedure. Content, propositional and procedural knowledge are aspects of assessing competence at this stage. At the second developmental stage, teachers have gained personal and technical expertise, they are more able to respond to individual differences in students' personality and learning styles and match a diverse array of strategies to the content. The third stage in Pratt's model of teacher development involves a critical reflection on knowledge and values. Citing writers like Shor (1983), Sullivan (1984), and Schon (1986), Pratt maintains that at this stage the teacher expresses "an increased ability and willingness to reflect on elements of the teaching situation as being embedded within the dominant culture of one's society" (Pratt, 1989, p.81). Knowledge involves an integration of reflection and action; in addition, teachers at this third stage critically question the origin of personal, institutional, and societal goals as well as the impact that these goals may have upon both the teacher and learner. Pratt also stresses that these forms of competence are interrelated and to define teaching excellence from only one perspective would be limited.

The teachers in this study also identified specific ways that they developed their own expertise. These included:

1. Continuing their education, either by completing a Master's degree or a certificate program.
2. Independent reading of journals, books, and other literature relevant to their interests in teaching English and ESL.
3. Observations of students in the classroom and through a critical examination of the techniques that worked best with particular students.
4. Attending in-services and conference
5. Discussions with colleagues and sharing ideas.

Dimensions of Teaching Philosophy: Characteristics of Effective Adult Educators and the Aims of Adult Education

The educators in this study also articulated characteristics of an effective adult educator, and many of their ideas are supported by research in the area of teaching effectiveness in adult and higher education (Gage, 1978; Centra and Bonesteel; 1990; Feldman, 1988; Lowman, 1994). The teachers also identified characteristics that would be least effective in working with adult learners. These characteristics include being authoritarian, insensitivity to learner barriers, dismissing the learners' concerns and prior learning experiences, poor organization skills and a lack of repertoire in teaching strategies, not keeping up to date with resources and research, lack of expertise in the content area, and a tendency to undervalue or underestimate the adult learner's potential. The educators' views of teaching support Gage's (1978) assessment of teaching as "a practical art that requires intuition, creativity, improvisation, and expressiveness while being flexible to depart from rules, formulas, and algorithms" (Gage cited in Centra and Bonesteel, 1990, p.15). Based on the interviews and the other data collected, the teachers in this study identified the following dimensions as being important in working with adult learners:

1. The teacher's knowledge of the content area (e.g. literature, linguistics, business communication forms, etc.).
2. The teacher's ability to recognize adult learners' needs and skillfully organize instructional strategies that would meet these needs. The skilled teacher would be able to integrate and apply a variety of instructional strategies rather than relying primarily on one (e.g. lecture, group discussion, etc.) strategy.
3. The personality skills of the teacher (e.g. enthusiasm, sensitivity, empathy, helpfulness, etc.).
4. The teacher's skill in organizing and communicating information with clarity and with enough variation so that a range of learners can comprehend the content.
5. The teacher's ability to accurately assess and evaluate the learners' skill level.
6. The teacher's ability to link the new information with learners' existing knowledge paradigms (e.g. building learning bridges) and the ability of the teacher to link the subject content to other disciplines or contexts.

The teachers also emphasized the importance of integrating the cognitive and affective domains of learning. In addition, they spoke of the importance of continuing to learn as a professional and as an individual. Interestingly, when I asked the teachers questions about learning and motivation, they would often relate their own positive and

negative experiences of learning and of "good" teaching. Mary's reflections on teaching adults highlight this:

> My belief is that I am always learning about being a good teacher and that I learn as much or more from any encounter with a student as he or she does. I strive to create an atmosphere of kindness and trust but this is often difficult, given my workload. Of paramount importance is engendering a sense of individual worth and fostering belief that they can achieve. I like to share an educational experience as much as possible, to reduce the teacher-student power dynamic. When I think over my most positive learning and teaching experiences, they were not coerced and these experiences acknowledged my values and dealt with (kindly) and challenged (gently) my own assumptions about different issues.

Another educator at Red River Community College emphasized that for her the skill in teaching adults involves integrating ideas from different approaches and theories:

> There is the old argument—what is the best method? The best method is in the truth that you gather from your own experience and from what information that you gather from different theories and methods. You then make up your own method. We need to look at our students' lives and what they are made up of and pull the truths from every approach. I wouldn't be happy subscribing exclusively to a Freirian or a holistic approach to teaching English although I know that each has important truths about how adults learn. (Rachel)

The conceptualizations and beliefs about teaching adults are consistent with Lowman's (1994) research on master teachers who are able to integrate clarity of communication, mastery and accuracy of the content with interpersonal skills such as sensitivity, encouragement, and warmth. Lowman states that while a "competent" teacher may excel in one area, a master teacher " is one whose content presentation is extremely clear and exciting and whose interpersonal relationships with students are marked by warmth, openness, predictability and student centeredness" (p.10).

Students' Perspectives on the Qualities of an Effective Adult Educator

Interestingly, the qualities that the teachers identified as being important as an effective adult educator were consistent with the students' responses to the question in the Adult Student Learning Survey: What characteristics of teachers have you found were

most helpful to your learning? The students who responded to this question identified qualities such as clarity of explanation, treating students like adults and not children, interest in the students and enthusiasm, a sense of humour, compassion, and being knowledgeable in the subject area. The following student responses detail these characteristics:

> The teachers here are very helpful, open, friendly and encouraging. They are understanding and often willing to be flexible on deadlines if a big problem arises. They seem to want to learn as much as we do. To work in a classroom as an adult is really not that easy and the teachers' attitudes are that of general acceptance.

<div align="center">*****</div>

> I like being in a classroom setting with teachers who really want to hear their students' opinions. We have had several discussions where students have revealed their feelings about issues like capital punishment and abortion. I always felt comfortable expressing my views without having to worry if the teacher would mark me down.

<div align="center">*****</div>

> Teachers who involve everyone in their class in a learning experience is a characteristic I admire because people are not only learning a lesson but they're learning about other people. Also teachers who listen to a student's opinion instead of just telling them the way it helps build the students' knowledge instead of telling it to them. Social, English, and Business teachers have more understanding skills than the Science teachers. They guide you when you get stuck on certain assignments.

<div align="center">*****</div>

> Mr. A. is a wonderful teacher because he is very clear in his explanations of things and asks questions that make you think for an answer. He's always in a good mood, funny, etc. He's very organized and that makes it easier when you have all these other responsibilities like children and work. Regarding characteristics that have been least helpful: When some teachers shift topics three or four times during

9. Each teacher also had a belief about what factors are essential for being an "effective" adult educator; as well, the teachers expressed clear statements of the aims of adult education--to empower adult learners to recognize their potential and achieve their goal; to further their quest to find meaning in life and in work, and to gain skills that would enable individuals to find employment.

The personal practical knowledge revealed in the profiles of each educator is consistent with Elbaz' (1981) conceptualizations of the four dimensions of personal knowledge—knowledge of self, knowledge of the subject matter, knowledge of instruction, and knowledge of context, including knowledge of the learners (see Tables 5-7, pp. 280-287). These dimensions are dynamic and are shaped by experience–particularly the teaching experiences that the educators have had in the classroom. Polanyi and Prosch's (1975) observation that professional expertise and excellence is rooted in practical experience and "a massive body of personal knowledge" applies to the observations in the present study.

class I can't focus long enough to learn something. Poor communication skills and asking questions that can only be answered in a yes or no fashion really bother me.

The teachers in this study were also open about expressing some of the dilemmas that they were experiencing. Teaching was not "a neat picture" but rather a complex process of decision making in a context where conflicts between the teachers' ideals and values and the realities of the institutions that they were working in surfaced.. For example, Rob sees the classroom as having the potential to be an agent of social change, but if this is to occur, he believes that a de-emphasis must be placed on competition, evaluation, and the market driven context that many educational institutions are leaning toward.

Summary

Based on the data collected in this study, the following observations have been made:

1. Although English teachers incorporated elements of the collaborative and transformative approach to teaching described by theorists such as Freire (1978), Mezirow (1981), and Daloz (1986), most of the adult educators in this study did not identify themselves as being "transformative educators". They view the deeper level changes as by-products or outcomes of the learning process that could be influenced by such factors as: the readiness of the student, the other learners in the classroom (including the teacher), the specific content of the course and the connections the student made. An interesting observation is that many of the educators did not distinguish between transformative learning and other types of learning (e.g. instrumental and communicative). They viewed all learning as a type of transformation. Educators that held more transmission oriented approaches maintain that learning specific skills such as correct grammatical usage and reading strategies are a type of empowerment. With those basic skills, learners have the potential to gain entry into programs and future employment.

2. The different conceptions and beliefs that teachers held about teaching and learning were related to the specific teaching and learning strategies that they employed in the classroom. At the higher levels (grade 12 and college level) more of an emphasis was placed on critical thinking skills and deeper level approaches to reading that required learners to reflect and analyze the content. At the basic and Grade 10 levels and in the

basic ESL course levels, the teachers emphasized more of a transmission orientation, believing that a foundation in basic skills is needed before "higher level" skills can be developed. The teachers in this study were most critical of the role of the reformer; they objected to the potential for manipulation and abuse of power.

3. Institutions influence the curriculum and to some extent the teaching orientation of the individual teachers. In the community college setting where an emphasis is placed on learning outcomes and competency based performance standards, an emphasis is placed on a transmission orientation.

4. Teachers integrated different approaches, depending on the topic to be covered, the level of the students, and their preferred teaching approaches.

5. The particular teaching philosophy of the teacher is influenced by factors such as personality, family background, educational experiences, the cultural and institutional context that they work in, and their teaching experiences. Many of the teachers expressed the opinion that they had changed over the years from a transmission orientation to a facilitation orientation.

6. The teachers were conscious of the barriers that influence their students' learning. The themes of violence, trauma, and other emotional and financial stresses or barriers were recurrent when the teachers spoke of their students and the problems that they experienced. The frequency and complexity of multiple stressors (e.g. financial, emotional, family, etc) were more evident with students enrolled in the basic literacy programs. The drop out rate of students was also higher among students enrolled in the basic literacy programs compared to those students enrolled in the ESL or college level English courses. Based on the students' responses to the Adult Student Learning Survey, there was a high degree of consistency between the barriers that the students reported as influencing their learning and the barriers that the teachers identified as affecting their students' learning.

7. There were many parallels between the teachers' expressed ideas about teaching and learning and academic theories about learning.

8. Despite the fact that the teachers had expressed concepts and views that were related to numerous theories of learning and instruction, theory is not influencing practice as significantly as the practical experience that the teachers have had.

Table 5:

Summary of Educator Roles (from Cranton, 1992)

Summary of Educator Roles (Cranton, 1992)	Major Characteristics
	*Transmits knowledge and expertise
Expert	*Designs
Planner	*Tells what to do and directs, guides
Instructor	*Responds to needs; encourages and
Facilitator	supports
Resource Person	*Provides materials
Manager	*Keeps records, evaluates, and arranges
Model	*Models behaviors, and values
Mentor	*Advises, guides, and supports
Co-learner	*Learns and mutually plans with learner
Reformer	*Challenges, stimulates, questions, and
	transforms
	*Examines and questions practice.
Reflective Practitioner	Develops
	philosophy and theory
Researcher	*Makes observations; formulates
	hypotheses; develops theory of practice

Table 6

Summary of Teaching and Learning Styles of Adult Educators from the Winnipeg School Division #1

Teacher	Learning Style (Kolb)	Teaching Styles(Conti)	Preferred Strategies
Rob	Diverger -creative and artistic -enjoys meeting and learning about people from diverse cultures	Score=156 Student Centered: -climate building, choices, personal development Teacher Centered: -evaluation and aspects of the Curriculum	*Readings *practical examples *discussion *thought questions, and essays
Ross	Assimilator -strengths in organizing and analyzing ideas	Score=148 Learner Centered: -encourages choice and self-direction -positive climate building Teacher Centered: -course objectives, evaluation standards, and classroom structure.	*readings *practical examples *discussion *thought questions *research papers *field work *presentations
Suzanne	Assimilator: -strengths in organizing and matching student needs to the learning/teaching strategies and texts -enjoys analyzing theories -reflective and analytical	Score=152 Learner Centered: -flexibility for personal development -relating material to students' prior experience -positive climate building Teacher Centered: -Course expectations and selection of curriculum -tests and evaluation criteria	*Readings *practical examples *discussion *thought questions *essays *speeches and presentations

Bruce	Learning Style: Diverger: -creative and intuitive; imaginative ability evident in poems and innovative teaching approaches	Teaching Style: Score=140 Learner Centered: -positive climate building -personal development -relates the content to the learners' experience Teacher Centered: -course objectives -selection of most materials -evaluation	Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies *Creative writing workshops (poems and stories) *readings *practical examples *journals *discussion *thought questions *reflective writing *essays and research (interviewing, etc.
Yvonne	Diverger: -people oriented -sensitive and intuitive -imaginative and perceptive -sees things from "an eagle's eye"- the broader panorama	Score=152 Learner Centered: -positive climate building -personal development -relates content to the learners' experience Teacher Centered: -course objectives -diagnosis of learners' language needs -evaluation process	*Readings *practical Examples *language Labs *games/simulations / role-play *practice and drill *journals *discussions questions *proverbs and analogies

Table 7

Summary of the Community College Teachers' Learning and Teaching Styles (Red River Community College)

Teacher	Learning Style Strategies	Teaching Style	Preferred
Craig	Assimilator: -analytical -strengths are in constructing and analyzing models and theories	Score= 148 Student Centered: -Positive learning climate -mutual collaboration -choice and participation in learning process -linking content to prior knowledge Teacher Centered: -criteria for evaluation -structure and objectives of the course	*Readings *films *practical examples *discussion *thought questions *lecture *research essays *theory and model building *projects *presentations *fieldwork
Don	Assimilator: -analytical -strengths lie in the ability to take complex information and put it into concise form.	Score=156 Student Centered -Positive Learning Climate -mutual collaboration -linking content to prior knowledge -choice and participation in learning process Teacher Centered- -Evaluation -Course objectives and general outline of course	*Interviews *field work *practical examples *discussion *thought questions *brainstorming *projects *research papers *models and theories

