NOTE TO USERS

The Process of Becoming: A Case Study Exploration of the Transition from Student Teacher to ESL Teacher

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October 20, 2003

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 0-612-98426-5
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 0-612-98426-5

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank Alana and Sara for allowing me to share their journey into their new profession. I hope it was as rich a voyage of discovery for them as it has been for me.

My heartfelt thanks go to my supervisor, Dr. Mary Maguire, who inspired me to believe that I could undertake a project such as this. Her patience has been endless (!) and her encouragement invaluable.

To my husband and best friend, the "smartest man I know", my deepest thanks. Twenty-two years ago he showed me how to learn, and he has been my inspiration ever since.

My family and friends deserve my thanks for their love and support throughout the process, and for understanding when I disappeared from the radar for weeks at a time.

My friends Sonia Faremo and Ursula Lord's careful editing of the final version was much appreciated. Their ability to see the forest when all I could see were the trees was of inestimable value.

I thank Denise Greffe for formatting the final document. Her virtuoso performance in word processing gave me a profound understanding of what I would have been in for if I had tried to do it myself.

Finally, my thanks goes to Starbucks on Parc and Laurier and to The Second Cup at Ste. Catherine and Guy for unknowingly providing me with a "Clean, Well-Lighted Place" where I could plug in the laptop and be soothed by ample servings of cheesecake and tea.

ABSTRACT

This inquiry is a phenomenological exploration of the development of two student teachers undergoing their practicum experience in my secondary classroom. It examines the changes in identity that the student teachers underwent and how those changes came about. The goals motivating this inquiry were (1) to understand the process through which the transition from student teacher to teacher occurred, and (2) to understand what influence the people surrounding the student teachers, such as the cooperating teacher and the supervisor, had on the process. The analysis closely follows Wenger's (1998) work in Communities of Practice and Schon's (1983, 1987) work in Reflective Practice. The data consists of audio-taped de-briefing sessions attended by the student teachers and the cooperating teacher, the cooperating teacher's Reflective Log, and a student teacher's journal. The inquiry supports the idea that the practicum experience in and of itself is important in the dramatic change in identity that student teachers experience. Also important is the "close accompaniment" of student teachers by the cooperating teacher in order to enact the reflective dialogue by which student teachers learn to become teachers.

RÉSUMÉ

La présente recherche est une exploration phénoménologique du développement de deux stagiaires sous ma supervision dans ma classe de secondaire. Elle examine les changements d'attitude qui se sont produits et comment ils se sont manifestés. Les objectifs de la recherche étaient, en premier lieu, de comprendre comment s'était effectuée la transformation de stagiaire à professeur et, en second lieu, de comprendre l'influence de l'entourage des stagiaires sur le processus, notamment celle du professeur-maître et celle du superviseur. L'analyse s'appuie sur les recherches de Wenger (1998), sur les communautés de pratiques et sur celles de Schon (1983;1987) au sujet de la réflexion sur la pratique. Les données sont constituées des discussions enregistrées entre le professeur-maître et les stagiaires, du journal de bord du professeur-maître et de celui d'un des stagiaires. Cette recherche pose comme hypothèse que l'expérience du stage est fondamentale dans le changement d'attitude des stagiaires. Par ailleurs, *l'accompagnement constant* du stagiaire par le professeur-maître est un facteur déterminant dans la construction du dialogue réflectif qui amène le stagiaire à devenir professeur.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Chapter Overview

This introductory chapter is divided into two parts. Part one begins with a vignette describing my preparation for the arrival of my two student teachers, Sara and Alana, on October 18, 1996. I follow this vignette with a discussion of what provoked my interest in studying student teacher development, and an examination of student teacher behavior before and after the first practicum experience. I conclude Part one with a summary of my research goals.

Part two of the chapter develops extensively the context for the inquiry, *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu.* I also describe the people involved in the inquiry, that is, the student teachers, my students, and me, the cooperating teacher. I also discuss my role as the researcher. The chapter ends with an overview of the research paradigm, and the research questions that guided my inquiry.

Part 1 – Why Study Student Teachers?

Beginnings

October 18, 1996, 7:50 am...the crowded city bus pulls to a stop and I struggle to get off at the corner behind the school. Brushing past uniform-clad students heavy with wet, book-filled backpacks, I struggle through the door of the bus and emerge into the cold air of the fall morning. Younger students, with their kilts and knee socks feel the chill of the air and rush across the street toward the school. The older students, most too cool to be wearing their uniforms outside of the school building, walk more sedately, except for the group who fill the bus shelter lingering to have a last cigarette and to wait for their friends on the next bus. I pull up my hood, cross the street, and move with the students down the block toward the back of the school, all of us braced against the cold October wind and the sharp, stinging rain.

Absorbed in running through the day ahead of me, I gratefully enter the building and shake off the rain. "Student teachers - two of them are due in today," I remember as I head into the noisy secondary five locker room. I weave through the groups of students chatting and copying last minute homework, exchanging a few "hi's" on the way. I flash a smile and a wave at Marcel Duchamps, the Secondary five level director, as I stride by his desk in the middle of the room,

and I hastily exit into the long, low series of hallways that wind through the basement, and lead me up to my first floor office.

> Arriving at my office, I shake down my hood and unlock the door. As I enter I cast a glance at my desk, confirming that all the material I need for today's test is ready. My office mates Penny, the secondary 4 ESL teacher, and Martine, the secondary five physics teacher, have not yet arrived. I shake off my coat, hang it up in the closet and quickly run a comb through my damp hair. "This isn't going to work," I think as I survey the three desks in the small room. "Bringing two student teachers in here is really going to crowd things – and Penny has a student coming too... wait a sec – there is an empty office at the end of the corridor that has a lot of desk space and holds only one server...maybe I can snag that for the next eight weeks...." Five minutes until the student teachers are due. I dig into my school bag and Lorraine Stirling pokes her head in the door. "Your student teachers are here" she grins, "and they look soooo young!" I laugh wryly, noting that Lorraine is only about twenty-six, and I slip out of the office and head toward the reception.
>
> (Reflective Log, Oct 21, 1996)

I have used this narrative scenario, reconstructed from my notes from the first entry in my reflective log on October 21, 1996, to introduce my inquiry into the development of two student teachers who taught with me in my classroom during the Autumn semester, 1996.

This is the story of becoming -of how two university students, Alana and Sara, came into my classroom as nervous pre-service teachers and how, over an eight-week practicum period, they became confident teachers who were ready to take on classes of their own.

How My Interest in Studying Student Teachers was Piqued

I am interested in discovering the process whereby student teachers become teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL). As both a supervisor of student teachers for a large, English university in Montreal, and as a cooperating teacher at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, I have observed student teachers both before and after their

practicum experiences, and throughout their seven-week practicum period. The most striking feature of this apprenticeship process is the difference between many of the student teachers' attitudes and self-confidence before and after the practicum. Before the experience, they were members of a community of students concerned with satisfying their university's criteria for passing courses and gaining experience for their upcoming careers as teachers. Faced with the practicum experience, they were insecure, frightened, and uncertain about how to function as teachers. After the experience, they had somehow become members of the teaching community. They had become confident, aware, and concerned for their students and their well-being.

I remember my first opportunity to observe this difference. I was to be supervising student teachers, and I attended a briefing meeting before the Autumn 1994 practicum in Teaching English as Second Language (TESL). At this meeting, student teachers received final practicum information from their university educator and met with their assigned university supervisors. This was my first experience as a supervisor. I was responsible for twelve student teachers who were in their third and final year of the teacher education program. It was immediately apparent to me that my student teachers appeared to lack confidence and seemed to be "panic stricken" about the impending experience. I inferred from this meeting that they had many fears and concerns about themselves as teachers, and about the expectations of their university department, their cooperating teachers, and their supervisors. They were very aware that this was one of the two practica that would determine whether they graduated and became teachers, or failed and left the program in their final year. At the end of the session, they swarmed around me, peppering me with questions: "*What do you really expect of us?*" asked one, while

simultaneously another asked "*Do you really expect us to be good at this, because you know, we've never done this before*!" Another voice, more defensive, whined, "*How do you expect us to do this with no experience?*" and "*How are you going to grade us?*" chimed in yet another. These questions had already been asked and answered during the session, and indeed, according to the teacher educator, they had been addressed during the semester prior, but the answers had not been perceived as such and had apparently not soothed their panic. I recall sensing that somehow, although I knew they were listening carefully, they just weren't hearing the answers. They slowly left the briefing session, still appearing uncertain about the upcoming practicum experience. I felt that all my reassurances and promises of all necessary support had had little impact.

However, the changes that I observed in the student teachers after the practicum were dramatic. At the debriefing session seven weeks later, there was a buzz in the air that had been missing in the briefing session. Instead of the frequently asked questions "*How do you expect us to do this with no experience,*" and "*What do you expect from us?*" and "*Do you expect us to be perfect when you visit us?*" I heard assertive statements. I heard statements about problems that before the practicum these student teachers could not have imagined. They were confident and excited. Some shared such comments as "*This is what **we** did about (any given problem) at **our school**,*" and "*Oh, well this is what I did when that happened...*" and "***We** have to do something about the terrible textbooks in **our schools**!*"

Suddenly the "I" had become "we" and the previously foreboding "the school" had become "our school". This transformation from pre-practicum panic to post-practicum self-assurance was an amazing and eye-opening experience for me. It appeared that the

students, who previously had little or no concept of themselves as teachers, had become part of a professional community, speaking with expertise and self-assurance about how they and/or their cooperating teachers had handled a multitude of situations during the practicum.

Examining the Pre-Practicum/Post-Practicum Transformation

How had this transformation happened? How had they moved from a state of near panic to such a degree of self-confidence? I decided to examine this transition by observing two student teachers going through the process of becoming teachers from the closer vantage point of my own classroom. I wanted to identify the factors that contributed to this transition. The questions that intrigued me were: What are the processes that interact in the professional development of an ESL teacher? What impact do the people most closely involved with a student teacher, such as the cooperating teacher and the university supervisor, have on the process? How does a student teacher move from feelings of panic and uncertainty to self-confidence, enthusiasm, and excitement?

To do this, I began by working within the framework of teacher research and reflective practice. That is, I undertook an inquiry that "generates questions and reflects teachers' desires to make sense of their experiences" (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1993:4). As both the cooperating teacher and the researcher in this project, I knew I would have to examine my own teaching practices in order to share them with my student teachers. Here I drew on Schon's (1983, 1987) ideas of knowing-in-action, reflecting-in-action and reflecting-on-action. To share with the student teachers what I knew, I would first have to examine what it was that I knew: I would have to examine the tacit knowledge that I

possessed as a classroom teacher, and which constitutes my "knowing-in-action," and make it conscious knowledge. I would also have to examine how I was able, in the midst of teaching, to reflect-in-action and act on that reflection to impart a change on the unfolding events in my classroom. Reflecting-on-action, that is, reflecting on teaching after-the-fact, was an essential part of our co-operating teacher-student teacher discussions, and constituted much of how Sara, Alana, and I made sense of the events that we encountered each day in the classroom.

In looking over my data and asking myself what happened to student teachers during the practicum process, I realized that what had happened to Alana and Sara was akin to a transformation in identity. Wenger's work on communities of practice (1998) helped me to understand *what* had happened to Sara and Alana throughout their practicum. Wenger defines a Community of Practice, as a "social theory of learning" (p. 4) which develops the idea that an identity is developed in practice among people who are engaged in the process of practicing. Alana and Sara were in exactly this situation.

Schon's work in Reflective Practice (1983, 1987, 1995), and Wenger's work in Communities of Practice (1998) form the backbone of my inquiry. Wenger's work gave me insight into *what* had happened to Alana and Sara as they progressed through the practicum, and from Schon's work I got insight as to *how* the transformation had occurred.

My Goals for the Research

My goal is to contribute to the reflective practice research (Schon; 1983, 1987, 1995), and to the research on communities of practice that teachers can create when they undertake research in their classrooms. I hope that my analysis of the day-to-day processes

and progress of student teachers and the roles played by the people surrounding the student teachers, such as the cooperating teacher, the university supervisor, and the Office Responsible for Student Teaching, will be a starting point for insights into what needs to be done when mentoring and educating ESL teachers. What is useful? What is not useful? What needs to be rethought? Is enough attention paid to the affective domain or is there more concentration on theory and approach? Can we do anything more? Do we need to? In answering these questions I hope to contribute to research on reflective practice and communities of practice in two ways: I will contribute to the "local" knowledge that is created by and for teachers and to the "public" knowledge that informs university researchers. (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1993:4)

I began this inquiry while I was a cooperating teacher working with my two student teachers, Alana and Sara (pseudonyms), in the autumn semester of 1996. I observed the student teachers and kept a written record of my observations, thought-provoking events that occurred and my reactions to these events. This resulted in a phenomenological account of my experiences as a cooperating teacher in the form of a reflective log. Alana, Sara and I audio taped the after-class debriefing sessions throughout the student teaching period. Alana allowed me to use her reflective journal in which she was recording her student teaching experiences for one of her university courses. In addition, I kept notes on their classroom experiences and analyzed their teaching very carefully in terms of the evaluation forms from their university.

Part 2 – The Context of the Inquiry, and the People Involved in It.

The Student Teachers

Both Sara and Alana come from Ontario. Alana is from Ottawa and Sara is from Toronto. Alana is tall, with shoulder-length brown hair and glasses. She was twenty-five years old at the time of the inquiry. Sara was twenty-one years old, shorter than Alana, with short blond hair. Both were outgoing by nature. Smiles and laughter were quick to appear. However, they had different ways of interacting with the world around them. Alana was the more serious in character; reflective and well-organized, and with a good sense of humor. She spoke often of the responsibilities related to teaching. By her own admission, she really liked "a tight ship". She made sense of the world by reacting quickly to the experience unfolding around her and verbalizing her thoughts and feelings about it. Sara also had a good sense of humor, and made sense of her world by observing and listening, and interacting when she had analyzed the situation. Although they were uncertain in the new environment of the school, neither was shy. Alana admitted discovering a "goofy" extroverted personality in the classroom, an exuberance she hadn't known she possessed:

> A: but you know what's funny is um, I wound up – and I never would have expected this, being far more comical than –than -than I would have expected, I mean you know, like the jokes, I didn't know where they were coming from sometimes, why I am saying these really silly things?... That's not part of me that has sort of surfaced in any other situation. ... Cool! I got to act like a real goof!
>
> (Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

Sara said that being in front of a class appealed to her "...unconsciously – no not unconscious, very *conscious* longing to be an actress".

Sara and Alana were enrolled in a program for Teaching English as a Second

Language (TESL). As students from outside the province of Quebec, they were expected to complete a four-year Bachelor of Education Degree, rather than the three-year degree required by in-province students. When they arrived at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, they were in their fourth year. This practicum was the first of two that students in their final year were expected to complete. Neither Alana nor Sara had had any previous teaching experience. Alana was enrolled in the English as a Second Language/French as a Second Language Program at the secondary level. Sara was enrolled in the English as a Second Language primary/secondary option. Sara had expected to do her primary practicum first, as her classmates were doing. However much to her surprise, only days before the beginning of the practicum she discovered that the school in which she had been placed was in fact a secondary school. Apparently it had been very difficult to place her in a primary school as she has a limited knowledge of French. Some schools had simply refused to take her because of this.

This issue of student teachers' being able to speak French in the French school system is a source of stress for the Office Responsible for Student Teaching, which struggles to fulfill its obligations to its students by placing them in schools for their practicum period. It is also stressful for the student teachers from outside the province who have chosen to study at this English university, and who must live the stress of the linguistic tensions that exist in the schools, as well as all the other stresses inherent in the student teaching practica.

Alana had a good knowledge of French. She had spent her primary years in Montreal, her secondary years in Ottawa, and had studied for a year in a lycée in France. Consequently, she had had much more exposure to the French language than Sara, who

had grown up in the Toronto area, and had attended a private high school before beginning her university training in Montreal. She had spent the year prior to the practicum in a year-abroad program in an Australian University. The only French language instruction that Sara had received had been in her French classes in high school.

Both Sara and Alana came from white, middle class backgrounds. Sara's family was self-employed in the restaurant business. Because she had attended a private high school, she was not too surprised at what she experienced at *Marie, Mère de Dieu.* Alana's father was an educator at a prominent Canadian University and her mother worked for a political party in Ottawa. She initially found the atmosphere at the school somewhat cold and sterile. In her reflective journal, Alana wrote:

> In fact, I couldn't help but notice a distinct lack of the students in the walls of this institution. The hallways do not demonstrate the work of the students so much as the work of professional photographers...I noted that student art work seems to be displayed only in a corner of the school, and very little of it has changed in the two months since I have been at the high school. I have to admit, I found this lack of evidence of the students' presence to be disappointing, and I found the school to look rather clinical.
>
> (Alana's Journal, Week of October 21-25, 1996)

She compared the school to the lycée where she had studied in France and had experienced a "distinct lack of community." She states: "I had found this lycée cold and unwelcoming and although I believe there is a definite sense of school spirit at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, I still sense a certain coldness in the air" (Alana's Journal, Week of October 21-25, 1996).

Prior to the practicum experience, Sara and Alana had not known each other. I had never met either of them. All student teachers must telephone their co-operating teachers before the practicum period begins to find out which levels they are teaching, what dress-code they might need to be aware of and adhere to, or what preparations they might need

to make before the practicum begins. These phone calls were the only contact I had with Alana and Sara before the beginning of their teaching at *Marie, Mère de Dieu.*

The Teaching Context: Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu

Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu is a private francophone Catholic high school in the north end of Montreal that was owned and administrated by the sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame (CND) until 1995, when the school reverted to a lay administration called the *Conseil d'administration.* The buildings remained the property of the CND. Three sisters of the CND continued to hold the three key positions in the day-to-day running of the school: the *directrice générale*, the *directrice des services pédagogique*s, and the *directrice des services financiers et de la comptabilité.* There were some sisters still teaching at that time, although many had retired, and were working in other capacities in the school, such as receptionists, assistants to the *directrice,* or running the school's recycling program. Some of them still lived in the school, including the *directrice*, *Soeur* Marie-Odette.

For its first forty years, *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* was a school for girls. In 1996, when the data for this inquiry were collected, the school had just become officially co-educational. This had been necessary in order to maintain a consistent number of students and in order to compete with other schools in the area, in particular with a new school that had opened in Darville (pseudonym), a suburb of Montreal. Since close to half of our students come from Darville, we risked losing our students to that school. As a pre-emptive measure, the school decided to become co-educational to make up for any possible loss, and boys were admitted into secondary one. The first group of boys graduated in 2001, and the school is now completely co-educational.

In the 1996-1997 school year, 1,685 students were enrolled at *Marie, Mère de Dieu.* The majority, 1,471, spoke French at home, sixty-five spoke English, twenty-nine spoke Arabic and twenty-nine spoke an Asian Language. The population also included students whose mother tongues were Greek, Italian, or Creole. In secondary one and secondary five, the levels that Alana and Sara taught throughout the inquiry, there were 374 and 324 students respectively. Nearly half of the students (792) came from Darville, a suburb close to Montreal. Five hundred and twenty-seven lived in the Greater Montreal area, on the South Shore, or north of Montreal. Those who lived in Darville were privileged with school bus service to and from school, as they still are today. This reflects the importance of this clientele. Students from other areas used public transport or relied on parents for transportation. These are still popular transport options today. In the mornings, the bus routes to the school are crowded with backpack-laden students, and the roads surrounding the school teem with the slowed traffic of parents dropping their children off for the day.

How Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu Makes Its Values Visible

Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu's Mission

In the *Annuaire 1996-1997*, the school publishes the *Objectifs généraux.* These *objectifs* are the six aspects that the school seeks to develop in each child, to the best of his or her ability. They appear in the *Annuaire* in the following order:

- ASPECT INTELLECTUEL : Méthode de pensée impliquant effort, qualité, rigueur scientifique.
- ASPECT PHYSIQUE : Développement sain et harmonieux du corps.
- ASPECT SOCIAL : Insertion progressive favorisant le développement de l'autonomie personnelle.
- ASPECT AFFECTIF : Développement personnel par la connaissance de

soi, de ses besoins, de ses valeurs.

- ASPECT CULTUREL : Contacts directs avec les sources privilégiées de la culture.
- ASPECT SPIRITUEL : Expression de la vie chrétienne dans des engagements concrets.

(*Annuaire, p.6-7)*

In the *Annuaire*, a brief explanation of each aspect is accompanied by a photo (Appendix A).

The Emphasis on Science and Technology at Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu.

The first *Objectif* above seeks among other things, to develop scientific rigor, and the school prides itself in its strength in the sciences and technology. Half of the girls in the school graduate having taken all the sciences and math courses that the school offers. This emphasis on science is the basis on which the reputation of the school is built. At the time of the inquiry, technology was (and still is) in the forefront. In 1996-1997, the school was concentrating on entering the information age. There were approximately 160 computers that were hooked up to the Internet and that were available for student use. Forty portable computers were available to be used by students and staff as needed. Our *directrice*, *Soeur* Marie-Odette, informed us that "you can have as many as 300 portable computers if you can seriously justify their use." Students followed computer courses and some classes were beginning to actively include the use of computers as part of their curriculum. There were many professional development seminars on software and computers for the staff. At our first staff meeting of the1996 school year, *Soeur* Marie-Odette advised the teachers that "you must begin to learn how to use computers and think about how to integrate them into your classes, because this is the future of education." She told that us that "you must not let your lack of technological knowledge with respect

to computers prevent the students from fully entering the 21st century."

Projet Culture

A concurrent project to our embarking on the road to technology was "*projet culture,*" a history and culture project that included all teachers at all levels of the school. In its nascency in the 1996-1997 school year, it is now in full operation. The idea of the *projet* is to ensure that students become culturally well-rounded, and not only scientifically able and technologically literate. Each grade level is responsible for a period in history. Secondary one covers Antiquity. Secondary two is responsible for the Medieval period, while secondary three studies the Renaissance. Secondary four and five cover the Industrial Age and the 20th Century, respectively. Each teacher is to make an effort to intertwine elements from the relevant historical period into his or her course, be it Physics or Physical Education. This aspect of the curriculum is not usually evaluated; thus, teachers are free to implement the project in various ways. A teacher can create culture *capsules* that can be one or two classes long, or even less. Alternatively, longer thematic units can be integrated into the material being taught. In secondary two for example, the teachers use the construction of the medieval castle as a way of exploring geometry. In French and English classes, novels can be selected according to the assigned historical period of the level. In secondary five English, we focus on the 20th Century. My students and I study the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Lee, 1982) and we work on Human Rights, drawing on historical events and documentation from the 20th Century such as Martin Luther King's leadership in the Civil Rights Movement. When longer units are the preferred method of presentation, or as in English, when novels representative of a time period are a large part of the curriculum, we can and do evaluate the students' work.

To further create a portrait of the school's ethos, the locker rooms and hallways specific to each level of the school have been painted and/or decorated to reflect the period of history covered by that level. For example, the secondary one hallway has a large timeline painted down the corridor, upon which are the important dates and events of Roman Antiquity. There are scenes of antiquity painted on the walls (Photo 1), and each classroom is designated by a roman numeral. For the medieval period in secondary two, each classroom takes the name of a medieval castle and a large crest of that castle hangs beside each classroom door (Photo 2). Each class, instead of a president, has a king or queen to lead them. Their locker room walls resemble the ramparts of a castle (Photo 3).

Photo1: Antiquity scene in Secondary 1 hallway

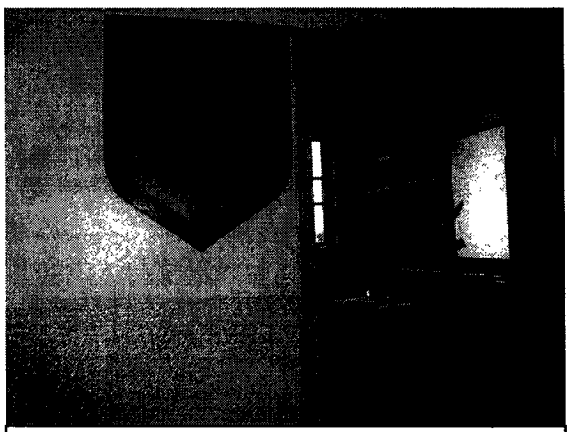

Photo 2: Medieval Crest at classroom doorway

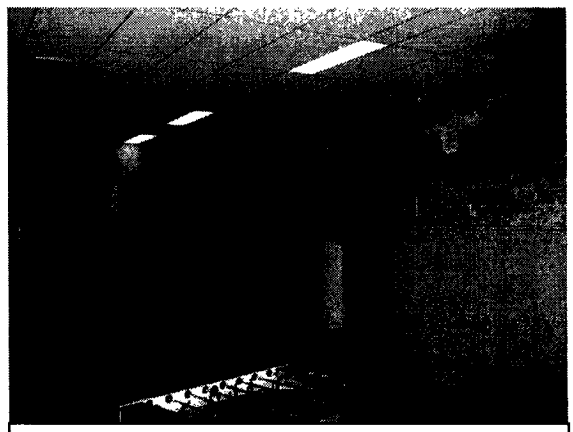

Photo 3: Castle ramparts in Secondary 2 locker room

To fit in with the secondary three theme of the Renaissance, the English classes in this level create a Renaissance museum of sorts where they choose Renaissance works of art, research them, display copies of them and, to practice their English skills, they guide their classmates and teachers through their museum. The secondary three teachers practice

for months toward the end of the year to dance a Renaissance minuet for the students at the end-of -year celebration. Secondary four has a life-sized portrait of Napoleon in their corridor, and their locker room wall has been painted in an Impressionist scene (Photo 4).

