

PATTERNS IN A NOVICE TEACHER'S SUCCESS STORIES

by

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DEDICATION

To my daughter, Hazel Rose Lydum, who was born just a few months after I started the PhD program at the University of Arizona and turned 10 just a few months after I completed.

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ABSTRACT

This study looked at the transition from preservice teacher to teacher by considering novice teacher success stories. This investigation rested on the presumption that the first year of teaching may be a struggle for some. This claim was underscored by the prevalence of the sink or swim metaphor in discourse related to induction. To understand how novice teacher success stories can inform teacher education, narratives were captured using task-oriented, semi-structured interviews deliberately designed to elicit authentic responses. Iterative analysis of the narratives yielded two profiles and 10 stories that are presented in a combination of vignettes written in the voice of the participant and expository comments. Iterative analysis of the 10 stories using the features or elements of story (setting, character, tone, and theme) yielded a number of patterns. In sum, consideration of these findings informs a deeper and richer understanding of induction through the experiences and perspectives of the purposively and conveniently selected participant in this study. Her case supports the rationale for this inquiry. She demonstrated a keen awareness of the struggles novices face. Yet, she self-identified as successful and her administration concurred. The overarching finding is deep insight into the persona of the participant—a survivor that understood successes as a novice teacher to be occurrences marked in sometimes minimal relief upon a context of struggle.

CHAPTER 1: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The transition from preservice teacher to teacher is recognized as a very challenging time. Not every aspiring teacher makes this transition successfully. Consequently, the metaphor that novice teachers either sink or swim is pervasive in education. This figurative language describes how novice teachers are tossed from the terra firma of highly structured and clinical preservice teacher education programs into the sometimes tumultuous deep end of schools, students, standards, classrooms, colleagues and curriculum. To extend the metaphor, a surprising number of novice teachers are unable to navigate the transition; rather they flail their arms, gasp for air, and ultimately drown. This phenomenon is so common that anecdotally, and in the academic literature on the transition from preservice teacher to teacher, the term *survival* is often used to describe this crucial point in the career cycle (Borich & Tonibari, 1997; Cole, 1994; Corcoran, 1981; Fuller, 1969; Goodlad, 1990; Huberman, 1989; Huling-Austin, 1990). Another term that has been used to describe the induction process is *ordeal* (Sabar, 2004). This type of language evokes the sink or swim metaphor, further supporting its pervasiveness in how we may accept the transition from learning to teach to work as a teacher. The sink or swim metaphor specifically occurs in the literature rather frequently (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Huling-Austin, 1989; Lortie, 1975; Reig, Pacquette, & Hen, 2007). This reinforces the warrant that the transition from preservice experiences to service as a teacher is widely accepted as a

sometimes daunting phase in the career cycle (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Friedman, 2000). Indeed, experienced teachers' narratives of struggles during induction years are common (e.g., Blankenship & Coleman, 2009; Corcoran, 1981; Eldar, Nabel, Schechter, Talmor & Mazin, 2003; McCann & Johannessen, 2004; Romano, 2008; Romano & Gibson, 2006; Sabar, 2004; Scherff, 2008; Schlichte, Yssel & Merbler, 2005; Schmidt & Knowles, 1995; Sharp, 2006; Williams & Williamson, 1996) and the transition from preservice teacher to teacher is often seen as a formidable rite of passage (Howe, 2006).

However, novice teacher success is good for education so it is an important line of inquiry. This claim serves as justification for any number of research projects, educational policies, or building-level initiatives. The importance of this inquiry rests on the assumption that it is a significant and disturbing concern that many novices do not have a successful transition from preservice teacher to teacher. The pervasiveness of the sink or swim metaphor in the discourse related to induction and the narratives of struggle in the literature indicates that the number of first-year teachers that sink may be significant. One quantitative approach to examining the scope of the issue is to consider attrition research. Attrition issues are so significant that the transition from preservice teacher to teacher has been described as a "revolving door" phenomenon (Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll, 2003; Shields, Esch, Humphry, Young, Gasson & Hunt, 1999). At least a third of beginning teachers leave the profession within 5 years (Rieg, Paquette, & Chen, 2007; Roulston, Legette, & Womack, 2005). Teacher education must take notice. Recently, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan stated, "by almost any standard, many if not most of the nation's 1,450 schools, colleges, and departments of education are doing a

mediocre job of preparing teachers for the realities of the 21st century classroom” (Duncan, 2009). Not being prepared for the realities of the classroom and struggling as a novice may be associated with the high attrition rates. But success as a novice teacher is important for those that choose to persist as well. Research strongly suggests that success early is a significant indicator of success later in the career cycle (Bandura, 1977 & 1997; Bartell, 2005). Ultimately, getting off to a good start makes a big difference. Therefore, success in navigating the transition from preservice teacher to teacher is integral to the notion that teacher success is important for education.

To understand what may account for success, especially in the context that struggles are rather common, more needs to be known about the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. One approach to learning more about this important transition is to look at cases and learn the stories of beginning teachers’ related to success (Athanases & De Oliveira, 2008; Davies, 2008; Hebert & Worthy, 2001; Hollingsworth, 1992; Hollingsworth, Teel & Minarik; 1992; Kooy, 2006). Some first year teachers can swim, and the patterns that emerge in and among the settings, characters, tones, and themes from their stories can provide interesting and fresh insight for teacher education into the important transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

Significance of the Study

The broad research domain exploring issues and ideas related to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher exists because the importance of successful novice teachers for students and schools is recognized. It is obvious and intuitive that successful

novice teachers are important for students and schools. The specific potential for this research domain to inform teacher education is less clear. Studying novices to inform teacher education is a powerful point of inquiry because of the proximal relationship between the preservice experience and the real work of serving as a teacher. This exploration offers promise that studying novices may uniquely inform teacher education. In this regard, Feiman-Nemser (2001) summarized that teacher education and preservice experiences could be more in alignment with what new teachers will experience during their first year. In other words, rather than preparing for the entire career span, teacher educators and preservice teachers could consider a more deliberate focus on the induction experience per se and on developing skills and curiosity to be lifelong learners. She cautioned however that the mechanisms for this to happen require a radical shift in the teacher education paradigm. She evoked Dewey (1938) while explicating this shortcoming of the current system:

I also think of Dewey when I see University teacher educators trying to cram too much into their courses, because they believe this is their last chance to influence prospective teachers. If preservice teacher educators could count on induction programs to build on and extend their work they could concentrate on building a foundation for beginning teaching and preparing novices to learn in and from their practice (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1016).

This perspective seems more in alignment with how teachers actually learn. Preservice teachers lack a sophisticated framework of experiences on which to situate the theoretical ideas about teaching learned in coursework (Doyle & Carter, 2003). Further, this minimal framework of experience limits their potential for meaningful reflection on clinical or field work. Doyle and Carter (2003) postulated that teacher education in this

form is “doomed to fail, and much of what was heaped on will inevitably fall off.” (p. 7). Consider the relationship between this phenomenon and the sink or swim metaphor. Arne Duncan’s (2009) indictment of teacher education quoted above intimates that Doyle and Carter’s (2003) prophecy of failure may be on point and that a paradigm shift in teacher education may be needed to realign preservice in a way that truly does prepare novices for the challenges of the transition into the role of teacher in the 21st century classroom.

The research that focuses on the proximal relationship between preservice experiences and induction uniquely informs teacher educators and may provide specific insight to support this paradigm shift. The body of academic research that considers the jump between learning to teach and becoming a teacher includes many threads. The domain includes studies on attrition, expert-novice studies, research and theory on teacher development, and narrative inquiry into the perspectives of teachers.

A clear perspective that emerges from this body of work is that beginning teacher success is important and a worthy topic for academic inquiry. Varied methods and approaches are used and dozens of research reports on the topic are published each year. A selected sampling of this research is reported in Chapter 2. For introductory purposes, the topic of beginning teacher success has enough empirical mass that some generalizations can be drawn. For example, work ethic and positive attitude may be attributes associated with beginning teacher success (Davies, 2008; Hebert & Worthy, 2001). Innovative, progressive, and student-centered preservice programs have been

associated with success (Hollingsworth, 1992) whereas theoretical, stale training is associated with struggles, i.e.: not being prepared for the realities of the 21st century classroom (McCann & Johannessen, 2004). Another generalization drawn from the literature is that supportive environments nurture success (Kooy, 2006) and school politics and sour milieu can be associated with beginning teacher struggles (Blankenship & Coleman, 2009; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). These studies are informative. To date, much has been learned about how success happens for beginning teachers and academic inquiry continues to look at this important issue from a number of perspectives. However, as the sink or swim metaphor is represented prominently in the discourse, clearly more needs to be known.