Rachel	Learning Style: Assimilator - identified more with the divergent learning style mode.	Teaching Style: Score=156 Student Centered: -positive learning climate -personal development -choice and participation in the learning process -recognition of learning styles -tries to incorporate a "multiple intelligences" approach to teaching Teacher Centered: -evaluation and course expectations and some aspects of curriculum content	Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies *Readings *practice and drill *problem sets *practical examples *field work *journals *brainstorming *discussion *thought questions *presentations and speeches
Carol	Converger -good decision maker and problem solver -practical rather than theoretical or analytical	Score=140 Student Centered: -Positive learning climate -recognition of prior learning experiences -personal development Teacher Centered: -diagnosis of skill level -curriculum content -learning objectives -evaluation	*Individualized instruction *practice and drill *problem sets *practical examples *discussion *questioning

| Laura | Learning Style: Assimilator -logical and analytical -enjoys reflecting on ideas and theories -enjoys writing and developing new ideas in research/curriculum development. | Teaching Style: Score=148 Student Centered: -positive learning climate -mutual collaboration -linking content to prior experience and knowledge -choice and participation in the learning process Teacher Centered: -criteria for evaluation -structure of the course -selection of reading materials and resources | Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies *Readings *films *practical examples *discussion *thought questions *journals *lecture *research *reports/essays and projects *presentations field work |

| Vancouver Community College Teachers

Sally	Learning Style(Kolb): Accomodator	Teaching Style (Conti) Score=148	Preferred Learning Strategies
	-Sally describes herself as a "doer"; she enjoys organizing projects and being involved with people(e.g. literacy project coordinator) -enjoys challenges and risks	Student Centered -positive climate building -emphasis is on a safe learning climate; evaluation is more informal. -marks and grades are avoided; learners concentrate on developing skills related to personal development. -the emphasis is on adapting the curriculum to match the learners' skill needs and interests. Teacher centered -evaluation criteria for placement of students in courses.	*Readings *simulation and games *films *practical examples *journals *brainstorming activities *discussion *thought questions *creative writing *fieldwork and projects

Teacher (Vancouver Community College)	Learning Style: Assimilator	Teaching Style Score=148	Preferred Teaching and Learning Strategies
Mary	-good organizer and planner -skilled in deciphering information -reflective and analytical -good at applying theories and translating the ideas into practical teaching/learning strategies -enjoys creating curriculum units	Student Centered -positive learning climate -personalized instruction -participation and choice in learning process -flexibility for personal development -relates content to students' prior learning Teacher Centered: -criteria for evaluation -course objectives and aspects of curriculum content	*Readings *films *practical examples *discussion *thought questions *research reports and essays *projects

Chapter Eight: Summary of the Findings, Research
Recommendations, Limitations of the Study, and Conclusion
Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore the conceptions of teaching and learning of twelve adult educators who teach in a range of English programs in the public school system and at the community college level. Their perspectives on teaching and learning as well as their "personal philosophy of practice" were compared with the role of the educator and the process of learning, most notably described by Jack Mezirow (1981; 1990; 1996) in his theory of transformational learning. The theoretical model for understanding the different perspectives and philosophies that the teachers held was Pratt and associates (1998) model of five perspectives of teaching in adult and higher education. These perspectives included: the *transmission, nurturing, developmental, social reform,* and *apprenticeship* model of teaching adults. Of these perspectives, the developing, nurturing, and social reform perspectives share many similarities with the process of learning and the role of the adult educator more frequently cited in the theories that focus on transformative learning. In this study, the teachers' perspectives were most consistent with the transmission, developmental, and nurturing teaching orientations. Most teachers held two "dominant" perspectives. In exploring the personal philosophies of the teachers, Elias and Merriam's (1980) description of the *liberal, humanistic, radical, progressive,* and *behavioral philosophy* was used as an additional base to compare the teachers' personal perspectives and philosophy.

This study supports the observation that while teachers' knowledge may be influenced by their understanding of theoretical knowledge found in philosophy, sociology, psychology, and other disciplines, there is also a "personal practical knowledge" which as Clandinin (1995) emphasizes rises from "circumstances, actions, and under goings which themselves had affective context for the person in question" (p.362). This knowledge is revealed "through interpretations of observed practice over time, and is given biographical, personal meaning through reconstruction of the teacher's narrative of experience" (p. 363). Because of the unique experiences of the teacher, this knowledge is individualistic and unique. This study also shows that as teachers gain experience, they develop a "professional artistry." Schon (1987) states that professional artistry "refers to

the kinds of competence practitioners sometimes display in unique, uncertain, and conflicted situations of practice" (p.22). There is an art to improvising and decision making regarding the use of some strategies over others that changes in response to the students' personality characteristics or learning needs or institutional changes. This study supports Pratt's (1989) assertion that teachers' decision- making processes must be evaluated within a specific context and " while the observable acts of teaching may look similar across situations, there may be considerable variation in the underlying rationale that led to the decision to act in a particular way" (p. 80). This study also supports the view that "teaching effectiveness" is multi-dimensional and is influenced by factors such as subject matter, course level, characteristics of students, and institutional goals.

The teaching and learning strategies that the English teachers in this study applied took into account adult learners' language, culture, social class, gender, ability, interests, and personality traits. The ability to be flexible with different adult groups and the changes that some of the teachers experienced can be understood from Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle. As teachers gain concrete experience in the classroom, they reflect on this experience and develop insights and "theories" about effective teaching, reducing barriers that learners experience, and ways of motivating adult learners. These ideas are then put into practice and open to further revision depending on the changes in the context. Virtually all the teachers emphasized that a large part of their expertise resulted from observing their own behavior and their students, and being able to act on these observations. Shulman's (1987) model of pedagogical reasoning and action reflects the "wisdom of practice" that the educators in this study practice. An assumption that Shulman makes is that while learning ultimately remains the responsibility of the students, teachers are a pivotal force in conveying and transforming information in multifaceted ways.

Summary of the Research Findings

The research questions which guided this study and the answers to these questions are as follows:

1. Do adult educators' conceptualizations of the teaching-learning process reflect assumptions about the role of the educator and the process of learning described in transformational learning theories?

General Finding: There were many parallels between the assumptions about the role of the educator and the process of learning described in transformative learning theories and the perspectives of teaching and learning that the teachers in this study held (for a more detailed answer, see pages 248-254). However, the teachers in this study integrated strategies and held views and perspectives that reflected a broader range of different philosophies and views of teaching and learning. The teachers in this study also had different perspectives or conceptualizations of the terms "transformative educator" and "transformative learning."

2. Do adult educators see themselves as transformative educators?

General Finding: While not referring to themselves as "transformative educators," some of the educators in this study held beliefs and views of teaching and learning that were consistent with the role of the transformative educator described in the literature by Mezirow (1981), Daloz (1986), and Freire (1970). However, many of the educators in this study had many concerns and criticisms about the role of the teacher as "change agent" and "reformer." (for a more detailed answer, see pages 258-263).

3. How do the conceptions of teaching and learning that individual teachers hold relate to their personal teaching philosophy?

General Finding: The conceptions of teaching and learning that the individual teachers held reflected the teachers' own personal teaching philosophy or "philosophy of practice." This personal philosophy of practice included the intentions, values, and beliefs that guided the decision-making process of the individual teachers. The "implicit theories" of learning and teaching that the teachers in this study had significant parallels with the theories of learning and teaching cited in the literature review. There were also inconsistencies between the teachers' own personal philosophy and their scores on the Zinn (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory (for a more detailed answer, see pages 264-268).

4. How might individual English teachers' philosophies be reflected in the curriculum choices that they make, and in their preferred teaching and learning strategies?

General Finding: There was consistency between the teachers' philosophy of practice and in the teachers' curriculum choices and in their preferred teaching and learning strategies (for a more detailed answer, see pages 266-270).

Personal Teaching Philosophy

This study found that English teachers' practice is influenced by the values, ideals, and beliefs that they hold. The personal philosophy and perspectives toward teaching and learning that the adult educators in this study held developed over time and was influenced by a number of personal and social factors. The factors most frequently stated by the educators that shaped their personal philosophy included: family and educational experiences, values and beliefs, personality and teaching/learning style, and past teaching experiences. In addition, personal teaching philosophies were influenced by: the specific characteristics (e.g. skill level, prior learning experiences, barriers, learning style personality) of their students, the institution and department that the teachers work in, and the curriculum objectives set out in the program. The teachers' philosophies were also influenced by the opportunities given to experiment with new approaches, professional development activities, and individual learning experiences. In this study, the teachers' expressed satisfaction with their work was also related to the support of their colleagues, and the congruence between the institution/ department values and objectives and their own beliefs and values about education.

Similar to the observations made by Larsson (1983) and Pratt and Associates (1998), there were qualitative differences in the way that the teachers viewed: a) their role; b) the process of learning and the dynamics of "effective teaching"; c) their orientation to the curriculum; and d) the context that they worked in and the dilemmas that they experienced. While there were many similarities among the educators with respect to the way they viewed learning and their role as an educator, the knowledge that they have about teaching is very individualized. The teachers also identified different areas of strength, in terms of interacting with students, content expertise, and applying different teaching and learning strategies .

The Role of the Transformative Educator and the Process of Teaching and Learning

While most of the educators did not refer to themselves as "transformative educators" nor did they share a theoretical knowledge of the basic ideas of transformative learning theory, significant parallels between some of the teachers' intentions, teaching behaviors, views on learning, course content, and the teaching and learning strategies used were consistent with the role of the transformative educator and the process of learning

described by theorists such as Mezirow (1981), Daloz(1986), and Freire (1977). Fostering personal responsibility, critical awareness, choice, collaboration, and self-direction were viewed by many of the teachers as important aspects of adult learning. However, the teachers also held many reservations about the role of the teacher as change agent and the ethical dilemmas that may surface when they are placed in a position to "critically challenge" learners' perspectives or to see their role as being more of a "social reformer." The similarities between their views and those of theorists like Mezirow (1981) were balanced with the "practical realities" of teaching in an inner city high school for adults and at a city community college.

While many of the teachers identified with roles such as facilitator, resource person, supporter, friend, and counsellor, they also saw their role as being a manager, expert, and planner. The educators who had read theorists such as Paulo Freire and Jack Mezirow were critical about the "directive" stance toward critically challenging students. Some teachers believe that adult learners, many of whom are experiencing different traumas and crises in their own lives, could be hurt or alienated if the teacher began to "critically challenge" their values and beliefs. They emphasized that adult learners differ in their background, their learning goals, their ability to be self-directed, and their readiness to be open to critical challenge, and that these factors should be weighed carefully if a teacher is to be more of a "provocateur" rather than a supporter or guide. These teachers emphasized that the starting point is with the specific needs of the learner. Class size is another factor influencing the degree to which the teacher can be more of a "friend" rather than a "technician" or instructor. Other teachers maintain that if a perspective transformation might occur, this would in all likelihood be an outcome of numerous factors, rather than a direct outcome of the teacher being critically challenging.

In analyzing the data from the interviews, it is apparent that most of the educators in this study took a pragmatic approach to their teaching. While they may not have been satisfied with particular institutional and program directives that often involves setting tests and exams to evaluate "learning outcomes", they learned to adapt to the system and "find a middle way" where they could to a greater extent be true to their ideals and yet meet the need of diverse adult learners and the requirements of the program and institution.

Evaluation and Assessment

This study found that it is in the area of evaluation that one of the key discrepancies between Mezirow's (1981) theory of transformative learning and the practical realities of teaching exist. Mezirow (1991) writes that "if a goal of education is to foster transformative learning, dogmatic insistence that learning outcomes be specified in advance of the educational experience in terms of observable changes in behavior...result in a reduction distortion" (pp. 219-220). Merriam and Caffarella (1991) further note:

> The evaluation of learning is an ethical dilemma in the teaching and learning process. Decisions about who and what will be judged, which methods are to be used, and who has access to results are difficult....The educator has the expertise to judge the quality of the learners' work and is also in a position to control the rewards for quality. (Merriam and Caffarella cited in Cranton, 1994, p.149)

While at the basic literacy and ESL level, evaluation is more informal and less "mark based," as the level of the course became more difficult, evaluation procedures became more fixed, and the teachers had to assign grades and administer tests and exams. The teachers in this study were also very much aware of the contradictions, conflicts, and power differentials that surface when the topic of evaluation was addressed. While "technical accuracy" in English can be tested through criterion referenced testing and other "objective" measures, the learning outcomes described by Mezirow (1981) as being indicate of "transformative change" cannot be "measured" or "evaluated." Moreover, changes in beliefs, values, and perspectives do not follow a set time limit of a five month or a one year course. The learning process that Mezirow describes is a complex and difficult one, and the stages that an individual may experience are not linear.

The Educational Context

Educational institutions differ in their purpose and mission, and this difference influences the specific focus and form that a program will take. In this study, specific differences in English programs were noted between Red River College, Vancouver Community College and the Winnipeg School Division #1. While the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre and Vancouver Community College integrated a literary component in their upgrading and college and career preparatory courses, no literary component was

included in similar courses offered at Red River College in Winnipeg. The exception at Red River College was in the Creative Communications department where college level courses in Canadian Literature and Literary Styles and Structures were offered. The trend toward more transactional forms of English was certainly evident in programming at both Vancouver College and the Winnipeg Adult Education Centre, and the teachers expressed concern that the benefits of studying literature for its "transformative" potential may become secondary to the teaching of technical forms of English. A number of the teachers in this study suggested that business and industry seem to be influencing the content and measured learning outcomes of many of the English and ESL programs.

At the ESL level, concern was raised by the teachers that the " settlement-focused" and outcomes- based Canadian Language Benchmarks directives for developing ESL curriculum is too politically directed. The specific skills and learning outcomes identified in the document seem beyond the reach of many new Canadians. Concern was raised by the ESL teachers that the Benchmarks assessment procedures could be used as a screening device that would enable only the most skilled in English to gain entry into programs that would lead to employment and career advancement.

Relationship between Teaching Perspectives, Personal Philosophy of Practice and Teaching and Learning Strategies

There was consistency between the perspectives and personal philosophy of practice that teachers held about teaching and learning and the teaching and learning strategies that they used in the classroom. The integration of the different roles that the teachers identified with is reflected in the curriculum choices and in the teaching and learning strategies that they use. The humanistic or nurturing perspective was most evident in the way the teachers established the classroom climate to be one where the adult learners would feel secure and comfortable. Building trust and establishing a positive rapport with students was a condition for learning that was cited by all of the teachers. The strategies that many of the teachers used encouraged student choice in selecting topics to write on and often, part of the writing task asked the students to relate the topic to their own experiences. The curriculum content included reading, reflecting and writing on current issues in politics, culture, sociology, and psychology. The study of literature that included plays by Shakespeare and novels by authors such as Dostoevsky, Joseph

Conrad, and Jane Austen touched on themes that have relevance to current personal and social issues.