Photo 4: Impressionist scene in Secondary 4 locker room

The students prepare presentations throughout the year on topics of their choice in the time period of the Industrial Age. The Secondary five theme is the 20th Century. The teachers have created a video overview of the century covering all the major historical events in terms of politics, history, economics, and cinema, among others. The video is shown to the students as a surprise treat at the beginning of the year, as a way to launch the project. The secondary five locker-room is painted a stylized version of a movie set (Photo 5).

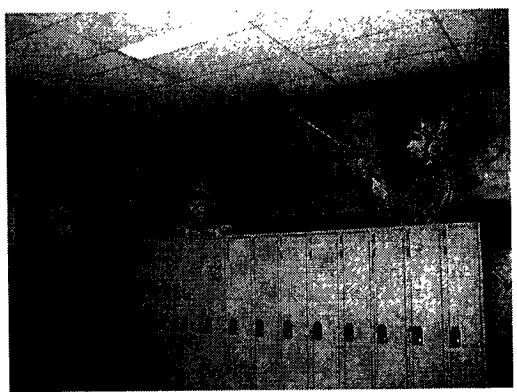

Photo 5: Movie Set scene on Secondary 5 locker room wall

Many teachers find *projet culture* very exciting and use it as a way to communicate their own passions and interests to the students. My secondary five ESL colleague and I feel particularly lucky as the 20th Century is an interest that we share, and it fits well into our ESL program. Other teachers find it to be yet another burden on their already overloaded shoulders and crowded curricula. How much of this project a teacher must include in his or her program is flexible; thus teachers can incorporate as much or as little history as they like, and as much as makes sense within their curricula.

Efficiency is Everything

This is a school that functions very smoothly and efficiently. Everything is orderly and runs as expected.

Everything that is done is planned months ahead of time so there are never any surprises. On my first day at the school, February1st, 1994, when I was most concerned with essentials such as finding my classroom on time for class, or searching for the nearest restroom, I was dumbfounded when the *la soeur* who was my level director sat me down to explain in colorful detail, my role in an activity that was to take place on March 22. It was hard not to sense the high level of organization, and, not being organized in quite the same way myself, I set about doing my job and conforming to the deadlines set out for me.

There is a high standard of professionalism exhibited by the administration, to which the staff is expected to rise. Teachers rise to meet the standard set by the administration in much in the same way that the students rise to meet the standards set by their teachers. I sometimes feel as if the administration-staff relationship mimics that of the teacher-student relationship. To illustrate this, I have included a vignette describing the interaction I had with a superior the first few months of my arrival at *Marie, Mère de Dieu*:

Being Called on the Carpet...

> When I arrived at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, I brought with me eleven years of experience with teaching ESL at multiple levels in a variety of circumstances in various countries around the world. Adapting to different circumstances has become second nature to me, and this was simply one more circumstance to which I was busily adapting. Apparently, I had adapted too easily. One day, after I had been at the school for about a week, my level director "*Soeur* Gertrude" told me, very sweetly and conversationally, that I was "*independent*". I was warmed by her recognition of a quality that I take pride in. "How nice" I thought, and

> smiled and replied modestly in my rusty French that it was just my way of doing things - figuring things out for myself and doing them with a minimum of fuss and bother to other people. I was halfway down the hall when it suddenly hit me. The English translation for the French "*independant*" is "snob". I had been insulted, not complimented! My colleagues explained to me that I had not needed *Soeur* Gertrude enough. Preferring to find things out on my own rather than disturb her for minor things, I had somehow committed the sin of not being dependent enough to allow her to exercise her leadership. As a result of that breach of etiquette, I often found myself called 'on the carpet' that year for a series of very minor infractions, most of which I had either been unaware of committing, being as new as I was to the school, or that I had not actually committed. I felt ridiculously like I was a student being 'picked on' by my teacher. Having this kind of relationship with a superior was something that I had never before encountered in my professional life, and I found it very unsettling.
>
> (Reconstructed from Memory, 2001)

At the time of this incident, I remember feeling angry and hurt at being misunderstood. As I began researching school documents for this inquiry, I discovered that one of the school's stated mandates is to encourage independence in the students. I found myself wondering how much independence could be encouraged in the students when independence in the staff was a threat to this level director.

Wearing the Uniform at Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu

Students at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* are expected to wear uniforms. The uniform for the 1996-1997 school year included a variety of options in skirts and shirts, pants (for the boys), sweaters and socks/tights, all white, navy blue, and teal green or some combination of the three. Street shoes in discreet styles and colors matching the uniform were expected. Sneakers were not. Discrete make-up was allowed in the upper levels. Hair color that was not mainstream was not allowed. Neither were visible body piercings or any jewelry that might be considered unsubtle.

The exact specifics of the uniform, that is, what constitutes the uniform for class, physical education, and for laboratories is spelled out each year in a document called

Annuaire, which is given to parents when their child starts attending the school. The parents whose children began *Marie, Mère de Dieu* during the year of the study would have received the *Annuaire 1996-1997.* The students receive an agenda at the beginning of each school year. This agenda, intended to help students organize their time, includes a list of all of the rules of the school. Among these rules are the ones concerning physical appearance. The following were taken from the student agenda of 1996-1997:

RÈGLEMENTS

> 7.1 Coiffure
> La coiffure est toujours soignée et sans recherche exagérée. Aucune coupe ou couleur excentrique (crane rasé no 2, port de bandeau et de la casquette, etc.) n'est autorisée. Les cheveux des garçons ne doivent pas excéder le col de la chemise.
>
> 7.2 Maquillage et bijoux
> Le maquillage doit être discret; les bijoux, petits et non-distrayant. Les boucles de nez, le tatouage apparent, les colliers et chaînes de toutes sortes évoquant la violence ou l'appartenance à un groupe quelconque ne sont pas tolérés.
>
> 7.4 L'uniforme du Collège est obligatoire tous les jours. Il doit être bien porté dès que revêtu, quelle que soit l'heure et quel que soit l'endroit. ...Les jupes courtes ne sont pas tolérées. ...Aucun signe distinctif n'est accepté.
>
> (Agenda, *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, 1996-1997)

Students are expected to wear the uniform with pride while in the school, on the surrounding streets and on school-sanctioned outings. Any student found not conforming to the standard may be reported to his or her level director. In secondary five in the 1996-1997 year, there was no need to inform the student that this was being done. Three infractions resulted in a detention. Three detentions resulted in a one-day expulsion. In the vignette below, I talk about the students' reactions and thoughts about wearing their uniforms, which I have gathered from speaking to the students, and working in levels other than secondary one and five:

Student Thoughts and Reactions to the School Uniform

Most students feel constrained by the uniform and are not proud of it. There are a few who appreciate not having to think about what they wear in the morning. This is the case especially in secondary five where the uniform is less and less a point of rebellion. Indeed, some students have finally become weary of the competition over who arrives in the locker room in the morning wearing the most fashionable clothing. For them, the uniform is actually a relief.

For the boys in secondary one, the only form of explicit rebellion possible is wearing white instead of dark socks, or not wearing a belt. There is, however, much variation in how the uniform is worn among the girls. In secondary one, the girls are small and obedient. They are very aware that they are the youngest in the school and that they have not yet established a place for themselves in the school community. The girls in this level obediently wear their skirts conspicuously to the knees, obeying school rules and their parents, who no doubt have the practical and economical idea that their daughters will grow into them. However, in secondary two, with their places in their classes and in the school more firmly established, and with a keen interest in the boys in the class beginning, these girls' skirts get shorter and shorter, as the girls discover that they can be rolled at the waist. If they fold their blouse, rather than tuck it in, they can hide the bulge created by the roll. They truly appear to believe that this is an effective disguise, and that none of their teachers can tell that their skirts are rolled and their blouses are not tucked in. This practice continues in the later grades, where, as the girls grow, it becomes less and less necessary to actually roll the skirt to shorten it. Some girls in the upper grades have been seen to sport boxer shorts under their skirts - all the easier to sit more comfortably or walk up stairs without having to be concerned about the whereabouts of their skirts on their bodies and what they might be revealing. In secondary five, it is less a form of rebellion or enticement than a desire not to spend money on a new skirt when graduation is imminent in June.

(Annotation to data, August 2003)

Throughout the eight years that I have been at the school, rules about the uniform have always been clear: the enforcement of these rules, however, has not been consistent, for a variety of reasons. Some teachers are very strict about enforcing the rules. The more authoritarian teachers have been known to use the uniform sanctions as yet one more form of power over problematic students. To some teachers, the blatant disrespect of the uniform code speaks volumes about the character of the student who is guilty of an infraction of the rule: he or she (most often she) is deemed rebellious, defiant, and

somehow lacking in morals.

Other teachers, particularly those of us teaching secondary five, feel that persecuting students to the extent of expulsion for uniform transgressions takes too much time and energy that we and the students could be better using elsewhere. If we were to report every untucked shirt, every too-short or rolled-up skirt, or any of the other possible uniform breaches, we would spend a good part of our day in our level director's office writing up all these transgressions. We don't have the time, so we have come to terms with enforcing the rules in our own way: At the beginning of the year, we all make an effort to be consistent. We warn the students that a "blitz" is imminent - that is, on the first period of a given day, we will be checking that everyone is properly wearing the uniform, and if they are not, sanctions will be imposed. After that, things get a bit sporadic. We are simply too busy to deal with uniforms problems. Much of the time, many of us don't even notice. When we do, we find it easier to deal with these problems on the spot. When a skirt is outrageously short, or a student is in extreme disarray, I simply tell them to fix the problem, then we both move on with our day. Some are more obstinate than others, some will try to make me believe that a shirt folded under is a tucked-in shirt, but it is rare that a student will outright refuse. We teachers have negotiated the canonical rules that the school believes should be enforced versus the non-canonical reality of how things need to be done in order for us to more effectively do our job.

Teachers too, have a uniform of sorts. It is not documented anywhere, but we are told about it when we are hired. Women must wear skirts or dresses and hose even when it is thirty-four degrees Celsius outside. Men are required to wear a shirt, tie and dress pants. Reaction to this is mixed. Female teachers feel that the dress code is sexist and that

as adults we should be able to make our own decisions about how we dress. There is a feeling that the administration would not trust us to dress professionally if pants were allowed. It seems that it might be a slippery slope; that our interpretations of what constitutes "professional" would vary and eventually disintegrate. While we all acknowledge that the rule is sexist, and although we would welcome wearing pants as an option, many of us in secondary five, myself included, also believe that as long as the students are held to a standard of "dressing well,", and if "dressing well" is defined as wearing skirts, then we as teachers and role models should also be prepared to wear skirts.

Student teachers doing practica at *Marie, Mère de Dieu* are required to conform to the teachers' dress code. During the first phone call from the student teachers, before they begin the practicum, I break the news about not being able to wear pants. Most, aware that their teacher educator and their Office Responsible for Student Teaching require that student teachers conform to the rules of their host schools, scramble to make arrangements to borrow the appropriate clothing, if necessary. However, one student teacher was outright offended. She tried to change her placement, but to no avail. Alana and Sara had no difficulty with the rule. Alana had simply accepted it as a condition of her placement with no further discussion of the matter. Sara was a private school graduate who had lived the experience of wearing a uniform, and so she did not see it as a problem. She mentioned, in fact, that her school had been much stricter about the uniform than *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* appeared to be.

The Students in this Inquiry

The students taught by the student teachers were involved in this inquiry by virtue of the fact that they were in the classes assigned to the student teachers. They were not in

any way the focus of the inquiry. However, they are discussed in the context of how the student teachers grappled with the classroom issues that arose as they entered into the complexities of teaching real classes.

Sara and Alana taught three groups of secondary five female students: one group of thirty-seven, one of thirty-five, and one of twenty-seven. These students were approximately sixteen to seventeen years of age. They also taught one group of thirty-seven co-educational secondary one students aged twelve to thirteen. The total number of students in their groups was 136. All of these groups were considered 'regular', as opposed to 'enriched' groups. Regular groups reflect a somewhat more homogenous francophone population than the enriched groups, which are more often composed of students having languages other than French as their mother tongue. Students in enriched groups are often already fluent in English. Of course, there are exceptions to this. There are very strong francophone students in enriched classes, and students whose mother tongue is not French, but who are stronger in, or more comfortable in French than in English, can be found in regular groups.

The Cooperating Teacher: My Role in the Inquiry

I am a classroom teacher of English as a second language. This is my day-to-day reality and has been for the past sixteen years. I have accumulated a knowledge base about classroom teaching over these years, and I have formulated assumptions about the nature of teaching, some of which are still tacit and remain unexamined. I have also worked with student teachers in the classroom at the rate of four to six a year for eight years. I am currently the head of the English Language Department, and full-time teacher at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, where I have been teaching for the last eight years.

During this time, I have also served as a supervisor of student teachers in a large English-language university. Before I did this, I spent four years in the Quebec public school system, teaching two years each of both primary and secondary. I also taught ESL for seven years to adults and international students in China, Hong Kong, and Vancouver. This is my history, my professional experience that I bring with me to this inquiry, along with all the other judgments and biases inherent in my personality that must be acknowledged in a qualitative inquiry of this sort.

In this project, I am teacher, researcher, and part of what is being researched. It is my responsibility as cooperating teacher to guide Alana and Sara through the experience of becoming a teacher, and give them feedback on their progress. Yet as a researcher it is their voices, their perspectives, that I am interested in hearing, since their story is evolving from the data which they have provided me. Being so close to the data might mean perhaps that I have not been able to see the forest for the trees. On the other hand, this close interaction with the situation has afforded me an opportunity to collect a very rich description of my own experience and the student teachers' experiences as they lived out eight weeks in my classroom. As Huberman (1996:137) points out, "...the field talks back as we observe it or try to modify it. Teacher researchers can potentially hear those voices better than others". I have provided an experience-near view (Kohut, 1971) of Alana and Sara's development as ESL teachers, and being the cooperating teacher investigating my own classroom, makes me, as Huberman (1996:138) puts it, a "privileged source."

This is the story of "how Alana and Sara became teachers" written by the teacher in whose classroom they became teachers. As the cooperating teacher, I developed a

strong rapport with Alana and Sara while working four days out of every six with them. I received their weekend and evening phone calls. I lived with them the triumph of finally being able to get through to difficult students, and the insecurities of not having enough knowledge to function in the school environment. A more experience-distant view (Kohut, 1971) written by an outside researcher who had no intimate knowledge of my students, my classroom or my school environment might not be able to achieve the degree of closeness that I have been able to achieve.

Agreeing to host student teachers for the past eight years has caused me to examine my teaching very closely in order to find out what it is exactly that I know. Professionals in all fields are often on autopilot; we go about performing our duties without critically thinking about the process of teaching during that process. We rely on our tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1967). Working with student teachers has forced me to become reflective and examine exactly what it is that I know about teaching and learning. I have had to make my tacit knowledge explicit. Knowledge is transformed into metaknowledge so that it can be communicated to and shared with student teachers. It is by sharing a common practice with the student teachers, that is, by being mutually engaged in a joint enterprise, by creating a shared repertoire (Wenger, 1998) and by talking through the problems and reflecting on them together, that I am able to do this, and Sara and Alana are able to learn what a teacher does. What it is that I know is intertwined with the knowledge and assumptions that I, Sara, Alana, and the students that we taught brought with us to the experience. Together, we created the experience of learning. The learning was in the practice of teaching and in the reflection while and after teaching. Since it was not done in a vacuum, the learning was also social in nature.

Research Paradigm Overview

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) state that at the most general level there are four major interpretive paradigms in qualitative research: positive and postpositive, critical (Marxist, emancipatory), feminist, and constructivist-interpretive. They define a paradigm as "the researcher's epistemological, ontological and methodological premises" (p.13). Unlike more traditional research, this inquiry allows the story to unfold in a natural, unmanipulated environment. It is phenomenological in nature. My desire is to allow the voices, experiences, and feelings of the student teachers to be prominent. I have approached the project from a constructivist/ interpretive paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). The assumptions of this paradigm are that there are multiple realities that contribute to knowledge construction, and that the interaction of all participants in any given situation contributes to the construction of knowledge. This knowledge will be interpreted to arrive at an understanding of the problems stated in my research questions. The result of the project will ultimately be my "construction of the constructions of the actors" that I am studying (Schwandt 1994:118).

This project was grounded in my classroom practice, in my dealings with both my own students and the student teachers, and so, embedded in this over-arching constructivist/interpretive paradigm is the paradigm of the teacher as researcher. Lytle and Cochran-Smith (1990) describe teacher research as inquiry by teachers about their classrooms that is systematic and intentional. Also important in this framework is the political notion that doing teacher research puts one in a different relationship to the epistemology of teaching. Traditionally, teachers' knowledge is understood to have been generated by university researchers for teachers. Instead of knowledge being disseminated in this outside-in fashion, teacher research is a way of questioning and changing

teachers' relationships to knowledge so that it is more equitably distributed between teachers and researchers so that it is, in effect, more outside/inside (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1993). It seems that the effect of legitimizing teacher inquiry could ultimately lead to a more fruitful knowledge base from which both teachers and researchers could draw, thus increasing the wealth of knowledge available to education in general.

Instinctively, I chose to tell the story of Alana and Sara becoming teachers in chronological order, because "becoming" teachers was a process that unfolded across time. Zeller (1995:76) writes of a narrative that "the events, the story, or the characters exist in world whose clock is ticking". She also adds, quoting Brooks and Warren (1970), that "narration provides the movement" I begin the story with Alana's and Sara's entry into the community, continue with what they discover within the community, and how they became teachers by interacting within the community. A story such as this lends itself quite naturally to a narrative approach.

This thesis is not typical of the genre of research papers that present data collection, location of the study within the academic literature, interpretation and analysis of data, and presentation of results based on analysis. It is instead the unfolding of a story which need not be confined to traditional forms of knowledge presentation. In the following pages, I will closely develop the complex context in which this story unfolded. I will describe what happened in my classroom as the practicum progressed, and how it happened. I will conclude with a discussion of the implications of what I observed throughout the inquiry for teacher education, and questions that might be investigated in future research. Rather than include a typical review of the literature, I have integrated the relevant literature as I have worked through the data and organized Alana and Sara's and my story.

The Research Questions Guiding My Inquiry

These questions were the initial questions that guided my inquiry:

1. What do student teachers feel, experience and understand as they undergo the practicum in the process of becoming a teacher?
   (A) How does a student teacher perceive herself at the beginning of the practicum experience and at the end of it?
   (B) What attributes does the student bring with her to the task of becoming a teacher? (Are there issues of self confidence, self-esteem, personal goals?)
2. (A) How do the people most directly involved in the practicum context, that is, the cooperating teacher and the faculty supervisor, influence the process?
   (B) As this is a team practicum, how do the students influence each other?
3. What assumptions about teaching and learning to teach do the student teachers and the cooperating teacher bring to the study?
4. What are the day-to-day classroom issues, the 'nuts and bolts' that the student teachers grapple with as they are learning to become teachers?
5. How does the Office Responsible for Student Teaching, in terms of its philosophy and expectations, influence the process of learning to be a teacher?

CHAPTER 2 - METHODOLOGY

Chapter Overview

Chapter Two begins with a discussion of how the context of this inquiry requires more description than the typical description of a setting and the people within it. I borrow the concept of "nested contexts" from Maguire (1994), and I put forth the idea that the context of this inquiry is in fact a complex set of "nested" political, historical and linguistic contexts. I then describe these historical, political and linguistic contexts, and I follow this with a description of how Alana and Sara's practicum is embedded within these multiple contexts.

Next I lay out the epistemological tenets that underlie the inquiry. I describe how I collected the data for the inquiry, and I describe the data sets. I then discuss how my research questions evolved as I began to analyze my data. I end the chapter with the recognition that the story I ultimately tell is only one of the many stories that could have been told.

The Context of the Inquiry, or "...Maybe it's a Sign of the Times we Live in..."

The Complexity of Context

Describing the context of this inquiry was not as simple as just describing the high school in which it took place. Maguire (1994:120) notes that context "is often thought of as the physical setting, people within the setting, what they are doing, and where and when they are doing it." The practicum setting in which Sara and Alana's story unfolded was far more complex than just the physical setting. History, culture, language, politics – all of these had an effect on the student teacher experience. Maguire (1994), Maguire and

MacAlpine, (1996) underscore the importance of the complexity of multiple contexts that Maguire refers to as "nested contexts":

> Emphasis is on the nested contexts: shifting social, cultural, linguistic, economic, and political boundaries that intersect, overlap, and collide with each other in complex ways (Maguire, 1994).

Maguire (1994) believes that when describing context, we should include not only a description of what people are doing when within a particular setting, but also "why they are doing it and what it means from their perspective (p.120)." The following excerpt from Alana's teaching journal shows her perspective of the complexities of undergoing a practicum in the context of *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, in the Province of Quebec. She alludes to the linguistic tensions that exist within the Quebec context, and how they might affect Sara and her at the school, and how they might impinge upon her future career decisions:

> ...Cheryl gave us a tour of the school – quite a large establishment – and answered our questions about the make-up of the school and school policies.... I noticed that Sara shared my concern about language – **maybe it's a sign of the times that we live in**, but we both felt the need to ask almost immediately what the regulations were in terms of English usage in the school. I think we were asking for slightly different reasons, though. Sara is unilingual and I suspect her concern lay mainly with the fact that she wouldn't be able to comply with a French-only rule. Me, on the other hand, I was more interested in the politics involved, perhaps because I have been wondering of late whether I'd like to look for work in Montreal or somewhere outside of Quebec. Cheryl assured us, however, that the teachers here were very professional and kept their political opinions to themselves, and as for speaking English, it wasn't an issue in this school. I have found this to be true; during my two months at CRA, I have found the staff to be polite and helpful, and no one seems to mind our English.
>
> (Alana's Journal, week of Oct. 21-25, 1996)

Language and politics in Canada and Quebec have always been tumultuous. Much of my, Sara's and Alana's attitudes toward language have been shaped by our having lived within these contexts, in different areas of the country. We are continually negotiating the legacy of the interactions of these two political bodies.

From the first day of their teaching experience and even before that, Alana and Sara were concerned with the use of French at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, both as a pedagogical issue in the ESL classroom, and as a political issue in the school at large. Alana writes of her first day:

> ...we were both facing a new experience that day – not only had neither of us ever taught before, but we were both from Ontario and English-speaking, so we had no idea what to expect from a French-language high school.
>
> (Alana's Journal, Week of Oct 21-25, 1996)

In my reflective log, I noted:

> ...I had been in contact with Alana and I had passed on to her some of the info about the classes, etc. We spoke about 2-3 times. I had mentioned that I would like to speak to Sara also, before she started. Several weeks passed, and I still hadn't heard from Sara. I was getting nervous, and a little put out, too. I was afraid that it might mean that she was content to let Alana do all the talking for her and how far into the workload would this extend – did it mean that she would ride on Alana's coat tails for other things?... I asked a second time to have Sara call me. She finally did, at 10:10 pm the evening before she was due to be in school. She apologized for not phoning earlier, saying that her French was not very good and she was nervous about calling the school...
>
> (Reflective Log, October26, 1996)

I was mystified about why Sara had not called me and had been worriedly interpreting her silence as a negative sign. A student teacher is absolutely required to contact her co-operating teacher before the start of her practicum. When I had not heard from her, I began to get worried about what this seemingly irresponsible behavior before the practicum had even begun might mean. I was relieved to discover that the problem was not irresponsibility on her part; she was very afraid of calling the school because she could not speak enough French. Below is an excerpt from our fourth debriefing session which illustrates Sara's perception of her French ability:

> S:...I come from Toronto where French just...
> C: It's a foreign language.

A: It's not so much a ()
S: You have to take it. That's the way it is. You have to take it, there's no reason to take it, there's no outlet to use it
-hmm
S: ...and so our French is just poor. Very poor compared to ()
....
S: But see, I - I compare it to my core French...
A: um-hmm
S: ...and their English is outstanding compared to my core French....Yeah. There's no way - I could not - I can't even go to the grocery store, let alone stand up and do a human rights speech! [laughter] You know, a presentation-

(Debriefing Session 6, Dec.14, 1996)

In an annotation to my reflective log entry above, I noted that "I was starting to think of language as simply an interesting sideline – a reflection of what it was like to be an anglophone living in Quebec, but not really something that is a big issue." As I worked with Sara and Alana, and as I worked through the data, the transcripts, my reflective log and Alana's journal, and as I conversed with teacher educator Thomas Keilly at Alana and Sara's university, it became clear that language was a much bigger and more complex issue than I had first thought.