Purpose

This study contributes to this conversation and to a deeper understanding of induction. Situated in this domain of research, the purpose of this study was to capture success stories of one purposively selected novice teacher and to consider the patterns that emerged in and among the stories to inform a deeper understanding of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

To accomplish this, the present qualitative study investigated the perspectives of one successful beginning teacher as the central point of inquiry. Accordingly, an interpretive study grounded in the constructivist worldview was appropriate. That is to say that the perspectives of the participant were interpreted to help build a deeper understanding of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. These perspectives

were captured with interview methods and interpreted with iterative analysis using features of story as a frame. Further methodological details are presented in chapter three. Presented below, the research questions for this study are introduced to clearly and succinctly define the purpose.

Research Questions

This study contributes to the larger body of literature on issues related to induction by collecting and considering the stories of one novice teacher. Specifically, the central aim of this study was to look at how one novice teacher stories success in order to more deeply understand the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

Guiding this study were three research questions:

1. What are examples of a beginning teacher's success stories?
2. What patterns emerge in and across these stories?
3. What do these patterns tell us about the transition from preservice teacher to teacher?

These questions illustrate the narrow purpose of this study—to inform a deeper understanding of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher by capturing and interpreting novice teacher success stories.

Rationale for the Study

Generating new and deeper understandings of the successful transition from preservice to teacher was the primary rationale for this study. The problems introduced above demonstrated the need to know more about this transition. Indeed, attrition problems and struggles seem so common in the academic discourse on the beginning

teacher experience that the tales of success seem almost mythological. Many beginning teachers do not seem to have success; therefore, teacher educators have an obligation to examine the issue and seek remedies. This study contributes to this obligation by looking at the perspectives of one purposively selected participant. A single exemplary case offers potential to gain new insights and understanding. Waxing about using cases to study content knowledge, Shulman (1986) described the usefulness of collecting and explicating a case such as a story of novice teacher success. He portrayed the

importance of myths in organizations – tales about heroic figures somehow capture the values of those organizations and communicate them to everyone working within them. Those myths, I would argue, or the case equivalence – pedagogical parables – would be equally important in the socialization of teachers into their general professional obligations as well as into the special ethos of particular schools or districts as organizations (p.12).

The statement demonstrates the importance and potential of collecting a number of stories and studying cases of beginning teacher success. Shulman goes on to ask “Why are cases memorable? Is it because they are organized as stories, reflecting the grammar of narrative forms of discourse, that makes them more readily stored, ordered and retrieved than their expository or propositional analogues?” (1986, p.12). It is this perspective that supported the rationale for using interview methods with one purposively selected participant to address the research questions.

Further, the nature of success, particularly success in the context of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher, is so nuanced another case was warranted. A single case, and the patterns that emerged from one novice teacher’s stories of success, contributes to a deeper understanding of this multifaceted variable within the context of

induction. Please note however, these research questions were not pursued with a naïve assumption that success can be operationalized or defined generally. Rather than attempting to circumscribe and precisely delimit success, the patterns that emerged from the stories of one successful novice teacher may be useful for researchers, teacher educators, and novice teachers in the process of recognizing the subtlety and variability of success in their own situated contexts. Carter (1993) portrayed this potential as “helping teachers to come to know their own stories” (p. 8). As an outcome then, instead of the confines of a definition, the identification of patterns that emerged in and among stories may be useful in helping to recognize and understand success when it happens. Success is a nuanced and multifaceted idea like love or happiness. Capacious ideas like this can be hard to understand. For millennia, philosophers and theologians have addressed this difficulty by using story. Carter (1993) described the potential of story to help understand expansive ideas:

We come to understand sorrow or love, joy or indecision in particularly rich ways through the characters and instances we become familiar with in novels or plays. This richness and nuance cannot be expressed in definitions, statements of fact, or abstract propositions. It can only be demonstrated or evoked through story (p. 6).

So, while positivistic methods are used by researchers to try to operationalize and define ideas like success in order to approach truth, the approach here was to recognize the situated and multifarious nature of what success may look like in the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. Doyle (1997) illustrated this orientation like this:

If we accept this view that truth is a floating value, akin to a swirl, that lies somewhere among the vectors of observation (direct experience), rigorous conceptualization (evidentiary argument), and communal understanding, then the truth we are seeking is not unlike the truth of story: A truth that taps into our

shared comprehension of the phenomenon. Each rendering provides insight, expands understandings, and pushes credibility, but none settles it once and for all.

From this epistemological perspective, the rationale for this study was to use the potential of story as a way-of-knowing to expand insight into this important issue rather than claim absolute prescriptions for, or definitions of, novice teacher success.

Definitions of Terms

Story

For the purposes of this study, the term *story* represented the form in which the participant shared her understandings of the characters, events, settings and timelines relative to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

Narrative

It is not uncommon to see the term *narrative* simply defined as a story (Murfin and Ray, 2003). Indeed the terms are often used interchangeably. For the purposes of this study, *narrative* was distinguished from story in that narrative was the process of communicating story.

Novice Teacher

For the purposes of this study *novice* was considered to be a first-year teacher. Although in the academic literature on teacher development, novices may be in their first, second, or third year. Because this study specifically considered the transition from preservice teacher to teacher, the purposively selected novice was in her first year.

Preservice Experiences

Dewey (1938) cautioned against the use of the word *preparation* when describing teacher education (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). This concern stems from how the term might imply that the development of teacher knowledge is situated exclusively within the confines of teacher education programs and that teachers emerge from these programs as finished products. The term *training* is also not sufficient as it may imply preparation of workers for rote or routine tasks. For the purposes of this study, the formal work the teachers do preceding induction is referred to as *preservice experiences*.

Success

Success is implicitly understood to be something like a general feeling of effectiveness and satisfaction. Or, success might be represented very generally as a link between one's capacities and the challenges one faces. For the purposes of this study, what was considered to be success was based on the perspectives of the participant.

Story Features

Literary theorists describe the building blocks of story as elements, parts or features. Carter (1993) delineated four features in her work describing the potential to understand questions about teaching by looking at story. These are character, events, setting and timeline. Other theorists have included features of story such as conflict, resolution and tone. Five such features are ubiquitous in literary analysis. These are character, events, context or setting, timeline, and theme. All of these features were

considered in the process of iterative analysis. In this study, distinct patterns emerged in regard to setting, character, tone, and theme. These patterns are reported in chapter four. Setting and character have obvious and intuitive definitions and need no further explication here. For the purposes of this study however, it was important to look more closely at the features of story referred to as *theme* and *tone*. Theme is the general idea or what the story is about. In other words, theme represents the concepts the story conveys or the point the story is trying to make. The feature of story known as *tone* refers to the story-teller's attitude. This element is more subtle. Tone is identified by word choice and syntax as well as the treatment of the descriptions of characters and settings and opinions toward themes.

Patterns

This term was used to describe the similarities that emerged in and among the stories. These were the recurring aspects revealed through iterative analysis. One could call such similarities *themes*. But as *theme* is a feature of story, or what a story is about, the term *patterns* was used.

Limitations

Purposive and convenient sampling as well as the nature of the study form a related pair of limitations. First, to identify potential participants, I corresponded by email and Facebook with contacts and friends that are educators (see Participant Recruitment Text Appendix A). Because of this recruitment process, there was certainly no way to infer any findings on first-year teachers writ large. Second, the selection

criteria were that the potential participant perceived herself as having had a successful induction and expressed commitment to continue as a teacher. Potential candidates were screened and only one individual was consented to participate. These criteria narrowed the phenomenon under examination considerably and cannot fully describe the nature of first-year teacher success. For example, feelings of being unsuccessful are not the only reasons teachers leave the profession. Such reasons cannot be accounted for in this study. Also, there are presumably first-year teachers that have made significant impact on student learning and may have shown leadership in curriculum or policy development. Certainly these are factors that could be a measure of a successful first year. However, teachers that might fit this description were not considered if they self-reported that they do not believe they had a successful year. In sum, this study was limited by the sampling technique and the criteria set for being considered a participant.

Another limitation was the narrow window in which the interviews and observations took place. Significant contributions to the literature in this area have been made by more sustained and ongoing investigations of first-year teachers. Romano and Gibson's (2006) study of one teacher's successes and struggles demonstrated a greater perception of success toward the end of the year. In this study, data was gathered at the end of the participant's first year and she had only recollections of her early struggles. The findings, therefore, were influenced by what could be called a weight-off-her-back effect. The limited look at the experiences and perceptions in this particular study did not explore comprehensively the depth and complexity of how personal attributes, formal training and support, and school context influenced perceptions of success.

It has been argued that this type of study, personal accounts of success, may do little to advance understanding of teacher education. For example, Ellen Corcoran (1981) wrote the following:

This literature generally is not helpful to those wishing to understand why preservice education fails to survive the shock transition from university to public school. The personal accounts tend to present the reader with romanticized finished products, leaving out the enormous amount of detail essential for piecing together of what actually happens when the shift is made. The prescriptions tend to espouse a single point of view, ignoring the many psychological and contextual variables that may render a given prescription unworkable for the beginning teacher transition. The empirical studies tend to focus on a small piece of a much larger picture, leaving the reader unable to envision the totality of the university-to-public-school classroom shift (p. 19).