The nurturing and social reform perspective that some of the teachers in this study held was expressed in their emphasis in encouraging students to write poems, essays, and stories as a vehicle for expressing their emotions. Through questioning techniques, individual and group projects, and creative writing, these teachers hoped to raise "critical awareness" about social and personal issues. Some teachers see their role as being more of a counsellor and resource person, and this perspective is revealed more in the exercises and assignments that ask the students to clarify their interests, values, and goals. Learning is more individualized, and the students have a choice in completing a term project that concentrates on a future career that they may be interested in pursuing. Many of the teachers in this study also incorporated a developmental approach to teaching and learning. The developmental perspective is associated with constructivist principles of teaching and learning. These teachers encouraged "metalearning" (the specific application of metacognition to the area of student learning). Biggs (1988) notes that metalearning is fostered when teachers help learners become aware of "their motives and intentions, their own cognitive resources, and of the demands of the academic task" (p. 187). The assignments and learning strategies that these teachers used provided the adult learners to interpret and encode information in their own words, develop questions, and "test" themselves to see if they have attained their goals.

The Role of the Adult Educator as Manager, Expert, and Planner

The role of the teacher as manager, expert, and planner surfaced more when the teachers spoke of setting course objectives, evaluating and assessing student learning, and organizing specific classroom activities. Most of the teachers also differentiated between learning "technical skills" such as writing an effective letter or essay and the more personal and social types of learning that would include gaining confidence, becoming more critically aware, working cooperatively, and developing independence.

The Role of Facilitator and Reflective Practitioner

Many of the teachers in this study indicated that they had changed over the years, moving from the role of the "expert" to one as a facilitator and a reflective practitioner. They also indicated that they were more able to integrate roles and approaches more

skillfully than they were at the beginning of their career. The changes that they described were activated in part, by the confidence they had gained over the years and their willingness to explore different techniques, further education and professional development, feedback from students, and their own observations and reflections on the "successes and failures" that they had experienced. This finding is consistent with Pratt's (1989) description of competence at three different stages in a teacher's career (see literature review and Chapter seven). While the teachers in this study emphasized the importance of competence in technical expertise, flexibility and ability to work with adult learners from diverse backgrounds, and being a reflective practitioner, they also emphasized that this competence is continually being developed. It is not a "fixed point" that you reach.

Comparison of the Teachers' Conceptions of Teaching and Learning with the Inventory and Questionnaire Responses

Similar to the results of Lorraine Zinn's studies (1983, 1994), the predominant adult education philosophies as measured by the Zinn (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory, were the progressive and behavioral adult education philosophy. Based on the interview data, there were inconsistencies between the teachers' statements and their scores on the inventory. While Zinn (personal communication ,1998) states that the dominant two philosophies that a teacher may hold are *complimentary* rather than contradictory (e.g. progressive and behavioral compliment each other while radical and behavioral tend to contradict each other), in the interview data, far more inconsistencies arose, so for example, teachers might have a very "humanistic" or "nurturing" perspective regarding the barriers that adult learners experience and the importance they place on establishing trust and a positive rapport with the learner, but also be very "behaviorally" oriented in their approach to assessment or in the specific teaching methodology that they use to explain a theory or concept. Some of the adult educators in this study often integrated "lecture" and more "discovery" types of learning/teaching strategies. Other teachers believe that a more structured educational environment (e.g. practice and drill, learning modules, rote learning, etc.) could help insecure learners who have been out of school for many years gain confidence and security. A number of teachers in literacy programs emphasized that often these adults fear large groups, and would feel "lost and

alienated" in a classroom. The rationale for choosing a particular approach or methodology has to be understood in the context of the teaching/learning situation. Other teachers explained that the high scores in the behavioral and progressive philosophies can be explained by understanding the reality of the programs that are skills and outcomes based. Standardized tests, provincial exams, and other "measurable outcomes" of a specific kind of learning that is more technical (e.g. the ability to write an editorial or critique a novel) are realities that they have to prepare the students for a specific program of study.

Compared to the English teachers who taught at the higher level (university entrance and college level) in both regular and advanced ESL classes, the teachers who worked at the basic literacy and ESL level held more nurturing and humanistic conceptions of teaching and learning. At the *beginning* literacy level, there is a high drop out rate and a major goal of the program is to help learners "acclimatize" and feel comfortable. The teachers explained that often, beginning literacy learners have experienced failure in the traditional school system. Some teachers in the basic literacy and ESL programs did not use letter grades or marks; instead, personalized comments and encouraging feedback to the learners were major parts of the learning process and assessment protocol. Experiencing success in a supportive atmosphere with a teacher who is sensitive and caring take precedence over content and skill mastery.

As the level of course difficulty increased, the teachers in this study tended to emphasize more of a transmission orientation with respect to performance standards and evaluation procedures. However, the teachers at the higher levels also referred to the importance of critical thinking and the importance of adult learners being able to move from "dualistic" perspectives to gaining more divergent views. Teachers at the more advanced levels held views of learning that were consistent with constructivist theories and the application of knowledge to specific contexts.

The Process of Transformative Learning

Many of the educators viewed all learning as a type of transformation and that the "deeper level" changes that a learner may experience may have more to do with the readiness and personality of the learner than with any intentional behavior the teacher may do. In gathering the data from the interviews, questionnaires, and inventories, a richer

understanding of the dilemmas and limitations of transformative learning theory as it applied to the practical realities of teaching surfaced. The clash between "theory and practice" for most of these educators concerned the process of evaluation, the course material selection, the diagnosis of learner needs, the boundary between teaching and counselling, and the aims and objectives of the educational institution and the department that they worked in. The teachers in this study possessed different patterns of strengths, each of which is important, given the context that they work in. Moreover, they emphasized the importance of being flexible and being able to effectively apply a range of teaching techniques that best match the skill level of the adult learner, the specific course and program requirements, and the different learning styles and personality traits of the students.

The findings of this study tend to support Cranton's (1994) analysis that transformative learning may be something that teachers may work toward rather than a universal goal shared by all teachers. (see Cranton, 1992, 1994). The process of transformative learning is complex, and if the aim is in helping learners become more critically aware of their self-perceptions, and then change negative or distorted views that may be hindering their progress, they must feel secure, self-confident, and possess a certain degree of self-direction. "Embedded in that list of requirements is a prerequisite that the learner already be empowered to some extent or at least be working in a context that is empowering and supportive" (Cranton, p. 144). As learners feel more secure and self-confidence, the educator becomes more of a "provocateur" critically challenging learners to questions their assumptions. While the teachers in this study agree that creating a positive learning climate and being supportive are important, the degree to which the teachers become actively involved in counselling, mentoring, and critically challenging learners becomes more complex and difficult.

Educators did not feel equally ready to assume the role of the counsellor and provocateur. In this study, this is where more disagreement was noticed. Despite efforts made to become a "co-learner" and friend, the reality of assessment and evaluation make it difficult to equalize the teacher-student relationship. Many of the teachers in this study reflected on the power differentials such as educational level, gender, financial status, etc. that make it difficult for adult learners to see themselves as "equal."

Another conclusion is that teaching and learning are complex processes that cannot be neatly packaged in "transmission" or "social reform" categories of teaching perspectives. In addition, results from inventories and questionnaires should be used with caution. While providing a spring board to discuss teachers' views and preferred teaching approaches, they fall short of identifying the complexities and contradictions that are part of the teaching-learning exchange. As I looked over each of the inventory responses from the teachers, I noticed how often a teacher would write comments in the margins of the inventories: "This statement is only partly accurate" or "My response will be different, depending on the group or course that I am teaching."

This study suggests that teachers often use a combination of approaches, and learning strategies to meet the unique needs of their students and to be "faithful" to their own teaching philosophy.

Images and Metaphors that Reflect Personal Teaching Philosophy

The images and metaphors that the teachers used to articulate their role and the process of teaching and learning can help gain a deeper insight into the conceptions they have of their role. Among the metaphors and images that the teachers in this study used to describe their role were the images of the English teachers as an artist or craftsperson, "architect" or builder, "cultural guide", technical expert, and counsellor trying to create a "safe haven" for their students. Some of these images have parallels with the role of the transformative educators as a "supportive friend" and a "gentle provocateur." The teacher as artist or craftsperson emphasizes invention, expressiveness, and the importance of searching for new ideas. The artist/craftsperson is more open to uncertainty and will welcome critical challenge. The study of literature is valued, and seen as a platform for exploring ideas and constructing new ones. The English teacher as "architect" demonstrates expertise in planning and designing new opportunities for students to learning. Learning is a process of mutual collaboration. The teacher as a " cultural guide" was evident in contexts where the teachers use literature as a vehicle to explore people, values, cultures, lifestyles, and beliefs. The teacher as counsellor or healer is evident in contexts where teachers use reading, reflection, and writing to help adult learners express the feelings and beliefs that they have. The English teacher as a "technical expert" who can understand and effectively communicate rules of grammar and styles of effective

writing was also seen by many of the teachers as equally important to the roles of supportive facilitator. Expertise in teaching English integrated both technical and interpersonal skill mastery.

Recommendations for Theory and Practice

Research Implications

Many teachers expressed ethical concerns about the role of teacher as change agent and reformer. Although much has been written in the adult education literature on the importance of "transformative education" and the role that critical thinking plays in learners' ability to reflect on their own lives, it is not clear if these goals are agreed upon among adult educators and the institutions that they work in.

The observations from this study suggest that Mezirow's (1981) theory of transformative learning could be expanded to consider how factors such as learning style and personality type could influence transformative teaching and learning orientations. It may be that personality type may influence teachers' tendency to be more reflective and expect this more from their students. Robertson's (1996) emphasis that more research is needed to investigate the phenomenology of facilitation is a critical point. He asserts that with a few exceptions, the adult education literature does not carefully examine the intra and inter-personal dynamics of the educational helping relationship.

This study suggests a need to continue building a scholarly body of literature relevant to facilitating adult learning effectively and responsibility, with a consideration given to ethical dilemmas, diverse adult education settings, and diverse adult learners. Throughout the adult education literature, there is the image of the exemplary adult educator as a person with expertise in facilitating transformative learning, yet again, throughout the literature, there is a lack of information that suggests guidelines in preparing or supporting adult educators who may want to accomplish these goals or ideals. Both from the teachers' perspectives and the responses from the adult students' to the questionnaire, adults have different academic and personal strengths and barriers. The barriers that adult learners experience could be identified more clearly. Through case studies and methods of narrative inquiry, a deeper understanding of Cross's (1981) familiar "barriers to adult learning" could be examined from the viewpoint of factors such as personality, gender, socio-economic class, age, and educational and life experiences.

Moreover, the diversity in adult education be limited by a one dimensional perspective that elevates the nurturing or social reform perspective as "superior" to other perspectives. While aspects of the social reform and nurturing perspective were evident in many of the teachers' views about learning and learners, these views changed when they spoke about diagnosis of learner needs and the criteria for evaluation.

Many of the adults who filled out the questionnaire in the adult basic education programs described trauma of some kind. Experiences in war, legal problems, drug and alcohol addiction, abusive relationships, and serious emotional problems impact the process and outcomes of learning. There is an absence in the adult education literature to address and understand how the severity of these barriers may interfere with any kind of learning, let alone the complex process of transformative learning that Mezirow (1981) describes. The teachers in this study had different views on how these barriers impact their own teaching and how skilled they felt in helping the learners cope with and overcome these barriers.

Researching Links between Adult Education and Counselling

The close association between counselling and teaching adults was evident in the data coming from this study. A number of the teachers saw the role of teacher and counsellor as almost inseparable. Further research is needed to explore these parallels, and to explore the extent to which "counselling skills" are applied in the teaching context. Robertson (1996) makes the point that even though education and counselling are closely related, adult education and counselling differ dramatically concerning the *preparation* of practitioners to manage the dynamics of the helping relationship. This study supports Robertson's (1996) contention that more needs to be done to explore the implications that programs in counselling would have on adult education programs. Should more emphasis be placed on adult educators learning more about adult development, lifestyle and career development, and individual and group counselling skills? A code of ethics for the field of adult education that includes the parameters and guidelines about the educational helping relationship could also be considered. Professional consultation for adult educators that provides confidential meetings in which to deal with issues related to the dynamics of the helping relationship could also be organized. More opportunities to discuss practical examples of applying transformative learning theory in different adult education contexts

could also be provided in staff development workshops (see Mezirow and Associates, 1991; Boud and Griffin, 1986; and Cranton, 1994). In terms of teaching English from a transformative perspective, Peim (1993) suggests that English teachers need to be more aware of how critical theory, discourse analysis, and semiotics can be applied to the analysis of different texts in English. Peim also emphasizes students also need to develop these skills in interpreting and decoding literary and non-fiction works. Further research is also needed to explore whether certain subjects lend themselves more to transformative learning. For example, English as a content area, touches on the world of culture, values, ideas, and personality and in this respect, but to what extent do other subjects such as mathematics, biology, and others sciences lend themselves to transformative learning?

Further exploration of transformative learning is also needed in diverse settings and across different disciplines. Some of the teachers in this study emphasized that transformative learning may reside more within the learner and his or her readiness for change. Factors other than the teacher may be instrumental in triggering this change: other students, emotional maturity of the learner, past experience, the learners' perception of the teacher, the content of the course, and elements of the educational setting. A more careful analysis of how these factors weigh in the complicated process of transformative learning is necessary.

This study suggests that much has been taken for granted in the literature that "transformative learning" is a normal part of adult development and that it could be aided by an educator committed to the goals of transformative education. In reality, teachers have different conceptions of what transformative learning means and how an educator might foster this type of learning. Mezirow's (1981) theory is not well known or understood by practicing adult educators; in this sense, theory is not driving practice. The close parallels between the personality characteristics that Mezirow describes as being essential for the adult educator and the strategies that many of the teachers employed were not an outcome of having read works by Mezirow, Freire, or Daloz, but by the personal convictions and beliefs that the teachers held from experience and personal history.

Recommendations for Institutions

This study suggests that further exploration by institutions to examine their mission statement and compare this with existing curriculum objectives is needed. Based on the observations of this study, educational institutions are becoming increasingly consumer oriented and market driven. It might be of benefit for institutions to critically examine the congruence between their stated mission and the "hidden agenda" that may be outcomes based and test/examination driven. Teachers who hold transformative perspectives may be hindered in their efforts to put into practice their ideas due to constraints imposed by administrators or by the imposition of standardized curriculum and testing programs. If standardized testing increasingly becomes a powerful force in shaping classrooms, teachers may have to alter the focus of their curriculum by teaching "test taking" skills or they may feel pressured to help their students achieve measurable results. As noted in the literature review and in the comments expressed by the teachers in this study, the emphasis on accountability and measurable outcomes can lead to teachers and students to feel disempowered; a restriction of learning opportunities may also result (see McLoughlin, 1989, 1992).