My conversation with Thomas Keilly provided illuminating insight as I noted in my reflective log:

> The lack of French, usually in out-of-province student teachers, has been a problem, according to Thomas Keilly. Student teachers are asked to have a French speaking friend contact their schools and get the coop teacher on the line, at which point they could take over....It seems that students without enough French have been asked to leave some schools. Others are not accepted if they are anglophone, or if they do not have a certain level of French....I can't help but think that the politics of this province might be a source of stress for a student teacher. As a teacher in the public system I sometimes felt that I was operating under stressful conditions, particularly in certain schools. It can't be pleasant learning under these circumstances.
>
> (Annotation from Reflective Log, December 6, 1996)

Although I had noted in my reflective log that language might be a source of

stress for student teachers, it was not until I began to look at all the data, as in the previous excerpt, did I begin to see how frequently the issue of language arose. I am an anglophone "insider" (Geertz, 1974) who is so comfortable and proficient at negotiating the Quebecois language and culture in my life that I do so without even perceiving it as negotiation. As such, I had not realized that this linguistic landscape was as huge a source of stress as the student teachers appeared to find it. Alana notes in her reflective log above that at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, "no one seems to mind our English". When I began to think about "nobody minding our English", I realized that this was probably because I acted as a buffer between Alana and Sara and the rest of the school. As an anglophone I am, at a tacit level, very aware of politics and issues of language, more so than I had realized. I have become such a good negotiator of the culture that I am able to blend in to the environment. I realized that I spoke French in the workplace to everyone except to my students and my English colleagues and to certain francophone colleagues whom I knew did not mind my interjecting an English phrase here and there, or who actively spoke English to me. I know to whom I can speak English and to whom I shouldn't and I was surprised to realize that I knew this without having to think about it. Looking back to 1996 from the vantage point of today, and the experiences with languages in contact and conflict that I have had since then at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, I can see that certainly, while no one "minded" our English, it was only because I was and still am, careful about when and where I allow "Englishness" to intrude into my working environment. In general, I am very comfortable in the linguistic environment, and I am proud of the fact that I can function well within that environment. I am aware, though, that underlying linguistic tensions do exist in my workplace. Below is a vignette

that provides an example of these tensions. It recounts the one time I chose not to ignore them. Here I refer to the linguistic tension as "the Language Demon":

What Happened When the Language Demon Escaped from Its Cage

It is a hot June day, and all the teachers in my level are gathered for the first meeting of the school year, which at *Marie, Mère de Dieu* we hold in June, rather than in September. Because it is so hot, Martine, the level director, has managed to reserve the physical science lab for us, as it is air-conditioned. The black lab tables have been placed in a circle and we are all settling in. Martine is sitting about four people down from me, on my right. This is her first meeting as level director. Directly across from me are Paul, one of the math teachers, and Melanie, one of the science teachers. About three people down from me, this time on my left, are Jacinthe, a history teacher, and Guillaume, another math teacher. The meeting begins, and we back-track over the year, debriefing the various activities, eliminating and ameliorating, as we go. As I had expected, Martine is very good at leading the meeting. She's well-prepared, open to people's suggestions and she moves rapidly, but delicately, to quash the more long-winded teachers.

The discussion winds into some area in which I am not remotely involved and so I let myself drift away from the meeting for awhile. I turn to the back of my agenda book, where, for moments just like this, I have stashed a few copies to be discreetly corrected. I absorb myself in this for awhile as the chatter unfolds around me, when suddenly, in the corner of my mind, I hear *"...anglais dans les corridors...."* I cringe, physically or mentally, I can't even tell. I just think "Oh, here it comes again," and I steel myself as my colleagues talk about *"les allophones"* who just will *not* speak French in the corridors of the school. The discussion moves into what they are going to do about it. I squirm and I don't know where to look. I feel like I must be wallpaper, otherwise how could they talk like this in front of me? Should I take comfort in the idea that it must be that they consider me one of them? But no, I can't. I'm not, and from their discussion it is clear that I am not. My language is not very well liked. Using it is being deemed despicable and by extension, what does that make me? My primary feeling at the moment is offended. Various solutions are being tossed around, none very original, and then Martine says very distinctly, *"ça ne me dérange pas comment vous le faites, mais écrase-les!"* At that, my head rises from my lap and I look out at the group. My colleagues are about to be treated to a side of me they have never seen, since I usually run from anything smacking of the political, especially with regards to language. I value the peace of my working environment too much. But there must be a look on my face, because Melanie looks at me and says, very graciously and diplomatically to the group at large, "surely there must be some other way of saying that."

I look over at her and at Paul beside her, but he can't even meet my eyes. I find my voice, which takes a few seconds because I have to find my French voice, and I say that their solutions will never work. All I can think of suddenly, is Native-American children being forced to learn French and about Quebecois

being forced to learn English to get good jobs and about an old textbook I studied in a Linguistics course, Peter Trudgill's *Sociolinguistics*, where I read about Welsh children being force-fed the English language. I think to myself "how can they think this way? *Crush* them?"

I try to tell them why it won't work. It won't work because I teach the kids they are talking about and I know that they are bitter, viscerally, because their right to a private conversation in the hallway, outside of the classroom, is being violated. The result is that they turn further away from French.

My heart is pounding, because I am angry and offended and very nervous about being this way in front of so many people and in a language over which I don't have enough control, especially for this type of debate. All eyes are on me and because of this it is difficult for me to be articulate in French. I must have told them about the Native American children because now they are offended, and Jacinthe, the History teacher is trying earnestly to give me a history lesson about the oppression of the French by the English, but I know all that and all I can see is that she is trying to use one wrong to justify another. I tell her that if they want the kids to use French, then they need to motivate them to do it, not punish them. Every solution they have come up with today is only pushing them further away. At one point I hear myself pointing out that many of these kids wouldn't be here if it weren't for Bill 101, Quebec's language law. With that, Guillaume jumps into the fray, and I feel awful. I hate confrontations especially with colleagues that I admire and respect. I can't tell from inside the situation just how bad it really is. I wonder, vaguely, what the long-term repercussions of this will be.

But for this one time, I allow myself to be angry. I am angry because of that inevitable way that history has of repeating itself and because I am seeing it happen before my eyes, by people that I like and respect, and I am appalled. The oppressed have become the oppressors. I am angry because I know that if any two of my French speaking colleagues were to visit the Vatican, they would not converse in Italian out of respect for the Vatican. They would naturally use French because it is the language in which they have a relationship. It is no different for these kids in the halls of this school. I am also angry because I think that they do this to the students because they can. They have never done it to me, or my other English colleagues, and we do speak English openly in the hallways, to each other and to the students. They would never do it to me because they respect me, and because I would never let them. It is a line that they know they cannot cross. But they can and do try to do it to the students because they are in control, and the students have no choice.

(June 1999. Reconstructed from Memory, June 2002)

In Sara and Alana's eyes, there was the potential for linguistic tension at *Marie, Mère de Dieu*, and there was the pressure of being anglophone in a francophone environment. Alana and Sara also felt a sense of linguistic pressure from their teacher educator, Thomas Keilly. From my conversations with him, I knew that getting ESL placements in French schools for anglophone students was sometimes difficult. Some schools would not take student teachers who could not function in French. He told me that one student teacher had been asked to leave a school because she had spoken to one of her students in English in the hallway after class. Alana and Sara told me the same story. The student teacher who had been asked to leave had been one of their classmates. This story had caused him to advise the student teachers to have a French-speaking friend call the school, and to make sure that they conformed to the linguistic rules in their host schools. Having to watch which language they were speaking when was a source of stress for student teachers, especially for Sara, who had very little knowledge of French. I understood then, why it had taken her so long to get in touch with me before the practicum.

Understanding Alana and Sara's Nested Contexts

Sara and Alana are two anglophone student teachers from Ontario. Alana, a bilingual (English/French) anglophone comes from Ottawa, Ontario, the bilingual capital city of Canada, and Sara, unilingual anglophone is from the unilingual English city of Toronto. They both attend a large, anglophone university located in the bilingual city of Montreal, the largest city in the unilingual province of Quebec. Quebec, in turn, is a province in the officially bilingual country of Canada.

To fully understand the experience as Alana and Sara lived it, it is necessary to

understand the larger geographical and political contexts in which their story unfolds. Language, in the context of the city of Montreal, in the larger context of the province of Quebec, and in the context of the entire country of Canada, has always been a contentious issue since the province passed into the hands of the British after they defeated the French in the battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759. The relationship of the province of Quebec to Canada has also been either more or less tenuous over the years.

The student teachers have to negotiate this relationship between Quebec and Canada, and they have to negotiate the linguistic relationships among the people of Quebec. Important to this context are the communities that Alana and Sara come from that have contributed to the shaping of their views of language use in the Canadian/Quebec context. Also important is the university community in which Alana and Sara are studying. As discussed above, this university community exerts an influence over which language Sara and Alana should use in their host school and in the classrooms that they teach in. The host school context, where they are doing their practicum, is also negotiated linguistically and politically. In the middle of all this complexity we have Alana and Sara themselves, who are negotiating the various influences from each context. The practicum experience for student teachers in Quebec cuts through all of these contexts and presents for this study a far more complicated concept of context than most studies have.

While English is a minority language in Quebec, it is the language of the majority of the rest of the country. Francophones, while in the majority linguistically in Quebec, are a minority language group within Canada. This, among other reasons, has led to the belief among some Quebecers that Quebec is a distinct society and as such should be either separated from Canada, or should exist in some form of sovereignty-association

within the country. Political parties dedicated to this end exist at the federal level of government, the *Bloc Quebecois,* and at the provincial level, the *Parti Quebecois.* The population of the province has voted in two referenda (1980 and 1995) on this subject, but neither referendum has resulted in any change in the status of the relationship: on both occasions, the population voted (with a very narrow margin, the second time) to remain in Canada.

The response of the rest of Canada to the potential division of the country has also been a source of tension. Some anglophones in the rest of Canada worry about the economic impact of separation and harbor resentment toward Quebec for wanting to divide the country and for the potential problems that this might create. Some would be perfectly happy to "let Quebec go"; others take the stance that "my Canada includes Quebec" as was witnessed when a rally held in Montreal before the 1995 referendum was attended by bus-and-plane loads of Canadians from all over the country in an attempt to show Quebec that it was a respected and desired part of the country.

As a result of these political tensions, here in Quebec one of the most defining characteristics as individuals in this society is the language people speak and the corresponding linguistic group to which they belong. Historically, Quebec was a majority francophone province marginalized and dominated by an anglophone establishment especially in Montreal. The city of Montreal was divided, often geographically. East of *Boulevard St. Laurent* was French; west of it, English. As late as the 1970's, Montrealers were living as "two solitudes" (MacLennan, 1986), two separate, flourishing communities, many of whose members had very little idea of how the other community lived, what songs they sang, what television they watched or how to speak their language.

There were of course many exceptions, but it was entirely possible to grow up in Montreal as an anglophone before the 1970's with little knowledge of French, and no need of it, and vice versa for a francophone. My parents know very little French. Many of my peers cannot speak fluent French, my brothers included, although we were luckier than our parents. Because we came of age in the 1970's when French in Quebec had become a reality that we were forced to reckon with, we were able to profit from immersion programs in schools that allowed us to learn French with varying degrees of success. In 1975, for example, I opted to study my obligatory Quebec History course in French.

Although a majority language in terms of numbers, French had a minority status in terms of economic power in society. To get a good job, knowledge of English was necessary. Since the 1970's, language laws have been enacted in order to better reflect the francophone population, to gain the power felt by being a majority language and to protect the language from disappearing in the great North American, indeed, world-wide sea of English. Language on signs in the province is strictly controlled; access to English schooling is limited to children who have one parent who has been educated in English in Quebec. All allophone children who immigrate to Quebec and all francophone children whose parents were not educated in English are by this law required to attend French schools, although there are sometimes exceptions, for example when families are transferred to Quebec and they will only be living here for a short period of time.

The separatist movement, having been simmering slowly since the 1960's visit of France's then-Prime Minister, Charles de Gaulle, swung into full gear with the election of the *Parti Quebecois* in 1976, a party dedicated to the separation of Quebec from Canada.

The result of the *Parti Quebecois* election win was a near immediate, massive exodus of businesses who could not or would not operate in French and of nearly 800,000 anglophones to other parts of Canada. Many felt that there was no longer a place for anglophones in the new Quebec. Resentment sprang up among some members of the anglophone community. These members felt and some still feel marginalized and ignored. Some of this feeling has been mitigated over the years by the two communities coming into closer contact and by anglophones learning more French and being able to both value and more fully participate in the culture of Quebec. In spite of these gains, however, sometimes echoes are still heard of a society that was, and for some to a certain extent still is, two-sided, as the anxiety felt by Sara and Alana and the defining words "anglophone and francophone" indicate.

Nested within the context of political tension between Quebec and Canada, and within the context of linguistic tension between the English and French in Quebec, is the context of Sara and Alana's university, an anglophone institution in bilingual Montreal. A person can get along easily in either language in this city. On the surface, linguistic tensions are not usually evident as the city's population, be they speakers of French, English, or any other of the city's many languages, interacts with each other on a daily basis.

I found it interesting, that from the very beginning, Alana used language as a distinguishing factor. Sara did too, and maybe even more so as she had a linguistic hurdle to get through just trying to contact her cooperating teacher. I was starting to think of language as simply an interesting sideline – a reflection of what it was like to be an anglophone living in Quebec, but not really something that was a political issue. It seems to have been much more of an issue in the eyes of Alana and Sara, who were not from

Quebec. I only discovered this when I went back to Alana's journal after reading my notes on French from the debriefing tape transcripts. Reading her journal and seeing the situation through her eyes really brought home to me how much this was an issue from the first day for Alana. For Sara, it had been an issue from even before the first day.

Alana seems to look at the language issue from the outside in. She is bilingual, having learned French in both Ottawa and France. She grew up in the bilingual city of Ottawa. Her mother has strong ties to the Liberal Party of Canada, a party committed to, among other things, the national unity of Canada. She has traveled and knows that it is helpful to speak English. Alana believes that learning French is extremely important for an Anglophone. French was so important that at a very young age, she was already beginning to learn. In her journal she writes "didn't I know the meaning of the word 'vite' at the age of six?" (Alana's Journal, Week of October 21-25, 1996). She believes that learning English should be as important for francophones as learning French was for her.

> I had to remind myself that these children had only started to learn English at the age of 9, and that the importance of English had perhaps not been stressed to them. I have to admit, it was disappointing. ... And later on, I would get very frustrated one day when I realized I couldn't explain the meaning of the word 'end' to another girl. 'How could she get to grade 7 ESL and not know the meaning of the word end?' I would fume privately. But I was just as angry at my own inability to communicate with her as I was at the 'system' that had failed to teach her the meaning of the word 'end'. Not one of my prouder moments.
>
> (Alana's Journal, Week of October 21-25, 1996)

Implied here is a belief that if only the importance of English had been stressed, the outcome with respect to her student's English knowledge might have been different. This is the view of an outsider looking in. Alana is a minority English speaker in a majority francophone world. But her language, although in the minority in Quebec, is a powerful

force both within Canada and globally. What Alana does not take into account here is the "insider's view". The priorities of a francophone, who speaks the language of majority in his or her own province of Quebec, are different from those of anglophones living in Quebec. French, for an anglophone is very important as it is needed in order to be employable here in our own province. Many programs, beginning in kindergarten and even earlier, exist in our public and private schools to ensure that students graduate as bilingual as possible. But English, for a Francophone does not necessarily take on that same importance. At the time of the study, schools by law could not teach English before grade four. Employment is possible without knowledge of English, though it is recognized that there are many jobs for which it would be an asset. For the parents of my students, the priorities for their children's education are Math and French. This can be seen by the large line-ups of parents in front of the math teachers' and French teachers' classrooms on parent-teacher nights. These line-ups are much shorter in front of the English classrooms. Parents will almost always show up on this night if their children are doing badly in French or Math, but this is not necessarily true for English. Parents and students recognize that English has an importance. However, some parents and students will accord it more importance than others. For many, it is simply another skill, like knowledge of computers. In secondary five, when students are taking a full load of sciences, parents will often allow their children to drop out of the enriched English program into the regular program so that they can concentrate on their other courses, even though they are more than capable of doing the enriched program. There is a sense that English can be picked up at some other time in their lives.

Sara's concerns about French in the classroom were very different from Alana's.

She knew that because she could speak very little French, so there was no issue about her using it in her ESL classroom and consequently failing. The issue for her was being nervous about not understanding the students if they spoke French to her, especially if she was being evaluated by her University supervisor. Alana cites in her journal that "Sara was downright worried" (Alana's Journal, Week of Oct 21-25, 1996).

Epistemological Tenets Driving the Inquiry

I have approached the project from a constructivist/interpretive paradigm (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). The assumptions of this paradigm are that there are multiple realities that contribute to knowledge construction and that the interaction of all participants in any given situation contributes to the construction of knowledge. Following are five epistemological tenets that reflect my understanding of knowledge and learning and which underlie this inquiry.

Epistemological tenet #1: Learning is a social act, occurring within a community that practices what is being learned.

Sara and Alana did not learn to teach in a vacuum. Wenger (1998) maintains that learning takes place through interacting with a group of people who are engaged in a common enterprise. He calls this group of people a "Community of Practice". Alana and Sara entered a community of practice at *Marie, Mère de Dieu*. They brought with them a legacy of theoretical coursework from the community of practice in which they were members at their university. They also brought with them their assumptions about the world, their biases and life experience. Inherent in learning to teach is the idea that while a student teacher is teaching (and learning), she is interacting with students who are learning. Alana and Sara interacted with four groups of students, with each other, with, the cooperating teacher (me), with other colleagues in the school and with the university

supervisor. Together we constructed the learning experience.

Epistemological tenet #2: We learn by doing.

Wenger (1998) maintains that knowledge is not a reified abstraction, but is gained in actual performance. The learning is in the doing, or, following Schon (1983, 1987, 1995), the knowing is in the action. Sara and Alana learned how to teach by teaching among a group of people who were engaged in teaching.

Learning is "hands-on", especially learning how to teach. What is needed is to get down in the "swamp" (Schon, 1983) and get dirty from the messy problems of teaching. The problems of teaching cannot all be covered in theoretical university courses. Teachers often don't even know what the problems are before they get into the swamp. Many student teachers have complained to me that the university hadn't prepared them for the problems they found in the classroom. I have always wondered how the university could prepare them for the many possible problems that might occur in the classroom. In order to solve the many problems that occur in the classroom, student teachers need to learn the terrain of a school. They need to know what the school's discipline policy is. They need to understand their own personalities and how they interact with other people in sometimes tense, confrontational situations. Until they have actually encountered situations where they have to remain the adult and react affirmatively, they don't know how they will handle a problematic situation. They have to be in the situation in order to learn how to get out of it, but these student teachers assume that solving the problems that arise in the classroom is a question of having a finite knowledge base that can be taught and learned in a university classroom and then applied in their own classrooms in the practicum setting. They do not see learning how to solve problems as emergent knowledge that can only be

learned in the doing.

Epistemological tenet #3: Knowledge is dynamic, fluid and emergent.

Because knowledge is socially constructed, it is dynamic, fluid and emergent. Learning how to teach does not consist of a finite body of knowledge that once "learned", we are deemed to "know" and can consequently "apply" to teaching situations. If this were so, a practicum would not be part of a Teacher Education program. What Alana and Sara learned was not finite, but emergent and fluid as a consequence of the interactions of the people involved in the learning situation. They were constantly learning and evolving as teachers. Their knowledge was constructed and built-upon as they interacted with the community around them.

Epistemological tenet #4: Those closest to the knowledge have a relevant voice and contribution to make to the body of knowledge.

Important in this framework is the political notion that doing teacher research puts teachers in a different relationship to the epistemology of teaching. Traditionally, teachers' knowledge is understood to have been generated by university researchers for teachers. This has resulted in a gap between theory and practice. When teachers do research in their own classrooms they change their relationships to knowledge. Instead of knowledge being disseminated from researchers to teachers in an outside-in fashion, it is more equitably distributed between teachers and researchers. It becomes more outside/inside. (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1993). The effect of legitimizing teacher inquiry could ultimately lead to a more fruitful knowledge base from which both teachers and researchers could draw, thus increasing the wealth of knowledge available to education in general.

Epistemological tenet # 5: Good teachers are reflective teachers.

As the cooperating teacher, I am an intricate part of the process that I am investigating. In examining the inter-related realities that we created, I had to turn the mirror on myself as much as on my student teachers. Therefore, I was forced to closely examine what it is that I know about teaching and learning. Following Schon, I have had to ask myself what is it that I know when I know. How is it that I can walk into my classroom where a student teacher has been teaching for half an hour, and size up the situation immediately? I know how she is doing; I know how the students are responding to her; I can see who is working and who is not. I can "read" the atmosphere. There all sorts of cues that I am reacting to. However, I don't always know what they are, but I can sense and react to the situations. My "appreciative sense" (Clark, 1998) is highly developed.

In order to 'teach' Sara and Alana, I have had to make explicit the tacit knowledge that allows me to size up a classroom with little more than a glance. I have often referred to this tacit knowledge as 'guts' or 'instinct'. Schon refers to it as knowledge-in-action (1983, 1987). As I teach, I constantly reflect-in-action, that is, I think about what I am doing in such a way that I can make continuous adjustments to my teaching in response to the discoveries I make as I reflect on what I am doing. After teaching I can reflect-on-action; I can think about what I have done and see how it can be adjusted in the future.

Alana and Sara observed me reflecting in and on action, and they began to do the same thing. As they reflected-in-and-on action, they were learning about what was effective and what was not. Knowing what was effective gave them the power to change their teaching. Teachers who do not reflect do not effect changes in their teaching. They do not evolve as teachers.

Collecting the Data

Preliminary Research Questions

Lytle and Cochran-Smith, (1993) have stated that teacher research is usually, by definition, case study research. I undertook this inquiry in my classroom over an eight week period which was equivalent to the practicum period prescribed by the Office Responsible for Student Teaching at Alana and Sara's university. It involved only two participants, aside from me.

As the cooperating teacher I was directly and actively involved in the process by which Alana and Sara came to experience/see themselves as competent classroom teachers of ESL. I was a mediating factor in the process by which they developed their sense of themselves as ESL teachers.

As a researcher, I wanted to understand how student teachers became transformed into teachers during their student teaching experience. My purpose was to get a better understanding of the process by which Alana, Sara and I worked our way through this eight week period. I wanted to understand this transformation from the perspective of Alana and Sara, and so I chose a phenomenological perspective.

I began my inquiry with the following questions, aware that these were just *preliminary* questions, subject to modification and change as I interacted with my data:

1. What do student teachers feel and understand as they live through the practicum?
    (A) How does a student teacher perceive herself at the beginning and the end of the practicum?
    (B) What attributes does the student bring to practicum?

2. (A) How do the people most directly involved in the practicum, that is, the cooperating teacher and the faculty supervisor, influence the process?
   (B) As this is a team practicum, how do the students influence each other?
3. How does the Office Responsible for Student Teaching influence the process of becoming a teacher?

Establishing the workload

I recall that after Sara and Alana had become familiar with the school environment and they had observed me teaching several classes, we decided how to distribute the teaching load. I provided two options. The first option was that they could divide up my classes equally and each would have her own groups from beginning to end of the practicum. The second option was that they could begin by team teaching all of my groups, preparing lessons together and each teaching the different parts of the same lesson and alternating those parts between groups. Then, as the practicum progressed, they would alternate teaching entire classes, and perhaps eventually moving toward having their own classes as they developed affinities with particular groups. Sara and Alana liked the idea of working so closely together, and so they chose the second option. I liked the idea because I was only teaching part-time, and this way, Alana and Sara would have exposure to four different groups of students, rather than only two groups each, the consequence of choosing their own classes. Also, if each student teacher observes the other teaching, there is yet another source of feedback on their teaching besides mine and the university supervisor's. Appendix C is an example of their class schedule.

We then decided that Alana and Sara would observe until they felt ready to begin teaching. In my experience, the observation period rarely lasts longer than two or three days before student teachers get bored with watching, and this was the case with Sara and

Alana. Already excited on the second day, by the third day they had begun teaching. They began with my three secondary five classes because I was in the middle of a project with my secondary one class. They began teaching my secondary one class toward the middle of the practicum.

The Data Sets

The data sets were collected over the eight-week practicum period. Of the seven data sets, I consider the tape-recorded debriefing sessions, Alana's journal, and my reflective log as the primary sources of data because they are the voices of Alana, Sara, and me. The data sets include the following:

1. **Six audio-taped post-class debriefing sessions with the two student teachers.**

What I am aiming for in this inquiry is a description of how Alana and Sara perceived the evolution of the practicum experience, contrasted with my perception of this same process from my point of view as the cooperating teacher. I am most interested in their reaction to the events of their practicum, and in how they integrate their classroom experiences into their identities as teachers. I am interested in the events that happen within the classroom only insomuch as they highlight this process. By recording the students I hoped to be able to hear Alana and Sara's voices in an open, unrestrained manner and to really get to the heart of what they are thinking and feeling. I wanted to see what they consider the issues to be.

A class debriefing session is what I normally do with student teachers when we talk about their teaching. We discuss how the class unfolded. Initially, we focus on their response to what has happened in the class and I encourage them to reflect on how they might deal differently with the same difficulties should they arise in the future. Then, I give them feedback on anything they might have missed, but that I had observed in the

classroom.

I recorded these six debriefing sessions over the eight-week practicum period, on the following dates:

Debriefing Session 1 - November 1, 1996
Debriefing Session 2 - November 6, 1996
Debriefing Session 3 - November 18, 1996
Debriefing Session 4 - November 18, 1996
Debriefing Session 5 - November 20, 1996
Debriefing Session 6 - December 12, 1996

The first session was recorded after Alana and Sara had been teaching for three days, and the last session was recorded on the last day of the practicum. I was in the classroom observing the lesson for the first three sessions. The sixth and last session was not based on a particular class, but was a retrospective on the whole practicum experience.

2. My reflective log.

In keeping with my assumption of multiple perspectives in qualitative research, I kept track of my own perspective of the unfolding events by means of a reflective journal. I fully anticipated that my concerns might not be the student teachers' concerns, but nonetheless the journal was necessary for constructing my reality throughout the inquiry. I periodically updated and annotated this log as I gained insight into the events that I recorded within it. The log contains ten logs, and fifteen annotations.

3. Alana's Journal.

Alana was required to keep a journal during the practicum for another class that she was taking at her university, and volunteered to allow me access to it as part of my data. This functioned as a valuable source for confirmation of her perspective throughout the analysis.

4. Written Classroom Observations of the student teachers.

I observed the student teachers as they taught and, as a more informal alternative than the Office Responsible for Student Teaching's formative assessment forms, I kept notes on the classes that I observed. There are five written observations. These were used as prompts for the verbal feedback that I gave Sara and Alana during the debriefing session.