In response to her argument, the on-going effort to hear and report stories of success, and struggles, of teachers is in fact worthwhile (Carter, 1993). In order to learn how the variance in experience for successful teachers can be explained, it makes sense to ask successful novice teachers themselves (Futernick, 2007).

Chapter 1 Conclusion

This study looked at beginning teacher success to more deeply understand the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. Specifically, patterns that emerged from one purposively selected participant's stories of success have been considered to generate potentially new and deeper understanding of issues related to successful induction. This increase in understanding of successful induction is important because the academic literature and the broader discourse on this transition reflect that success is not always the outcome. The rationale for looking at a single case to generate this potentially new and

deeper understanding was that an exemplary case of success may uniquely inform the research questions.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Interest in the transition from preservice teacher to teacher has inspired a broad domain of research warranted by the importance of teachers to our communities and the potential for this line of inquiry to powerfully and uniquely inform teacher education. The breadth of this interest is reflected in a rather vast body of inquiry. This study shared these warrants and this interest. This chapter introduces the literature in this domain by beginning with more global or general studies and moving toward a narrow focus on research that uses narrative methods to gain deeper insight from novice teachers' stories.

Although not always explicitly stated, a central impetus motivating the induction domain in teaching and teacher education research is interest in understanding what can account for a successful transition into the role of being a teacher. This chapter introduces and reviews this vibrant academic discourse and makes a case for how a rigorous consideration of one novice teacher's success stories can contribute to the conversation exploring this important transition.

The chapter is organized in two sections. The first section provides an overview of the broad landscape of research that informs understanding of induction related issues. It begins with a consideration of quantitative studies that look at issues relating to attrition. This provides a background or context to understanding the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. Other threads that highlight the landscape of this domain of research include expert-novice studies and teacher development studies. The second

section narrows the focus to the thread of inquiry that uses teacher narratives to collect stories as a means of generating deeper insight into issues related to induction. It is with this particular thread of qualitative inquiry that this study most specifically aligned. The review of narrative studies was organized using features of story as a frame.

Significant Threads in Induction Research

This section introduces the broad intellectual landscape in which this study was situated. Three threads in this academic discourse are briefly introduced and reviewed. First, the literature that looks at attrition, specifically attrition associated with the problems related to induction, is introduced. Next the thread of work on teacher development is briefly introduced. Following this, research that looks at experts and novices is briefly considered. The section concludes with a discussion of significant patterns that emerged from these three threads in the literature.

Attrition, Struggle, and Problems Associated with Induction

A significant part of the research domain that deals with issues related to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher focuses on attrition. Teacher attrition is recognized as a problem (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Gold, 1996). The specific numbers vary by study, but generally speaking, the survey research exploring this issue indicates about a third of all teachers leave within the first few years of entering the profession. An interesting insight into why it is important to retain teachers comes from outside of education. The broader field of human resources considers attrition and retention in all areas of the workforce. Trained professionals can be viewed as assets for organizations.

Learning how to be a teacher, both during preservice and after placement, comes at a cost; there is an investment in time and money as well as an emotional investment. Retention increases the chance that there will be return on that investment (Fitz-Enz, 2000). Further, as is discussed in more detail below in the subsection on teacher development, attrition is a concern because novices do not emerge from preservice programs as fully developed teachers (Worthy, 2005). Fantilli and McDougal (2009) support this claim: "While strong evidence suggests that teacher effectiveness spikes sharply after the first few years in the profession, research shows that many teachers exit prior to attaining this level of expertise" (p. 814). In short, when teachers leave the profession early, the effort made to become a teacher goes for naught and the opportunity to continue to develop expertise as a teacher evaporates.

A careful consideration of attrition research shows, as Cochran-Smith (2004) explained, that the reasons why novice teachers leave are not always associated with struggle. For example, teachers may leave their position to pursue another career, start a family, enter educational administration, or go to graduate school. Smethem (2007) introduced the construct of intention to more clearly understand the nuances of retention and attrition. The fact that some teachers may enter into the profession with the intention of only teaching for a few years before moving onto the next thing must be considered when trying to understand what seem to be alarming attrition rates. In other words, in terms of the warrants that support the present study, it is important to acknowledge that struggles are not the only reason novice teachers leave. It should also be pointed out that, presumably, success might not be the cause that makes them stay. The questions in the

present study, however, rested on the assumptions that the seeming ubiquity of novice teacher struggles and the pervasiveness of the sink or swim metaphor in the broader discourse on induction are problematic and that more needs to be known about issues related to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

Rather than considering attrition and retention writ large, this review was limited to findings that were in alignment with the problem and questions that guided this study. Therefore, following is a discussion of specifically how struggle and the perceived problems associated with induction are represented in the large quantitative studies on attrition.

Data from the *Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)* and the supplemental *Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS)*, both conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), were used for Ingersoll's (2001) analysis. These surveys provided a dataset that "is large, comprehensive, nationally representative, and included teacher migration, teacher attrition, the reasons teachers themselves give for their departures, and a wide range of information on the characteristics and conditions of elementary and secondary schools" (Ingersoll, 2001, p. 504). These data were analyzed in three stages. First, a summary of the descriptive data on recent trends in attrition was presented. Next, Ingersoll used a multiple regression analysis to examine the predictors that may relate to teacher turnover—the dichotomous dependent variable. The third stage used data from the TFS to examine the reasons teachers provided regarding why they persisted or left education. It should be noted that Ingersoll (2001) did not specifically consider novices

in his analysis. Rather, he used the term *young* and defined this term as a teacher younger than 30 years of age. Nevertheless, this important and significant research provided some insight into the formation of novice teachers' perspectives on success or struggle and the relationship to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

Multiple regression analysis supports the common understanding that about one third of all beginning teachers leave within the first few years. Being a novice teacher, or to use the dichotomous independent variable operationalized in Ingersoll's analysis, being young, proved to be a statistically significant indicator related to attrition. Ingersoll found that "the relative odds of young teachers departing are 171% higher than for middle-aged teachers" (p. 518). What is more important here however, is a consideration of why teachers left, and specifically if struggles played a determining role in their decision. The magnitude of the attrition problem seems to be well understood. What may influence a novice teacher to persist or leave is less understood.

Ingersoll's deeper analysis into the reasons why teachers leave using the TFS data failed to provide a clear answer to the question of why novice teachers may choose to not persist. This shortcoming was because this deeper stage of analysis only considered the type of school as independent variables. The analysis was limited to discussion of all departures and a comparison of urban, high-poverty public schools with small private schools. Age as a variable was not considered. Using this study to understand why novice teachers may choose to not persist and whether struggles were involved in their decision-making process demands an inference upon novice teachers from the reasons

presented by all teachers that chose to not continue. In this regard Ingersoll found, curiously, that retirement was "among the least prominent reasons for turnover" (p. 521). The most prominent reason associated with attrition was job dissatisfaction accounting for 42% of all departures. This dissatisfaction was associated with the organizational conditions of schooling. These organizational conditions were specifically explicated as "low salaries, lack of support from the school administration, lack of student motivation, and student discipline problems" (p. 522). This finding provided a glimpse of intimation or a vague supposition as to how struggles for novice teachers may be related to attrition but clearly more insight into this problem is needed. One key finding that can be associated specifically with novice teachers was that one of the most important organizational conditions related to retention and attrition was the level of administrative support.

This body of research clearly showed that many novice teachers leave the profession. Obviously there are a number of reasons for this phenomenon, many of which are benign or do not represent a significant problem in either teacher education or the nature of teaching and schools. Indeed some of these reasons might be propitious for education; moving on to graduate school or administration, for example. Nevertheless a pattern emerged that many novice teachers face struggles, some of which may appear as dissatisfaction that influences their decision to leave the field of education.

Using the features or elements of story to help identify patterns that may emerge regarding these common struggles and the high level of attrition, two findings were

identified. First, teaching and working in schools is clearly an interpersonal experience and as such the characters (i.e.: students, fellow teachers, and administrators) in novice teachers' stories may play a significant role in their perceptions of success and struggle in their ultimate decision to remain in teaching or to contribute to the attrition statistics. The second major pattern that emerged from the narrative formed by these large quantitative studies on teacher attrition was the crucial importance of context or setting on teachers' decisions to stay or go after their first year or two or three of teaching. A central finding of Ingersoll's (2001) analysis was that negative organizational conditions may play a more significant role in teacher turnover and school staffing problems than student enrollment or teacher retirement increases. Ingersoll (2001) cited a number of seminal thinkers (Durkheim, 1961; Waller, 1932; Parsons, 1959; Grant, 1980; and Rosenholtz, 1989) when describing the importance of the social aspect of context or setting: "Educational sociologists, in particular, have long held that the presence of a sense of community and cohesion among families, teachers, and students is important for the success of schools" (p. 501). This claim supports the finding that a healthy context or setting may influence novice teachers' perceptions of success. The notion of context or setting as a major factor in novice teachers' formation of these perceptions returns as a refrain or echo throughout the entire body of academic research on induction.