Recommendations for the Professional Certification of Adult Educators

Adult education upgrading classes are increasingly being offered in secondary schools, yet many of the administrators and teachers working with adults have never undertaken a formal study of adult education. The requirements concerning the need for a certificate or degree in adult education varies, depending on the province and the institution. For example, while teachers at Red River Community College in Winnipeg and Vancouver Community College are expected to complete courses and eventually a certificate in adult education, many secondary schools offering adult upgrading programs *do not* require teachers or administrators to complete specialized courses , certificates, or degrees in adult education. In Manitoba, the increase in schools offering day upgrading programs to adult learners is evident in the number of the "advertising campaigns" and information brochures sent to homes giving information about university entrance courses, work training programs, and basic literacy offered in a nearby high school. Partnerships with business and industry may require teachers to work away from traditional classrooms. Many new programs that secondary schools in Manitoba, for example, are

now offering promise to meet the "needs of adult learners." If primary and secondary school teachers are expected to take specialized courses in elementary and secondary school education as part of their "professional" training, it seems reasonable to suggest that educators planning to work with adults take specialized courses in, for example, adult learning theory, historical aspects of adult education, program planning, and counselling adult learners either in a certificate or degree program. The gap between theory and practice needs to be bridged; in order for practice to be informed by theory and vice versa, educators of adults need to become more familiar with the body of theoretical knowledge in adult education. To continue building a stronger body of scholarly knowledge in adult education and to define the field of adult education more clearly, more could be done to encourage practitioners in the field of adult education to become familiar with adult education theory.

Recommendations for Teacher Education Programs

The nature of theoretical knowledge in teaching and learning has also changed in recent years. Teachers need to be given more opportunities to read and reflect on these changes and examine their own teaching-learning context. In curriculum design, for example, the teacher must simultaneously consider methods, the nature of the subject area, the characteristics of the student audience, and his or her own "preferred" style of teaching.

In education faculties, courses could be offered to help future teachers develop their personal philosophy of education. In addition, teaching practicum courses could encourage teachers to experiment with different strategies and approaches with an emphasis on providing a rationale on how these techniques/strategies might be used in different contexts. Teacher education programs should not outline "rules" that are applicable to every single teacher, nor can teaching as Pratt (1998) emphasizes be reduced to a set of "value neutral skills." Emphasizing the need to encourage future teachers to develop "practical reasoning" and critical reflection, Noel (1995) states that "teacher education should not involve rules that are supposedly applicable to every single teacher. Every piece of information will interact with each person's beliefs, desires, experiences, and knowledge in unique combinations and sequences before the complete understanding is to be formed or the decision to act is undertaken" (p. 152). McLoughlin (1989)

contends that teacher education programs adopt a cognitive developmental framework based on Perry's (1970) stages of intellectual development. Both McLoughlin (1989) and Noel (1995) take the view that too often teachers serve to reproduce traditional authoritarian didactic patterns of instruction because they have not been encouraged to conceptualize education as a project of possibility in which teachers and students engage in the critical and social construction of meaning. Curriculum and teaching strategies are viewed as skills to be acquired rather than explored or critiqued. These theorists emphasize that teacher education programs need to encourage a more transformative approach that integrates aspects of constructivist theory. For further information on teacher education programs that emphasize a constructivist perspective, see: McLoughlin, 1989, 1992; Prawat, 1992; Goodman, 1992; MacKinnon and Erickson, 1992; Noel, 1995; Pratt and associates, 1998; Davis and Sumara, 1997.

Recommendations for New Directions in Teacher Evaluation

While there are common links in the approaches to planning and implementation that the teachers in this study share, their personal philosophy of practice is also unique. This study supports Pratt's (1998) assertion that there is not "one best way" to teach adults. Another recommendation based on this study is that teacher evaluation be more open to dialogue, understanding, negotiation, and acknowledgment of the teacher's *own philosophy* and rationale underlying such matters as curriculum choice, teaching methodology, learning strategies, etc. The process of evaluation, as Pratt (1998) notes, is seldom impartial or balanced in power (p. 258). A "duties-based" and "technically focused" approach to evaluation undermines the complexity of learning and the diversity of approaches inherent in effective teachers. Rather than evaluation being viewed as a didactic "one-way" imposition of a set of rules and criterion for "good teaching" applicable to all teachers, teachers should be given an opportunity to think, reflect, and articulate on their beliefs and intentions regarding learning and learners, curriculum choice, and teaching methodology. How are these beliefs and intentions translated into actions? Creativity, improvement, and innovation in teaching are more likely to emerge if teachers feel less threatened and defensive regarding the process of evaluation (see Pratt and Associates, 1998; Webb, 1995; Shulman and Hutchings, 1995).

Recommendations for Workshops and Professional Development Programs

Judging from the interest of the participants in this study to explore their beliefs about teaching and learning, more could be done to help practitioners currently teaching in the field develop their personal teaching philosophy. Many of the educators that I interviewed in this said that no one had every asked them to express their views on teaching and learning, or to explain the dilemmas that they experience in terms of their intentions and ideals, and the practical realities of teaching adults from diverse backgrounds.

This study supports the ideas presented by research such as Argyris and Schon (1974), Shon (1987), Brookfield (1990,1995) and Pratt (1998) who assert that to a large extent, teaching perspectives and the strategies that teachers employ are a function of the values and beliefs that they hold. Unless these ideas and perspectives are explored, existing ineffectual practices could be continued. The perceptions and personal theories that individuals can consciously or unconsciously shape their expectations, judgments, and behaviors. While these perceptions may be linked to their past experiences, they may be linked to social and organizational norms about how they think they should act in the situation. Professional development workshops could be conducted to help teachers articulate their "implicit theories" and make them more explicit. Helping teachers develop the "tools of effective inquiry" could enable individuals to broaden their perspective through a process of reflection, observation, inference, suggestion, and action. New forms of understanding and action occur when individuals feel the freedom to experiment with and explore different possibilities. Kolb's (1985) Learning Style Inventory, Conti's (1990) Principles of Adult Learning Scale and Zinn's (1994) Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory have potential use for practitioners. They could be used as tools to help increase practitioners' awareness and understanding of learning styles, adult learning principles and philosophies professed in the literature. These instruments also have potential use in helping practitioners clarify their own professed views of teaching and learning with their actual practice. Despite the value that these inventories and questionnaires may have, this study also points out some of the limitations of relying on an inventory or questionnaire to "measure" a person's learning style or beliefs. The inconsistencies and contradictions that emerged when comparing the interview data with

the teachers' scores on the different inventories suggests that teaching is a complex process that is not easily reflected with quantifiable research instruments.

Professional development workshops could be aimed at helping experienced teachers develop "practical reasoning" and critical reflection about how the following elements interact with and influence each other in the teaching context: past experiences, academic and practical knowledge, emotions, intentions, and the present teaching context. Schon's (1992) metaphor of the art studio where apprentices learn their craft can be applied to the professional development of teachers at different stages in their career. In "action science" workshops, Schon (1987) describes how individuals learn through case studies of situations that were problematic or surprising in some way. With the help of others, they try to reconstruct the reasoning that is implicit. Schon suggests that when people make errors, they do so because they lack the insight or awareness of the values that influence their actions. The "reflection-in-action" approach suggested by many of the theorists cited in this study reflect the experiential learning model proposed by Kolb (1984).

Recommendations for Educational Research Based on Teachers' Experienced Knowledge

This study has implications for both theory and practice in its emphasis on giving teachers an opportunity to see themselves in the role of co-researcher involved in a process of collaborative planning, data gathering, self-reflection, and responsiveness. Researchers like Kvale (1983), Van Manen (1997); and Lincoln and Guba (1989) emphasize that qualitative research methods like the hermeneutic interview have the potential to go beyond a surface understanding of human consciousness to critical consciousness raising. The present research study takes the stand that educational knowledge needs to be created "context-specifically" and that it should involve reflection and action by all interested participants. In the critical research paradigm, teachers are not "the observed" but rather they become observers and researchers. Classroom research involves a systematic inquiry by the teacher-researchers themselves. Brookfield (1990) refers to grounded teaching which involves the ability of teachers to observe and reflect on their action and "ground" their teaching on their observations of the students and the context they work in (see Shulman, 1987; Hunt, 1993). The personal perspectives and

narratives of teachers could be used to inform theory. Another advantage of this is that more documentation on how educators learn to be educators and how they develop their practice would emerge. It may also prove useful to understand how a particular teaching approach influences student learning and achievement at various academic levels and in different disciplines.

This study suggests that Pratt's (1998) model of five perspectives of teaching and adult and higher education has both theoretical and practical value. Rooted in empirical studies of teachers' perspectives in a range of adult education contexts, Pratt's work represents a new ground for researchers and practitioners who seek to understand teaching and learning from a more complex perspective. The present study confirms the usefulness of Pratt's (1998) model of teaching in both the design and interpretation of educational research relating to the understanding of teachers' knowledge. Pratt writes that:

> Acknowledging the legitimacy of multiple perspectives, comprehending how to analyze those perspectives, and relishing the different ways they approach teaching and learning, is after all, still confined to mental exercises. But teaching is visceral. It changes and challenges each participant every time the class starts. It is full of thought provoking moments; indeed it is one of those rare professions that can grow immensely more interesting over time. (p. 280)

Limitations of the Study

The teachers who participated in this study were willing to disclose their personal beliefs, invite me into their classrooms, and allow me to analyze the assignments, tests, and responses to questionnaires that they completed. A limitation concerns the teachers who are "silent"—who are reluctant to speak and express their views. How might their perspectives compare to the group that participated in this study? How do the majority of teachers integrate theory and practice? The sample size is small, and further studies could include a larger population and a cross section of teachers from different disciplines over longer periods of time. How might teachers' views differ in other locations in Canada? The small sample of teachers interviewed in Vancouver and Winnipeg makes it difficult to understand the experiences of teachers in other parts of eastern and western Canada.

How might government funding and directives in other provinces influence adult education programs at both secondary and post secondary institutions?

While this study focused on teachers of English at different levels and in three different educational settings, another possibility would have been to analyze teachers' perspectives who work in the same school and who teach at the same level. What similarities and differences might arise? What kind of core beliefs about learning and teaching do school administrators hold and how does this limit or enhance the teachers' personal philosophy and practice? While this study focused primarily on teachers' conceptions of the teaching and learning practice, a closer analysis of the connection between the stated beliefs of the teachers and their actual teaching practice over an extended period of time would be useful. While I also collected data from the students in terms of responses to an adult learning questionnaire as well as samples of their written work, the focus of this study concerned the teachers. A future study could include an in-depth analysis of the way the adult learners experience the process of learning. What characteristics of teachers do they find most helpful to their learning? To what extent do adult learners in different context experience transformative learning in the way Mezirow (1981) describes it? How do specific factors such as age, gender, personality, and educational setting influence, limit, or enhance the teaching-learning dynamic? Moreover, do the range of philosophies and perspectives identified by Zinn(1994) and Pratt (1998) reflect the range of personal philosophies that teachers have?

Given the emphasis that institutional constraints place on teachers' intentions and goals, a closer analysis of the social context of teaching would be helpful. Even if a teacher wanted to foster transformative learning, this desire may conflict with the goals, values, expectations, and beliefs with the institution. Another limitation of this study is that it did not include feedback from the administrators and how they define or conceptualize the mission and purpose of the institution and the role of adult education. Understanding their view point would have informed this study further. Derkatz (1994) writes that "administrators use their will, power, and ingenuity to justify, advocate, and endorse what they believe is valuable over those things other people feel are important." (p..42) The administrator is a pivotal person in a position of power who acts to influences others in the educational community. In comparing the meanings, experiences, understandings found

between administrators and teachers and students, we would arrive at a richer understanding of the diversity and plurality that characterize educational institutions today.

Conclusion

This study attempted to understand how adult education teachers who teach in a range of English programs conceptualize the process of teaching and learning. The perspectives that the teachers held about transformative learning and the process of teaching were diverse and unique, each arising out of the particular experiences of the teacher. As a subject, much has been written about the role of teaching English as an opportunity to explore values, beliefs, and more importantly, to trigger some type of critical reflection that may lead to personal and social change. Mezirow's (1981) transformative learning theory integrates key themes from humanistic and constructivist theories of learning. His theory continues to be influential in adult education. The central purpose of perspective transformation is to liberate the individual from personal unconscious content, cultural norms, and patterns that block the individual's ability to self-actualize (Boyd and Myers, 1988). The adult educator, according to Mezirow, can play a vital part in fostering this process. This study suggests that more research is needed to address the complexities and dilemmas that arise when Mezirow's theory is applied to adult education practices. The views of English curriculum theorists like Northrop Frye, Louise Rosenblatt, Maxime Greene, and Nick Peim all highlight the importance of English being used as a vehicle to foster personal and social awareness and change. Greene (1978) states that "it seems clear enough that interpretive encounters with literature can, at least to some degree, lead to clarification of modern readers' lives" (p.38). What seems *less clear*, however, is the degree of importance that teachers and educational institutions place on the transformative study of English. This study shows that while many English teachers do approach English from a critically reflective standpoint, they incorporate many other approaches that are more "technical" in nature. Moreover, many educational institutions are moving away from teaching English as the "study of literature" to a technical focus aimed at integrating the business world into the schools. Green's (1986) assertion that educators are caught up in " product orientations, credentialing practices, and preoccupations with utility" (p.22) is supported by the concerns that many of the teachers in this study raised. In his book The Unconscious Civilization, John Ralston

Saul (1995) writes that we are faced by a crisis of conformity and passivity and that the increasing aligning of education with the needs of the job market has resulted in narrow specialization and a fracturing of knowledge that undermines the search for ideas and understanding, and ultimately, individual participation in building a democratic society. He asserts that to a great extent, schools and universities have become handmaidens of the corporatist system. While the dissolving boundaries between academic institutions and industry and business offer new possibilities for creativity and knowledge creation, the direction and long term result of this "exchange" or partnership for both individuals and society remain unclear. Many of the teachers in this study commented on the tension between the trend toward a more technical emphasis in teaching English courses and their belief in the value of teaching English as a vehicle for promoting deeper understanding, critical reflection, and possible transformative changes.