5. Official University formative and summative assessment forms.

These forms are the formal documentation of the evaluation process used by the university. They formalized in writing my insights into my observations of the classroom performance of the student teachers. Based on the classroom observations, I filled out the formative and summative evaluation forms required by the University. On these I formally noted the progress of the student teachers in gradations ranging from 'not applicable' to 'excellent' in the following categories: (a) Lesson Preparation (b) Presentation (c) Implementation (d) Management and (e) Professional Qualities The university supervisor also filled in formative evaluation forms for each of the two visits that she made to Sara and Alana's classroom. The summative assessment forms were jointly filled out by the university supervisor and me. . (Appendix B provides examples of the university formative and summative evaluation forms.)

6. Notes from the university debriefing session.

This session was held at the end of the practicum, for the teacher educator, the student teachers and their supervisors. As I was both a university supervisor as well as a cooperating teacher, it was a privileged coincidence that I was present that day. Sara and Alana and I were an active part of this debriefing session along with all the other ESL

student teachers and their supervisors. Observing Sara and Alana in this environment participating in an exchange about the practicum with their fellow students added yet another dimension to the information that I had gathered.

7. Alana and Sara's lesson plans.

Sara and Alana were obliged by me and their supervisor to keep a record of all their lesson plans (see sample plan in appendix D) These plans were useful for establishing a timeline of classroom events and contextualizing conversations when audio-taped debriefing sessions were vague about what was actually happening in the classroom.

How I Analyzed the Data

> The case researcher emerges from one social experience – observation – to choreograph another, the report. Knowledge is socially constructed...
>
> (Stake, 1994, p. 240)

The data analysis phase is the challenge of organizing and interpreting the data in such a fashion that it tells the most authentic story possible. I began the process by transcribing all the audio-taped data. I then examined the transcriptions and began by coding the data broadly according to my research questions. As categories emerged within each question, so did new questions and I found that I needed to modify the original research questions in response to the new categories.

Simultaneously, I began studying my reflective log, and Alana's journal. Similar categories began to emerge from the three major sources of data which allowed me to triangulate my theories of what was going on in the Alana and Sara's development as student teachers. It became very clear that in my research questions I needed to consider the assumptions that each person involved brought to the project. Secondly, I had not

accounted for the fact that many of the concerns that the student teachers had were about the 'nuts and bolts' of everyday life in a classroom. They were really in the 'swamp' that Donald Schon discusses (1983, 1987,1995) and were busily concerned with sorting out what they found in there. Because much of our debriefing sessions consisted of talk about these issues, the research questions were then expanded to include questions three and four. The modified questions appear below:

1. What do student teachers feel, experience and understand as they undergo the practicum in the process of becoming a teacher?
   (A) How does a student teacher perceive herself at the beginning of the practicum experience and at the end of it?
   (B) What attributes does the student bring with her to the task of becoming a teacher? (Are there issues of self confidence, self-esteem, personal goals?)
2. (A) How do the people most directly involved in the practicum context, that is, the cooperating teacher and the faculty supervisor, influence the process?
   (B) As this is a team practicum, how do the students influence each other?
3. What assumptions about teaching and learning to teach do the student teachers and the cooperating teacher bring to the study?
4. What are the day-to-day classroom issues, the 'nuts and bolts' that the student teachers grapple with as they are learning to become teachers?
5. How does the Office Responsible for Student Teaching, in terms of its philosophy and expectations, influence the process of learning to be a teacher?
6. What can be changed about teacher training programs that can more accurately reflect the needs of ESL student teachers?

Writing the Story

Writing the story was the most difficult part of the process. Staring at the mountain of data, I was initially at a loss about what to do with it all. As I sifted through it, two broad questions helped me to gain some perspective: *what* had happened to transform Alana and Sara during this practicum, and *how* had it happened? I determined

that *what* had happened was that Sara and Alana had somehow undergone a transformation in their identities. At this point I re-read Wenger's (1998) *Communities of Practice,* this time in the light of my data. This helped me to see the identity transformation as a result of Sara and Alana's participation in the *Marie, Mère de Dieu* community. When I examined my role as cooperating teacher in Alana and Sara's transformation, I was able to see *how* the transformation had happened in terms of Schon's ideas of reflective practice (1983, 1987) and how learning happens when people are actually "doing" what they are learning. Keeping my research questions in the forefront, as well as my two broad questions of *what* and *how* kept me focused. I was then able to visualize an analysis. Appendix E is an example of the process of creating my analysis.

I am very aware that the story I am telling is subject to all the biases and flaws I bring to the process. In choosing to follow certain avenues of the data, I have naturally neglected others, and the final story is the result of the choices that I have made about what to tell and how to tell it. As Goodson (1995:94) says, "Storying...becomes a form of social and political prioritizing, a particular way of telling stories that in its way privileges some story lines and silences other."

CHAPTER 3 - SIFTING THE DATA

Chapter Overview

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part, called "Walking the Tightrope: Negotiating Context and Identity", is inspired by Maguire's (1994) "shifting and colliding" contexts. It describes three interdependent tensions that were at play as Sara and Alana began their practicum: 1) the tension between the university context and the *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* context; 2) the tension between Alana and Sara's identities as students within the university context and their emerging identities as teachers in the *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* context; 3) the tension between the reified knowledge of the university and the practical knowledge found in the "doing" of teaching. Part two, entitled "Entering the Community: Weaving the Context", begins with an anecdote about the first day of the practicum and then discusses Alana and Sara's initial reactions as they sought to make sense of their new community, and my attempts to make them legitimate peripheral participants (Lave and Wenger, 1991, Wenger, 1998)) within it. Part three, called "Welcome to the Swamp" uses Schon's metaphor of the "swamp" (1983, 1987, and 1995) as a place of messiness and confusion to describe the world of classroom practice as Alana and Sara discovered it at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu.* Here I describe what Sara, Alana and I did in the "Swamp"- how we made them teachers - in terms of Schon's ideas of reflective practice.

Part 1 - Walking the Tightrope: Negotiating Context and Identity

Our identities arise through our participation in the various contexts that make up our lives. Our attitudes and values emerge out of life experiences gained from living within the "shifting and colliding" nested contexts referred to by Maguire (1994). A particular set of nested contexts permeated Alana and Sara's practicum experiences. Already rich with life experiences culled from the various intersecting contexts in which they grew up, becoming teachers required that they negotiate their personal contexts, the university context and the new *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* context embedded in the historical/political context discussed in Chapter 2.

When Sara and Alana arrived at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, they had strongly-established identities as university students. They were "insiders" in this context. As students in the university community they knew exactly what their roles were and what expectations the university had for them. They appreciated the need to conform to these expectations and systematically did so. They knew how and when to interact with their professors and their classmates. They knew the physical layout of the university and they knew how to navigate through the often complex administrative interactions necessary for students. They learned all this through interacting and sharing knowledge with people in the university community: their teachers, classmates and administrative support staff.

Once at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, Alana and Sara were no longer comfortable insiders. They were now outsiders looking in. When student teachers arrive at their host schools, they can feel somewhat as if they have been parachuted into their new context. The host school is completely new territory. ESL classes in the host schools have been in progress since the beginning of the year. Classroom cultures have already

been created and are evolving in response to ongoing interactions between the students and their teachers. In this new environment, student teachers don't know anyone. They have often only spoken to their host teacher on the telephone. Sometimes they are placed in a pair-teaching situation. They have no idea whether their personality will mesh with their partner's personality, or with the personality of their co-operating teacher with whom they must spend day-after-day for the next eight weeks. They don't know whether or not they will have similar working styles, or educational philosophies. They are not familiar with the physical environment of the host school. They do not know how to make their way in the community, which in Sara's case was particularly anxiety-provoking because the school community operated in French, a language in which she was not fluent. They don't know the students they are facing. The large groups seem to be just a sea of unidentified, possibly hostile faces. When I asked Alana and Sara how they felt facing the students for the first time as their teachers, they expressed their discomfort, as illustrated in this excerpt from one of our interviews:

> C: ...what did it feel like being up there that very first day, before you said anything, you're facing the classroom, looking at them – What's in your head?
> A: **"They're staring at us!"** [laughter]
> S: **"I can see them, picking me apart!"** And I could! [laughter] That was the problem, **I could see them picking me apart!**
>
> (Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

Alana writes in her journal about the first day she and Sara observed me teaching:

> We noticed some girls stealing looks at us while writing their tests...Sara and I had been expecting to get the once-over from the girls, and we found it amusing. How we would love to be a fly on the wall of the cafeteria and hear what the girls said about us!
>
> (Alana's Journal, Week of October 21-26, 1996)

Negotiating the collision of the university context where they are insiders, with

their new host school context where they are outsiders, is a bit overwhelming and destabilizing for student teachers. As an added stress, they are acutely aware that they must in a few short weeks face a supervisor from the university who will be seated at the back of their classroom and who will judge their performance as acceptable or not. Failure to live up to university standards after two supervisor visits puts the three years that student teachers have invested in the teacher education program in jeopardy. At most, they would be required to leave the program, abandoning their academic and financial investment:

> In programs where there is a compulsory practicum (field experience) a Pass ("P") is required. If a student fails this component of the program the student will be required to withdraw from the program.
>
> (*Handbook for Student Teachers*, p.7)

At the very least, the student might be required to repeat the practicum, entailing the extra expense of enrolling for another term in the university, and the inconvenience of putting their lives "on hold" for another term:

> At the discretion of the Department of Second Language Education, a student teacher experiencing difficulty may be allowed to repeat a field experience in order to satisfy the conditions of the Faculty.
>
> (*Handbook for Student Teachers,* p.6)

In short, student teachers must make the transition from identifying themselves as university students to identifying themselves as teachers. All the while, though, they must keep one foot in the university community, because throughout the practicum experience, they remain students of the university. Ultimately, it is the university supervisor whom they must please. The university supervisor, with input from the cooperating teacher, determines whether or not the student teachers pass the practicum.

Sara and Alana see 'pleasing the university' as a necessary strategy for ensuring

success in their environment. Sara illustrates this in the next two excerpts from debriefing sessions three and six, where she discusses an activity in which the students had to give their opinions. The students had difficulty with the task because they could not gauge what answers they thought Sara and Alana wanted to hear. They desperately wanted to give the answers that the teachers wanted to hear in order to reap praise or a good grade. Sara says that they are learning a lesson that will be useful when they get to university:

> S: I found it interesting watching them write the responses, compared to 509. Cause 509 just sat down and did it, but these ones really wanted to make sure that they were writing about the right thing. And they - quite a few of them asked me "What - what do you want me to write" and I said "I want you to write how you feel. I want you to write your thoughts, how this article made you feel, how you feel about anything, about (drunk driving?) about safety, about just anything, any emotions that were elicited from the text" and Flora was interesting because she had so much trouble writing, and I was watching her and she was having so much trouble writing! She was on about the second line and she only had – I don't know, ten minutes left, or fifteen minutes left. I said "Flora, just write how you feel" and she said "I know, I know, but I want it to be right!" [laughter] and I just laughed!
>
> (Debriefing session 3, November 18, 1996)

> S: I mean they're going to be well prepared for university, cause in university you figure out what your professor wants, and that's what you give them
> A: [laughter]
> S: because if you come up with something really imaginative and something really brilliant off the top of your head, they won't believe that you wrote it...
> A: um-hmm
> S: ...or, it's not what they believe and
> A: yeah
> S: ...and they find it hard to process and mark
> C: um-hmm
> S: and that's something I've learned at University that I don't like about University but it's something you come to understand and so I think they'll be well –prepared in – for university in that way cause they really do think "what does she want of me?" and when you just want them to be creative or you just want them to like [laughter] say what they think they find it (hard?)...to let go
>
> (Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

I noted this anxiety to please when Alana, Sara and I discussed the use of French

in the ESL classroom in one of the debriefing sessions. Sara and Alana felt pressure regarding language choice as a pedagogical tool from their university training program and their teacher educator. Although this is nowhere formally documented in their training program, it is expected that Alana and Sara and their classmates will not code switch to French in the ESL classroom. Alana described the message absorbed by the student teachers as follows:

> A: well we just get it drummed into us that we will fail if we – if we [use French in the classroom]
>
> (Debriefing Session 2, November 6, 1996)

As a university student anxious to do what the university required of her, Alana desperately desired to know what constituted "using French in the classroom" or "teaching English in French". In the following excerpt from a debriefing session, Alana wondered if it was all right to help students understand by pointing out the French cognate "*source*" for the English word "source" She wondered if this would be considered teaching English in French. She needed reassurance that she was doing the right thing according to the university. She talked about needing "boundaries" in the following discussion with Sara and me.

> C: ok? Maybe when you find that the whole class is going "I don't understand, I don't understand", well then, stop. Ok?
> S: yeah
> A: ok
> C: [ask them] "what don't you understand?" "Well, I don't understand this" Then you point out well, "source" (English) is "*source*" (French).
> S: yeah
> C: It's the same thing. "Are there any other words that you recognize? ()|
> A: so, to make this clear, we're allowed to say things like that? That's not teaching English in French?
> C: If I point out "look, it's the same in French. You know the word 'source". No. I – I say that that's fine, because there is a reality factor here. These girls are operating in another framework in terms of language, ok?

S: well, especially when it's a cognate like that. I don't think there's anything wrong with pointing out a cognate
C: yeah, especially cause – cognates are a strategy for learning.
A: yeah, yeah, yeah
C: ok? I mean what is cognition? It's relating what you know – the new information that's coming in to what you already know and then integrating it somehow...
A: Yeah
C: ...right? And you can't deny the French language in their brains. So no, don't worry about *that* being teaching English in French.
A: ok, ok good.
C: I kinda hold the belief that a little well-placed mother-tongue knowledge...
A: I think so too
C: ...is not a problem.
S: hmm
C: There are some people who will go to the other extreme "never, never, never, never, never, never, never"...
A: yeah
C: ...but the word "never" is too strong.
A: yeah, ok. I feel so much more liberated now.
C: oh, oh, ok. Was this something that was...
A: well we just get it drummed into us that we will fail if we – if we
S: but the thing is, is I don't think he means like that, I think he means...
A: yeah
...that if you if you walked in and said "Aujourd'hui..."
A: I know but see, the thing is, I need to know where the boundaries are...
S: yeah
A: I mean obviously I can use a cognate
S: uh-huh
S: for example the other day, they didn't understand the word 'asylum' so I just wanted to clear it up, and I did say "well, the word is similar in French, and so someone comes up with the word "asile". So.
C: um-hmm
A: Ok, what does 'asile' mean? So, just as long as I know that that's alright...
C: That's fine
A: ...That gives me a sense of where the boundaries are.
C: That's fine. I think what – what – what he means is that there are people who go in there and they conduct their entire English course in French
A: ...the instructions and stuff are in French
C:...the instructions are in French, everything is in French

(Debriefing Session 2, November 6, 1996)

Although logically it could not possibly be argued that using a French cognate in the ESL classroom would be "teaching English in French", Alana feels pressured both by

her need to preserve her identity as a good student who knows how not to fail, and by the constraints of her teacher educator with respect to the use of French in the classroom.

When student teachers reach the practicum, they have successfully established identities as university students but they have not yet established their identities as professional teachers. I note this in my reflective log.

> Student teachers arrive at the practicum having very little concept of themselves as teachers. Everything they have learned so far has been purely theoretical and hypothetical. They have no context in which to frame this information, until the practicum.
>
> (Reflective Log, Oct. 27, 1996)

I suspected this was the case with Sara and Alana when I started to think about why they had written nothing down when they observed me teach on the first day:

> What I noticed was that they took no notes. This surprised me. I wondered why. I even thought of suggesting it, but didn't. For some reason, I thought they should be sitting at the back of the class scribbling furiously. What did I think they should be writing down? I'm not sure.....I have a theory about this. *I suspect that they didn't even know where to begin.* I don't think they had any frame of reference for what they were seeing. They don't know what is important and what is not. When you have no sense of anything, what's to write down?
>
> (Reflective Log, Oct 27, 1996)

Because they did not see themselves as professional teachers, they stuck to what they knew best, which was how to be students. In the beginning, they were very concerned with doing things the way that the Office Responsible for Student Teaching said they should. They were very polite. They were uncertain and hesitant as they waited for me to tell them what to do. They were very aware that they were in an environment that was not their own. I know from supervising for the university that student teachers are constantly reminded that they are guests in the schools where they teach, and that they must never forget that it is their job to conform to the environment of their school. They must be polite and respectful with their cooperating teacher and with their colleagues around

them. They must dress professionally and carefully fulfill all the duties expected of them in the manner in which they were taught during their university courses. They are to consult the *Handbook for Student Teachers* and their supervisors. It is in their and the Office Responsible for Student Teaching's best interests to perform all of these duties as outlined in the handbook.

Another situation in which Sara and Alana drew on their identities as university students occurred in the early days of the practicum when their initial concern was with preparing and delivering lessons. The first lesson had to be prepared according to the standards established by their teacher educator, and as laid out in the *Handbook for Student Teachers*:

> All good teaching, formal or informal, requires planning. It would be highly beneficial for the student teacher to review such plans with the cooperating teacher prior to teaching. ...The student teacher is also required to submit the Summary Teaching Plan to the visiting university supervisor and the cooperating teacher if requested...For the detailed planning of your teaching you should use the model suggested here...
>
> (*Handbook for Student Teachers*, p.16-17)

They interpreted the delivery of these early lessons as tests of who they were as university students. Thus, in the beginning, succeeding as students was what was important, because this is who they were. In their *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* classroom, delivering the lesson, they were university students again, being graded on the quality of the plan and the implementation of the lesson. The difficulty was that they also had to be teachers, and they had to deal with all the messiness of life in the classroom that they couldn't write into their ever-so-carefully-prepared lesson plan.

As Alana and Sara tried to put into action what they had learned as university students, they sometimes felt that their attempts were being thwarted by their boisterous

students, as revealed in this excerpt:

> A: I was saying that the most tiring aspect of this is the - it's the psychological tiredness,
> C: yes
> A: and it's because I want to give a great lesson, and then having to deal with things that are taking me away from that as I'm as I'm working my lesson
> C: um-hmm
> A: it's having to do the extra things, like Sara was just saying to you now, talking over the voices...
> C: um-hmm
> A: trying to get the voices to go away
> C: um-hmm
> A: competing, in other words...
> C: um-hmm, it's...
> S: ...and not even competing to get like to give your whatever you want to do to them, like to give your instructions, competing to get their attention...
> C: um-hmm
> S: to give the instructions
>
> (Debriefing Session 1, November 1st, 1996)

In this excerpt, a collision emerges between the university context and the classroom context, and the identities that were required in each. Not yet able to see themselves as teachers and having no experience of how to put their theoretical, decontextualized university knowledge of teaching into practice in the classroom, Alana and Sara were unable to take into account the interactions of their students when planning for their early lessons. They were unable to envision what it would be like to actually have students in the class as a lesson plan was unfolding. Their students were a live force. They could be noisy and outspoken and they were not always happy to fall obediently into the student teachers' lesson plan. Initially, being successful in implementing the lesson plan was what was most important for Sara and Alana, and in making the delivery of the lesson primary and not accounting for the active involvement of their students, they relegated their students to the status of "two-dimensional characters", like paper dolls to be placed wherever they were most convenient for the student teachers.

Over the course of a practicum, most student teachers do eventually make the transition from the university context to the new host school context. As they begin to integrate into the new host community and create new identities as teachers, their identities as university students recede into the background. Eventually, they forget about themselves and their needs as university students and begin to focus on the needs and responsibilities of their students. Thus they become more confident in their new environment and they begin to see themselves successfully playing the role of teacher. Alana wrote about becoming comfortable in the role by the third week of the practicum:

> By this time we'd become comfortable enough with our positions as teachers to know that we were doing all that was humanly possible to make [the unit]"fun"
>
> (Alana's Journal, Week of November 4-8, 1996)

As the practicum unfolded, Sara and Alana began to see their students as active participants of their classroom. At the end of the practicum, they no longer looked at the students as impediments to the lesson plans mandated by their university courses. They started to view their students as learners through their new identities as teachers. In the final debriefing session, Sara noted:

> S: because it's amazing how –like the students that we thought "Oh, no" were going to give us the hardest time at the beginning, were the ones who came round the most at the end and then ones who were um, really good at the beginning and sometimes would say sometimes say something that seemed a bit cocky and then we'd be like "Whoa" and it would throw you off but then the next day they'd be fine again.
>
> (Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

Alana noted how the students had become "full" not "flat" characters:

> A: because these kids who showed the most attitude at the beginning turned out to be so endearing and – and showed us that they are full characters, they're not flat – you know uh…
> C: two dimensional?
> A: …two dimensional characters, there really is a lot to them there's a lot interesting to them.

(Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

In summary, there were a number of interdependent tensions at play when Sara and Alana began their practicum. The first tension was between the university context and the host school context. In the university context, Alana and Sara were insiders, well aware of how to negotiate it. However, arriving at the host school, they were outsiders. To be successful as teachers they had to negotiate these two contexts and become insiders in the host school context. The second tension concerned Alana and Sara's identities within the university context and their emerging identities as teachers in the host school. Sara and Alana had to make the transition from university student to classroom teacher. In effect, they had to walk the tightrope between these two identities. While becoming teachers, they were still university students. The third tension concerns what Alana and Sara learned in each context. The university offered reified knowledge *about* school and in the host school context, knowledge is in the actual practice of teaching. Alana and Sara had to find a way to transfer the reified knowledge gained at university to the more practical classroom setting.

All of this was somewhat overwhelming and a little de-stabilizing for Alana and Sara. There was some trepidation as the contexts collided, but their experiences were not without excitement. Alana and Sara were enthusiastic and eager to begin teaching. In the last debriefing session, I asked Sara and Alana to look back and tell me how they felt about beginning to teach. Sara expresses how she felt as facing students as a teacher became imminent:

> S: I was excited. I was not – I wasn't worried, I don't know why. Sec 1 worried me a little more because of the French English barrier.
> C: um-hmm

S: Sec 5? I was excited to teach. I was excited to just get in there. It was strange. I thought I would be more apprehensive that I was.
C: um-hmm. And you weren't at all?
S: no.
C: no?
S: I think I - I'm one of those people who have to dive in and if I don't dive in, then I can sit around and make myself nervous, but if I just throw myself into it, I'm ok.
...
S: ...I mean I was a little anxious, I suppose, to hope – like hoping that it went well, but I don't know – nerves? If I had nerves, they had to be good nerves because I don't think I would be able to get through it by being really seriously nervous. Like I get nervous for much, much more nervous for ridiculous things [laughter] than that!

(Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

Alana's first contact with the students was an impromptu review of an accuracy-building activity that I had done with the students on the previous day:

> The next day Sara and I had the chance to take up answers to "Messenger and Scribe" with the girls – it was our first experience leading them through an activity. What a buzz! I found it terrifying and thrilling. I let my "automatic" self take over, I went into this strange sort of "teacher mode", where I channelled all my energy into providing a clear set of instructions and getting the girls to answer me without letting any of them be too disruptive.
>
> (Alana's Journal, Week of Oct. 21-25, 1996)

Sara and Alana made the transitions from their university context to their *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* context. They made transition from their identities as university students to emerging teachers. They also learned that their reified university classroom knowledge was not the same kind of knowledge as the practical knowledge learned in the classroom at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*. They made these transitions by living the process of teaching in their host school. A large and important part of making that transition was entering the community and becoming familiar with the physical structure and ideological framework of the community, and with the people who worked within it. In the next section I will describe Sara and Alana's beginnings in the community.

Part 2 - Entering the Community: weaving the context

I begin this section with a vignette that is partly an early excerpt taken from my reflective log, and partly reconstructed from my memory. I include it here to bring to life what I experienced with Sara and Alana on the first day of their practicum:

Beginnings - Entering the Community

> ...I hear the bell ring, signalling the end of the first period, and I mentally kick myself again. "Two student teachers with me and it's a test day today." Three classes in a row - of tests. What on earth is there for them to see since except the backs of students' heads bobbing up and down as they gnaw on pencils in concentration? There isn't even any time in the seven minutes between classes to get oriented or to get to know each other, or to give them any input with respect to the groups they are about to see. Oh well, I decide. Don't know what I must have been thinking when I asked them to come in today. I should have just told them to begin tomorrow. The only thing they will see me do is give the instructions for the reading comprehension quiz, and the ten-minute part of the class where we correct the quiz afterwards. That won't be much fun for them. Nothing much to see there. "But then again," I surmise, "knowing how to give instructions is important for student teachers." I decide that we will make the best of it. I check the schedule to see which sec V group I see first today. "Ah, group 548! Oh. THAT will be interesting!" I perk up a bit. "They can start by observing the personality of each group! Each of the three groups has a very interesting chemistry...it will be interesting to see what they make of it all!" I propose this to them as we walk to class. When we get there, I ask them to introduce themselves to the class, who have been expecting them. Then they find seats. Alana sits in the first row, four seats back. Sara has chosen the third row, last seat. I begin giving the instructions for the test, and as I speak to the group of students in front of me, I notice that Alana and Sara are not writing anything down. I am surprised, but then I wonder, "just what it is that I think they should be writing down?" I don't know –"... notes on class organization, maybe? Things that I do that might be useful to them? How I relate to the students? Surely there is something to be written down?" But, no. They just sit and watch. After I give the students the quiz instructions, I send Sara and Alana for coffee, with instructions to return ten minutes before the end of the class...We follow this routine three times.
>
> Later, we have some time to tour the school, and get oriented with respect to the places they will need as they teach. We begin on the third floor, with our immediate superior, Marcel Duchamps, the level director for secondary V. He is a jovial, easy-going man in his late forties. He knows all of the girls in sec V by name – an amazing feat. He stands up and moves around to the front of his desk to greet them. He shakes their hands, smiles, laughs and jokes with them, and says "*Bienvenue à Marie, Mère de Dieu*". Sara nods and smiles a large, bright smile,

and says *"merci"*, a few times. Alana is charming and gracious. She does all the talking, being much stronger in French than Sara. Leaving Marcel's office, we pass through the music hallway, where Sara and Alana look at all the class photos and graduation photos of past students that are hanging on the walls. The history of the school is laid before them in black and white, from its earliest incarnation as a boarding school in the fifties, to the present day. In the early photos, the sisters are wearing imposing black habits and standing sternly at the front of each class. We continue on to wing C where we see a photo from the early seventies, and laugh, and Sara says, "we weren't even born when that photo was taken!" I realize that I have never before felt such a gap of time, such a sense of being from another generation almost, as I have with these two. I decide I must be getting old.