Stages of Development

This thread in the induction literature frames the experience of being a novice teacher within a continuum of career development. It is considered here in two

subsections. First, theoretical understandings of how insights into teacher development can be plotted on a continuum is briefly introduced. Next, how this research and theory can inform teacher education is discussed.

Theoretical continuum of teacher development. Certain patterns in the chronology of teacher development have been identified by researchers. These patterns are broadly generalized below.

Apprenticeship of observation. The development of teachers starts much before enrollment in a formal preservice teacher education program. The apprenticeship of observation has been described as a significant contributor (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Lortie, 1975). These are the perspectives and opinions that are formed while potential teachers are students. These perspectives are strong and Feiman-Nemser (2001) described one aspect of the ongoing developmental process as the breaking down of barriers that may exist because of personal experiences.

Preservice experiences. There is some overlap moving into the next phase in the teacher career developmental continuum. After the apprenticeship of observation, preservice experiences typically constitute the next stage. Although to be sure, potential teachers are students during this stage and perceptions on teaching are formed not only by the content or curriculum of their program but also by the actions and attitudes of their teacher educators.

Transition from preservice teacher to teacher. The present study was situated in the general domain of the next stage—the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

The stage could also be called the induction period. Along with the apprenticeship of observation, experiences as a novice form strong perceptions that may endure for the entire career cycle (Bush, 1983).

Sustained teacher learning. The rest of the developmental continuum describes or operationalizes the ongoing growth toward being an experienced or expert teacher (Berliner, 1986). The essence of the conclusions formed in this thread of literature approaches the axiomatic: teacher learning at its best is a lifelong and ongoing endeavor. The maxim etched in granite above the grand entrance to the old College of Education building at Western Oregon University expresses this sentiment: *those who endeavor to teach must never cease to learn.*

Stages of development research and teacher education. Carter (1995) noted that throughout these stages of development “one needs to have well-formed conceptions and strong commitments—that is, personal ‘truths’—to step in front of a classroom” (p. 328). But during the transition from preservice teacher to teacher these truths may not be well-formed and commitments to ideas about teaching that may have been strong in preservice can be challenged.

Looking specifically at the induction stage of teacher development, or the transition from preservice teacher to teacher, McCann and Johannessen (2004) interviewed eleven novice teachers of English over a two-year period. One of their participants, Jonas, described the friction that novices may experience that happens as a

consequence of the need to have personal truths, as Carter (1995) explained it, but in fact these ideals are in a state of flux and are not fully formed. Here is how he described it:

I'd stay up kind of late trying to get something that I thought was really good and have sleepless nights, but in the morning I was actually ... I'd have almost like dry-heave anxiety. You have to understand how strange that is for me, normally I am a very 'type B' personality: no stress whatsoever, take one thing at a time. Just having those kinds of mornings was totally strange for me... I kind of had to reinvent myself to do this that some of that happened, but it was really just going to school and not being 100% confident in what I was going to present the students (McCann and Johannessen, 2004, p. 139).

This friction can be found elsewhere in the literature. Feiman-Nemser (2001) conducted a study looking at induction from the perspective of a case study on an exemplary mentor teacher. The participant that collaborated with her in this study described it like this:

In the 1st year, you have doubts, you need reassurance, you're so overwhelmed by all the things you think you're not doing. "I'm not teaching enough science. I'm not teaching social studies in the right way." You need to know all the ways that you're effectively working. I don't think you can ever get too much of that (p. 23).

Using the features of story as an analytical frame, an interesting pattern emerged related to plot. Some novice teachers experienced a conflict in their developmental story. Conflict is considered to be a feature or element of story by some literary theorists, or an aspect of plot by others (Murfin & Ray, 2003). Conflict is intuitively understood as a clash between characters or aspects of the context or setting. Obviously, there will be situated conflicts with students or administrators or struggles associated with facilities or the environment for every teacher. But the conflict that emerged as a pattern in this

thread of research was the personal one between novices' ideal vision of themselves as a teacher formed during the apprenticeship of observation and during their preservice experiences and the reality of the teaching persona that emerged when they were tossed into the sea of working in schools with students.

The notion that everything teachers will need to know to be successful can be crammed into four or five years of preservice experiences is unrealistic. Yet, this is the traditional approach. Feiman-Nemser (2001) succinctly described the juxtaposition between the hegemony of traditional approaches to teacher education and the potential to align the findings from this thread of research with programming and policy:

Placing serious and sustained teacher learning at the center of school reform is a radical idea. It challenges dominant views of teaching and learning to teach. It calls for major overhaul and provisions for teacher preparation, induction, and continuing development. It requires capacity building at all levels of the system. No one should underestimate the depth or scope of the agenda (p. 1014).

This emphatic statement is a refrain of the sentiment expressed by Arne Duncan presented in chapter one. The conflict novice teachers may experience in this transition underscores the call for the need for significant change in teacher education. Research on stages of development provides unique insight into what these changes could look like. Clearly more needs to be known about these issues. However, preservice experiences that prepare novices for induction specifically by instilling tools and capacity for sustained teacher learning is a promising direction informed by this line of inquiry.

Expert-novice Studies

Considering the unique knowledge that an expert may possess in juxtaposition with the novice has been a narrow, but ongoing, theme for researchers for over twenty-five years. One reason perhaps that there are not more studies of this type is that expert teachers may be difficult to identify. If indeed they exist, we may not know exactly what they look like. They may be elusive and hard to see, almost mythological (Berliner, 1986). Novice teachers, on the other hand, proliferate. Not every novice, even when persisting through the stages of development, becomes an expert. The assumption that expertise can be linearly associated with experience can be challenged (Fuller & Unwin, 2004). An old joke may help make this more clear: *Have you had 20 years of experience? Or, one year of experience 20 times?* Nevertheless, experience certainly is part of the process of gaining expertise. This point demonstrates how important the attrition issue is. Novice teachers must persist to gain experience that can be used to increase their effectiveness.

The juxtaposition of the expert to the novice allows developmental differences to stand out in stark relief. One difference to be pointed out here is the capacity for discernment. That is to say, experts seem to demonstrate the capacity to identify what is important in a situation or circumstance and respond appropriately. Carter, Sabers, Cushing, Pinnegar, and Berliner (1987) described this as the development of schema that allowed for quicker, more complicated decision-making. Ericsson & Lehmann (1996) described this effortless access as “domain specific perceptual skills” (p. 292). The following studies demonstrated this empirically.

Carter, Cushing, Sabers, Stein, and Berliner (1988) compared expert and novice teachers' information-processing ability. The study used structured interviews to capture perceptions based on visual stimuli that evoked classroom events. They found that novices were less adept at recognizing important features.

Borko and Livingston (1989) compared four novices (student teachers) with four experts (the four novices' cooperating teachers). Data were generated from observations and interviews over the course of one week. Analysis revealed several patterns that demonstrated this notion of discernment. Distinct from the experts, novices demonstrated "more time consuming, less efficient planning; deviations from scripted lesson plans when attempting to be responsive to students; and varied, less selective post-lesson reflections" (p. 490).

Swanson, O'Connor and Cooney (1990) provided an example of a study design that used "think aloud" responses to vignettes to understand differences among expert and novice teachers. The investigators looked at differences in perspectives on classroom management issues. Twenty-four novices and twenty-four experts were each presented with six written scenarios and were recorded as they worked out solutions while speaking aloud. Analysis of the transcribed data yielded an interesting nuance to understanding the less developed capacity for discernment of novices. When instructional cues that added detail to the scenario were included in the prompt, there was less distinction between the two groups. Experts can make quicker decisions based on recognizable routines and patterns to generate possible solutions.

Carter et al (1987) studied experts and novices by investigating thinking in regard to a simulated task of taking over the teaching of a class in the middle of the year. Experts were able to draw on previous experiences to guide their thinking with routines and actions plans.

From a literary analysis point of view, the term *theme* refers to the underlying meaning of the story. A pattern that emerged from the studies exploring experts and novices was that experts may have a greater capacity to discern the meaning of the sequence of events or experiences compared to novices. In other words, they had a greater understanding and insight into the meaning of their own stories.

Section Conclusion

The picture that emerged from this literature was of a vibrant and ongoing research agenda that approaches, from a number of different perspectives and methods, issues related to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. The attrition literature intimated that job dissatisfaction may be associated with high turn-over rates among young teachers. This is unfortunate as stages-of-development research demonstrated a pattern that novices still have much to learn about being a teacher when they transition from preservice. And interestingly, research on the differences between experts and novices showed that it takes time to develop a repertoire of experiences to rapidly and perhaps more accurately understand what features or elements are important in teacher stories. That is to say novices may lack the breadth of experiences to situate the

characters or accurately observe the context or setting in their own attempts to story their understanding of teaching.

Two conclusions were drawn. First, this scholarship supports the general and more informal discourse within education that beginning a career as a teacher can be an arduous struggle. In sum this research may show that the struggle is part of a growth curve that is to be expected. On the continuum of teacher career development, the jump from preservice into teaching is significant and growth pains may occur. Second, within this context, there is much yet to be learned about the nuanced and situated nature of success of the individual novice teacher. Research using teacher story to provide insight into these nuances addresses this need for deeper and richer understanding.