Finally, despite the attempts to theorize about the dynamics of teaching and learning, there remains an inherently illusive quality about the process. This study suggests that a complex interaction of variables that include personality and motivational characteristics of both the teacher and student, past experience, culture, content of the subject area, and aspects of the educational context or setting seem to influence both the quality and experience of teaching and learning. If the end result of "good teaching" is "good learning," it is vital for educators to reflect on what it means to learn. In reflecting on our own assumptions about learning, we build a base for understanding, appreciating, and incorporating new ideas that may enhance the teaching-learning exchange.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Questions for the Interview Schedule (Adapted from Pratt and Associates, 1998)

Date:

Place of Interview:

Time: Start: End:

Teacher:

Background Information

1. Where were you born?

2. Where were you raised?

3. Where did you attend college or university?

4. What was your undergraduate major?

5. Have you attended graduate school?

6. How long have you been teaching?

7. What school/college systems have you taught in?

8. Why did you decide to become a teacher?

Instructor's Role and Responsibility

9. How would you describe your role and responsibility as an adult educator?

10. How would you describe the purpose of adult education in our society?

11 You have been an adult educator for some time now. Could you tell me what makes an adult educator effective? What characteristics are important for an adult educator to have?

12 Have you changed as an educator over the years? How would you describe some of these changes?

13. What have you learned from your practical experience as a teacher over the years?

14. Is there a metaphor or image that best describes your role as a teacher and your approach to teaching?

15. How do you establish your expertise?

Values, Beliefs, and Ideals

16. What keeps you teaching?

17. What key experiences in your own life influenced your teaching?

18. Can you identify or describe important beliefs or values that influence your teaching and would be important to understand if someone were observing your teaching?

Learning and Learners

19. What does learning mean to you?

20. What does the term "transformative learning" mean to you?

21. How do you know when someone has learned what you are teaching?

21. How would you describe your learners?

22. What do they bring to the learning situation that might influence their learning and your teaching?

23. What barriers are you aware of that might interfere with your students' learning?

24. You teach in a setting with students from diverse backgrounds. Are cultural considerations addressed in your approach to teaching? In what ways?

25. What kind of learners are the most challenging for you?

Content

26. How do you decide what to teach and what should be learned? What are you try to accomplish? How do you know when you are successful?

27. How do you plan a unit of study on a novel, a play, or a series of articles? Could you give some examples?

28. Which novels, plays, stories, etc. do you find most enjoyable to teach? Why do you think this is so? How do you think learning literature will affect your students?

29. What do you want people in your teaching to learn? What might be difficult about that?

30. How do you engage learners in the content?

31. How do you assess their learning?

32. What does critical thinking mean to you? Do you apply any strategies to foster critical thinking in your teaching? Could you describe some examples?

33. Do you have any preferred teaching techniques? If you invited me into your class, what kinds of activities might I see?

<u>Context</u>

34. How would you describe your teaching environment? (e.g. the setting, your schedule, characteristics of the institution that you work in, your colleagues, etc.).

35. What do you like most about the setting?

36. What do you like least about it? How do the characteristics of the setting influence your teaching and your students' learning?

37. Does your work setting provide opportunities for professional development? Could you give some examples? Do you feel that you benefit from these opportunities?

38. Do you feel that you have the opportunity to develop professionally in the institution that you work?

39. What changes would you most like to see in the education system? How realizable are these changes?

40. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask me?

<u>Appendix B</u>

<u>Reflections and Critical Incident Questionnaire</u>

1. Please write down any further reflections that you have on your approach to teaching adult learners.

2. Dilemmas are a constant feature of teachers' lives. Please comment on some of the dilemmas that you have experienced in your teaching experience (past or current).

3. Think back over your professional life and choose the most successful educational experience in which you were involved, either as a teacher or a learner. Why did you consider it successful?

What features can you point to that were present at the time and that may not have been present in other educational situations in which you were involved?

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix C

Teaching Strategies Check List

Please check off the strategies that you most frequently use in your teaching situation.

1. *Concrete Experience*

    Laboratories___

    Observations___

    Primary Text Reading___

    Simulation/Games___

    Field Work___

    Trigger Films___

    Readings___

    Problem Sets___

    Practical Examples/Demonstrations___

2. *Reflective Observation*

    Logs___

    Journals___

    Discussion___

    Brainstorming___

    Thought Questions___

    Rhetorical Questions___

3. *Abstract Conceptualization*

    Lecture___

    Research Papers and Essays___

    Theory and Model Building___

    Projects___

    Analogies ___

4. *Active Experimentation*

      Case Study___

      Laboratory___

      Field Work ___

      Interviews___

      Projects____

      Speeches___

      Simulations___

1. Are there certain teaching/learning strategies that you would like to use more often but cannot because of restrictions (e.g. lack of resources, institutional factors, the nature of the curriculum, etc.).

Thank you!

Appendix D

The Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory

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PHILOSOPHY OF ADULT EDUCATION INVENTORY©

(Revised, 1994)

The Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory© (PAEI) is an assessment instrument developed to assist the adult educator to identify his/her personal philosophy of education and to compare it with prevailing philosophies in the field of adult education. The PAEI© was designed to be self-administered, self-scored and self-interpreted.

Validity and reliability test data are summarized in *Dissertation Abstracts International*, *44*, 1667A-1668A (Zinn, 1983).

FOREWORD

A *philosophy of education* represents a comprehensive and interrelated set of values and beliefs as applied to education—including beliefs about the purpose and nature of human life, the role of the individual in society, purposes or goals of learning and education, role(s) of teachers and students, important subject matter, and effective teaching approaches.

Educational philosophy is primarily concerned with *why* teachers do what they do, whereas various *methods, techniques and/or strategies* describe and guide *what* teachers do. An *educational philosophy* is broader than a preference for specific teaching *methods, techniques or strategies*. Preferred teaching methods, techniques and/or strategies are usually consistent with one's educational philosophy; however, the skilled teacher may selectively use a wide variety of appropriate methods, techniques and/or strategies. *Teaching style* evolves as a combination of one's educational philosophy and preferred teaching methods, techniques and/or strategies. *Educational philosophies* are fairly deeply rooted in people's life values and are unlikely to change significantly. *Teaching methods, techniques and/or strategies,* on the other hand, may change depending on what works best in a particular situation.

A *personal philosophy of education* provides an integrated, consistent basis for making choices in the practice of education, and offers insight into relationships (a) between teacher and learner, (b) between the learner and learning content/activities, and (c) between learning content/activities and the world at large. Identifying one's personal philosophy of education can enhance the degree of congruence between a teacher's beliefs or values and actions in the practice of teaching, and can provide a basis for mutual understanding and acceptance among members of an instructional "team," given the great diversity of teachers, program planners and administrators that comprise the field of (adult) education.

The term *adult educator* may describe anyone who teaches adult learners, whether in formal or informal educational settings; for academic credit or not-for-credit; through individual tutoring, classroom teaching and/or informal discussion groups; helping adult learners to acquire certain knowledge, attitudes and/or skills; for a variety of purposes. *Adult educators* may also be called trainers, tutors, mentors, facilitators, health educators, religious leaders, cooperative extension agents, community service educators, workshop/seminar presenters, etc.

During the past decade, the *Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory*© *(PAEI)* has been used by hundreds of individuals engaged in teaching or training adults. By all reports, it is considered to be a valuable tool for teacher and trainer in-service, staff development for instructional teams, and education of graduate students seeking advanced degrees in fields such as Adult/Continuing Education and Human Resources. The *PAEI*© has been selected as the data-gathering instrument for numerous Doctoral dissertations and Masters theses and has been cited in several professional publications. (See list of resources "For Further Information" following the Inventory.) A K-12 version of the instrument, the *Philosophy of Education Inventory*© *(PEI),* is also available.

— Lorraine M. Zinn, 1994

PHILOSOPHY OF ADULT EDUCATION INVENTORY©

(Rev. 1994)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION

Each of the fifteen (15) items on the Inventory begins with an incomplete sentence, followed by five different options that might complete the sentence. Underneath each option is a scale from 1 to 7, followed by a small letter in parentheses. For the present, ignore the letters; use only the numbers on the scale.

To complete the Inventory, read each sentence stem and each optional phrase that completes it. On the 1-7 scale, CIRCLE the number that most closely indicates how you feel about each option. The scale goes from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with a neutral point (4) if you don't have any opinion or aren't sure about a particular option.

Continue through all the items, reading the sentence stem and indicating how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the options. Please respond to every option, even if you feel neutral about it. *THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS!*

As you go through the Inventory, respond according to what you **most frequently or most likely do**. If it helps you to respond more easily, you may want to focus on a specific course that you teach. If you do focus on a particular course, choose one that you feel most comfortable teaching – one that you think best reflects your preferred style of teaching.

HAVE FUN!

STRONGLY DISAGREE			NEUTRAL			STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. IN PLANNING AN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY, I AM MOST LIKELY TO:

   Identify, in conjunction with learners, significant social, cultural, and/or political issues and plan learning activities around them.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	(h)

   Clearly identify the results I want and develop a program, class, workshop, etc. that will achieve those results.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	(c)

   Begin with a lesson plan that organizes what I plan to teach, when and how.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	(a)

   Assess learners' needs and develop valid learning activities based on those needs.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	(d)

   Consider the areas of greatest interest to the learners and plan to deal with them, regardless of what they may be.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	(f)

STRONGLY DISAGREE			NEUTRAL			STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. PEOPLE LEARN BEST:

When the new knowledge is presented from a problem-solving approach.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (x) |

When the learning activity is clearly structured and provides for practice and repetition.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (w) |

Through discussion with other learners and a group coordinator.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (z) |

When they are free to explore, without the constraints of a "system."

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (y) |

From an "expert" who knows what he or she is talking about.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (v) |

STRONGLY DISAGREE			NEUTRAL			STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF ADULT EDUCATION IS:

To facilitate personal development on the part of the learner.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (f) |

To increase learners' awareness of the need for social change and to enable them to effect such change.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (h) |

To increase knowledge and develop conceptual or theoretical understanding.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (a) |

To establish the learners' capacity to solve everyday problems.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (d) |

To develop the learners' competency and mastery of specific knowledge and skills.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | (c) |

4.   MOST OF WHAT PEOPLE KNOW:

Is a result of consciously pursuing their goals, solving problems as they go.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (x)

They have learned through critical or reflective thinking focused on important social, cultural, and/or political issues.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (z)

They have learned through a trial-and-feedback process.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (w)

They have gained through self-discovery rather than some "teaching" process.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (y)

They have acquired through a systematic and comprehensive educational process.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (v)

5.   DECISIONS ABOUT WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Should be made mostly by the learner in consultation with a facilitator.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (f)

Should be based on what learners know and what the teacher believes they should know at the end of the activity.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (c)

Should be based on a consideration of key social, political, economic, and/or cultural situations.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (h)

Should be based on a consideration of the learners' needs, interests, and problems.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (d)

Should be based on careful analysis by the teacher of the material to be covered and the concepts to be taught.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (a)

STRONGLY DISAGREE			NEUTRAL			STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. GOOD ADULT EDUCATORS START PLANNING INSTRUCTION:

By considering the specific outcomes they are looking for and the most efficient ways of producing them in learners

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (w)

By identifying everyday problems that can be solved as a result of the instruction.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (x)

By clarifying the content, concepts, and/or theoretical principles to be taught.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (v)

By clarifying key social, cultural, economic, and/or political issues that affect the lives of the learners.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (z)

By asking learners to identify what they want to learn and how they want to learn it.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (y)

STRONGLY DISAGREE			NEUTRAL			STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. AS AN ADULT EDUCATOR, I AM MOST SUCCESSFUL IN SITUATIONS:

That are unstructured and flexible enough to follow learners' interests.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (f)

That are fairly structured, with clear learning objectives and built-in feedback to the learners.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (c)

Where I can focus on practical skills and knowledge that can be put to use in solving problems.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (d)

Where the scope of the new material is fairly clear and the subject matter is logically organized.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (a)

Where the learners have some awareness of social, cultural, economic and political issues and are willing to explore the impact of such issues on their daily lives.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (h)

8. IN PLANNING AN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY, I TRY TO CREATE:

The real world – problems and all – and to develop learners' capacities for dealing with it.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (x)

A setting in which learners are encouraged to examine their beliefs and values and to raise critical questions.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (z)

A controlled environment that attracts and holds the learners, moving them systematically towards the objectives.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (w)

A clear outline of the content and the concepts to be taught.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (v)

A supportive climate that facilitates self-discovery and interaction.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (y)

9. THE LEARNERS' FEELINGS DURING THE LEARNING PROCESS:

Must be brought to the surface in order for learners to become truly involved in their learning.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (h)

Provide energy that can be focused on problems or questions.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (d)

Will probably have a great deal to do with the way they approach their learning.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (f)

Are used by the skillful adult educator to accomplish the learning objectives.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (c)

Are likely to get in the way of teaching and learning by diverting the learners' attention.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (a)

10. THE TEACHING METHODS I PREFER TO USE:

Focus on problem-solving and present real challenges to the learner.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (x)

Emphasize practice and feedback to the learner.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (w)

Are mostly non-directive, encouraging the learner to take responsibility for his/her own learning.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (y)

Involve learners in discussion and critical examination of controversial issues.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (z)

Are determined primarily by the subject or content to be covered.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (v)

11. WHEN LEARNERS ARE UNINTERESTED IN A SUBJECT, IT IS PROBABLY BECAUSE:

They do not realize how serious the consequences of not understanding or not learning the subject may be.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (h)

They do not see any benefit for their daily lives.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (d)

The teacher does not know enough about the subject or is unable to make it interesting to the learner.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (a)

They are not getting adequate practice or feedback during the learning process.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (c)

They are not ready to learn it or it is not a high priority for them personally.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (f)

12. DIFFERENCES AMONG ADULT LEARNERS:

Are relatively unimportant as long as the learners gain a common base of understanding through the learning experience.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (v)

Enable them to learn best on their own time and in their own way.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (y)

Are primarily due to differences in their life experiences, and will usually lead them to make different applications of new knowledge and skills to their own situations.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (x)

Arise from their particular cultural and social situations and should not be minimized even as they recognize common needs and problems.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (z)

Will not interfere with their learning if each learner is given adequate opportunity for practice and reinforcement.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (w)

13. EVALUATION OF LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Is not of great importance and may not be possible, because the impact of learning may not be evident until much later.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (h)

Should be built into the system, so that learners will continually receive feedback and can adjust their performance accordingly.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (c)

Is best done by the learners themselves, for their own purposes.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (f)

Lets the teacher know how much learners have increased their knowledge and conceptual understanding of new material.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (a)

Is best accomplished when the learner encounters a problem, either in the learning setting or the real world, and successfully resolves it.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (d)

STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEUTRAL			STRONGLY AGREE	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

14. MY PRIMARY ROLE AS A TEACHER OF ADULTS IS TO:

Guide learners through structured learning activities with well-directed feedback.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (w)

Systematically lead learners in acquiring new information and understanding underlying theories and concepts.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (v)

Help learners identify and solve problems better.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (x)

Increase learners' awareness of social, cultural, economic, and/or political issues and help them learn how to have an impact on these situations.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (z)

Facilitate, but not to direct, learning activities.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (y)

STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEUTRAL			STRONGLY AGREE	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

15. IN THE END, IF LEARNERS HAVE NOT LEARNED WHAT WAS TAUGHT:

The teacher has not actually "taught."