As we continue on our tour, we arrive on the second floor, at the *polycopie.* A few teachers are there photocopying and I introduce Sara and Alana. We continue to the *Centre Multimedia*, where I introduce them to Estelle, director of the *centre,* and to her assistant, Normand, and then, to the library where we meet the librarians, Marthe and Yvonne. These are all places that Alana and Sara will be using, and they need to feel that they are known and welcome. We run into *Soeur* Jacinthe, *directrice des services pédagogiques* on the second-floor stairway. Silver-haired, tall and elegant, she is, as usual, well-groomed and impeccably dressed. "Rats!" I think. I had wanted the meeting to be in her office, so that Alana and Sara would be formally aware of being introduced to the administration. She shakes their hands, welcomes them in her polite and gracious French, and then glides on serenely down the stairs.

Throughout the tour, Sara and Alana are very polite; they follow me dutifully, and they smile and nod and laugh at all the right places. We laugh and joke with each other; I'm beginning to see that these two are going to be a lot of fun to work with. They are sharp, smart, and witty – "it's going to be fun," I predict. "Or, it will be as soon as they relax!" We've arrived back at my office, and I'm inside talking to them and I suddenly realize I'm talking to the air. They are standing outside my office - they haven't followed me in! "Come on in!" I invite, and they do, and then they stand there in front of me, and I have to say "have a seat" because they are standing there waiting to be invited to sit! I laugh to myself, "this is like herding a small group of puppies!" But at the same time, this behaviour is very awkward for me, and very unfamiliar. I am not used to having people stand on such formality with me....and then I remember my own early days here, and I remember how the somewhat formal atmosphere of the school can be a bit intimidating when one is not used to it. But I am definitely not intimidating, and I need to quickly disabuse them of that notion. "My office is now your office", I tell them. "Everything in it, from the books on shelves, to the supplies inside the desk drawers to the coat closet and that sink in the corner – it's now as much yours as it is mine. Please, make yourselves at home."

(Reflective Log, October 26, 1996 and Memories, March 2003)

Although arrangements for welcoming a student teacher to *Collège Marie, Mère*

de Dieu are made between the University's Office Responsible for Student Teaching and the *directrice des services pédagogiques*, *Soeur* Jacinthe, it is neither she nor any other member of the administration who introduces the student teachers to the school. Once the arrangements are made, *Soeur* Jacinthe entrusts the details of hosting to the co-operating teacher. And so it was that from the first day, I became Alana and Sara's guide to their new community. From that first day they were guided by my assumptions about teaching and learning. As they began to construct a framework of their new community, their experiences were shaped by my decisions about what was important for them to know.

Reflecting on my "knowing-in action" about student teachers and their needs, I discovered that I held four equally important assumptions about what Alana and Sara needed to feel comfortable in their new environment. The first assumption was that they needed to be familiar with the physical context of the school. *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* is a large school, and over the course of the practicum Sara and Alana would need to be in various places far and wide within the complex. Thus it was imperative that they know how to orient themselves within the building. We began with a tour of the building, concentrating particularly on the places where they would need to be.

As we toured the building, I began to work on my second assumption: that Alana and Sara would need to feel that they were a part of the school community, and not simply polite strangers tiptoeing carefully on the outskirts. They needed to know who everyone was (as far as possible given the size of the school) in the community and everyone needed to know who they were. I felt that it was important that they see themselves reflected as teachers in the community in the eyes of community members around them. It was vital then, that on that first day and throughout the practicum that they be formally

introduced to the people who make up the community, both teaching and non-teaching personnel: secretaries, receptionists, cafeteria workers, or members of the administration.

Sara and Alana also needed to understand the hierarchical organization of *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*'s administration and how teachers and administrators worked together within the context of the school. As well as the chance introductions that I made on the tour, I specifically introduced them to the administrators with whom I had (and consequently they would have) the most contact. In this vignette, I describe Sara and Alana's introduction to the administration of *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*:

Meeting the Administration

> We began with Marcel Duchamps, the vice-principal of Secondary V and my immediate superior. I was counting on his easy-going warmth, energy and humour to make Alana and Sara feel welcomed, and I was not disappointed. He jumped out of his chair, began immediately laughing and joking, and vigorously shook their hands and inquired how they were getting along. He told them that if they needed anything, if he could be of any help, that they should not hesitate to come in and talk.
>
> We did not get to Soeur Jacinthe's office that first day, but I made sure that we did the following day. In contrast to Marcel Duchamp's office, with its comings and goings of students and teachers, and its constantly ringing telephone, her office was an oasis of calm and quiet, with Soeur Jacinthe seated placidly in its midst. In this office, I had seen evidence of Soeur Jacinthe's sharp wit and her quick intelligence. Here, I had occasionally sought and had been given very insightful advice. And, here I had been gently rebuked, when once I expressed surprise that she was surprised that there had been a 1% failure rate: one of my students had not passed the final exam a few years earlier. *Soeur* Jacinthe was never cold, but she always seemed to be professionally distant. A climate of deference and respect, always mutual, reigned here. While Marcel welcomed Sara and Alana first as people, and then as student teachers under my guidance, *Soeur* Jacinthe welcomed them with the automatic assumption that they were already professionals. She rose, and ritually shook their hands. She gave them a copy of the agenda, an important tool that all students and teachers have, and which contains all the pertinent information concerning school rules and regulations. She welcomed them to the school, where she was certain that they would learn a lot.
>
> (Reflective Log, October 26, 1996, and memories, March 2003)

Both these welcomes were important. Marcel's warm, friendly, and informal

welcome made them feel comfortable in their immediate environment, and *Soeur* Jacinthe's welcome set the tone for what they were about to become – professionals. The contrast between the administrators' styles of welcoming and greeting Alana and Sara was symbolic to how they would eventually describe the school at the end of their practicum: "a community that was a contrast of warmth and formal rigidity." In a reflective interview, I asked them what they had expected upon their arrival at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*:

> A: um. I don't – I really don't know what I expected like for example the very first day…
> C: um-hmm
> A: but I do know that what I found out was that the Collège has a lot more of a community, a sense of community, a sense of spirit than is immediately observable…
> C: um-hmm
> A: …visible to the eye.
> C: What – what made you notice that? What was it that…
> A: umm, the salle 5 in the mornings, the DJ-ing, you know, um, 'Mr Motivation' [laughter] just the presence of – of - of these authority figures but who really seem to care and know a lot about each girl.
> C: uh-huh, uh-huh
> S: hmm
> A: you know? That seemed to make a difference, I mean I went through high school being fairly anonymous…
> C: uh-huh
> A: …and so that fact that that for example, Mr. Duchamps would know all about you – that's really special.
> C: yeah. And he does know all about them. He – he knows yeah, things that sometimes he tells us and sometimes he doesn't, depending on whether it's relevant for us to know
> A: um-hmm
> C: and not – but whenever I have a reason to go upstairs to talk to him about a girl, he knows who I'm talking about and he knows her history…
> A: um-hmm
> C: …It's amazing
> S: I find it – I just find it hard that there's so – like they've got all these things, they've got Mr. Duchamps and they've got Mr Motivation and they - they really do try and make it a big sense of community, but then they're so test-oriented and so kind of…
> A; yeah, it's a contradiction of terms
> S: it is, and so stifling of personalities in the classrooms in their work…
>
> (Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

Although I tried on the first day to introduce the student teachers to the *directrice* of the school, I was not able to because, not surprisingly, she was not in her office. *Soeur* Marie-Odette's influence throughout the school was pervasive. One of the ways she accomplished this influence was by being a strong physical presence around the school. She had a very "hands-on" style of management, and so it was not often that she could be found at her desk. As a teacher, I rarely had day-to-day contact with her. My contact with her was usually limited to the few meetings where she would address the teaching staff, an annual meeting she holds with each teacher, discussions concerning my workload and annual contract, and any chance encounters that I might have with her in the hallways of the school. I almost never needed to see the *directrice* for anything concerning my daily work. The hierarchy of the school is such that pedagogical matters are seen to by the teachers themselves, the vice principals or the *directrice des services pédagogiques, Soeur* Jacinthe. Although it is important that student teachers be acquainted with the administration of the school, I knew that since I rarely had cause for interaction with *Soeur* Marie-Odette, Sara and Alana would have even less cause. Consequently, meeting her could be put off until we could find her in her office, or more likely, that she would run into us in the hallways.

My third assumption was that Alana and Sara would need to feel that they had my support. I did not want them to feel as if they were going to be thrown into the 'lion's den' while I disappeared into the staff room. I believed that we were a team, and that I was the team leader. I tried to make this idea of a team apparent from the very beginning. I told them that initially we would plan together, teach together and problem-solve together. Eventually, as they became proficient, I would fade out of the picture, while still

maintaining a strong presence in the background, as they shared their planning with me and as we de-briefed each lesson at the end of the day.

We began by observation and team-teaching. Even though, in the very early days, Alana and Sara were only observing me teach, they were privy to various aspects of my teaching such as the planning that I did, the reasons why we were going to do the things we did, the problems I thought we might encounter in presenting the lesson, the problems we did encounter, and the solutions to those problems. All of these things I shared with them by reflecting on my actions in debriefing sessions after the lessons and by reflecting-in-action during the lesson. They watched me teach, and heard the reflection-on-action that I did afterwards as a kind of accompanying soundtrack that justified what I had done. Sometimes they heard me justify what I would be doing before the lesson. Other times they would hear me reflect on my actions after the lesson. Sometimes, as in the excerpt below, I would reflect-in-action, during the lesson. In this next excerpt, from Alana's journal, Alana observes an activity that we did with the classes that illustrates how our working together unfolded. She talks about why I chose to do the activity, a problem that we had while the activity was in progress and, after reflecting-in-action together, how we solved the problem. Throughout her description, she uses the pronoun 'we'. Even though she was still observing at this stage, the nature of the activity she describes allowed Sara and Alana to be by my side throughout. I interpret her use of 'we' as an indicator that she felt she was an active collaborator in the team-teaching experience, even though technically, she was still observing.

> On the second day of our stage Cheryl announced that we'd be doing an activity with the Sec. V's that made them focus on their accuracy – an element of their written production that had been somewhat neglected by the girls. The activity was called "Messenger and Scribe" and it involved a relay team of sorts of three

> girls – a reader, a runner, and a writer. The reader read a text aloud, the runner relayed the information to the writer, who in turn copied down the text. The object of the activity was to come up with an identical copy of the original text. Interestingly enough, we once again witnessed the "character" of each group of girls as they undertook this activity. 509 didn't try very hard to produce accurate copies, and seemed to get carried away with the idea of "runner" – they seemed to consider the activity to be a sort of race. We soon realized that we would have to rename the runner the "messenger" in order to deemphasize the speed aspect of the activity. 548 was somewhat more successful at this activity, and they really seemed to enjoy the chance to stretch their legs, which is true enough to their very "active" nature. 526, sure enough, spent most of the time trying to get the activity done properly, and did not get half as much written down, but did manage to make very few errors.
>
> (Alana's Journal, Week of October 21-25, 1996)

The students whom Sara and Alana were about to begin teaching were, in terms of number, the largest part of their new community. They were also the people with whom they would spend the most time. My fourth assumption was that it was crucial that Alana and Sara be seen by the students as teachers with as much authority as I had, from their first day. The measures I took to ensure this were twofold. First, I prepared the students ahead of time for Alana and Sara's arrival. Just as student teachers should not feel that their co-operating teacher is throwing them into the lion's den, neither should the students feel that way when student teachers arrive in their classroom. I explained to them how the practicum would work, what Alana and Sara's role was in the class room, and what my role would be and how it might change as the practicum unfolded. I explained that as their teacher I had a responsibility to them, their parents, and the administration, and that even though I might not always be in the classroom, I was always in the school, and I would always know what was happening at all times. I had a dual responsibility here. I was responsible for both the student teachers and I was accountable to my students, their parents and my administration for the learning of my own students. What ever happened in their classroom would have to be sanctioned by me.

The second way in which I prepared both the students and the student teachers for the transfer of authority was by having Sara and Alana stand at the front of the classroom at my desk while the class was entering the class room and preparing for their class. I did not want Alana and Sara to sit at desks in the back of the room, as if they were students themselves, and prepare to observe me. Instead, I had them begin doing routine tasks that I would normally do, such as preparing the absence sheet, taking attendance, and answering students' questions, or just socializing with the students as they came up to the desk to chat before class began. I referred the students to Alana and Sara for such things as requests to go the wash room, or to get drinks of water, telling them to "ask your teachers".

"...The First Day Was Just a Day to Gawk About"

I had several concerns about Sara and Alana's integration into the *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* community. They were: becoming familiar with the physical layout of the school, meeting the members of the community, and making sure that they felt supported in their new context. My reasons for touring the building were very specifically to do with becoming familiar and comfortable with the places they would need to be, and the people they would need to interact with or that they would encounter throughout the school. To my surprise, what I had pointed out to them, and who I had introduced them to had been duly observed and then relegated to only one line in Alana's journal: "Cheryl led us on a tour of the building, pointing out important places".

I concluded that there was so much new information for Alana and Sara to absorb, that for them, the tour had had a much more general purpose than my helping them navigate their way around, or meeting the relevant people in the school. As Alana put it in her journal (Week 1, Oct. 21-25, 1996) "Basically our first day was just to gawk about."

Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu is a very large school and "gawking about" is an accurate description of Sara and Alana as they took in the immensity of it all. Alana talks about her impression of the building as she and Sara approached it that morning when they got off the bus behind the school, and walked around half the circumference of the building to get from the bus stop to the front door:

> On the first day of our stage, my teaching partner Sara and I didn't quite know what to expect as we arrived at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*. The building was huge, it seemed, and perhaps a little foreboding. We wouldn't have known it was a school if weren't for all the uniformed girls filing inside. It looked like an institution, that was for sure, but we weren't sure what kind of institution it reminded us of.
>
> (Alana's Journal, Week of October 21-25, 1996)

She describes the building as a "foreboding" institutional looking structure, perhaps reflecting her anxieties about the experience to come. Once inside, what struck Alana most was the size of the building and its classrooms.

> I realized that one of the reasons the building is so big is the fact that the nuns who work at the Collège – part of the Congregation de Notre Dame – also live there. Actually, a good number of classrooms are very small. Or perhaps they just seem small, because there is an average of forty desks crammed into each room. Something Sara and I would quickly find out is that the classrooms are so crowded, we are sometimes hard-pressed to manoeuvre around the big teacher's desk at the front to reach the aisles of students' desks.... The teacher's desk sits at the front of the room on that platform. The forty or so students' desks are separated into 6 or 7 aisles of 6 or 7 desks – no alternative seating arrangements. In fact the seating is so strictly enforced that there are marks on the floor indicating where the legs of each desk must go.
>
> (Alana's Journal, Week of October 21-25, 1996)

Sara also commented on the size of the classrooms a few weeks later:

> S: I just hate how close the front row is to me...
> A: I know
> C: I know, me too.
> S: ...because I overlook them. Like we were – you (A?) said to Marie Kim today "oh, well you know feel free to move forward in the classroom if you'd like, if you think that maybe you would be able to hear better, or concentrate better, or

whatever" I just felt like saying "yes, but not in front, I'll overlook you!" It's like, you can't see the front row, they're underneath your nose!
C: that is irritating as hell!
A: yeah
C: there's nothing we can do to stop it, unfortunately.

(Debriefing session 1, November 1)

Alana also notices the school technology and compares it to public schools.

I was amazed, however, at the school's technology. This institution is outfitted with at least a hundred computers, and this has to be the very least. The computer labs are massive, which is nice to see, for the students have room to spread out their books and take notes, and there are even laptop computers which the staff and students can borrow for work at home. There is a video recording studio, and two audio visual technicians on staff. Apparently, some teachers are already teaching using PowerPoint. Sara and I quickly came to the conclusion that this is definitely a technology-oriented school and that the students here have a real edge over many students in the public system who are growing up computer illiterate (like I did).

(Alana's Journal, Week of October 21-25, 1996)

In my reflective log I noted my discomfort with Sara and Alana's reaction as we toured the school:

...They (Sara and Alana) were following, listening, oohing and aahing. The school has such an abundance of riches that it really is embarrassingly overwhelming. It might also be because I am aware of what other schools have. As Sara said "my friend down the street is at 'X' school and they only have one volley ball."

(Reflective Log, October 26, 1996)

While I was thinking of the tour of the school as a way of including Sara and Alana in the warmth and/or familiarity that I feel in my workplace, Alana was experiencing the school as cold and clinical. When she described the school in her journal during the first week, she repeatedly refers to it as an "institution". She describes her reaction to the decor of the classrooms and the school in general:

The walls of some classrooms decorated with interesting material, but by no means are all classrooms so decorated. ...I couldn't help but notice a distinct lack of the students on the walls of this institution. The hallways do not demonstrate the work of students so much as the work of professional photographers. There

> are large, sometimes disturbingly life sized, photos of ballet dancers, award winners, etc., but few student-made posters advertising upcoming events. I noted that student art work seems to be displayed only in a corner of the school...I have to admit, I found that this lack of evidence of the students' presence to be disappointing, and I found the school to look rather clinical.
>
> (Debriefing session 1, November 1, 1996)

Sara, having attended a private high school, was not at all put off by what Alana perceived as rigidity. In a debriefing session the three of us had a conversation where Sara said that while Alana thought the school was somewhat rigid, it was not as rigid as the school she had attended.

As an "insider" (Geertz, 1974), I already had an established place in the *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* community. I was familiar with negotiating the ins and outs of its routines and I had already established numerous professional relationships and friendships that allowed me to feel the warmth of the people around me. I was, in Wenger's (1998) terms, an "old timer", someone through whom a new generation of teachers, Alana and Sara, could access the school community and its practices. While I felt warmth and comfort in the school community, to Alana and Sara the school was not much more that a big empty box that was simultaneously foreboding and exciting, and full of curious things. The tour on the first day was their first experience of seeing the community through my eyes. Although they saw the school it did not represent the same thing for them as it did for me, standing on the "periphery" (Lave & Wenger, 1990) as they were.

Wenger (1998:100) maintains that "required learning takes place not so much through the reification of a curriculum as through modified forms of participation that are structured to open the practice to non-members" These "modified forms of participation" are legitimacy and peripherality. Quoting their earlier work (Lave and Wenger 1991) he uses the term "legitimate peripheral participation" to explain how newcomers can gain

access to new communities.

Peripheral participation is an "approximation of full participation that gives exposure to actual practice" (Wenger, 1998:100). There are a number of ways of being on the periphery. The University coursework and practicum are illustrative of what Wenger means. The periphery "can involve explanations and stories" about practice as Alana and Sara experienced in their coursework at the university. This, however, is not enough. It is engagement in practice that is of more importance and this engagement for Alana and Sara was achieved through the practicum. The practicum experience is a form of legitimate peripheral participation as it includes:

- "lessened intensity" (the student is not required to and indeed cannot keep his or her eyes on the big picture as the co-operating teacher is),
- "lessened risk" (the co-operating teacher has the ultimate responsibility for what occurs in the classroom.),
- "special assistance" (in terms of Schon (1987) "coaching" from the co-operating teacher and the university supervisor,
- "lessened production pressures" (students do not carry a full teaching load).

Schon (1987:17) expresses the same idea of peripheral participation in this way:

> ...learning *all* forms of professional artistry depends, at least in part, on conditions similar to those created in the studios and conservatories: freedom to learn by doing in a setting relatively low in risk, with access to coaches who initiate students into the "traditions of the calling" and help them, by "the right kind of telling" to see on their own behalf and in their own way what they need most to see.

Legitimacy is also necessary to make participation in a community of practice possible. I did not have the words for it then, but legitimacy is what I was trying to give Alana and Sara when I showed them the school and introduced them to everyone we came across. "Newcomers must be granted enough legitimacy to be treated as potential members "(Wenger 1998:101). I wanted Alana and Sara to see themselves as potential

teachers as reflected by the other members of the school community.

In the early days of the practicum, Alana and Sara were on what Wenger (1998:154) refers to as an "inbound trajectory":

> Newcomers...joining the community with the prospect of becoming full participants in its practice. Their identities are invested in their future participation, even though their present participation may be peripheral.

I was on an "insider trajectory": I was in the midst of an evolving practice responding to all the quirks and elements of the community, fine tuning and "renegotiating" (Wenger 1995:154) my identity in response to the demands of my community. This year, for example, *Marie, Mère de Dieu* became unionized. As well as my identity as a teacher, I have had to reconcile a new identity as "union member" with my already-established "teacher" identity.

"I Think I Understood Right Away that it would be Okay if We Joked"

The tour of the school had not been as important to Sara and Alana as it had been for me. As it turned out, the people to whom I had introduced them had not been as important to them, either. Although I had been careful to introduce Sara and Alana to everyone we met, I seemed to be the only one person who had an impact on them in those early days before the imminent arrival of their supervisor. Alana says in her journal that:

> We met our cooperating teacher, Cheryl, and we were convinced right away that she was a thoroughly pleasant person. This was immensely reassuring for Sara and me for although I hadn't really put it all together then, I realise now that Sara and I were venturing out into very unknown territory that day
>
> (Alana's Journal, Week of Oct 21-25, 1996)

Whether or not they will get along with their cooperating teachers is a tremendous source of worry for student teachers. Horror stories abound about student teachers and cooperating teachers whose personalities or philosophies clash. A cooperating teacher

can be a friend or a foe. If a student teacher is placed for seven weeks with a cooperating teacher who he or she doesn't get along with, then there is one more very large stress on their way to graduating.

Luckily, we didn't have to worry about that because we all got along well right from the beginning. As they were "going into unknown territory", I became their lifeline. I had the answers to all the questions they had, and although the school was populated by many people, they never really needed to deal with anyone except me, because, as Wenger (1998) describes it, they were legitimate peripheral participants: they were subject to lessened intensity and lessened risk because I was ultimately the one responsible for my classes at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, regardless of who was actually teaching them, be it me or the student teachers.

It seemed that initially Sara and Alana felt uncertain about how they should act in the classroom. Alana seemed to feel that teaching was going to be a somewhat more sobering endeavour than it actually turned out to be. Alana and Sara discuss this in the following excerpt:

> S: I think I was put at ease watching you, observing you, because you were 'light' about in your teaching, you weren't...
> A; heavy-handed
> S: ...a very heavy-handed, strict, um, kind of just-lecture-to-them kind of teacher and I can't be like that, I know I can't be like that, and if I'd been with a teacher who was like that, I think I would have been more nervous to go in because...
> A: um-hmm
> S: would have – I would have been nervous about how I would have handled the situation, but because you like to encourage the girls and like to have fun with the girls and like to get to know the girls...
> A: yeah
> S: ...and their personalities and kind of plan your lessons to their personalities, it made it a lot easier for me.
> C: um-hmm
> A: I think I understood right away that we would - it would be ok if we joked.
> C: uh-huh

S: uh-huh [laughter]
A: and watching you I just knew that we could joke around with them and that would be fine and that would be educational.
C: uh-huh
A: so that put me more at ease because I knew that I would have – I would be at liberty to do fun things.

(Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

Sara was relieved to see that I had what she described as a "light" teaching style, because she seemed to feel that she would be required to teach in whatever style her cooperating teacher taught. As my teaching style suited my personality and hers as well, she felt more comfortable teaching because she did not worry about how she came across in the classroom and that left her free to concentrate her energies elsewhere. I asked Alana and Sara whether they would have felt compelled to teach in the style of their cooperating teacher. They agreed that there was a possibility that they might have imitated the teacher's style:

C: Ok does that mean then that if you felt - that if you felt that you had a really strict disciplinarian type teacher did you feel that you would have had to be that way also?
S: huh. I don't think that I would have been like that, but I would have leaned more towards that,
A: um-hmm. There would have been an element of us that was a reaction to that
S: yeah, we would have been reactionary to a certain degree, I think, but…
C: In what sense?
A: Well, if somebody is being very heavy-handed all the time, I think it would be just my natural inclination to provide some lightness, some -some comic relief of some sort. Even – I won't say 'comic' but some sort of relief.
S: yeah
A: maybe just a lighter material, but the fact of the matter is, you have to deal with this person for weeks, and this person will evaluate you, and so yeah, I would be obviously seeing this person as a mentor and trying to - to learn, and if this person was offering insight in terms of disciplining or –or teaching from that viewpoint, then it would be valuable for me to learn…
C: uh-huh
A: …I mean it would still be of value.
S: uh-huh

C: So is that – is that kind of like Sara what you said just before one of the things you didn't like about university was the fact that you kind of have to figure out what the professor wants and give it to him? Is that – is that the idea?
S: Well, just if you have like I think because I found that our personalities mesh, it never it wasn't a conscious thing for me. But I think if I had been with a disciplinarian teacher I would have – I would have thought "well this is how she teaches, this is what she thinks is right, and while I won't be exactly the same and there's no way I could be exactly the same because it's not my personality, I definitely would have I'm sure been different. I would have been different in the classroom. I don't know how I would have been different, but I would have been different than I was.
C: um-hmm
S: And I was glad that I could teach the way that I felt comfortable teaching because I think that makes me a better teacher cause I wasn't worried about how I was coming – like about how I was behaving...
C: um-hmm, right
S: ...I was worrying more about the material and the understanding, the comprehension, rather than my performance...

(Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

"Coming to Terms with What you Have to Do."

As the practicum unfolded, I could see Alana and Sara grappling with their new environment and trying to come to terms with it. As they tried their hands in the classroom, they began to encounter frustrations in dealing with the students. They felt some discomfort because of it. Sara spoke of trying to get the students' attention. Alana spoke of the "psychological tiredness" and how it frustrated her that as hard as she tried to give a good lesson, she felt thwarted by unruly students. As she tried to explain why she felt frustrated and uncomfortable, she cast about through her own experience, trying to reconcile what she already knew about schools and schooling with the new situations in which she found herself. I spoke of the importance of a teacher being comfortable in her own classroom. I posed the following question: Are you having the feeling that it's not your class?

C: ...are you having the feeling that it's not your class?

A: I think that it's a – for me, it's a lot of things, and part of it's that I never went to private school, maybe. I'm still not, I'm still I still find the ambiance a bit unusual,
C: hmm, ok
A: that's part of it, I think for me is, I'm still not really sure, and also a different province...
?: yeah
A:...in a () system
C: How do you perceive the ambiance in this school?
A: I haven't really come to conclusions yet. Um, see, I figure I-I know how kids, say in an anglophone school system in Ontario think and what – I know what they're doing during their spare periods, I know what they're doing at lunch time. These are-this-these are kids that I'm not familiar with. I'm not familiar with their ways...
C: uh-huh
A: ...you know? So I don't know really what they talk about or how they think or how they approach things. It's the differentness of these kids...

(Debriefing Session 1, November 1, 1996)

Alana believes that there are vast differences between anglophone and francophone institutions, public and private institutions, and anglophone and francophone students. There are most certainly differences between institutions. Differences between anglophone and francophone students for me, as an experienced classroom teacher, are a non-issue because there are probably as many differences among each of the individual francophone students in one classroom as there are between an anglophone and a francophone student in different institutions. However, for a student teacher who is trying to construct a framework of what a teacher is, and where a teacher works, and how the teaching environment functions, it seems natural that Alana and Sara might compare what they already know from one context to what they are learning in a new context.

Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu was a very different experience for Alana. Her anglophone, co-educational, public school education was admittedly different from the private, Catholic, francophone, all-girls institution where she found herself. She was frustrated. She stated that she wanted to run a "tight ship". She wanted to give good

lessons in the manner that she had planned them, and have the students follow her lead with out any hindrances. She wanted much more control over the situation than she had.

Although she perhaps did not feel it at the time, Alana was immensely successful in the classroom, in spite of her frustration and discomfort. All of her frustrations were simply her way of exploring and adapting to her environment. She was sorting out differences and similarities with what she already knew. She was looking for ways to explain things, and to make sense of the sometimes frustrating moments in the classroom. It was a very real response to a real dilemma that all student teachers face: How does a new teacher go about coping with being essentially a stranger parachuted into a classroom culture that has already been negotiated by the students and the co-op teacher? In this excerpt, I try to comfort her with how artificial her teaching situation is:

> C: well, you know, your situation is, nobody teaches in real life, well, not entirely true, but for the most part [bell rings] people don't teach in real life the way that you teach. You're parachuted into this environment which is alien and strange
> A: yeah
> C: and every one of those things that you've said is () you know, coming to terms with what you have to do.
>
> (Debriefing Session 1, November 1, 1996)

In exploring the data, I noted that Alana often reflected back through her life and her experience. She was trying to connect what she was experiencing in the present to experiences she might have had in the past. I noticed that not once, neither in the data I collected, nor in her journal did she ever seek to connect what she was experiencing to anything she had learned in her course work at the university.

Part 3 - Welcome to "The Swamp"

I have borrowed from Schon (1983, 1987, 1995) his concept of the high ground versus the lowlands of the swamp. He uses this metaphor to illustrate the dilemma of

rigor or relevance that he feels is alive in research universities today. On the high ground, problems are easily solved by the skilful application of theories and techniques. In the swamp are all the messiness and confusion and problems which defy solution. The high ground is the domain of prestige, inhabited by researchers with rigorous standards of inquiry, who undertake research purportedly to inform those of us in the swamp engaging in practice. The swamp is the domain of practitioners who are often unable to describe what it is that they do, let alone apply any rigorous standards to what they know. In education, there is the domain of educational research, purportedly undertaken in order to inform those of us engaging in practice, and there is the domain of practice, inhabited by classroom teachers

What Did We Do Down There?

> The student cannot be *taught* what he needs to know, but he can be *coached*: he has to see on his own behalf and in his own way the relations between means and methods employed and results achieved. Nobody else can see for him, and he can't see just by being 'told,' although the right kind of telling may guide his seeing and thus help him see what he needs to see."(Dewey, 1974:151)

Schon (1987:17) maintains that a student "cannot be *taught* what he needs to know" because for the most part, what practitioners know is tacit, implicit in "doing" whatever it is they do. A student can however, be "*coached"* and guided so that he sees "what he needs to see". This was what I did. I was a coach for Alana and Sara as they went through the practicum. Essentially, I showed them two things. The first thing related to what I knew about the ESL classroom, knowledge that is both tacit and explicit. I led them through the swamp of the ESL classroom. I have knowledge-in-action about ESL classrooms, and as I modeled the process of teaching, Sara and Alana saw me put that knowledge to work. My knowing was in my doing.

The second thing I did was lead them through the process of becoming teachers. By this, I mean that as well as having knowledge about classrooms, I also have, from my privileged source (Huberman, 1996) as both a supervisor and a cooperating teacher, knowledge-in-action about student teachers and bringing them through the process of becoming teachers. This knowledge is perhaps more explicit than tacit because in working with student teachers I was frequently analyzing and verbalizing what I knew as I interacted with them and the situations they were in. Because of my knowledge of both classrooms and student teachers, I was on the one hand able to show Sara and Alana the realities of classroom life through the eyes of a teacher, and an the other hand, through the eyes of a university supervisor, in effect, showing them what the university wanted them accomplish. I served as a buffer among the three communities: the *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* community, the classroom community, and the university community.

According to the *Handbook of Student Teaching*, my role as a cooperating teacher is described as follows:

1. Serve as a model and resource person
2. Oversee and monitor the planning and delivery of teaching units;
3. Provide the student teacher with weekly written feedback both during and at the end of the practicum.

(*Handbook of Student Teaching*, p. 9)

This seems a deceptively simple task but it was in reality, very complex. What is it that the Office Responsible for Student Teaching wants me to model, exactly? How exactly do I oversee and monitor planning and implementing of lesson plans? It seems that I am being told to "Show them whatever it is that you do, make sure they do it and tell them how well they are doing it".

How Did We Do It?

The student teachers observed for the first few days of the practicum. Alana and Sara watched me teach, slowly began co-teaching with me, and after three or four days, they were bored and ready to try it themselves. Before they began, I had involved them in all aspects of teaching from the planning, the implementation through to debriefing myself. Intuitively, I believed that they needed to not only to see me teach, but also to understand what I thought about when I was teaching, and why I did the things the way I did. My knowledge was made explicit through my manner of working. I held debriefing sessions. These sessions allowed me to a certain extent to unpack my tacit knowledge and look at it more closely. Listening to me talk, Sara and Alana learned how to talk about the issues of the classroom, that is, they learned how to reflect-on-action. In hearing them talk, I was able to zero in on their concerns and address them more completely. Through this dialogue, they became familiar with what a teacher does in the classroom and how she thinks and talks about what she does. As I sifted through the data, I was asking myself who it was that was driving the agenda for these debriefing sessions. As we entered into a dialogue with each other, it was difficult to say. I most certainly had in mind what I wanted to get out of a session, in very general terms, (which I will describe below,) so to that extent, I had a hand on the steering wheel. But, I was also careful to keep my initial questions open-ended in order to let them bring up the issues that they saw as needing discussion.

Example of a Debriefing Session

Below is an example of how Sara and Alana and I debriefed. From reading the data transcripts and from my own overt knowledge of how I usually proceed with

debriefing sessions with student teachers, I have noted a pattern to the sessions. I always begin by asking the student teachers how they think a lesson, week etc. went, and I allow them to talk about their impressions. During this time I will question them, provide advice, listen, or offer reassurance. The idea is to let the student teachers create the agenda for the discussion, express the areas that they find problematic, and allow them to reflect on what they have seen and done before I have my say about what I saw. Many times, not only with these two student teachers, I have found that given the opportunity, student teachers can already zero in on the problem areas, especially as they get further along in the practicum. I tend to question a lot, and my questions are designed to get them to talk about issues that they think are important or that I think are important, or that we might have previously discussed and were perhaps manifested in the class that day. In section 1 below, the italicized items are examples of how I open the debriefing session, and the bolded items and are examples of questions that I asked to provoke reflection:

SECTION 1 (Debriefing session 1, November 1).

C: We started with 509, right? OK, give me give me an evaluation. How do you think it went? Give me an over all impression of what you think is going on.
S: I was impressed with your method () of the news the news clips.
C: Um-Hm
S: I didn't know if they'd pick up the entire story. I thought they did well on that.
A: Yeah I think that was ().
C: Um-Hm. Yeah they did actually.
C: They follow, they follow the listening comprehension section pretty good. You know when they get to the end of the year – I told you once before – I think they'd laugh…
S/A: Yeah.
C: …at the listening on the () exam. They actually, they break out in laughter right smack in the middle of the exam.
S/A: Yeah
Some people who would supervise the exam were actually fuming. The girls were laughing. (laughs) So their oral their oral their oral comprehension is really pretty strong.

S: And they seem to like it well enough.
A: I thought so too. Watching ( ).
S: And I think that they don't realize that it is listening comprehension. They don't think that that…
?
C: "We're going to watch TV today!. We're going to watch TV!". Yeah. **OK, so how about the rest of the class? You did three things today. You did the warm up., the () lining and now the song.**
S: Headlines are still () too. Do you find?
A: Yeah I didn't- I didn't feel that I had gone there.
S: OK and that's like I just thought –I don't know what I could have done to prepare them any more.
C: Now that was in my question. What do you think you could have done? In what way did you think you weren't prepared?
S: Um, I just think that when we planned we thought it would be, not easy but just very understandable. That they would be able to -()
A: It seemed logical to us.
S: Yeah, but somehow it didn't seem logical to them. When we were discussing this earlier we thought well, maybe it's because if we'd said before (even) that this is a technique that you can use when you're looking at your articles ().
C: But did you (say it?)
S: We said it afterwards.
C: Was it still going on.
S: I said it afterwards to 509.
C: OK.
S: And I thought like maybe if we'd said it before they would have realized "OK this is a good technique. Maybe we should try it."
A: "This is important."
C: I noticed that as you were correcting them you were using the technique. You were saying "OK so what is that?" One headline was something about education. I can't remember what it was. And you said um who was doing the headlines?
A: I was.
C: You were. OK and you said um, oh what was it you said? 'OK, so that would be education right? OK so we're going to look for education. Find something with education.' OK so you were actually dealing with the key word thing throughout the question and answer…
S: Well I think just, I found with 548 -not necessarily all of 548 but the 548 and the 509- if it doesn't relate - if they can't relate it to something they're going to need -
C: Um-Hm
S: -then they don't care.
A: They're not interested.
S: -And they're not interested. Unless its fun. So with something like that they couldn't see the value in being able to skim and scan until maybe afterwards but by that point its too late.
C: Um-Hm

S: But then in 548 you said before, you introduced that idea before and still some of them just didn't seem to care. Or maybe () just not enough priorities. But I don't know.
A: I think that was I think it ().
S: Yeah. I think... Yeah.
A: It was just 'oh there's a part of what we usually have to do...
S: "And if we wait long enough the answers will come to us". Like () "tell us ()".
A: Yeah and "this is a piece of paper with a lot of writing on it and the writing's small and I just don't feel like it."
C: OK so what do you think how would you do it differently the next time? What are the possibilities?

The discussion in section 2 provides an insight into what might have gone wrong in the classroom, and I give advice on how Sara and Alana might handle this type of problem in the future:

SECTION 2 (Debriefing session 1, November 1)

C: In that particular (). You see what I think may have happened here is that this is the kind of exercise where they have to sit by themselves and interact with the material.
S: Which is why I wouldn't ()
C: Yeah. That's true.
S: The distractions aren't there. They aren't sitting in front of their friends. There's no time. They're not waiting for the bell ring.
A: And they don't have somebody giving them ().
C: Because they did know that the answers were coming. You're absolutely right about that. They knew that the answers... They didn't have to do anything that the answers were just going to come. And it is the kind of thing that required more interaction than we gave it. So maybe what we should have done rather than () it would have been maybe worth the effort to let them work on it more.
S: Yeah
C: Then to take it up right away. Just to try and give it (). So we can remember that ().
S&A: ()
C: this really, we needed to interact more with the material and we lost the opportunity to do that
S: um-hmm
C: ...cause we moved too fast. Ok? Umm...ok, so the warm up, yeah the news warm-up did you try giving them something to think about before they listened?

Finally, I will give my feedback on how I think the lesson went, giving first of all

what I saw that was positive. Section 3 is an example of how I give my feedback, my opinion of the lesson:

SECTION 3 (Debriefing Session 1, November 1)

C: I think the week has gone very well
A: ok
A&S: [laughter]
C:I really do, I think you guys are good. [laughter] You have the idea, you've got the enthusiasm, you get in there and …and your preparation is wonderful. Uh, the implementation is also very good. There's some things you need to work on () [laughter] ah, but I think it's going very well. I think the girls are responding well to you,

Section 4 is delivery of a critique about what I saw but that Sara and Alana did not see, or did not bring up. This is also a way of bringing in issues that I feel are important to teaching, but that the student teachers may be unaware of. I may also bring up examples of behaviours that they may not be doing enough of:

SECTION 4 (Debriefing Session 1, November 1)

C: Oh, I did have two things I wanted to mention:
S: um-hmm
C: when you're dealing with what – like things you were dealing with this morning like, um, in the headline activity, and you ask them if they understand, never assume that they do, ok?
S: …they do.
C: Never assume that they do. Unless you, you know what I sometimes do is I laugh and I joke with them and I say "look, I want to see eyes, eyes, looking at me, I want to see everybody's eyes, Caroline, let me see your eyes!"
A: um-hmm
C: ok? "Do you understand this?" And some of them will say yes, some of them will say no, some of them won't bother, and I say "No, no, no, no, I want to hear "yes, Miss, we understand" and they'll say "yes, Miss, we understand"[laughter] and then I know that they've understood and that's ok…
A: ok
C: …alright? But if you ask the question "do you understand" and a couple people say "yes" and you hear a couple of yeses, that's not enough.
S: ok
A: ok
C: Assume that they don't
A: ok

A: and give your explanation anyway, because for every kid that said yes, there's probably three that don't
A: yeah
S: ok, that's true
C: ok?
C: yeah, and anybody who tells you they can't see? Move them.
A: ok
C: Move them right away. Because that means they're missing () the course.

Ethell and McMeniman, (2000) believe that what a cooperating teacher knows is so tacit as to be unreachable by student teachers. If this is so, then:

> ...the procedural knowledge of expert teachers would remain unarticulated even in interactions with student teachers during pre-service practica. This raises a challenging dilemma for teacher educators: How can the knowledge of expert classroom teachers be made available to student or novice teachers if such knowledge is, to a large degree, unarticulated, tacit in nature and grounded in experience? (p.88)

Consequently, Ethell and McMeniman feel that "Learning to teach effectively requires that student teachers access the minds, not only the observable behaviours of effective teachers." (p.87) Debriefing sessions are perhaps a way cooperating teachers can make explicit their tacit, unarticulated knowledge. During a debriefing session, many things happen. One of the ways that Sara and Alana learned how to talk about what they were doing was to listen to what I deemed problematic. In this way, I showed them what I felt the important issues in teaching were. In this sense, what Alana and Sara learned was very much dependent on who they were learning from. Had they been with another cooperating teacher who had a different teaching style than I had, they more likely than not would have looked at the world differently. As I reflected on my actions and as we reflected on their actions, I showed them what was problematic. In Schon's (1987) terms, I "named and framed" the issued to be discussed, and in doing this, I was doing what he calls "worldmaking":

> When a practitioner sets a problem, he chooses and names the things he will notice....Through naming and framing, the practitioner selects things for attention and organizes them, guided by an appreciation of the situation that gives it coherence and sets a direction for action. So problem setting is an ontological process – in Nelson Goodman's memorable word, a form of worldmaking. (p.4)

I created a world of teaching according to my viewpoint and bias, and Alana and Sara followed me into my world, and in doing so, learned how to create their own worlds.

In taking up my issues and following my lead, Alana and Sara made the issues their own. Initially they imitated me. They watched how I taught, observed how I talked about my teaching, and then proceeded to do the same thing about their own teaching. Schon (1987) describes the process this way:

> Initally she watches and listens and gives operative attention...She does as she has seen him do, enacting the verbal description he has given. She constructs in her own performance what she has seen as essential in his, experiencing from the inside the patterns of action she had observed from the outside, and she produces a new product...She can now reflect on her own process, asking what rules, operations, and understandings she has enacted, comparing these with [her coach's] earlier descriptions....She can reflect on her new product, comparing it...asking herself whether she has "got it"... (p.113)

As they progressed, I began to see myself and my philosophies reflected back to me as Alana and Sara lived the practicum experience. At the beginning of the practicum, I had spoken about something that I had learned from *Soeur* Marie-Odette, and that I had since adopted as part of my own philosophy of teaching: it is extremely important, regardless of how unsavoury an interaction I may have had with a student, that he or she have the chance to start each day over with a 'clean slate', and as the adult in the situation it was my responsibility to give them that chance. By the end of the practicum, Sara and Alana had lived two months of ups and downs with the students and now truly understood what it meant to give a student a 'clean slate'. On the last day of the practicum, Sara said, "you really do have to get past the kinda day-to-day emotions, and you can't –

you do have to start with a fresh slate every day – it's just starting fresh with a new slate that's one of the big things you learn." Alana backed her up, describing the attitude that they had needed to take with the students, saying, "...you really have to force yourself to not let things bother you...you have to remember 'now look, we're being professionals here, we're being grown-ups.'"

I had also spoken about "teachable moments", moments in the classroom where suddenly, an opportunity arises to teach the students something that may not have been on the lesson plan, but the conditions for teaching it are just right and the students are receptive to listening and engaging. I encouraged them to take advantage of those opportunities. Then, I saw that Alana had taken this idea to heart, and spoke about it in her journal:

> I watched with interest one day as Cheryl diverged from the textbook to teach the difference between "buy" and "sell". The students were having difficulty differentiating between the two, and she entertained them by collecting the pencils of half the students and attempting to sell them to the other students. The kids loved the spectacle, and did indeed learn the meanings of the words, and I started to think about how this was the sort of spectacle I could throw my (egomaniac) self into heart and soul. This was, as Cheryl later explained to us, a "teachable moment" and thus she put a name to a phenomenon that no one taught me about at _____, but that I had been using unconsciously as I discussed human rights with the grade 11's. I promised myself to take advantage of as many teachable moments in the future as possible.
>
> (Alana's Teaching Journal, Week of November 4-8, 1996)

What I Didn't Do

I never directly made connections to theories of learning that Alana and Sara might have learned at the university. At no point did I systematically relate "book learning" theory to anything that I was doing. I could not have as I was unaware of exactly what was being taught in Sara and Alana's courses. However, I was well aware of

what the Office Responsible for Student Teaching expected of student teachers during their practicum. What I did do was pass on a pedagogy borne of my own experiences. Any pedagogy that I knew from the university had been long relegated to the level of tacit knowledge, or it had been replaced over the years by my own theory-building about classrooms and teaching ESL. I helped Sara and Alana learn how to build their own theories about the classroom and ESL teaching.

In exploring the data, I noted that Alana looked back through her life seeking to make connections to what she was experiencing during the practicum. I noticed that not once, neither in the data I collected nor in her journal entries, did she ever seek to connect what she was experiencing to anything she had learned at the university. Perhaps she did not recognize in practice what she had previously only heard about or discussed. Perhaps she saw no connections worth commenting on, or she might not have felt that her connections would have any relevance for me and thus she did not mention them. Maybe she perceived the university experience and the practicum to be so far apart as to be irrelevant. Whatever the reason, both she and Sara were very vocal about what they felt they had not learned. We see this is in the following excerpt where we discuss the concept of linking elements of a lesson from one lesson to another:

> S: ...and I like the idea of bringing everything back. Cause that was something that hasn't been stressed to us
> A: ()
> C: What do mean bringing things back?
> S: Well, whenever you do something like kind of making your next thing like relate back, trying to keep relating things back
> C: Ah, ok. You're talking about linking
> S: yeah
> A: yeah
> S: simple linking of topics and elements in your class. And just little things, like today we were taking up ok () I suppose
> A: uh-huh

S: or even when we were doing headlines just saying "oh, this person was is a ref like is a refugee like a refugee thing" Like "Oh do you remember the refugees in the video?" and things like that.
...
S: because that's something that hasn't been stressed at the university, I don't think.
A: yeah.
C: I think it's almost a cognitive thing, you know, I don't know, but to me it makes sense.
S: but then we haven't had really a () (logic/ logical?course?)
? Yeah, it is
A: it's logic,
S: yeah
A: it's pure logic
C: yeah, right, to link things that yeah, because on your on your evaluation form there's this thing about linking things, and you're saying that you haven't - nobody's told you anything?
...
A: we haven't been prepared for that.
S: I honestly don't think that we were prepared to go into a secondary school.
A: um-hmm
S: Maybe, it's in the other focuses they have here, because they've done that Introduction to Secondary School Teaching, whatever that class is?
C: Oh, ok, Planning for Teaching?
A: yeah'
S: um-hmm, Planning for Teaching
A: oh, yeah, which we don't get
C: right
S: and, yeah, and ESL you get even less in ESL/FSL
...
S: yeah, but I had never heard the word 'linking' before!
C: no?
S: no
C: ok Do they maybe call it "building on what you've already done?"
S: no...
A: no
A: (Believe me?) I have not been in a class where the concept has been discussed.
C: no? ok. [laughter] It - no matter what name they give it! [Laughter] Ok, yeah, but does it make sense to you?
S: Completely
A: oh, for sure! ()
S&A: ()
C: I mean things are not – never taught in isolation

(Debriefing Session 1, November 1, 1996)

At the end of their practicum experience, when I asked Alana and Sara what they

had been the most nervous about on their first day, what they felt they had not learned in their university courses came up again. This time they spoke of not feeling adequately prepared by the university, as illustrated in this next excerpt:

> C: ok. What – If there was one thing to be nervous about, about the first day, would it have been preparation, would it have been "What are they going to think of me?" would it have been the French-English problem, would it have been…?
> S: I think it would have been preparation in the sense that I really didn't feel I had any high school teaching background. No information through University, no – just no experience…
> C: That's true, cause you were sort of thrown into this, you were you had primary, didn't you? Primary Methodology?
> S: Well, I had primary, but I mean Alana takes the same course as me, so she wouldn't have…
> C: So she was no further ahead…
> S: Nobody else – nobody else would have been any further ahead.
> A: oh, no
> S: but, we just hadn't had anything, and it's just the idea – you just don't know what's going to work, and you want them to learn but you don't know if they're going to. And that was it, just hoping that they'll learn something.
> C: all right. Ok, Alana…
> S: And not sit there dumb. [laughter] Like dumb-faced! Like
> C: yeah
> A: yeah
> C: Ok Alana, you, what was going through your head when you were facing…
> A: What was going through my head?
> C: …that class, yeah you're sitting there – well, let's start with you're sitting there watching me teach, you're observing, and you're faced with the fact that a few days from now it's going to be you…
> A: um-hmm
> C: …what's – what are you thinking?
> A: Uh, I think my biggest thing was, uh planning oriented. My biggest fear was that I wouldn't know what to do with them, I wouldn't know what level, how to assess their level, I would not know how to choose activities that were appropriate to their level, I would not know what abilities I was going to have to focus on, what I was supposed to challenge – I have no idea.
> …
> S: and we never even had any MEQ high school () like I'd had – I'd had MEQ elementary…
> A: I did in FSL, but I was all confused
> C: uh-huh
> A: but yeah, um, now see, I don't get the evaluation course, so I have no clue how to evaluate.
> C: ok

A: And still don't I still do everything by instinct.
S: I have to, too.

(Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

Alana and Sara felt unprepared for the practicum experience. They felt that because of the programs they were following, they had not had the opportunity to follow what they felt were the appropriate courses in order to be prepared for the practicum. Sara felt she hadn't had enough secondary teaching background, while Alana was concerned about her perceived lack of preparation in planning. Sara mentions that she did not know what the "MEQ" (Ministère de l'education de Québec) guidelines were for secondary ESL teaching. They end the discussion with the idea that because they do not have the appropriate coursework, they are forced to rely on "instinct". They appear to believe that their success as teachers depends largely on the coursework they have or have not done. They perceive "instinct", or tacit knowledge, as something to fall back on. They do not yet see it as a way of knowing.

The Suitcase Theory of Knowledge

As a cooperating teacher and as a supervisor, I had often heard students complain with an air of having been somehow cheated, that the university courses had not taught them enough about classroom management. Perhaps, they had not been taught enough; I was not privy to course content, but upon reflection, I wondered what it was they thought the university could teach them about managing a classroom. As an experienced classroom teacher, I know that management is very much an "in the moment" experience, that is, a person has to be there, in the moment, dealing with the personalities and the issues in the classroom in order to actually learn how to manage them. Classroom situations that require "management" are so diverse and complicated that the university cannot provide

a formula that solves all management problems, as some student teachers believed it should.