Narrative Inquiry on Novice Teachers

In order to understand the transition from preservice teacher to teacher and novice teacher success it has been helpful to review the broader literature on induction. While many studies have looked at induction from a broad perspective, the narrative inquiry tradition looks at this important issue through the situated and nuanced nature of story and therefore provides potential for deeper understanding. These studies focus more narrowly on success in the transition from preservice teacher to teacher by using narratives to capture, collect, and make sense of teacher perspectives. This methodology is more attuned to an orientation which values teachers' knowledge rather than the knowledge of teacher education researchers (Carter, 1990; Fenstermacher, 1986). This

section introduces and reviews selected studies in the narrative tradition that are more similar in method and scope to this study.

Dozens of reports in this thread have been published over the last 30 years. To consider this significant body of work efficiently, elements, or features of story are used as an analytical frame. That is to say, in this section, studies that used narrative methods to look at issues related to successful induction are briefly introduced and patterns from these stories are then discussed. As there are a number of elements or features of story that are used in literary analysis, for organizational purposes, these studies are arranged using the elements of story offered by Carter (1993): "events, characters, and settings arranged in a temporal sequence implying post-causality and significance" (p. 6). The patterns that emerged in and among the stories represented in this research were identified through iterative analysis.

Events Associated with Novice Teacher Success

Martin (2004) conducted a qualitative study on beginning teachers that focused on classroom management. Three participants were interviewed 11 times over their first three years of teaching. An unspecified number of observations contributed to the data. Transcripts and field notes were coded and data analysis was iterative and ongoing. One interesting finding was that two of the participants, Stephanie and Charles, had small successes early that led to further development as a teacher. Martin described it like this:

Stephanie and Charles' early successes with management set the foundation for continued growth. They came to rely less on external management systems. Both

of them guided students' opportunities for responsibility. Each expressed confidence in his/her management abilities (p. 416).

McCann and Johannessen (2004) interviewed eleven new teachers trying to understand their concerns. Their questions focused on two central themes: frustrations that might influence a decision to leave the profession and what support might encourage them to persist. Their findings in regard to those that chose to persist stand in interesting juxtaposition to the notion that small successes may snowball into larger perceptions of success. A key indicator that a novice may choose to persist was "the need to view disturbing episodes in the school year as shared experiences among students and faculty and not as personal obstacles, aggravations, or attacks" (p. 142).

Athanases & De Oliveira (2008) conducted a study focusing on new teachers' challenges to advocating for equity in classrooms. Among their participants were 38 new teachers. Much of the data emanated from five separate focus groups comprised of 5 to 10 teachers. Each focus group lasted three hours. Other data included artifacts and surveys. One participant, Rena, storied the momentum that builds from small successes. She demonstrated a clear ability to recognize her own successes and gain confidence from them. Seemingly small acts of helping individual students gain equitable access to school resources blossomed into creating a wildly successful afterschool technology and culture club.

The pattern that emerged from these three studies regarding the events in their stories was the importance of not allowing negative experiences to define or determine exclusively one's perceptions while simultaneously recognizing positive experiences and

gaining confidence from them. This capacity associated with success has been operationalized by Bandura in his work on self-efficacy (1977). This phenomenon was represented in our figurative language (snowball or butterfly effect) demonstrating its pervasiveness beyond the discourse on the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

Characters Associated with Novice Teacher Success

Schlichte, Yssel, and Merbler (2005) conducted interviews with five novice teachers about their first-year experience. Their findings focused heavily on the importance of relationships with others in the school context. Their participants' interactions with administrative staff, mentors, and students, all vitally influenced their first-year teaching experience. The single participant that reported having a successful first year was quoted in the report: "I couldn't ask for better relationships than we have in our school" (p. 38). He continued his point with details about his positive relationships with coworkers, administration and students and concluded that "It works because we are a team" (p. 38). Among the researchers' conclusions was the idea that preservice teachers could be taught to understand the importance of establishing connections and relationships.

Bergeron (2008) conducted a study using narrative case-study methodology with a single participant, Christina. A pragmatic framework was used, eschewing elaborate research design. Rather, the focus was on discussing problems with the participant and thinking about how the research influenced decision-making. Four "conditions for success" (specifically to creating a culturally-responsive classroom) were identified: "a

multilayered support system, an administrator supportive of innovation, a vigorous district-wide system of professional development, and an individual willing to take risks” (p. 21).

A pattern that emerged from these studies was the important role that administrators play in the lives of novice teachers. Indeed, the principal or supervisor may be one of the most important characters in the stories of some teachers about their transition from preservice to teaching.

Settings Associated with Novice Teacher Success

Scherff (2008) used narrative inquiry focused on two novice teachers that did not choose to persist in the profession. Data were drawn from email communication spanning 17 months and interviews near the end of the induction year. One participant’s primary source of dissatisfaction with this induction year was what he perceived to be student apathy. This participant also experienced frustrations with his relationship to administration. Although he did not feel successful and chose to leave the profession, he did maintain some humor throughout the year. The other participant found frustration in “the bureaucratic demands of teaching, like paperwork and special education accommodation” (p. 1326). She also described cold relationships with her colleagues as a reason for quitting. The research aligned these frustrations mostly with the school context rather than personal attributes of the novice teachers or issues regarding their training. In fact, the participants were said to be highly trained from respected preservice

teacher education programs. These findings led Scherff to contemplate policy implications regarding school culture.

Blankenship and Coleman (2009) conducted a study using five data sources to examine what could lead to “wash out” in beginning physical education teachers. These data sources were four interviews over the first and second year of teaching, four videotaped lessons, field notes of 30 observations, documents including lesson plans and email communications, and two psychometric instruments--the Teacher Efficacy Scale modified for PE (Metzler & Reif, 1986) and the Pluralism and Diversity Attitude Assessment (Stanley, 1996). Lawson’s (1989) four interactive factors influencing workplace conditions for physical educators were used as a theoretical framework for analyzing data. The four categories were political and economic, organizational, situational, and personal-social. Describing how setting influenced the perspectives of the novice teachers, Blankenship and Coleman (2009) stated the following:

Workplace conditions that may have inhibited wash-out were being able to team teach with someone from the same PETE program, a new gym and equipment toward the end of their first teaching year, support from their principal, perceived control over content and teaching methods, and being proactive in soliciting assistance (p. 97).

Stories occur in settings. These two studies represented how important novice teachers’ perceptions of their setting were in influencing their perceptions of success as well as their decisions to persist in or leave the profession. This pattern has interesting implications for teacher education programming. Many novice teachers may not be aware of how strongly context and setting may influence their perspectives as they enter the induction phase of teaching.

Timelines Associated with Novice Teacher Success

Lisa and seven other women were introduced in Hollingsworth's (1992) feminist critical theory program review of her conversational support group. The report storied how women talk about learning to teach through a feminist lens:

The method for studying the group's learning, then, became an example of feminist praxis: a willingness to risk and examine personal experiences as women and to be changed by the research process itself. The value of this conversational approach for learning to teach in urban settings becomes clear in the narrative (p. 373).

Feminist principles such as, recognizing the voice of the underrepresented, nurturing, and the importance of long-standing relationships were represented in the report. The group met for three and a half years in various settings. Among the findings was the notion that overcoming struggles comprised a plot line of the story of success:

My latest philosophy is that, even though this has been such a hellish year, there have been some things that worked—certain reading lessons or certain interactions I've had with the kids. So I think, well, my first year is done. Imagine how it could be in five years when I keep progressively learning these things. That's just been helping me lately (p. 400).

As part of a larger research project, Corcoran (1981) conducted a single case study that consisted of interviews and observations over a fourteen week period. Findings were reported as the experiences of "Debra" and her interaction with one student "James". Ongoing efforts at studying novice teachers have yielded, according to Corcoran, common elements in the world of novice teachers. In this study she explored "the condition of not knowing" (p. 20). "The large number of factual and procedural unknowns can send the beginning teacher into a state of shock, wherein it becomes

impossible to transfer previously mastered concepts and skills from the university to the public school classroom” (p. 20). This study focused on the condition of not knowing as it related to classroom management. The report described Debra’s arduous journey to overcome self-doubt, ultimately feel confident and successful in her abilities in classroom management, and to persist in the profession.

Hollingsworth, Teel, and Minarik (1992) collaborated with beginning teacher Leslie in a longitudinal study that examined her work with Aaron as he learned to read. Multiple data sources were used to inform her story of success. Leslie demonstrated patience and student-centeredness as she overcame struggle and Aaron gained confidence and became proud of his literacy. Her story was one of endurance and determination, self-efficacy and advocacy—an archetypal plot line of overcoming struggle.

The pattern that emerged using the element of story timeline was that success may be a process, or at least the outcome of the process, rather than a singular experience. This significant sequence of events is an old, even archetypal, plotline (Tobias, 1993). This too has significant implications for teacher education programming. Perhaps success and struggle do not have to be operationalized as dichotomous in the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. These narratives and this study provide some insight into another way of looking at this relationship.