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (a)

They need to repeat the experience, or a portion of it.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (c)

They may have learned something else that they consider just as interesting or useful.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (f)

They do not realize how learning will enable them to significantly influence society.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (h)

It is probably because they are unable to make practical application of new knowledge to problems in their daily lives.

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   (d)

[GO TO THE NEXT PAGE TO FIND OUT
HOW TO SCORE YOUR ANSWERS.]

Philosophy of Adult Education©
SCORING MATRIX

ITEM	a	v	c	w	d	x	f	y	h	z
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										
12										
13										
14										
15										
SUB-TOTALS										
ADD	a + v		c + w		d + x		f + y		h + z	
YOUR SCORES	L =		B =		P =		H =		R =	

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

After completing the Inventory, go back to your responses and find the small letter in parentheses to the far right of each rating scale. This is a code letter for scoring the Inventory. Transfer each of your numbers from the rating scales to the SCORING MATRIX in the right-hand column. For example, for item #1, if you circled a 5 for option (a), write the number 5 in the box for 1(a). Note that item #1 has five different responses: **a, c, d, f, h**. *Record all five of your responses for item #1*, then continue with #2 - #15 (which also have five different responses each). When you finish, there will be numbers in *every other square* in the SCORING MATRIX (like a checkerboard).

YOUR TOTAL SCORES

Now, add all the numbers by columns, from top to bottom, so you have *ten* separate subtotals. None of these subtotals should be higher than 56; nor should any be lower than 7. For TOTAL SCORES, combine the subtotals from the columns on the Scoring Matrix, as indicated below. **Note:** TOTAL SCORES should be no higher than 105, nor lower than 15.

L (a + v) = _____   B (c + w) = _____   P (d + x) = _____

H (f + y) = _____   R (h + z) = _____

[PLEASE GO TO THE NEXT COLUMN AND COMPLETE THE SCORING MATRIX.]

WHAT YOUR SCORES INDICATE

L = LIBERAL (ARTS) ADULT EDUCATION
(Education for Intellectual Development;
General Education for Life)

B = BEHAVIORAL ADULT EDUCATION
(Education for Competence, Behavioral
Change, Compliance with Standards)

P = PROGRESSIVE ADULT EDUCATION
(Education for Practical Problem Solving)

H = HUMANISTIC ADULT EDUCATION
(Education for Individual Self-Actualization)

R = RADICAL ADULT EDUCATION
(Education for Transforming Society)

WHAT IS A PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION?

A Philosophy of Education represents a comprehensive and interrelated set of values and beliefs as applied to education – including beliefs about the purpose and nature of human life, the role of the individual in society, purposes or goals of education, role(s) of teachers and students, important subject matter, and effective teaching approaches.

An educational philosophy is much broader than a preference for specific teaching methods – although *preferred* teaching techniques are usually consistent with the educational philosophy. However, teaching techniques most characteristic of one philosophy may be used selectively by a teacher who has a *different* educational philosophy. Educational philosophies are fairly deeply held, closely aligned with people's life values, and unlikely to change significantly. Teaching *techniques* or *teaching style,* however, may vary depending on what works best in a particular situation, as long as the techniques used are not incompatible with basic premises of a teacher's philosophy of education.

On the next page, you will find brief descriptions of these five Philosophies of Adult Education.* You may want to write your score for each Philosophy above the column that describes it. Your *highest* score reflects the Philosophy that is *closest* to your own beliefs; your *lowest* score reflects a Philosophy that is *least* like yours. For example, a score of 90-105 indicates that you very strongly agree with that Philosophy; a score of 25 or lower indicates that you very strongly disagree with a given Philosophy. *NOTE:* If you find your scores fairly equal among all of the Philosophies, or spread among three or more, you may want to spend some time further clarifying your beliefs and values and looking for possible contradictions among them.

Most Adult Educators have a clear primary philosophical orientation, or share two that are stronger than others. Typical combinations are: *LIBERAL (ARTS)* and *BEHAVIORAL, PROGRESSIVE* and *HUMANISTIC, PROGRESSIVE* and *RADICAL,* or *HUMANISTIC* and *RADICAL.* On the other hand, it is quite unlikely that you would have high scores in both *Liberal (ARTS)* and *RADICAL,* or *BEHAVIORAL* and *HUMANISTIC* Philosophies. These philosophies have key underlying assumptions that are inherently contradictory. (For example, the primary purpose of Behavioral Education is to ensure compliance with expectations or standards set by others; while Humanistic Education is intended to enhance individual self-development — which may or may not meet anyone else's expectations or standards.)

There is no *right* or *wrong* Philosophy of Adult Education. The Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory© is designed to reflect back to you some of your own beliefs, not to make judgments about those beliefs. It is up to you to decide how your beliefs may influence your decisions and actions as an educator, and how your personal educational philosophy may be well-suited, or perhaps not the best match, for the educational setting in which you work.

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* Descriptions adapted from J. Elias and S. Merriam (1995), *Philosophical Foundations of Adult Education* (2nd. ed.), Krieger.

FIVE PHILOSOPHIES OF ADULT EDUCATION

TOTAL SCORES	L = _____	B = _____	P = _____	H = _____	R = _____
	LIBERAL (ARTS) ADULT EDUCATION	**BEHAVIORAL ADULT EDUCATION**	**PROGRESSIVE ADULT EDUCATION**	**HUMANISTIC ADULT EDUCATION**	**RADICAL ADULT EDUCATION**
PURPOSE(S)	To develop intellectual powers of the mind; to enhance the broadest sense of learning; to provide a general, "well-rounded" education.	To promote competence, skill development and behavioral change; ensure compliance with standards and societal expectations.	To support responsible participation in society; to give learners practical knowledge and problem-solving skills.	To enhance personal growth and development; to facilitate individual self-actualization.	To bring about, through education, fundamental social, cultural, political, and economic changes in society.
LEARNER(S)	"Renaissance person"; always a learner; seeks knowledge; expected to gain and conceptual and theoretical understanding.	Learners not involved in setting objectives; master one step before another; practice behaviors/skills to get them right.	Learner needs, interests, and experiences are valued and become part of learning process; learner takes an active role in learning.	Learner is highly motivated and self-directed; assumes responsibility for learning; very involved in planning learning projects.	Learner and "teacher" are equal in learning process; personal autonomy; learner is empowered; voluntary participant..
TEACHER ROLE	The "expert"; transmitter of knowledge; teaches students to think; clearly directs learning process.	Manager, controller; authoritative; sets expectations; predicts and directs learning outcomes.	Organizer; guides learning process; provides real-life learning applications; helps learners work cooperatively.	Facilitator; helper; mutual participant in teaching-learning exchange; supports learning process.	Coordinator; convener; equal partner with learner; suggests but does not determine directions.
CONCEPTS/ KEY WORDS	Liberal arts; learning for its own sake; general and comprehensive education; critical thinking; traditional knowledge; academic excellence.	Standards-based; mastery learning; competence; behavioral objectives; performance; practice, feedback/reinforcement; accountability.	Problem-solving; practical learning; experience-based; needs assessment; transfer of learning; active inquiry; collaboration; social responsibility.	Freedom; autonomy; individuality; teaching-learning exchange; self-directedness; interpersonal communication; openness; authenticity; feelings.	Consciousness-raising; praxis; noncompulsory learning; autonomy; social action; empowerment; social justice; commitment; transformation.
METHODS	Lecture; reading and critical analysis; question-and-answer; teacher-led discussion; individual study; standardized testing.	Computer-based instruction, lock-step curriculum, skill training, demo & practice, criterion-referenced testing.	Projects; scientific or experimental method; simulations; group investigation; cooperative learning; portfolios.	Experiential learning; discovery learning; open discussion; individual projects; collaborative learning; independent study; self-assessment.	Critical discussion and reflection; problem-posing; analysis of media output; social action theater.
PEOPLE & PRACTICES	Aristotle, Plato, Adler, Rousseau, Piaget, Houle, Great Books Society, Paideia Program, Center for the Study of Liberal Education, Chautauqua, Elderhostel.	Thorndike, Watson, Skinner, Tyler, Mager, vocational training, management-by-objectives, certification exams, military training, religious indoctrination.	Dewey, Whitehead, Lindeman, community college developmental studies, citizenship education, cooperative extension, university without walls, community schools.	Rogers, Maslow, Knowles, Tough, group dynamics, self-directed learning, I'm OK, You're OK; diversity education, credit for prior learning.	Holt, Freire, Illich, Kozol, Shor, Ohliger, Perelman, free school movement, Afro-centrism, voter registration/education, social justice education.

Appendix E

Conti's (1990) <u>Principles of Adult Learning Scale</u>

(Copyright 1990 by Gary Conti, Ed.D.)

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Reprinted as it appears in <u>Adult Learning Methods,</u>

Michael J. Galbraith (Ed.)., Krieger Publishing Company.

APPENDIX B

PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING SCALE

Directions: The following survey contains several things that a teacher of adults might do in a classroom. You may personally find some of them desirable and find others undesirable. For each item please respond to the way you most frequently practice the action described in the item. Your choices are Always, Almost Always, Often, Seldom, Almost Never, and Never. On your answer sheet, circle 0 if you always do the event; circle number 1 if you almost always do the event; circle number 2 if you often do the event; circle number 3 if you seldom do the event; circle number 4 if you almost never do the event; and circle number 5 if you never do the event. If the item *does not apply* to you, circle number 5 for never.

Always	Almost Always	Often	Seldom	Almost Never	Never
0	1	2	3	4	5

1. I allow students to participate in developing the criteria for evaluating their performance in class.

2. I use disciplinary action when it is needed.

3. I allow older students more time to complete assignments when they need it.

4. I encourage students to adopt middle class values.

91

5. I help students diagnose the gaps between their goals and their present level of performance.

6. I provide knowledge rather than serve as a resource person.

7. I stick to the instructional objectives that I write at the beginning of a program.

8. I participate in the informal counseling of students.

9. I use lecturing as the best method for presenting my subject material to adult students.

10. I arrange the classroom so that it is easy for students to interact.

11. I determine the educational objectives for each of my students.

12. I plan units which differ as widely as possible from my students' socio-economic backgrounds.

13. I get a student to motivate himself/herself by confronting him/her in the presence of classmates during group discussions.

14. I plan learning episodes to take into account my students' prior experiences.

15. I allow students to participate in making decisions about the topics that will be covered in class.

16. I use one basic teaching method because I have found that most adults have a similar style of learning.

17. I use different techniques depending on the students being taught.

18. I encourage dialogue among my students.

19. I use written tests to assess the degree of academic growth rather than to indicate new directions for learning.

20. I utilize the many competencies that most adults already possess to achieve educational objectives.

21. I use what history has proven that adults need to learn as my chief criteria for planning learning episodes.

22. I accept errors as a natural part of the learning process.

23. I have individual conferences to help students identify their educational needs.

24. I let each student work at his/her own rate regardless of the amount of time it takes him/her to learn a new concept.

25. I help my students develop short-range as well as long-range objectives.

26. I maintain a well-disciplined classroom to reduce interferences to learning.

27. I avoid discussion of controversial subjects that involve value judgments.

28. I allow my students to take periodic breaks during class.

29. I use methods that foster quiet, productive desk-work.

30. I use tests as my chief method of evaluating students.

31. I plan activities that will encourage each student's growth from dependence on others to greater independence.

32. I gear my instructional objectives to match the individual abilities and needs of the students.

33. I avoid issues that relate to the student's concept of himself/herself.

34. I encourage my students to ask questions about the nature of their society.

35. I allow a student's motives for participating in continuing education to be a major determinant in the planning of learning objectives.

36. I have my students identify their own problems that need to be solved.

37. I give all students in my class the same assignment on a given topic.

38. I use materials that were originally designed for students in elementary and secondary schools.

39. I organize adult learning episodes according to the problems that my students encounter in everyday life.

40. I measure a student's long term educational growth by comparing his/her total achievement in class to his/her expected performance as measured by national norms from standardized tests.

41. I encourage competition among my students.

42. I use different materials with different students.

43. I help students relate new learning to their prior experiences.

44. I teach units about problems of everyday living.

SCORING PALS

Positive Items

Items number 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 39, 42, 43, and 44 are positive items. For positive items, assign the following values: Always = 5, Almost Always = 4, Often = 3, Seldom = 2, Almost Never = 1, and Never = 0.

Negative Items

Items number 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 21, 26, 27, 29, 30, 33, 37, 38, 40, and 41 are negative items. For negative items, assign the following values: Always = 0, Almost Always = 1, Often = 2, Seldom = 3, Almost Never = 4, and Never = 5.

Missing Items

Omitted items are assigned a neutral value of 2.5.

Factor 1

Factor 1 contains items number 2, 4, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 21, 29, 30, 38, and 40.

Factor 2

Factor 2 contains items 3, 9, 17, 24, 32, 35, 37, 41, and 42.

Factor 3

Factor 3 contains items 14, 31, 34, 39, 43, and 44.

Factor 4

Factor 4 contains items 5, 8, 23, and 25.

Factor 5

Factor 5 contains items 18, 20, 22, and 28.

Factor 6

Factor 6 contains items 1, 10, 15, and 36.

Factor 7 contains items 6, 7, 26, 27, and 33.

Computing Scores

An individual's total score on the instrument is calculated by summing the value of the responses to all items. Factor scores are calculated by summing the value of the responses for each item in the factor.

Appendix F

Kolb's (1985) <u>Learning Style Inventory</u>

(copyright 1985 by David Kolb, Ph.D.)

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Learning-Style Inventory

Self-Scoring
Inventory and
Interpretation
Booklet

LEARNING-STYLE INVENTORY

The Learning-Style Inventory (LSI) evaluates the way you learn and how you deal with ideas and day-to-day situations in your life. We all have a sense that people learn in different ways, but this inventory will help you appreciate what "learning style" can mean to you. It will help you to better understand:

- how you make career choices

- how you solve problems

- how you set goals

- how you manage others

- how you deal with new situations

On the next page you will be asked to complete 12 sentences. Each has four endings. Rank the endings for each sentence according to how well you think each one fits with how *you* would go about learning something. Try to recall some recent situations where you had to learn something new, perhaps in your job. Then, using the spaces provided, rank a "4" for the sentence ending that describes how you learn *best*, down to a "1" for the sentence ending that seems least like the way you learn. Be sure to rank all the endings for each sentence unit. Please do not make ties.