Reviewing what Sara and Alana described about what had worried them most at the beginning of the practicum, and having in mind former student teachers' views on teaching about classroom management, I began to realize that part of what happened to Sara and Alana during their practicum was that they had moved from relying on the university as the full source of knowledge needed to inform their teaching, to relying on the situations they encountered in practice to inform their teaching. Initially, like my previous student teachers, Alana and Sara believed that it was the job of the university to supply them with all they needed to know to solve the problems they would encounter during the practicum. Hence it is understandable to see their concern about what they had not had in terms of course work and course content. This university knowledge was transportable; they could simply put it in a suitcase and transport it directly to *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, where it could then be removed, shaken out, and applied.

As participants in the modern university, Alana and Sara have been caught up in what Schon (1983, 1987, 1995) claims is the prevailing epistemology in university communities today: "technical rationality". Technical rationality holds that "...instrumental practice is based on the science or systematic knowledge produced by the schools of higher learning." (Schon, 1995:30). If it is their course work and their teacher educator who is responsible for disseminating the knowledge that is important for teaching, then it is not surprising that Alana and Sara felt unprepared and somewhat bewildered. In Schon's (1995:28) words, "...for anyone who has actually taught a professional practicum, the predicament is that classroom knowledge is only part – and by no means

the most important part – of what counts in practice".

Alana and Sara had arrived at the practicum feeling as though they had somehow missed important information from the university that was essential to their teaching success. They should have arrived with a suitcase full of knowledge, but instead it was only half full; in their minds, the university had failed to fill it up completely. What Sara and Alana could not have known at the beginning was that the university could not fill up the suitcase. As the practicum unfolded, they would become successful as teachers in spite of not having what they considered the appropriate course work. When I asked Sara and Alana how they felt leaving the school for the last time, as teachers, Sara immediately speaks of how much she had learned:

> C: Ok, so, this is your last day. You're about to walk out of the school for the last time, as teachers, [laughter] can you do quickly for me, a retrospective. How did you feel when you arrived here and how do you feel leaving now. Ok, on any level about anything, whatever comes to mind -
>
> S: hmm, so much more knowledgeable! [laughter] Just in everything. In understanding just the way the school runs, lesson planning, anything. The way a class runs... we were just discussing how you – you really do have to get past um, kinda just day to day emotions and you can't – you do have to start with a fresh slate every day...
>
> (Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

Sara and Alana arrived at the practicum with their metaphorical suitcases in hand. They were indeed on a journey, but it was the progression of the journey that was of the greatest interest, and not what was in the suitcase they brought with them on the journey. They would learn to construct theories of their own, modify old beliefs and assumptions and create new beliefs as they lived the situation. Before the fact, they had no way of seeing that this could happen. However, by the end of the practicum they had gone from

students carrying their knowledge in suitcase to teachers creating knowledge from their contexts.

A Guest in the Swamp – The Supervisor

According to the *Handbook for Student Teachers* (p.10), the role of the supervisor is described as follows:

1. Serve as liaison between the school, the university, the school personnel, and the student teacher;
2. Observe at least two teaching units;
3. Provide useful feedback on how the practicum is progressing;
4. Assess whether the student teacher is able to become a good teacher;
5. Complete both the formative and summative evaluation forms.

Because I was also a supervisor, I was used to fulfilling numbers 2, 3 and 4, and thus I was able to provide Alana and Sara with useful feedback in terms of what a supervisor would look for. I had assessed them with both a teacher's eye and a supervisor's eye. I knew that Alana and Sara were well-prepared for their supervisor's visit. Unfortunately, it proved very difficult for Sally Sapsin to schedule her visits early in the practicum because of her heavy supervising schedule and the activities that were taking place in our classroom. Ideally, the first supervisory visit, the formative visit, should occur in the third week of the practicum so that student teachers can get feedback on their teaching and have enough time to put into practice the suggestions made by their supervisors before the second summative visit. However, Alana's, Sara's and my students were giving oral presentations on human rights, and for each class of forty students we required five class periods to accommodate all of the students. As we were working part

time, this meant that we spent close to two weeks evaluating presentations. We also had official test days that we had to respect as they were negotiated in cooperation with the rest of the secondary V teachers. Neither of these types of classes, presentations or testing, showed Sara and Alana taking charge of a class and actively teaching it, so they were not useful classes for the supervisor to evaluate. This meant that Sally had no choice but to evaluate later in the term. As a fellow supervisor, I was able to reassure her that Sara and Alana were not having any significant difficulty with the practicum and that they were progressing wonderfully. Consequently, she was not worried about leaving the evaluation to later in the practicum.

Sara and Alana had heard positive and negative things about supervisors. Discussions on the topic of supervisors abounded in the community of student teachers, especially since most of their classmates had already had their first visit. Some of Alana and Sara's fellow students had had positive experiences; others had had negative experiences. Some students had supervisors whom they had already had as professors. They had socialized as part of a class with their supervisors. Alana appears to believe that knowing the supervisor beforehand is a definite advantage. Sara and Alana had only spoken to their supervisor over the phone. In this next excerpt, Sara and Alana discuss their reactions to the upcoming supervisory visit:

> C: so how do you feel about Sally coming?
> A: ahhh
> C: What's your - This is the your first supervisor's visit. What are your thoughts?
> A: Um, I'm not sure. [laughter]
> S: I'd feel a lot better if she was coming in sec 5. If she came in sec 5 I don't think I'd be very nervous because – because of having you and you've done all aspects of it and you've given us good feedback, I don't feel...
> A: um-hmm
> S: I don't think I'd feel as nervous, but with sec 1... it'll be fine! [laughter]
> S: ()

A: um, yeah. Um, it's hard to really figure out how I feel I think a lot of it as well is that some people have horror stories about their supervisors coming, and - like most people that we know have already had theirs come, whereas – actually last night a girl that we were talking to said that hers was - went really well, like you know, it was really nice – but she knew the woman beforehand, she'd had a course with the woman…
C: ohh, a course
S: …and they did potluck dinners
A: yeah, well they did potluck dinners, whereas we have no idea what um, our supervisor's like.
C: yeah
A: and then we there's the case of Martina who was told she wasn't dressing properly by Jane Dean and all this, you know so
C: uh-huh
A: like we've been having conflicting – we've got conflicting ideas in a way
C: yeah
S: She seems nice on the phone, but she – I don't know. I just get the impression that she will come and do it and get out as quickly as possible. [laughter] But she's been nice on the phone.
C: um-um. I told you I met her last year and she is a very nice woman…
A: um-hmm
C: …she really is.
A: um
C: um, I don't know – I mean – much about her other that that, but I don't – in any case I don't think either of you need to worry. [laughter] But you will anyway, I know!
A; Yeah, and it's hard to know how we're going to - I mean I'm sure that I – if I make – say I make a mistake or a blunder in that class, I think it will be, certainly to – well probably to a big extent – due to the fact that I was being watched that day.
C: um-hmm
A: You know? I don't think it would be a normal – a normal occurrence…
C: right. Ok but you know what's important to
A: …so I have that worry
C: Ok, you worry about ()
A: Yeah I guess so.
C: So you know what's important though about making the blunders is the recoup. Ok? So it doesn't matter if you make a mistake, it's what you do with the mistake. It's how you-
A: yeah
C: …-it's how you recover.
A: Yeah, I can understand that.
S: I'm confident about what we've done so far. I don't think we've had any really big catastrophes so, I don't see why we'd have one that day.
C: Yeah. Yeah, that's true. Nothing - really nothing untoward has happened.

(Debriefing Session 4, November 18, 1996)

Alana and Sara were somewhat unsettled by the idea of the supervisor coming, but they were not outright worried. The practicum was unfolding just as it should have. Sara and Alana were responsible, professional, creative and enthusiastic about teaching. They were progressing in leaps and bounds. They had had a lot of feedback. They were confident that since nothing untoward had happened so far, there was no reason to expect that something large enough to cause them to fail would happen at that stage of the game. Nonetheless, the supervisory visit was still a stressful, hoop to be jumped through before they could pass the practicum.

We finally managed to schedule Alana's first supervisory visit for November 20th, 1996. She was to teach secondary one and even though she had not yet taught them before. This was preferable to having her supervisor watch her teach 548, which we had termed "the Gremlin Group" due to all the active personalities in it. Unfortunately, the visit was not to be, as I describe in this next anecdote:

The First Supervisor Visit

> The time has come for Alana to have her first visit from Sally and I'm certain I must be more nervous than she is. Sally had not arrived by the time Alana went in to teach her class, but I figure she will be here momentarily, and she'll just slip in quietly. I wait for her in the hallway inside the large glass front door, ready to whisk her up to the classroom. After about ten minutes, I begin to get worried, and I go to the phone and check my phone messages to see if she has cancelled, or been delayed. There is no word from her. I check with Virginie at *la reception*, but no, a message from Sally has not come in. Worried, I pace up and down the hallway, feeling very protective of Alana. I imagine her watching the doorway, waiting for that jolt of adrenaline that will send her heart into her throat when she sees Sally standing in the doorway of the class. To this day, I can remember that feeling when I had my supervisor sitting in the back of my class, and as I remember, I find myself becoming angry at Sally. "How can she let this happen" I think. "It's so unfair to put Alana through this, and so unprofessional!" I pace up and down the hallway, but the phone at the reception does not ring, and Sally does not walk through the door. Twenty-five minutes into the class and still she has not shown up and there has been no word. I imagine that she is either late, she has gotten lost, or has forgotten her appointment, and that even if she turns up

in the next five minutes , it will be too late to evaluate, as there will only be twenty minutes left in the class. I walk upstairs and slip into the class, feeling that I might put Alana's mind at ease by telling her that it looks as if there will be no visit today, so she can relax.

(Reconstructed from annotation on the data, and from Memory)

It turned out that Sally had had a minor car accident on the way to the school, and had been unable to make it in time for the class. When she was finally able to call the school, Alana had already finished teaching her class. In the debriefing session that day, I asked Alana how she had felt while she was waiting for Sally to show up. As I had predicted, I had been more nervous than she had been. Her main feeling was that she wished that it was all over with:

C: but, yeah. How did you feel when you were sitting there waiting for Sheila to maybe come or maybe not come…?
A: Well I figured well you know, she's not going to get a very complete picture, but that's her problem [laughter]
C: [laughter] yeah, all right, yeah
A: At that point I was just you know, keep the class running smoothly. That's where my head was
Ok, good, so you weren't terribly distracted…
A: no
C: …by her
A: by her no.
C: Were you nervous at all, were you waiting for her to come?
A: Not really, I just wanted to get it finished with
C: uh-huh, so how do you feel now?
A: Well, I feel um like I'd I feel – instead of, it's funny. On the one hand I feel like it would be really nice if I had it finished with now, so that I could - so that right now I would be being debriefed by her
C: right, at ease
A: And I could just forget about it then, and I could go on and do my other stuff tonight, have it behind me. On the other hand, I have not had any practice with sec 1 before so I really feel that this was a good day, I mean I really could do with the practice so I'm glad I had the practice and I 'm also glad that sec1 had their practice with me as well.
C: um-huh
S: um-huh, yeah. So in a way I would be happy if she didn't make it on Friday so that I too could have at least one day, yeah

C: yeah. Well from the looks of things, um, she'd said something about not having a car, so I suspect that you may not be having - you'll be having a practice on Friday I think,
S: ok
C: I have feeling unless she takes her husband's car
S: () and on Monday we have tests in all our classes, so she can't come Monday...
C: she can't come Monday, that's right, yup. So, um...
S: It's Tuesday or Thursday...()

(Debriefing Session 5, November 20' 1996)

Souvenirs from the Swamp

In the end what did Sara and Alana learn in my swamp? I like to think they moved beyond believing that the knowledge that was in their suitcases was the only knowledge that was important. I like to think that they discovered that teaching was not just about the knowledge they brought with them, but that it was also about what they learned on the journey through the practicum. Through my words and actions I showed them that although the swamp was often a bewildering mess, there were ways to peacefully exist within in it. Survival in the swamp was easier when they understood that it was okay not to know what to do about a problem, how to look at a problem or to not even be able to define the problem. There were many problems that they encountered and the solutions were not "one size fits all". By being honest and open when I didn't know how to deal with a situation, I showed them that reflection both in and on action was the way to navigate through the swamp. We needed to have a conscious dialogue with a situation to really understand it and learn from it.

I realize now that what I was trying to show Sara and Alana was that what we referred to as "guts" and "instinct" during the practicum were actually forms of tacit knowledge and were valid and important ways of assessing situations. Already they had a store of tacit knowledge concerning schools and students. Someday, what was then

conscious knowledge would become tacit knowledge, stored way in their "guts" and "instincts". According to Schon, it is this knowledge that outstanding practitioners have. He refers to it as "wisdom", "talent" "intuition", and "artistry" (Schon 1987: 13).

These were the things that I wanted them to see, but did they see what I wanted them to? Alana and Sara and I never discussed what impact, if any, I had on their learning, and I never directly asked them. I don't truly know if I achieved Dewey's "right kind of telling". As they were highly successful by all the measures deemed necessary by the university, they must have seen "what they needed to see". It seems a logical question to have asked them. I can only think that I didn't ask it because it was too early in the process, and I had no sense of what to ask then, because I didn't yet know where the writing process would lead me. I was in the same situation at the beginning of the thesis as they were at the beginning of their practicum: they knew nothing about teaching, and yet they were expected to do just that. I knew nothing of writing a thesis, yet I was faced with the process of writing one. We all had to enter a swamp of sorts and figure out the lay of the land from within it.

CHAPTER 4 - ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SWAMP: OBSERVATIONS, RETROSPECTIVE, & RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter Overview

This chapter is divided into three parts. Part one brings the story of Sara and Alana's teaching experience to a close. It also discusses what determines student teacher success from my perspective as a cooperating teacher and from the perspectives of Sara and Alana. Following this are both my observations and Alana and Sara's observations of their transformations in identity.

Part two is a brief retrospective of the inquiry. Based on my insights and observations from this inquiry, I make recommendations that might benefit student teacher education in Part three.

Part 1 - Observations

How it All Turned Out

Sara and Alana were immensely successful in their practicum. They each received the highest grade possible from both the supervisor and me. Appendix B contains a sample of the formative Student Teaching Assessment Form used by the Office Responsible for Student Teaching.

Alana and Sara received a rating of "excellent" in each of the five categories: Preparation, Presentation, Implementation, Management, and Professional Qualities. Instead of filling out the Summative Evaluation Forms (see Appendix B) individually, supervisor Sally Sapsin and I filled out a joint summative form for each student teacher. On Sara's form, under "general comments" we wrote the following:

> A very successful practicum. Sara is an outstanding student teacher. Her excellent rapport with the students, her superior planning and lesson

> implementation and committed sense of professionalism will make her an excellent teacher. We would recommend her without reservation.

Alana's form read as follows:

> An outstanding round of student teaching. Alana demonstrates a very confident professional manner in her approach. She has a warm, enthusiastic rapport with students and fellow professionals. We would recommend her without reservation.

What Determines Success?

My Observations on Student Teacher Success

What was it that made Alana and Sara successful as student teachers? As a cooperating teacher, I think there are several things that determine success. The most important thing is having what the *Handbook of Student Teaching* calls "class presence" on its evaluation forms. The *Handbook* defines this as the ability to attract and hold students' attention and interest in the subject (*Handbook of Student Teaching, p.13*). I define it as somewhat more. What does it take to "attract and hold students' attention?" A student who can do this can walk into the classroom self-possessed and self-confident, which makes her students believe that she is in control. Although she may not feel as confident as she looks, she manages to convey that she is in control. Part of exuding confidence is the ability to use her voice clearly and authoritatively, in order to be heard easily throughout the classroom, and to keep and hold the students' attention. I made the following observations about self-confidence in my reflective log:

> I asked Sara, while Alana was busy teaching, just why it was that she and Alana do so well and her answer was "I think we're just bossy!" There is some truth to that, I think....I have a hunch that this is a key to success. A strong sense of self and comfortable in a leadership role. Students who have been unsuccessful did not have the confidence that these girls have....These girls have a sense of who they are.
>
> (Reflective Log November 25, 1996)

> ...Sara and Alana have been so *good.* I knew it almost immediately. The first time I saw them in the class, teaching the class, I knew. "How did I know and what was it that I knew?" Right off, I noticed that they faced the class comfortably and with confidence. It was as if they had something to say, and communicating it was so important that there was no time?/reason? to let stage fright or fear or insecurity get in the way. The first time Alana gave instructions I was astounded - student teachers frequently have trouble and struggle toward clarity throughout the practicum, but Alana - from the beginning she was crystal clear. Sara taught the second segment right after Alana and I remember thinking that she wasn't so clear. I wonder now, though, if it wasn't because I had just seen Alana be so extraordinarily clear. At first I thought Sara would be working on instructions, but no! She too was very rapidly as clear as Alana...
>
> (Reflective Log November 25, 1996)

This confidence is important in establishing credibility in the classroom. Student teachers can learn how to pace a lesson. They can learn how to use the blackboard to its best advantage. They can experiment with adding variety to their lesson plans. These are all things that can be practiced and learned during the practicum. A student teacher who arrives without a strong sense of self and cannot develop one during the practicum (a rather tall order) will have a difficult time establishing authority in the classroom. Student teachers must establish themselves in the eyes of the students they are teaching as credible teachers even though they are just beginners. As I reviewed the audio taped data and heard Alana and Sara talk about grappling with authority issues, I made the following observations as annotations to the data:

> ...I have an assumption that when student teachers are parachuted into a situation such as the seven week practicum, the students they are teaching are thrown off by suddenly having to dance to some stranger's tune, someone who is not their teacher, with whom they have already established a classroom culture. There is sometimes resistance to this. The classroom culture is disrupted. All of a sudden someone whom they have never seen or heard of has complete authority over them, and a relationship upon which to base this has never before been established. The student teachers are vested with instant power. Some students are taken aback by this, often the ones who have a tendency to resist authority. Others who more willingly accept the institution just grant the student teacher the power.
>
> A classroom's culture is a delicately maintained balance. Our personalities, both students' and teacher - our identities, who we are, and how we show

ourselves to the world have already been established before the arrival of the student teachers. Student teachers need to tune into this and come into the class in such a way as to not upset the balance... I am overtly aware of this knowledge when it comes time to teach it to student teachers. Before the student teachers' arrival, I had already built relationships with my classes and the individuals in them, and now, I can use the knowledge, intuition and experience as the radar to guide me through. Student teachers have not yet developed that radar, or they have a lesser degree of it. That being said, though, Sara and Alana are particularly good....

So it seems that the student teachers and students ... are in the process of readjusting the balance of the classroom culture. They are all learning how to respond to each other, how to be with each other. The student teachers are doing - teaching - while learning how to wear the mantle of their authority....I am very aware of this and how my students must make the transition from me as the central authority in the classroom, to the student teachers as the central authority. So student teachers managing the classroom becomes a delicate thing ...

(Annotation to Debriefing Session 2, November 6, 1996, made August 25, 2001)

The Student Teachers' Perceptions: "I Think we're Just Bossy"

In our last debriefing session, I asked Alana and Sara two questions about their success. One of the questions related to which personality characteristics they thought contributed to their success. Sara attributed her success to being "bossy". Earlier, she had also spoken of being highly organized, and of being a bit of a "dictator" who enjoyed delegating. She also felt that a lot of her success had to do with her ability to address a group of people without fear or nervousness, due to her past experience of public-speaking and debating. Alana was very clear that her ability to use her voice was a prime factor in her success. Alana and Sara discuss these reasons for their success in this next excerpt from our last debriefing session:

2042 C: ... what personality characteristics would you say contributed? I mean you once said to me, you said "I think it's just because we're bossy!"
S: [laughter] I think it is! [laughter] I've done a lot of public speaking and,
C: you have? Oh...
S; yeah. Oh I was on the debating team and I public-spoke and
C: yeah

S:...so I'm not nervous in front of people and being
A: I think that's 95% of it...
S: yeah
C: yeah?
A: yeah, I've known that from day one.
C: uh-huh?
A: I've known from day one that if I could become a teacher it would be because of my voice...
C: um-hmm
A: ...because I could use it.
S: but unconsciously – no not unconscious – very conscious longing to be an actress [laughter]
A: very possibly! Very possibly.
S: I think so.
A: I mean like a teacher has to be a good public speaker. It seems to me, um, the teachers that I have had who have not been good public speakers have been trodden upon...
S: yeah
C: um-hmm
A: ...preyed upon
C: hmm. Class presence.
S: And it's amazing how...
A: yeah class presence...
C: um-hmm
A: And it's amazing how – no matter how small you are – I mean, I don't consider myself to be very big or anything, but if you can make your voice carry and in an authoritative way...
S: and if you sound confident in what you're saying
A: yeah
S: they'll listen.
C: um-hmm
S: I had a professor who I'm sure told me many brilliant things. I cannot tell you one thing from his class, because he spoke monotone and he looked down at his feet the entire time and he had - everyone had to sit in the front three rows, because if you sat behind the third row, you could not hear him.
A: hmm
S: and people would ask him to speak louder and he'd try and he felt bad but he – he couldn't teach, he couldn't get his ideas to you.
C: hmm
A: hmm
S: and yeah I think public speaking – that confidence in your speaking.
A: that is a huge – that's a majority - for me that's the majority of being a teacher
S: () pedagogy! [laughter]
C: Yeah ok we'll throw in a bit of pedagogy, then!

(Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

The second question that I asked Sara and Alana was a more general question about what made them so successful. Sara was unhesitant in responding that for her, team-teaching with Alana had been extremely helpful. In the excerpt below, Sara discusses how she and Alana worked together:

> C:...So you were both clearly successful. Why? [laughter] What made you successful?
> S: I think a lot of it had to do with team teaching, for me
> A: um-hmm. That helped immensely.
> S: [laughter] Just having someone to throw ideas off of. And - and as we were bouncing ideas off each other, kinda coming to a middle ground a lot of the time to –to find our lesson plan...
> A: yeah. A lot of our lessons, they - they were half of us, you know...
> C: yeah
> A: ...they weren't completely me or completely Sara.
> C: um-hmm
> A: ...so there was compromise...
> S: yeah
> A: ...but it was compromise that really came naturally.
> C: um-hmm
> A: Neither of us felt like we were giving anything up
> S: no, no
> A: no
> C: a good blend of personalities
> A: yeah that was – we were very lucky.
> S: Which is interesting because we didn't know each other...
> A: not at all [laughter]
> S: ...didn't know each other at all
>
> (Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

In the same excerpt, Alana continues, noting that for her, having a sense of justice and an awareness of having a responsibility to society through the job she does was important to her success:

> A: having a sort of – sense of justice, being an objective sort of person obviously
> C: yeah
> A: so. You know I think um, having some awareness of your place, like your community, community awareness?
> C: uh-huh
> A: because this is a – this is a public service type job, so to be a business man you know, I think it would be somewhat different.

C: So there's a certain amount of personal responsibility...
A: yeah
C: ...that ...
A: yeah, yeah, yeah
C: (that everyone has?)
A: I mean that aspect appeals to me
C: um-hmm, um-hmm
A: so I think that's (part of it)

(Debriefing Session 6, December 12, 1996)

It is interesting to note that the characteristics that I had picked up on as evidence of success, that is self-confidence and an ability to use their voices, were the same characteristics that Alana and Sara perceived as necessary for success. Was this a reflection of my teaching? Did I unconsciously reflect to Sara and Alana that these qualities were important to me? Alternatively, is this Sara's and Alana's completely independent observation of what it takes to become a teacher? I noticed very early on in the practicum that they each had these attributes, so they were not anything that I would have mentioned as needing improvement. However; I would have spoken about these abilities as part of my positive feedback. In the reflective dialogue that Sara and Alana and I developed, it was sometimes hard to say exactly who or where an idea came from, it was so deeply buried in the practical experience.

Another thing I noted was that Alana and Sara did not attribute their success to either me or their university supervisor. However, they did attribute their success to each other. Does this mean that I was of no importance to the process? I don't believe so. I think that what is important is that each of them was on what Wenger calls an "inbound trajectory". I am on an "insider trajectory" We all exist within the community, but in different ways. Learning is both a social and individual endeavour. Although Alana and Sara and I worked closely together, I was not undergoing the major changes in identity

that they were. Creating new identities and reconciling them with who they were in the other contexts in their lives was a fundamentally individual exercise, though the impetus for it was socially gained in the interaction of everyone within the community (Wenger, 1998). What may be most important is a sense of 'kinship' that might come from knowing that there is someone else who is undergoing the same process.

Creating Identities

Observing the Transformation

When they arrived at *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu*, Alana and Sara had the complex task of creating identities as ESL teachers, and reconciling those identities across the boundaries of all the communities in which they were participants. Wenger notes that "We become who we are by being able to play a part in the relations of engagement that constitute our community" (Wenger 1998:152). In this inquiry, participation in a new teaching community led to a dramatic transformation in the student teachers' identities.

When I asked Sara what it felt like to be leaving the practicum compared to how she felt arriving, she said "I feel like I've gone through a life experience here..." The practicum had a tremendous impact on her life, transforming her from student to teacher.

I saw this transformation not only in Alana and Sara, but also in their peers. At the end of the practicum experience, Professor Keilly, Sara and Alana's teacher educator, invited me to attend the debriefing session for student teachers. At the beginning of the session, the student teachers were invited to fill out questionnaires about their experience during their practicum. Although they were asked to fill them out individually, the students seemed to be unable to contain themselves long enough to fill in the questionnaires.