Section Conclusion

In all, one significant conclusion was that it takes time to develop the cognitive and perceptual skills to demonstrate proficiency and develop expertise. As such, early

struggles were not uncommon or unexplainable. Three less significant conclusions were also drawn. Foremost was that case study methodology can indeed be a meaningful and worthwhile tool for understanding the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. Second, the stories of these novice teachers also add some rich detail in describing the phenomenon encapsulated in the sink or swim metaphor and reflected in the broader literature. Finally, these studies show the promise of using narrative inquiry to study success by capturing and interpreting novice teacher stories.

Summary and Conclusion

Case studies using narrative methodology looking at novice teacher success stories are situated in a larger domain of academic inquiry into issues related to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. The background literature included studies on attrition, stages of development, and expert-novice studies. A sweeping summary of this literature could support a general conclusion that ongoing teacher learning may help novices swim rather than sink when tossed into their first-year of teaching from the more predictable and perhaps stable dry-dock of preservice experiences. Informed by this background and context, a more narrow thread of inquiry used teacher story to look at this transition and gain insight from the perspective of novice teachers themselves through narrative inquiry. These cases provided a voice proximal to the point of inquiry. The stories these participants shared and the analysis of the researchers demonstrated the capacity of narrative inquiry to capture the rich, multifarious nature of teacher understanding. The potential of story as method is to provide a familiar, even organic,

mechanism for organizing thoughts and experiences and sharing them with others. In conclusion, narrative inquiry continues to realize this potential and teacher story continues to contribute to our understanding of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. The potential of story as an analytical tool, on the other hand, seemed underdeveloped like faint pencil sketches tentatively testing the canvas.

It is curious and bears noting that features or elements of story was seldom used as an analytical device in the literature looking at the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. It is especially curious that this analytical potential has not been developed in the narrative inquiry tradition. In other words, the features of story have not been purposefully used as an analytical tool, even in the studies that explicitly use story as method. Because of the nature of story, these features are implicitly developed to one degree or another. The full potential of this approach has yet to be realized and as such there may be much more to learn from the stories of novice teachers. Carter (1993) addressed this issue and offered potential reasons why this is the case:

I would argue that our teachers are still stick figures and, in some cases, are even given numbers or letters rather than names. This weak characterization and even weaker plot structuring occurs because stories about teachers are often told in the service of or on the way to more dominant paradigmatic interests, such as discovering the ever-elusive “effective practice” (p. 9).

Explicitly capturing stories and using features of story to identify patterns that emerge from them may provide potential to add more depth and detail to these important stick figures and in the process, enrich our understanding of success in the context of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter has two purposes. One is to provide a rationale for the methodology and to situate this work within a larger tradition of literature in which researchers used story as method. The other purpose is to describe how methods informed by this tradition are enacted in this specific study. These purposes are addressed in the following four sections. First, the research questions are revisited to begin the consideration of methodology. Next, the research traditions used to inform the methods of this study are briefly surveyed. Details regarding how these methods were carried out in this study form the next section followed by a section that explicates the strategy for analysis.

Research Questions

To learn more about the successful transition from preservice teacher to teacher, this study looked at one novice teacher's stories of success. The process began with the data collection technique of using interviews to collect stories. Accordingly, the task was to evoke *authentic* stories. This chapter describes the process and procedures for approaching and enacting that task. The central aim of the study was to identify patterns that emerged from these stories in order to more deeply understand the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. Three research questions guided this study:

1. What are examples of a beginning teacher's success stories?
2. What patterns emerge in and across these stories?
3. What do these patterns tell us about the transition from preservice teacher to teacher?

Research Tradition that Informs Study

As mentioned in chapter one, these research questions were explored from a constructivist-interpretive perspective. Qualitative methods, specifically using interviews to capture stories, are suitable for addressing questions from this worldview (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Generally speaking, the constructivist-interpretive orientation agrees that the mind constructs understanding as we “invent concepts, models, and schemes to make sense of experience, and we continually test and modify these constructions in the light of new experience” (Schwandt, 2001, p. 30). More specifically, the constructivist-interpretive paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) that underpins this study recognizes that these constructions of understanding are formed from the researcher’s interpretations.

Within the broad spectrum of qualitative research methods, collecting and considering teacher stories (Carter, 1995) were used to more deeply understand the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. The questions and the method aligned as the central issue to be addressed (how one novice teacher’s success stories can inform understanding of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher) was situated and specific in time and context. In the tradition of academic inquiry into teacher education, Carter (1995) and Doyle and Carter (2003), have recognized that the concepts, models or schemes that teachers use to form their perspectives are shaped as stories. In this regard, the question and the method also aligned with the constructivist-interpretive tradition because the stories were used to understand and interpret (through description and analysis) the perspectives (organized as stories) of the participant.

Decisions about specific methodology and research design were guided by the research questions. Story as method begins with deliberately capturing success stories. To address the research questions, semi-structured interviews were used to capture stories of novice teacher success. Insofar as story is the tradition that informs the methods used in this study, this specific qualitative tradition is introduced to provide a context for the specific methods and analysis that were used in this study.

Intellectual History of Story as Inquiry in Teacher Education

The constructivist-interpretive worldview and qualitative methods can be seen as an intellectual balancing or reaction to dominant deterministic and quantitative approaches to understanding. The deterministic and quantitative approaches were strongly influenced, even defined, by patriarchal power assumptions. Consequently, the use of story was often marginalized and researchers had to argue that it was a legitimate method for academic inquiry in the face of staunch, entrenched, and likely threatened opposition from the quantitative/positivist hegemony. Story as inquiry provides critical theorists, feminist scholarship, for example, an empowering method (Carter, 1995; Hollingsworth, 1992).

In the contemporary environment, story as research method is widely acknowledged as useful to address questions about teaching and teacher education.

Carter (1993) described the paradigm shift:

Today this picture is quite different. Teaching is being studied up close by researchers—typically women—who have a close association with K-12 classrooms, by collaborative teams of researchers, or by teachers themselves.

Methods of inquiry are intensely focused on the rich explication of stories in a single or a few local situations, and the emphasis is on understanding the situations and the outlooks of the participants (p. 329).

The consequence of this paradigm shift and the acceptance of narrative as empirical work in the Academy is a burgeoning body of literature that explores the potentiality of the method while addressing questions relating to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. A sampling of this body of literature was introduced in chapter two and the present study contributes to the conversation.

Story as Method

The methods used in this study rest on the assumption that individuals form perspectives on the phenomenon they experience in the world through story. Here, the specific phenomenon of interest was the transition into full-time teaching. To learn more about this important transition, this study looked at one novice teacher's perspectives on success. These perspectives are storied and shared through narrative. The phrase "we live storied lives" means that we come to understand our own lives as we construct narratives to share our stories with others or even to remember them ourselves. From this perspective, teacher stories can be useful in helping us understand issues related to teaching. Clandinin and Connelly (1996) conceptualized this situated nature of using story as looking at "personal practical knowledge, set in the context of teachers' professional knowledge landscapes" (p. 29). The storied practical knowledge under investigation in this study was the perspective of one novice teacher on success and how that can inform an understanding of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

Story as method was an appropriate approach because the question of how novice teacher success can inform an understanding of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher can be answered in many different ways. The stories captured novice teacher success. Success is a big construct like love and happiness. Pinning these ideas down with concrete and universal definitions is impractical. Understanding of success, or love and happiness, is situated in the perspectives of individuals in certain times and settings. This multiplicity of potential characters and events interferes with efforts at generalization. Stories of success for novice teachers are nuanced and situated in nature. “This richness and nuance cannot be expressed in definitions, statements of fact, or abstract propositions. It can only be demonstrated or evoked through story” (Carter, 1993, p. 6). Explaining novice teacher success with quantitative rubrics would fail to recognize this complexity. Capturing narratives to get at story through interviews aligned with the interpretivist assumptions underlying this research.

Methodology

The methods used to conduct this research are described in this section. In developing these methods, due consideration was given to the empirical tradition described above. This section begins with a general overview of how research methodology was enacted in this study. Key ideas and concepts introduced in the overview are broken down in more detail in the sections that follow.

Overview

To address the research questions and to contribute to the academic conversation about the transition from preservice teacher to teacher the following methodology was used: A participant was purposively and conveniently selected to inform the specific questions posed in this study. The interview protocol designed to address the research questions was piloted and refined to improve *story-capturing* capacity. Guided by this protocol, the participant collaborated with the researcher in three audiotaped and transcribed semi-structured interviews. The three sections that follow describe the methodology in further detail using the key elements of this overview as an organizing frame. First, the participant and researcher are introduced. Following is a section describing the development of the interview protocol. This section concludes with specific descriptions of how the methodology was enacted in this study.