Example of completed sentence set:

1. When I learn: **2** I am happy.   **1** I am fast.   **3** I am logical.   **4** I am careful.

Remember: 4 = *most* like you

3 = *second* most like you

2 = *third* most like you

1 = *least* like you

1. When I learn:	____ I like to deal with my feelings	____ I like to watch and listen	____ I like to think about ideas	____ I like to be doing things
2. I learn best when:	____ I trust my hunches and feelings	____ I listen and watch carefully	____ I rely on logical thinking	_-_ I work hard to get things done
3. When I am learning:	____ I have strong feelings and reactions	____ I am quiet and reserved	____ I tend to reason things out	____ I am responsible about things
4. I learn by:	____ feeling	____ watching	____ thinking	____ doing
5. When I learn:	____ I am open to new experiences	____ I look at all sides of issues	____ I like to analyze things, break them down into their parts	____ I like to try things out
6. When I am learning:	____ I am an intuitive person	____ I am an observing person	____ I am a logical person	____ I am an active person
7. I learn best from:	____ personal relationships	____ observation	____ rational theories	____ a chance to try out and practice
8. When I learn:	____ I feel personally involved in things	____ I take my time before acting	____ I like ideas and theories	____ I like to see results from my work
9. I learn best when:	____ I rely on my feelings	____ I rely on my observations	____ I rely on my ideas	____ I can try things out for myself
10. When I am learning:	____ I am an accepting person	____ I am a reserved person	____ I am a rational person	____ I am a responsible person
11. When I learn:	____ I get involved	____ I like to observe	____ I evaluate things	____ I like to be active
12. I learn best when:	____ I am receptive and open-minded	____ I am careful	____ I analyze ideas	____ I am practical
TOTAL the scores from each column	☐ Column 1	☐ Column 2	☐ Column 3	☐ Column 4

The Cycle of Learning

The four columns that you have just totaled relate to the four stages in the Cycle of Learning from Experience. There are four learning modes in this cycle: Concrete Experience (CE), Reflective Observation (RO), Abstract Conceptualization (AC), and Active Experimentation (AE). Enter your total scores from each column:
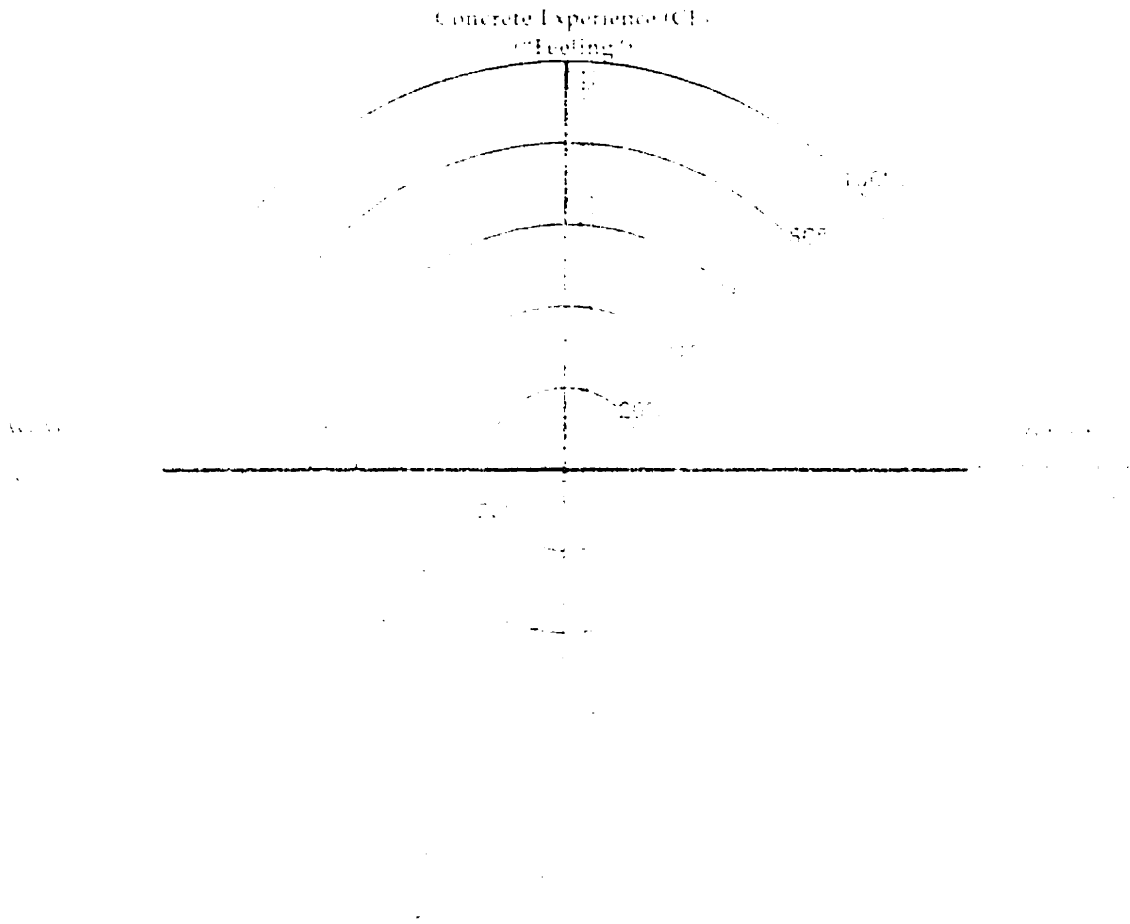
Column 1 (CE): ☐   Column 2 (RO): ☐   Column 3 (AC): ☐   Column 4 (AE): ☐

In the diagram below, put a dot on each of the lines to correspond with your CE, RO, AC, and AE scores. Then connect the dots with a line so that you get a "kite-like" shape. The shape and placement of this kite will show you which learning modes you tend to use most and which you use least.

The LSI is a simple test that helps you understand your strengths and weaknesses as a learner. It measures how much you rely on four different learning modes that are part of a *four-stage cycle of learning*. Different learners start at different places in this cycle. Effective learning uses each stage. You can see by the shape of your profile (above) which of the four learning modes you tend to prefer in a learning situation.[1]

On the next page are explanations of the different learning modes.

---

[1] One way to understand the meaning of your LSI scores better is to compare them with the scores of others. The profile above gives norms on the four basic scales (CE, RO, AC, AE) for 1,446 adults ranging from 18 to 60 years of age. The sample group contained slightly more women than men, with an average of two years beyond high school in formal education. A wide range of occupations and educational backgrounds is represented. The raw scores for each of the four basic scales are listed on the crossed lines of the target. The concentric circles on the target represent percentile scores for the normative group. In comparison to the normative group, the shape of your profile indicates which of the four basic modes you tend to emphasize most and which you emphasize least.

The Four Stages of the Learning Cycle and Your Learning Strengths

CONCRETE EXPERIENCE (CE)

This stage of the learning cycle emphasizes personal involvement with people in everyday situations. In this stage, you would tend to rely more on your feelings than on a systematic approach to problems and situations. In a learning situation, you would rely on your ability to be open-minded and adaptable to change.

Learning from feeling
- Learning from specific experiences
- Relating to people
- Being sensitive to feelings and people

REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION (RO)

In this stage of the learning cycle, people understand ideas and situations from different points of view. In a learning situation you would rely on patience, objectivity, and careful judgment but would not necessarily take any action. You would rely on your own thoughts and feelings in forming opinions.

Learning by watching and listening
- Carefully observing before making judgments
- Viewing issues from different perspectives
- Looking for the meaning of things

ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALIZATION (AC)

In this stage, learning involves using logic and ideas, rather than feelings, to understand problems or situations. Typically, you would rely on systematic planning and develop theories and ideas to solve problems.

Learning by thinking
- Logically analyzing ideas
- Systematic planning
- Acting on an intellectual understanding of a situation

ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION (AE)

Learning in this stage takes an active form—experimenting with influencing or changing situations. You would take a practical approach and be concerned with what really works, as opposed to simply watching a situation. You value getting things done and seeing the results of your influence and ingenuity.

Learning by doing
- Ability to get things done
- Risk-taking
- Influencing people and events through action

Remember:

1. The LSI gives you a general idea of how *you* view yourself as a learner.
2. Because learning is a cycle, the four stages occur time after time. While you're learning, you'll probably repeat the cycle several times.
3. The LSI does not measure your learning skills with 100% accuracy. You can find out more about how you learn by gathering information from other sources—your friends, instructors, and co-workers.

From the preceding descriptions of Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, and Active Experimentation, you may have discovered that no single mode entirely describes your learning style. This is because each person's learning style is a *combination* of the four basic learning modes. Because of this, we are often pulled in several directions in a learning situation. By combining your scores, you can see which of four *learning-style types* best describes you. They are named as follows:

- Accommodator
- Diverger
- Converger
- Assimilator

Understanding your learning-style type—its strengths and weaknesses—is a major step toward increasing your learning power and getting the most from your learning experiences.

Learning-Style Type Grid

Take your scores for the four learning modes, AC, CE, AE, and RO, listed on page 4, and subtract as follows to get your two *combination scores:*

$$\square \quad - \quad \square \quad = \quad \square \qquad\qquad \square \quad - \quad \square \quad = \quad \square$$

    AC   **CE**   **AC–CE**   **AE**   **RO**   **AE–RO**

A positive score on the AC–CE scale indicates that your score is more abstract. A negative score on the AC–CE scale indicates that your score is more concrete. Likewise, a positive or negative score on the AE–RO scale indicates that your scores are either more active or more reflective.

By marking your two combination scores, AC–CE and AE–RO, on the two lines of the following grid and plotting their point of interception, or *data point,* you can find which of the four learning styles you fall into. These four quadrants, labeled Accommodator, Diverger, Converger, and Assimilator, represent the four dominant learning styles.

The quadrant of the Learning-Style Type grid into which your data point falls shows your preferred learning style. For example: If your AC–CE score was –8 and your AE–RO score was +15, your style would fall into the Accommodator quadrant. An AC–CE score of +7 and AE–RO score of +10 would fall into the Converger quadrant. The closer the data point is to the center of the grid, the more balanced your learning style. If the data point falls near any of the far corners of the grid, you tend to rely heavily on one particular learning style.

The Four Learning-Style Types[2]

CONVERGER

Combines learning steps of **Abstract Conceptualization** and **Active Experimentation**

People with this learning style are best at finding practical uses for ideas and theories. If this is your preferred learning style, you have the ability to solve problems and make decisions based on finding solutions to questions or problems. You would rather deal with technical tasks and problems than with social and interpersonal issues. These learning skills are important for effectiveness in specialist and technology careers.

DIVERGER

Combines learning steps of **Concrete Experience** and **Reflective Observation**

People with this learning style are best at viewing concrete situations from many different points of view. Their approach to situations is to observe rather than take action. If this is your style, you may enjoy situations that call for generating a wide range of ideas, as in brainstorming sessions. You probably have broad cultural interests and like to gather information. This imaginative ability and sensitivity to feelings is needed for effectiveness in arts, entertainment, and service careers.
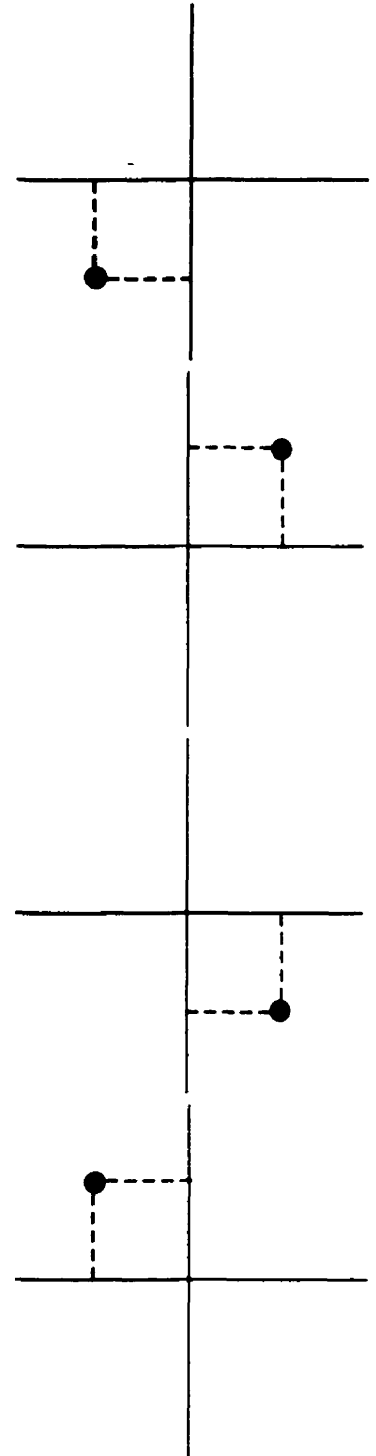
ASSIMILATOR

Combines learning steps of **Abstract Conceptualization** and **Reflective Observation**

People with this learning style are best at understanding a wide range of information and putting it into concise, logical form. If this is your learning style, you probably are less focused on people and more interested in abstract ideas and concepts. Generally, people with this learning style find it more important that a theory have logical soundness than practical value. This learning style is important for effectiveness in information and science careers.

ACCOMMODATOR

Combines learning steps of **Concrete Experience** and **Active Experimentation**

People with this learning style have the ability to learn primarily from "hands-on" experience. If this is your style, you probably enjoy carrying out plans and involving yourself in new and challenging experiences. Your tendency may be to act on "gut" feelings rather than on logical analysis. In solving problems, you may rely more heavily on people for information than on your own technical analysis. This learning style is important for effectiveness in action-oriented careers such as marketing or sales.

---

[2] The Learning-Style Inventory is based on several tested theories of thinking and creativity. The ideas behind *assimilation* and *accommodation* originate in Jean Piaget's definition of intelligence as the balance between the process of adapting concepts to fit the external world (accommodation) and the process of fitting observations of the world into existing concepts (assimilation). *Convergence* and *divergence* are the two essential creative processes identified by J.P. Guilford's structure-of-intellect model.