Instead, they excitedly began discussing their practicum with their peers. In my log book later that day, I made the following observation:

> Students did the questionnaires that Prof. Keilly asked them to do - there was some confusion about whether they should put their names on them or not. Some did, some didn't. - was supposed to be done individually, but not so. Students really wanted to share experiences.
>
> (Reflective Log, December 5, 1996)

Later, while reflecting on the data, I added the following annotation:

> They had so much to share that they could not keep quiet and do individual work. This practicum has had an enormous impact on these students. positive, negative, both, whatever, they have undergone a transformation.
>
> (Annotation to Reflective Log Entry of December 6, 1996)

"I Was Going to be Learning About Myself as Much as About My Students..."

In playing a part in the *Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu* community, Alana and Sara became ESL teachers. In effect, they were transformed. In reading through Alana's teaching journal, I saw Alana observing herself making the transformation. In the first week of her practicum, she observed that she would be learning a lot about herself:

> This teaching experience was going to be as much a learning experience as a teaching one, and I found myself thinking that I was going to be learning about myself as much as about my student s, my colleagues, the subject matter, or the teaching profession. The experience was going to be about learning how I react to certain situations, and about accepting the fact that there might be things about myself that I would need to change. Gulp.
>
> (Alana's Teaching Journal, Oct 21-25, 1996)

By the second week, she had some insight into how she was being transformed when she wrote about her experience of telling the students about her trip to South Africa:

> ...Sara and I decided that to hear my account of life in a country that was no stranger to human rights violations might make the concept of human rights seem more real, and therefore meaningful to the students. So I marched right up to the front of the classroom three periods in a row and talked for about half an hour

about my impressions about South Africa. Once again, I seemed to go into "automatic teacher mode" but this time the teacher in me was infused with the actress in me. I didn't start off talking to the girls with any particular details in mind, but rather a few main points I wanted to communicate. But what's funny is that as I started to talk about South Africa, I started to remember things, important, wonderful things that I had totally forgotten. I became more and more animated, and I found myself jumping about and making large motions, with my hands – I was really reliving my experiences in South Africa and loving it! I was in my element, telling a story that I believed in to a largely captive (literally, for where could they go??) audience. I thoroughly enjoyed my role as narrator and I realize now that I enjoy the story-telling aspect of teaching more than any other....Once again the teaching experience was teaching me as much about myself as anything else. I was realizing that I had a secret desire to act, to animate, to lead.

(Alana's Teaching Journal, October.28-November 1, 1996)

Part 2 - Retrospective

That a transformation of some sort happened to student teachers in the process of the practicum had fascinated me since the first debriefing session I had attended as a faculty supervisor a few years earlier. From my perspective as a classroom teacher, I studied two student teachers as they made the transition from uncertain university students/student teachers to confident ESL teachers.

In this story of becoming, I was both the researcher and, inevitably, the researched as well. I had to examine my own teaching and my role in the process, and although it is Sara and Alana's voices who speak, it was I who determined how I would use their voices in the construction of this thesis. Inevitably, it is also my story.

My epistemological tenets driving the inquiry were:

1. Learning is a social act, occurring within a community that practices what is being learned;
2. We learn by doing.
3. Knowledge is dynamic, fluid and emergent.
4. Those closest to the knowledge have a relevant voice and contribution to make to the body of knowledge.

5. Good teachers are reflective teachers.

For Sara and Alana, the work of the practicum was the construction of new identities as ESL teachers, and the reconciliation of those identities with who they were across all the other contexts of their lives. In effect, they underwent a transformation.

> Because learning transforms who we are and what we can do, it is an experience of identity. It is not just an accumulation of skills and information, but a process of becoming – to become a certain person or, conversely to avoid becoming a certain person. Even the learning that we do entirely by ourselves eventually contributes to making us into a specific kind of person. We accumulate skills and information, not in the abstract as ends in themselves, but in the service of an identity. It is in that formation of an identity that learning can become a source of meaningfulness and of personal and social energy (Wenger, p.215).

To describe how this transition in identity occurred, I relied on Schon (1983, 1987, 1995). I drew a parallel between Schon's "swamp" and my classroom. The "swamp" is a zone of indeterminate practice characterized by messy and confusing problems that are not necessarily solved by turning to the knowledge gained in the university. My classroom was also a "swamp".

In my classroom, my knowing was in my doing. As I worked with student teachers I began to make my unconscious, tacit knowledge explicit. I did this by reflecting-in-action. I observed myself thinking about what I did as I taught. Hearing me reflect-on-action gave Alana and Sara the language that they needed to be able to talk about their own teaching. Schon (1987) speaks of the processes of telling/listening and demonstrating/imitating. I talked about my teaching and Alana and Sara listened to my talk. I demonstrated my teaching, and they imitated me. As they did this they developed their own repertoire of things upon which they could reflect.

Part 3 - Recommendations

The experience of conducting this inquiry has provided me with insights into the transformation of student teachers as they become teachers. In the interest of considering how the outcome might benefit student teacher education in general, I present a short list of recommendations. In particular, I am interested in changes that would more accurately reflect the needs of student teachers. In this brief section, I present some of the changes I believe would be beneficial.

Recommendation #1: Foster the Cooperating Teacher

The role and responsibilities of a cooperating teacher, as described in *The Student Teaching Handbook* are open to broad interpretation. Teachers need a clearer vision of their role. They need to understand that student teachers benefit most from practicum experiences when they work with cooperating teachers who believe in playing a strong role in student teacher development. Borko & Mayfield (1995), found that teachers who believed they were important to the process tended to hold longer conferences with their student teachers, and to provide more extensive and explicit feedback. This fits with my own experience, as does Ethell and McMeniman's (2000) belief that student teachers' observing cooperating teachers is not enough to foster learning. Cooperating teachers need to provide what I have termed "close accompaniment" for their student teachers in order to engage them in the reflective dialogue that they need for learning. As insiders in the teaching communities, they have to let their student teachers into their professional lives and share with them all its facets, from the conception of ideas for teaching activities through the preparation and implementation of these activities and on to the reflection-in-action after the fact. They need to show them, and tell them what they think

is happening in the teaching process. Further, helping cooperating teachers to provide "close accompaniment" to their students should be a general goal for teacher education.

In 1996, when I undertook this study, the faculty was placing a lot of hope and trust in the cooperating teachers who they sent their student teachers to work with. The faculty had no real idea of the type of mentoring that the student teachers were receiving. The Office Responsible for Student Teaching needs to play a more active role in making sure that their student teachers are exposed to cooperating teachers who understand that learning to teach is a mentoring experience, and that student teachers need to interact with a cooperating teacher who is as immersed in the student teacher's experience as the student teacher herself is.

Recommendation #2: Honor the Role of Practice in Learning to Teach

The practicum was in large part responsible for Sara and Alana's transition to ESL teachers. Teacher educators need to overtly acknowledge the importance of the practicum by actively incorporating the ideas of reflective practice and learning-by-doing into their curriculums. Before their practicum begins, student teachers have no understanding of what the practicum experience will do for them, and thus they see it as mysterious and frightening, and as something that might diminish them as university students if it causes them to get low grades. These feelings could be mitigated by a better understanding of practice by all the people involved in the practicum experience, and of what role practice plays in student teachers' overall educational experience.

Recommendation #3: Re-Think the Collaborative Team

According to the *The Handbook of Student Teaching,* a collaborative supervisory team consists of the School Adminstrator(s), cooperating teacher(s) and university supervisors. In 1996 when I began this inquiry, it was my experience that there was no team such as this. The only team that existed was the team of Alana, Sara and me. The supervisor was a pleasant guest whom we saw on two occasions during the practicum. The only role my school administration played was in overseeing arrangements for hosting student teachers with the Office Responsible for Student Teaching. In fact, it is difficult for me to imagine the administration at my school having the time or the desire to be a committed member of a "collaborative team".

I propose that the school administrators be replaced by the teacher educators. Teacher educators are more directly interested in what the student teacher learns in her practicum. Also, as the student teacher is the raison d'être for the existence of the "collaborative team", she should have a place on this team and voice in her own experience, and this should be reflected in the *Handbook.* The supervisor should remain on the team, but should play a much more active role as a liaison between the university and the cooperating teacher.

At the time of this inquiry, teachers, supervisors and the teacher educators were, in Wenger's (1990) terms, standing at the boundaries of our own practices. We each knew that the others existed, but we knew very little about what each of us actually did. We should be standing on the periphery (Wenger 1990) of each other's practices. This could be accomplished by meeting and talking with each other, and becoming more active partners in the process of educating student teachers. We need to understand more

about each other's work. If teachers knew what was going on in their student teachers' university classrooms, and if the office for the placement of student teachers and the teacher educators understood more about what happens in the practice of teaching, we would be able to develop a common vision of what it means to mentor student teachers. We would have a much more enlightened view about how each of us could contribute to the student teaching process.

Recommendation #4: Closing the Theory-Research Gap

I found it intriguing that university students could spend close to three years in a university setting from which they could graduate as teachers that could be certified to work in the province, yet they did not attribute any of their success to their three years of course work.

Alana and Sara had been very open with me about what they thought they had not received from their course work, as had other student teachers with whom I had worked in the past. These students had been socialized to expect that the university would play a role in transmitting to them the knowledge that they would need for their practicum, and they were surprised and confused when they encountered situations for which they were unprepared. It is clear then that there exists a gap between the theoretical knowledge that Sara and Alana and their peers acquired from their university coursework and the practical knowledge they gained during their practicum. This gap was also evident in the type of practical training that they received from me, in the sense that I showed them and told them about teaching. I did not explicitly refer to educational theories or research.

What is to be done about this gap between theory and practice? Lytle & Cochran-Smith (1993) maintain that in the climate of "outside-in" dissemination of knowledge

from researchers to teachers, the solution to bridging the gap is often thought to be one of making "university findings more accessible, more relevant and more used by school-based teachers" (p.24). Instead of focusing on these university findings, Schon believes that we have to turn this problem of the gap between research and practice "on its head" (1983:49), or turn it "upside down" (1987:12). Instead of trying to make better use of knowledge produced by researchers, we need to be examining "the competence by which practitioners actually handle indeterminate zones of practice..." (Schon, 1987:13).

An effective way of bridging the gap would be to give those of us who practice a voice in determining what constitutes the knowledge base about practice in ESL teacher education. There is no one more better-placed to do this than the cooperating teacher.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Collège Marie, Mère de Dieu's Objectifs Généraux (Annuaire 1996-1997)

L'excellence est demandée à la mesure de chaque élève:

ASPECT INTELLECTUEL

Méthode de pensée impliquant
effort, qualité, rigueur scientifique.


Robert Dauphinais


Robert Dauphinais

ASPECT PHYSIQUE

Développement sain et
harmonieux du corps.


Robert Dauphinais

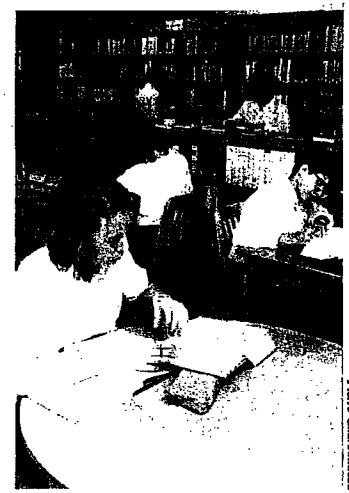
ASPECT SOCIAL

Insertion progressive
favorisant le développement
de l'autonomie personnelle.

ASPECT AFFECTIF

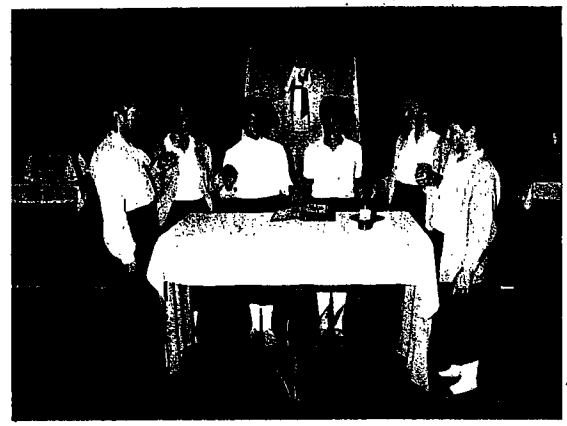
Développement personnel par
la connaissance de soi, de ses
besoins, de ses valeurs.


Robert Dauphinais


Pierre Charbonneau

ASPECT CULTUREL

Contact direct avec les sources
privilégiées de la culture.


Robert Dauphinais

ASPECT SPIRITUEL

Expression de la vie chrétienne
dans des engagements concrets.

Appendix B: University Formative and Summative Assessment Forms

Formative Assessment Form

DATE _____
WEEK # _____
DENT TEACHER _____ SCHOOL _____
OPERATING TEACHER _____ SUBJECT _____ LEVEL _____
_ SUPERVISOR _____ NUMBER OF STUDENTS _____ TIME _____
)GRAM: 1G B.Ed PRIM/SEC U1/U2/U3 CLASS LENGTH _____

If Description of Teaching Content

	Not Applicable	Difficulty	Marginal	Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory	Excellent	COMMENTS (use 2nd page if necessary)
PARATION							
son Planning							
Subject Knowledge							
Appropriateness of Content							
PRESENTATION							
Introduction							
Presentation							
Evaluation							
IMPLEMENTATION							
Clearness of Instructions							
Teacher/Student Participation							
Questioning							
Pacing							
ariety							
Use of Pedagogical Aids							
MANAGEMENT							
Class Control							
Group Work							
Classroom Routines							
Supervision							
PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES							
Class Presence							
Use of Language							
Motivation of Students							
Voice Quality							
Openness to Criticism							
Sense of Responsibility							
Rapport with Students							
Relations with Others							
Appearance							

Strengths and Weaknesses Observed

At this point of the Practicum, the student's performance is rated _____

Cooperating Teacher/Supervisor _____ Date _____

DISTRIBUTION OF COPIES: WHITE - STUDENT; YELLOW - STUDENT TEACHING OFFICE; PINK - SUPERVISOR, COOPERATING TEACHER

Summative Assessment Form

udent Teacher | Program | Year

ıpervision Period | School | Grade

lease check the appropriate boxes	Rating Scale			
	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Very Satisfactory	Excellent
PREPARATION				
PRESENTATION				
IMPLEMENTATION				
MANAGEMENT				
PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES				

General Comments

Overall Rating (circle one) ☐ Unsatisfactory ☐ Satisfactory ☐ Very Satisfactory ☐ Excellent

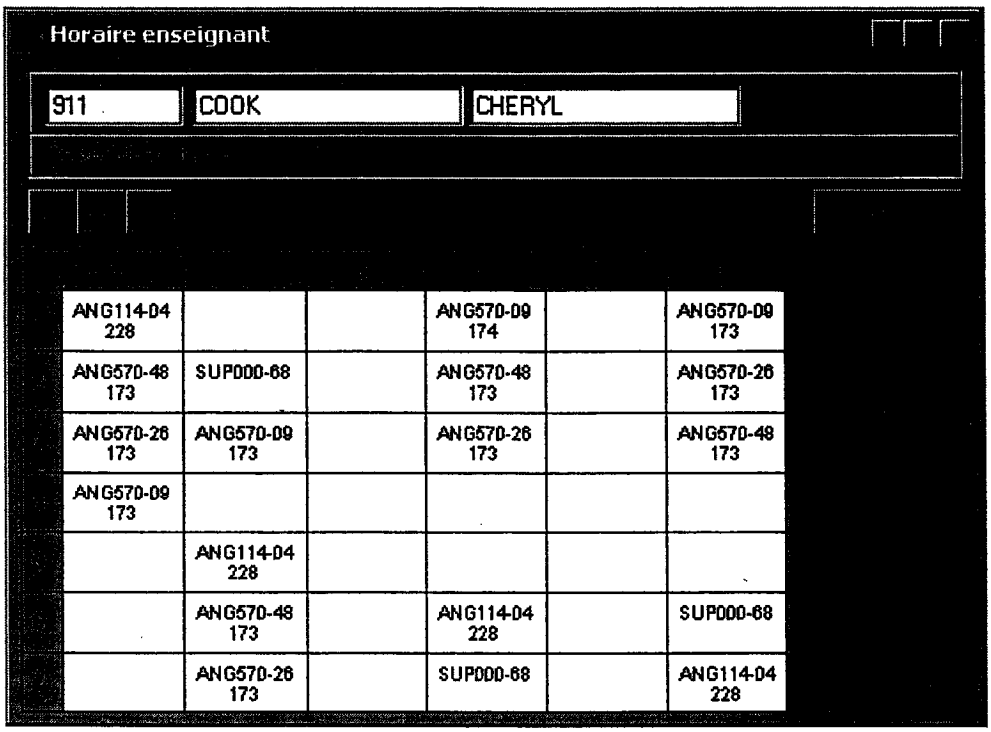
Cooperating Teacher (please print) _____ Supervisor (please print) _____

Cooperating Teacher (signature) _____ Supervisor (signature) _____

Date _____

DISTRIBUTION OF COPIES WHITE - STUDENT, YELLOW - STUDENT TEACHING OFFICE; PINK - SUPERVISOR, COOPERATING TEACHER

Appendix C: Alana and Sara's Class Schedule



ANG114-04 228			ANG570-09 174		ANG570-09 173
ANG570-48 173	SUP000-68		ANG570-48 173		ANG570-26 173
ANG570-26 173	ANG570-09 173		ANG570-26 173		ANG570-48 173
ANG570-09 173					
	ANG114-04 228				
	ANG570-48 173		ANG114-04 228		SUP000-68
	ANG570-26 173		SUP000-68		ANG114-04 228

Appendix D: Sample Lesson Plan

Secondary 5 (06-11-96)

→Pepsi Boycott for Burma

Objectives:
- to re-enforce the term boycott and the implications of such an action
- to make accessible to them the concept of a boycott, to attach it to a cause and company that the students know and can relate to.
- to demonstrate that the actions of everyone, even us in Canada, can be felt all over the world.
- to make the students aware of change as a legacy that they've inherited (MLK, Jr.- sense of history) and as a modern day phenomenon in which they can take part.
- to explain that as consumers we hold a great deal of power.

Materials:
- Pepsi Boycott flyer

Implementation: (25 minutes)
- describe where the flyer came from.
- ask for a definition of the word "boycott".
- remind students of the video seen the day before and the actions taken by the people of Montgomery Alabama during the bus boycott.
- remind the students of the outcome of the boycott and why it was successful.
- explain that is trying to do the same thing to Pepsi, they are trying to create an economic boycott to make their voices heard and their demands met.
- explain the situation that is going on in Burma (ex: forced labour, dictatorship)
- inform the students of all the Pepsi subsidiaries and products to demonstrate the impact a boycott could have.
- begin a discussion with students as to what they think will result, what they think should happen, etc.
- remind them that it is through peaceful non-violent actions that Martin Luther King, Jr. saw change as possible and that that is exactly what the students of believe.

→ Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" Speech (Excerpt)

Objectives:
- to acquaint the students with this very important speech.
- to evoke emotion and thought through an oral reading and comprehensive written questions.

- to tie in the video that was shown the previous day and to continue the introduction to America's greatest civil rights activist.

Materials:
- one copy of the "I Have a Dream" speech for every student.

Implementation: (35 minutes)
- as a class read out loud the speech.
- have one student read each paragraph while the rest of the class follows along on their own paper.
- when the speech is finished, point out some of the borrowed phrases he uses. Point out the line "free at last" and ask them where they've heard it previously (U2's "Pride: In the Name of Love")
- Read through the three questions with the class and reiterate them to ensure that everyone understands what is being asked of them.
- give the students the rest of the class to answer the questions in full sentence form reminding them that their papers will be collected.

Observations:
There was a strong reaction to the Pepsi boycott issue and an involved discussion evolved taking longer than had been predicted.

Appendix E: Analysis in Progress

It is interesting that ... compared her experience CRA to her own life experience but not to the experience she gained at McGill

It's ok to be afraid

How/Where to include dimensionality?

Establishing Identity — negotiating context and identity

* Walking the tightrope and yet they negotiate remain both throughout
  - arrive w/ identity of "student" → no concept of "teacher"
  - describe "student" environment - describe how they are parachuted into CRA
  - reified environment vs practical environment
    Must make the transition btwn the two.

They begin de-stabilized - exciting - but nerve wracking

So how do they do this?

from the outside looking in

move initial vignette here.

* Living the process - Becoming part of the community

△ Entering the community - creating a context
  - exploring the physical community
  - meeting and becoming part of the people who create it — imp. to be reflected in the eyes of ... — always introduce them to people they meet throughout ... stage
    - Mr. Duchamp, Soeur Jacinthe, Mr. Lapointe

guided by quote ... my assumption. this is based on my assumption of what they need - comfort in immediate surroundings part of what is going on.

Multimedia people, receptionist not S. Annette - only incidentally as (A) she's difficult to find (B) is not remotely related to the students' tasks. We find her en route, and yet, they know all about her. Her influence pervades. Colleagues - Pat, Marie Rita Louise (Lorraine)

Our environment is very small triangle - office - bathroom across hall - classroom

- Me the insider - see notes - buffering btwn the two. only the buffering part here.
- meeting the students — one dimensionality.

~~Into the swamp~~ △ Getting Down and Dirty with the buffer
("Walking the Walk, Talking the Talk") grappling with The Nuts + Bolts of Teachings

- Classroom management
- Discipline
- Giving Instructions
- Presenting + Contextualizing material
- Learning names
- Issues of Authority — students are a force that ... had to be ... at McGill
- Juggling many things at once
- Establishing credibility
- Lesson planning + delivery - re-thinking the plan — difficulties of planning
- Contextualizing the lesson

discovering or coming to terms with what they need to know

← Nested contexts - must them in many ways - linguistically - they are not ... teachers

MUST BE VERY CLEAR FROM BEGINNING THAT NESTED contexts pervade ALL LEVELS

assumptions - instinctively feel a imp. about what they be ...

nested contexts - what they ... McGill context - jumping through hoops require - French in the classroom French in the school. I kept that at any. Maybe

MY Role guidance and mentoring not ... "coach" here

I am also ...

Supervisor's Role

What Attributes do S + A bring?

Appendix F: Certificate of Ethical Acceptibility

Statement of Informed Consent

This is to state that I agree that Cheryl Cook may undertake research for a Master's thesis entitled The Process of Becoming: A Case Study Exploration of the Transition from Student Teacher to ESL Teacher at . I understand that she is under the supervision of Professor Mary Maguire in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University.

The goal of this research is to describe the process by which two student teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) develop their identities as ESL teachers during their final practicum in the McGill University ESL Teacher Education Program.

I understand that Cheryl hosted two student teachers in her classroom for an eight week period during the autumn term, from October 18 to December 12, 1996. She observed the student teachers in the classroom, and collected audio taped data from them in debriefing session held after classes. The two student teachers and their development were the focus of the study, and the school was the context for the student teaching experience. As such, the physical context of the school, and its policies and procedures will be documented in the upcoming research. Some areas of the school will be photographed in such a way that the school's anonymity will be preserved.

I understand the purpose of this study and know about the risks, benefits and inconveniences that this research entails. I understand that the school's confidentiality will be maintained by the use of a pseudonym on all documentation and in any discussions concerning the research project.

I understand that the school may withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or prejudice.

I understand that, at a later date, the data may be presented at conferences or written up as a journal article. The name of the school will remain protected by a pseudonym.

I have carefully read the above and understand the nature of the school's participation in this agreement. I freely consent and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Name (please print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Title: _____

Statement of Informed Consent

This is to state that I agree to participate in the research project for a Master's thesis entitled The Process of Becoming: A Case Study Exploration of the Transition from Student Teacher to ESL Teacher, conducted by Cheryl Cook under the supervision of Professor Mary Maguire in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University.

The goal of this research is to describe the process by which two student teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) develop their identities as ESL teachers during their final practicum in the McGill University ESL Teacher Education Program. I will be one of the student teachers.

The research consists of 1) audio-taped interviews with Cheryl Cook, my cooperating teacher, which are to be transcribed and used in the study. 2) Classroom observation of my teaching by Cheryl Cook, which is already an integral part of the teacher training program. I also understand that conversations that Cheryl and I have as part of the student teaching experience may also inform the study. I understand the purpose of this study and know about the risks, benefits and inconvenience that this research entails. I understand that my confidentiality will be maintained by the use of pseudonyms on all documentation and in any discussions concerning the research project.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at anytime without any penalty or prejudice.

I understand that, at a later date, the data may be presented at conferences or written up as a journal article.

I understand that the evaluations I will receive from Cheryl as a normal part of the student teaching practicum are in no way affected by my participation in this project.

I have carefully read the above and understand my participation in this agreement. I freely consent and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Name (please print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Statement of Informed Consent

This is to state that I agree to participate in the research project for a Master's thesis entitled The Process of Becoming: A Case Study Exploration of the Transition from Student Teacher to ESL Teacher, conducted by Cheryl Cook under the supervision of Professor Mary Maguire in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University.

The goal of this research is to describe the process by which two student teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) develop their identities as ESL teachers during their final practicum in the McGill University ESL Teacher Education Program. I will be one of the student teachers.

The research consists of 1) audio-taped interviews with Cheryl Cook, my cooperating teacher, which are to be transcribed and used in the study. 2) Classroom observation of my teaching by Cheryl Cook, which is already an integral part of the teacher training program. 3) My Student Teaching Journal, which I freely volunteered for use in the project. I also understand that conversations that Cheryl and I have as part of the student teaching experience may also inform the study. I understand the purpose of this study and know about the risks, benefits and inconvenience that this research entails. I understand that my confidentiality will be maintained by the use of pseudonyms on all documentation and in any discussions concerning the research project.

I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at anytime without any penalty or prejudice.

I understand that the evaluations I will receive from Cheryl as a normal part of the student teaching practicum are in no way affected by my participation in this project.

I understand that, at a later date, the data may be presented at conferences or written up as a journal article.

I have carefully read the above and understand my participation in this agreement. I freely consent and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Name (please print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

NOTE TO USERS