The Participant and the Researcher

The core of the research methodology was the conversation that occurred between the participant and the researcher. To learn what type of stories about success a novice teacher tells, and to look at the stories for patterns that may emerge, requires initially that stories are captured. Acknowledging the rigor of the qualitative tradition and ethical research practices, these stories were captured through the formation of a relationship that was grounded in a structured protocol that included formal organized meetings, informed consent, and formulaic interview prompts. Yet the explicit ambition of this study was to capture *authentic* teacher stories. It may seem ironic to capture authentic stories through the use of a prescribed interview process. This irony was addressed through procedures

that led toward authenticity and trustworthiness. Further description on how the participant, the researcher, and the idea of trustworthiness was to be achieved follow in the subsections below:

The participant. The identification of the participant was purposive and convenient. Potential participants were identified by informally contacting professional acquaintances that serve as teachers and school administrators. For convenience, the recruitment procedure used social media, specifically Facebook, to share with educators within my networks the goal of the study and the need for potential participants. One very strong potential participant was identified from an ongoing but thin stream of leads. Social media facilitated the purposive and convenient recruitment of this participant. The strong potential participant that was identified contacted me on Facebook after she had heard about the study from a friend of a friend.

Selection criteria for the purposive and convenient selection of a participant was established in the design of the study and further informed through informal piloting as well as the researcher's work as a teacher educator with extensive familiarity regarding the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. In order to address the questions in this study, success stories of a novice teacher were captured through an organized interview procedure. Not every novice teacher meets these criteria to a conspicuous level. A conspicuously-suited participant was sought and selected purposively and conveniently with the deliberate intention of developing a collaboration that allowed the capturing of stories related to novice teacher success.

The recruitment and selection criteria included the following:

1. The participant must be recognized by supervising administration as a successful novice teacher.
2. The participant must self-identify as a successful novice teacher.
3. The participant must be willing and able to share stories of success through the task-oriented, semi-structured interview protocol.

The first two criteria are straightforward. The third criteria merits further description. The purposive nature of the selection criteria demanded that the participant had the conspicuous capacity to respond to the prompts so that her stories could be captured. In the section that follows that describes how the interview protocol was piloted, it is noted that not all novice teachers are willing and able to share their stories of success.

Consented, potential participants were screened through preliminary interviews to determine their interest and if they met the selection criteria. The complete protocol and interview questions for this preliminary screening interview are in the appendix.

Based on information and insights gained in the interviews, a profile of the participant is presented in this section. This profile was generated through an analysis of the interview transcripts and field notes. The description of how the interview prompts and stems were deliberately designed to inform this profile is presented in the following section.

The researcher. The narrative approach recognizes the researcher's participatory role in the process (Fine, Weis, Weseen, & Wong, 2000). The tradition of using story as a method for understanding teacher knowledge requires, at some point, for a participant

to tell her story to a researcher. A concern was that these stories may be less authentic than stories teachers may tell a confidant or a colleague (Carter, 1993; Gudmundsdottir, 1991). In other words, stories may be more genuine that have audiences other than academic researchers. To address this concern, it is tradition that the researcher provides a brief self-introduction to aid efforts in moving towards authenticity and trustworthiness (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Like many researchers in this area, I am strongly connected to schools. Recall the Carter (1993) quote used in the section on the intellectual history of story as inquiry: many researchers in this growing tradition have “a close association with K-12 classrooms” (p. 329). In my work as a teacher educator, I am closely associated with the classroom. My current role is teaching methods courses and supervising preservice physical education teachers, although my work as a K-12 teacher was in secondary language arts.

Authenticity and trustworthiness. The stories presented here were explicitly informed by how a novice teacher described her successes through semi-structured interviews with me. My role was to capture her authentic story, interpret the interview transcripts and recount her story in a trustworthy report.

Authenticity. For the purposes of this study, authenticity can be explained clearly by the use of a continuum. On one end of the continuum are novice teacher stories reported in a clinical context to a researcher. On the other end of the continuum are novice teacher stories told to confidants over Sunday morning coffee. The *coffee talk*

represents the more authentic end of the continuum. This is to say, the audience shapes the story. The interest in this study was on capturing stories that may not otherwise be captured with more clinical methodology. Authenticity can be nurtured by the careful formation of interview prompts. An example is a prompt encouraging the participant to share something about her teaching that she bragged about to her mother. This is potentially more authentic than merely asking vaguely that the participant share her success stories (Carter, 1993; Gudmundsdottir, 1991).

It should be noted, that the term *authenticity* can certainly have significant meaning beyond and different than how it is used here. For example, from another point of view, authenticity might mean something akin to validity. From this point of view, fabrications and exaggerations boasted in a coffee shop might be considered inauthentic or untrue stories even though they may have been told in colloquial form. In other words, authenticity does not guarantee truthfulness. There may be other interpretations of the word *authenticity* as well. So the use of the word here was narrowed to mean the antithesis of clinical.

Trustworthiness. This qualitative study sought trustworthiness using approaches specifically aligned with the more narrow approach of story as inquiry. Two related efforts were used to enhance trustworthiness: checking for internal accuracy and member checking.

Checking for internal accuracy required a careful focus on inconsistencies within the transcripts. This occurred through a process of sharing transcriptions and drafts with

the participant and discussing inconsistencies identified in the analysis. Novice teachers are working out who they are as teachers, or growing into their teaching persona (Doyle & Carter, 2003). Their perspectives on success and struggle change as they work this out. Focusing on how the participant struggled into understanding through careful analysis of the inconsistent comments was employed to enhance trustworthiness.

Member checking was another method used to move toward trustworthiness. The member checking effort was conducted by transcribing the interviews and sharing them with the participant. Drafts were shared as feedback was sought from the participant regarding the accuracy of the transcripts. The participant's feedback, provided in written form, afforded time for deeper reflection. This process assisted in improving the accuracy of the interpretations. Trustworthiness was further enhanced by having the participant review the transcript and craft written responses to specific questions with the intention to seek clarification. This process has been shown by other researchers to be effective. Bianchini, Johnston, Oram and Cavazos (2003), for example, found this in their work with novice teacher Josh. This was his perspective on this member-checking method: "I believe I am better at answering the given questions when I have more time to think them through like how I answered these [follow-up] questions in writing" (p. 426). Follow-up communication with the participant in this study aided clarification and continued through the preparation of drafts to fill in omissions, confirm details and check for understanding.

These procedures followed qualitative tradition, and as such, the researcher acknowledges his situated role in this process. These efforts were made to ensure trustworthiness and to move towards authenticity; however, the findings and final analysis are the interpretations of the researcher (Carter, 1993; Denzin & Lincoln 2000).

Interview Protocol Development

This section describes the development of the interview protocol. A problem was that novice teacher struggles are reported frequently in both informal or collegial and academic or empirical contexts. After reviewing the literature and considering methodological traditions, it was determined that listening to teacher voice would provide deeper understanding of what success of a novice teacher might look like in transition from preservice teacher to teacher. The research questions for this study were addressed most specifically in the analysis. The patterns that emerged from the novice teacher's success stories could only be identified and analyzed if the authentic stories were first captured. Therefore, development of the interview protocol was central to the design of the study. Distinguished from the research questions were two essential interviews tasks:

1. Learning ample biographical information about the participant and context information about the school setting to be able to write a profile.
2. Capturing stories.

Early informal piloting made it clear that capturing novice teacher success stories did not happen automatically in casual or professional conversation. The subsections that follow describe the piloting process and three specific tactics employed to improve the effectiveness of the interviews in regard to capturing stories.

Piloting process. For at least two years, I had been conversing informally with novice teachers in order to learn about novice teacher success. In the process I honed my skills in providing prompts to move toward authenticity that encouraged communication in a comfortable, conversational tone. I started informally asking the many novice teachers I would meet to share with me their success stories. This process was informal in context and occasion only. The many occasions consisted of dozens of friendly conversations. The context of these conversations was usually the lobby at a seminar or in the bleachers at a high school sporting event. My questioning method however was more clinical than informal. In other words, my prompts failed to yield authentic responses. I was surprised that my typical prompt, a deliberate request to tell me stories of success, yielded nearly unanimously responses indicating that success as a novice teacher may not exist at all. The broad and vague prompt, “tell me your stories of success”, yielded the following type of response: "wow (long pause)... it's weird, I can't think of any!" I found this both discouraging and encouraging. It was discouraging and unfortunate that so many novice teachers struggle. It was encouraging in the sense that success appears to be rare; therefore, its' apparent scarcity identifies this issue as an important one that invites further investigation.

The naïveté of those initial conclusions regarding my piloting of interview prompts was overcome by a deeper understanding of the effective use of interviews to deliberately capture authentic teacher stories. Most of the novice teachers I talked to during my informal piloting phase likely had stories, but my approach did not help them

recall these events and shape them into narratives. Carter (1993) described stories such as these as *well-remembered events*:

A well-remembered event is an incident or episode that a student observes in a school situation and considers, for his or her own reasons, especially salient or memorable. It is, in other words, a short story from a novice's stream of experience (p. 7).