The ability to learn is the most important skill you can acquire. We are often confronted with new experiences or learning situations in life, in our careers, or on the job. In order to be an effective learner you have to *shift*—from getting involved (CE), to listening (RO), to creating an idea (AC), to making decisions (AE). As an adult, you have probably become better at some of these learning skills than others. You tend to rely on some skills and steps in the learning process more than others. As a result, you have developed a learning style.

Understanding your learning style helps you become aware of your strengths in some steps of the learning cycle. One way you can improve your learning effectiveness is to use those strengths when you are called upon to learn. More importantly, you can increase your effectiveness as a learner by improving your use of the steps you underuse.

Another way of understanding your learning style is to see how closely related it is to:

- choosing careers

- problem-solving

- managing people

- working as part of a team

On the following pages, you will:

- see how problem-solving relates to learning styles

- learn how to improve your learning skills

- find out which careers are closely related to certain learning styles

Understanding your learning style can make you an effective problem solver. Nearly every problem that you encounter on the job or in your life involves the following skills:

- identifying the problem

- selecting the problem to solve

- seeing different solutions

- evaluating possible results

- implementing the solution

Different pieces of the problem must be approached in different ways. Look back at your strengths and weaknesses in the four learning modes. Compare them with the problem-solving model illustrated below. If you rely heavily on Concrete Experience, you may find that you can easily identify problems that need to be worked on or solved. However, you may need to increase your ability to evaluate possible solutions, as in Abstract Conceptualization. Or you may find that your strong points rest with carrying out or implementing solutions, as in Active Experimentation. If this is so, you may need to work on carefully selecting the problem, as in Reflective Observation.

Self-Scoring LSI

Develop

Compare it with
Reality

The next section contains strategies to help you develop your learning skills.

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You can improve your ability to learn and solve problems in three ways:

1. Develop learning and work relationships with people whose learning strengths and weaknesses are opposite to yours.

2. Improve the fit between your learning-style strengths and the kinds of learning and problem-solving experiences you face.

3. Practice and develop learning skills in your areas of weakness.

FIRST STRATEGY

Develop supportive relationships. This is the easiest way to improve your learning skills. Recognize your own learning-style strengths and build on them. At the same time, value other people's *different* learning styles. Also, don't assume that you have to solve problems alone. Learning power is increased by working with others. Although you may be drawn to people who have similar learning skills, you'll learn more and experience the learning cycle more fully with friends and co-workers who have opposite learning skills.

How? If you have an abstract learning style, like a Converger, you can learn to communicate ideas more effectively by associating with people who are more concrete and people-oriented—like Divergers. A person with a more reflective style can benefit from observing the risk-taking and active experimentation of someone who is more active—like an Accommodator.

SECOND STRATEGY

Improve the match or *fit between your learning style* and *your life situation.* This is a more difficult way to achieve better learning performance and life satisfaction.

How? There are a number of ways to do this. For some people, this may mean a change of career or job to a new field where they feel more at home with the values and skills required of them. Most people, however, can improve the match between their learning style and task by reorganizing their priorities and activities. They can concentrate on those tasks and activities that lie in their areas of learning strength and rely on other people in their areas of learning weakness.

THIRD STRATEGY

Become a flexible learner. You can do this by strengthening the learning skills in which you are weak. This strategy is the most challenging, but is also the most rewarding. By becoming flexible, you will be able to cope with problems of all kinds. And, you will be more adaptable in changing situations. Because this is more difficult, it involves more time and tolerance for your own mistakes and failure.

How?

1. Develop a long-term plan. Look for improvements and payoffs over months and years, rather than right away.

2. Look for safe opportunities to practice new skills. Find situations that test your new skills but will not punish you for failure.

3. Reward yourself—becoming a flexible learner is hard work.

The chart below identifies the strengths and weaknesses of each learning style with out improvement.

Concrete Experience

ACCOMMODATOR

Strengths: Getting things done
Leadership
Risk-taking

Too much: Trivial improvements
Meaningless activity

Not enough: Work not completed on time
Impractical plans
Not directed to goals

To develop your Accommodative learning skills, practice:

- Committing yourself to objectives
- Seeking new opportunities -
- Influencing and leading others
- Being personally involved
- Dealing with people

DIVERGER

Strengths: Imaginative ability
Understanding people
Recognizing problems
Brainstorming

Too much: Paralyzed by alternatives
Can't make decisions

Not enough: No ideas
Can't recognize problems and opportunities

To develop your Divergent learning skills, practice:

- Being sensitive to people's feelings
- Being sensitive to values
- Listening with an open mind
- Gathering information
- Imagining the implications of uncertain situations

Active Experimentation   Reflective Observation

CONVERGER

Strengths: Problem-solving
Decision-making
Deductive reasoning
Defining problems

Too much: Solving the wrong problem
Hasty decision-making

Not enough: Lack of focus
No shifting of ideas
Scattered thoughts

To develop your Convergent learning skills, practice:

- Creating new ways of thinking and doing
- Experimenting with new ideas
- Choosing the best solution
- Setting goals
- Making decisions

ASSIMILATOR

Strengths: Planning
Creating models
Defining problems
Developing theories

Too much: Castles in the air
No practical application

Not enough: Unable to learn from mistakes
No sound basis for work
No systematic approach

To develop your Assimilative learning skills, practice:

- Organizing information
- Building conceptual models
- Testing theories and ideas
- Designing experiments
- Analyzing quantitative data

Abstract Conceptualization

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Concrete Experience

ACCOMMODATOR

Careers in Organizations

Fields: Management
Public Administration
Educational Administration
Banking

Jobs: Accountant
Manager/Supervisor
Administrator

Careers in Business and Promotion

Fields: Marketing
Government
Business
Retail

Jobs: Salesperson/Retailer
Politician
Public Relations Specialist
General Manager

DIVERGER

Careers in Arts and Entertainment

Fields: Literature
Theater
Television
Journalism

Jobs: Actor/Actress   Musician
Athlete   Artist
Designer

Careers in Service Organizations

Fields: Social Work
Psychology
Police
Nursing

Jobs: Counselor/Therapist
Social Worker
Personnel Manager
Planner
Management Consultant

Active Experimentation | *Reflective Observation*

CONVERGER

Careers as Specialists

Fields: Mining   Forestry
Farming   Economics

Jobs: Civil Engineer
Chemical Engineer
Production Supervisor

Careers in Technology

Fields: Engineering   Computer Science
Medicine   Physical Science

Jobs: Physician
Engineer
Computer Programmer
Medical Technician
Applied Scientist
Industrial Salesperson
Manager

ASSIMILATOR

Careers in Information

Fields: Education   Sociology
Ministry   Law

Jobs: Teacher
Writer
Librarian
Minister
College Professor

Careers in Science

Fields: Mathematics
Physical Science
Biology

Jobs: Planner
R & D Scientist
Academic Physician
Researcher
Financier

Abstract Conceptualization

Self-Scoring LSI

Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development
by David A. Kolb. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984.
The *theory* of experiential learning, with applications to education, work, and personal development.
Contains information on the validity of the Learning-Style Inventory.

User Guide for the Learning Style Inventory
by Donna Smith and David A. Kolb. Boston: McBer & Company, 1985.
A manual for teachers and trainers.

Personal Learning Guide
by Richard Baker, Nancy Dixon, and David A. Kolb. Boston: McBer & Company, 1985.
A practical guide to using training programs to increase learning.

Adaptive Learning Style
by Experience Based Learning, David A. Kolb and Richard Boyatzis.
Distributed by McBer & Company, Boston, MA 02116.
An inventory to assess your adaptability in different learning situations.

Learning Skills Profile
by Experience Based Learning, David A. Kolb and Richard Boyatzis.
Distributed by McBer & Company, Boston, MA 02116.
An instrument to compare your learning skills to your job skill demands.

Bibliography of Research on Experiential Learning and the Learning-Style Inventory
Boston: McBer & Company, updated 1992.
References to recent studies.

McBer & Company

Appendix G

Adult Learning Questionnaire

1. Why did you decide to return to school?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Are you pleased with your decision to return?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What have you learned that has been most helpful to you?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. What have you liked most about the courses and the program that you are in?

_____

_____

_____

5. What have you liked least about the courses and program that you are in?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. What characteristics of teachers did you find most helpful?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. What characteristics of teachers did you find least helpful?

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. What difficulties or problems most interfere with your ability to learn and concentrate on your studies ? (e.g. financial problems, worry, time management, etc.).

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. Please add any further comment if you wish.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

Appendix H

Letters to Teachers and Consent Form

To Interested Participants:

I am a doctoral student in Adult Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. My research focuses on English and ESL teachers' views of teaching and learning and "personal philosophy of practice" in adult education contexts. Hopefully, your involvement in this study can help you explore the way your own beliefs and values influence your teaching style and your students' learning.

I would like to meet with each teacher three times. If possible, I would like to sit in on one class that you are teaching. The interviews will last for about one-two hours. Each teacher will also be asked to complete:

1. The Zinn Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory.
2. Kolb's Learning Style Inventory.
3. Conti's Principles of Adult Learning Scale.
4. A Questionnaire
5. Teaching Strategies Check List

*Each inventory/questionnaire takes approximately fifteen minutes to complete. Each teacher also has the option of distributing an adult learning questionnaire to the students in his or her class.

All information will be confidential, and I would be very pleased to meet with you to discuss the research study in more detail. Thank you so much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Karen M. Magro

<u>Consent Form</u>

I am agreeing to participate in Karen Magro's doctoral study:

<u>Exploring English and ESL Teachers' Conceptions of Teaching</u>
<u>and Learning in Adult Education Contexts</u>

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time. I also understand that all information that I provide will be confidential and that my name will not appear in any publication.

<u>Signature of Participant</u>:

<u>Signature of Researcher</u>:

<u>Date</u>:

Appendix I

Letters from Publishers/Permission Forms

Lifelong Learning Options

Ms. Karen Magro   March 20, 1998
4-847 McMillan Avenue
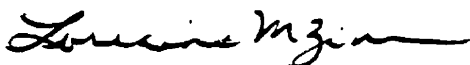Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3M0T1

This letter will verify that you have my permission to use the *Philosophy of Adult Education Inventory*© (Rev. 1994) in your doctoral study at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (The University of Toronto). A clean copy of the Inventory, suitable for reproduction, is enclosed. (I recommend double-sided printing to save on paper and costs.)

Normally, I request a $2.00 copyright fee for each individual use of the *PAEI*©. However, that fee is waived for graduate students. What I do ask is that you agree to the following conditions:

♦ <u>Do not change anything</u> on the Inventory, the Scoring Instructions or Scoring Matrix, or the "Five Philosophies of Adult Education" interpretation sheet. (As a researcher, I'm sure you share my commitment to quoting materials exactly and leaving validated instruments intact.)

♦ <u>At minimum</u>, photocopy and send to research subjects <u>pp. 3-11</u> of the 1994 revision of the *PAEI*© (copy enclosed). <u>I recommend</u> that you also include pp. 1-2 (Cover Sheet and Foreword). If you choose not to include pp. 1-2, you may want to use some of the language from the Foreword (with proper citation) in your own cover letter. A particularly helpful section would be the paragraph that suggests many different terms that may be substituted for the descriptive phrase "Adult Educator." I suggest that you <u>do not include</u> pp. 12-14 in your initial mailing.

♦ As an incentive for your research subjects, please offer to send them some interpretive information after they return the completed *PAEI*© (or you may only request their *PAEI*© scores). Remind them to keep a copy of their TOTAL SCORES; then arrange for a way that they can identify themselves for mailing purposes yet still maintain anonymity as research subjects. <u>Copy pp. 12-13 of the enclosed materials to send back to respondents who request the interpretation.</u>

♦ Unless you are given alternate guidelines, cite the reference to the *PAEI*© in the following way:

    Zinn, L. M. (1994.) *Philosophy of adult education inventory, with foreword*
        (Rev. ed.). Boulder, CO: Lifelong Learning Options.

♦ Please send me a <u>brief synopsis</u> of your dissertation proposal before you begin the research study, and a copy of your <u>abstract and reference citation</u> for the dissertation when completed.

♦ Since I work entirely independently, without benefit of university support, I would appreciate your sending a $20.00 courtesy fee to cover permission letter(s), camera-ready copy of the Inventory, and miscellaneous correspondence or phone calls.

Please let me know if I can help you in some other way. I wish you the best as you work through your dissertation research.

Sincerely,

Lorraine M. Zinn

Lorraine M. Zinn, Ph.D.

4757 West Moorhead Circle   **Phone: 303-499-0864**

Boulder, CO 80303-6157   **(llozinn@ecentral.com)**   **FAX: 303-499-7341**

Hay McBer

15 March 1999
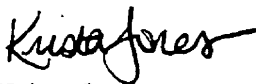
185 Cordova Street
Winnipeg MB R3N 1A2
Canada

Dear Karen Magro:

You may have permission to include a copy of the 14 page Learning Style Inventory by David A. Kolb, in the appendix of your dissertation. Please make sure that the existing copyright is also included as it appears in the booklet.

By purchasing the 10 copies of the Learning Style Inventory from us in December of 1996, you automatically were granted permission to use them for research purposes.

However, if you plan to include the paper and appendix in any electronic media such as microfiche or internet, you may not include the above mentioned booklet or inventory pages, please replace them with a listing of our contact information. Thanks very much and feel free to contact me with any questions.

Regards,

Krista Jones
Senior Customer Service and Sales Representative

HayGroup

March 15, 1999

Karen Magro
185 Cordova Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3N 1A2

RE: Your copyright permission request of 15 March

AUTHOR: John Elias and Sharan Merriam
TITLE: *Philosophical Foundations of Adult Education*
ISBN: 0-88275-971-X
PAGES: 9-11

Dear Ms. Magro:

Permission to duplicate the above-referenced material for your dissertation is granted.
There will be no charge for use of this information as long as the paper is not sold.

Please credit your material as follows:

Elias, John and Merriam, Sharan. *Philosophical Foundations of Adult Education*, 1980,
1984, Krieger Publishing Company, Malabar, Florida.

Sincerely,

Eula Schutte
Administrative Assistant

KRIEGER PUBLISHING COMPANY

January 26, 1998

Karen Magro
4-847 McNillan Ave.
Winnipeg, Manitoba
CANADA   R3M OT1

RE: Permission Request
     ADULT LEARNING METHODS, Edited by Michael Galbraith
     Pages 91-96, Principles of Adult Learning Scale, by Gary J.
     Conti

Dear Ms. Magro:

Permission to duplicate the above information, as stated in your letter of January 16, 1998, is hereby granted. Please be advised we will waive the permission charge as long as your doctoral thesis is for non commercial purposes.

Please credit your material properly citing author, title and publisher.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Stanton
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CLS