To more efficiently capture these events during the interview process, prompts and stems were continually revised. Revision of the prompts was guided by an attempt to move these conversations into a more conversational, open, affectively safe, and comfortable tone. Potential interview questions were continually sifted and screened to eliminate clinical language to reveal essential questions that could be communicated in everyday or conversational style. Specific techniques described below were designed to elicit stories to increase the richness of the responses to my informal queries.

Endeavoring towards authenticity as it was operationalized seemed to improve the capacity of the novices to form narratives. It may seem contrived that authenticity was achieved by the use of technique; nevertheless, three deliberate strategies were developed. These, conversational tone and two specific interview techniques, task-oriented prompts and the use of metaphor, are further described below.

Conversational tone. Interview prompts and stems were used to evoke the story. The terms *prompts* and *stems* are deliberately used. Interview questions encourage *answers*. The essential task for these interviews was to evoke *authentic* stories. To approach authenticity the prompts and stems were deliberately formulated to avoid a formal or clinical tone. The prompts and stems were free of academic jargon or

educationist lingo. Rather they were written in familiar and everyday language. The purpose of the prompts and stems was to facilitate a conversation in which stories could be captured.

The precise trajectory of the conversation could not be predicted. The task-oriented prompts and the use of metaphors were used to evoke recollections, but much of the interviews included follow-up questions, comments, or prompts as appropriate in the situation. Often these prompts were quite minimalistic and general, i.e.: *what happened next?* Minimalistic interview prompts can also encourage authenticity by evoking emotions. Responding to a researcher's prompts to recall success stories may seem like a cognitive endeavor to the participant. In other words, it may seem like taking a test or that there is a right or wrong answer. In contrast, stories shared in authentic conversations may come more from the heart than from the head. Using a follow-up prompt such as "*how did that make you feel?*" was an interview tactic or technique used to evoke emotional reflections. As the relationship and personal rapport was developed between the participant and the researcher, the conversation became quite casual and colloquial reflecting the use of idiom and other characteristics of informal speech.

The conversational tone of the interviews must not be mistaken however for unfocused chatter. It is important to clarify the essential question within the conversational narrative within which it is cloaked. To inform the research questions, the data from these interviews were generated from prompts which were in fact conversational attempts to address the two essential tasks of the interviews delimited

above: getting to know the participant and her context and capturing her stories of success.

Asking the participant to relate how her preservice experiences informed her understanding of herself as a teacher now reflects a clinical approach to addressing the first essential task of the interview—getting to know the participant. In contrast, conversational approaches were used to gain insight into these experiences. For example, a conversation could begin with the prompt, “where did you go to college?” A follow-up question to her response could be, “why did you choose this college?” This process is represented on the interview guide as the *friendly greeting*. This is the conversational introductory exchange with the purpose of developing a relationship and gathering demographic and biographical information. This purposeful, but informal conversation, was focused on gaining perspectives on preservice experiences and childhood influences on her decision to be teacher (i.e. the apprenticeship of observation).

The second essential task in the form of a clinical question is, “what are your success stories?” This was the task of evoking and capturing stories. The prompts were designed to encourage a conversational tone. The researcher’s role then was to be an active listener. As the participant began to respond to the prompts, the conversation was maintained by active listening and minimalistic follow-up prompts. The two specific strategies were used to improve the efficiency of this task and are described further below.

Task-oriented prompts. There were two main purposes of the task-oriented prompts. The tasks were designed to move towards authenticity and to stimulate the participant's memory. The first goal was to move into the world, or the environment, of the participant to approach authenticity. If coffee shop talk with a trusted friend exemplifies authentic narrative and, in contrast, clinical responses to a researcher reflects less authentic narrative, then any effort to move closer to the coffee shop and away from the laboratory was moving toward authenticity. The second purpose of the task-oriented prompts was to stimulate recollections. In order to organize experiences into narratives, novices need a chance to tell their stories. Presumably, many experiences go unstoried. The task-oriented prompts served as catalysts that inspired the formation of narratives to organize and communicate the experience of being a novice teacher while it is happening (Carter, 2011).

Three tasks were developed in all, one for each interview. Each task was pre-assigned so that the participant had some opportunity to reflect on the prompt and prepare her response. The first task was to lead me on a tour of the school and classroom. The second task was for the participant to think of a fictional character, or attributes of a fictional character, with which she may identify. The third task was to recall stories that may be evoked by considering pairs of dichotomous metaphors.

Upon being selected and after signing the informed consent letter, the participant was assigned to prepare to take me on a tour of her school with a specific emphasis on her teaching spaces. During the tour, aspects of the setting were used as potential stimuli

to evoke authentic stories. For example, while sharing with me her seating charts, I could have followed up with a question such as: “do you ever move a student as a classroom management technique or strategy?” This prompt was modified and expressed in a more conversational tone: "where do you seat a student that needs a bit more of your special attention?" Or, an example of a minimalist prompt that was useful in evoking stories was to point out a piece of art or student work she had on the desk and say: "that's interesting, tell me about that.”

The second task was assigned at the completion of the first interview. This task challenged the participant to identify with a fictional character. No fictional character was off-limits. The participant could choose an historical or contemporary character, a cartoon, or a character from classical literature or any other category. The task was to select the character and explain the sense of identification. For example, a novice physical educator that I spoke with during the informal piloting phase described how he identified with the lead character from the cartoon, American Dad. The sense of his identification came from the opening sequence and theme song of every show. Right at dawn, just as the sun comes up, the character bounces out of bed, instantly is fully dressed in a suit and tie, and begins singing: "Good morning USA! I've got a feeling that it's going to be a wonderful day!" This novice teacher shared with me his story of waking up excited and quickly getting groomed and dressed and going to work energized every morning. Apparently this was quite a success because this young man reported that getting out of bed and going to morning classes as an undergraduate was very

challenging. His perky morning attitude as a novice teacher he found comical by comparison to his college sloth.

The third task was to use a list of dichotomous pairs of metaphors to stimulate the recollection of stories of either success or struggle. The use of metaphors in the construction of a task-oriented prompt to evoke stories may be a unique interview technique. As such, the rationale for the use of metaphors bears further explication. This is provided in the next subsection.

Use of metaphor. Metaphor is also called figurative or non-literal language. Metaphor allows interpretive meaning to be packed into minimal narratives (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Metaphoric language, simply defined, means thinking about one thing in terms of another. The use of metaphoric language in this study was to stimulate the participant to recall stories of success. The use of metaphor, like task-oriented interviews, was another effort to get at authenticity.

A beginning understanding of how story is evoked by metaphor may be formed by considering the following analogy. The specific theme among teacher stories of interest in this study was *success*. Success is an unwieldy, large construct like love or happiness. Constructs like this may be hard to describe as they are intangible and quite diverse in form and shape. It is the nature of human language to use metaphor to understand and communicate our perspectives about hard-to-describe constructs (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). The purpose of the interview prompts and stems was to capture stories. The use of metaphor was deliberately used as a strategy to capture stories by

exploiting this capacity of human language to story understandings of one thing in terms of another.

Interview protocol development conclusion. This section described the development of the interview protocol. Practice and reflection refined the prompts and stems that encouraged authentic responses from the participant. Serious consideration was also given to the story-capturing capacity of the interviews. Efforts to address this have been described. The litmus test of whether prompts and stems were effective was if they evoked authentic stories. The following section provides procedural details reflecting what has been learned about capturing authentic stories.

Interview Procedures

This section describes the specific procedures used in conducting the interviews. The interview process was informed in part by protocol suggested by Seidman (1998). Three task-oriented, semi-structured interviews took place after a preliminary screening interview. Each of the three semi-structured interviews was 90-minutes and took place in the participant's classroom at a mutually agreed on time after school was out. The interviews followed a consistent pattern. After approximately fifteen minutes of friendly greeting, two prompts and one task were used to initiate conversation with the intention of capturing authentic stories. The interviews concluded with the assignment of the task used in the subsequent interview. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. Member checking correspondence occurred between interviews. Description of the specific procedures used for each of the interviews follows in chronological order.

Preliminary screening interview. This interview had four purposes. The first was to share with the participant the nature of the study and guide her through the informed consent process. The second was to determine if the potential participant met the selection criteria. The third was to begin to get to know the participant by focusing mostly on biographical details. The fourth purpose was to assign the task for the first 90-minute interview.

Immediately after our introduction, the nature of the study and the procedures for informed consent were explained. Following this was a more extensive, informal and unstructured conversation with the dual intention of getting to know the participant and determining if she met the selection criteria. This determination was subjective. The selection criteria were deliberately left rather vague. Selection was, in part, determined by my intuitive sense of the participant's ability to contribute to the study. Two prompts were used to stimulate and initiate the recollection and sharing of stories:

- You have read and signed the informed consent letter and understand that this study seeks to collect success stories from one novice teacher. The data to inform this question will be three 90-minute task-oriented interviews that will take place in your classroom after school. Explain why you are willing and able to participate in this study.
- When you leave school feeling great about the day, who do you call and what do you tell them?

The interview concluded with the assignment of the first task that was used to evoke stories in the next interview. This was the task-oriented prompt of leading me on a tour of the school and classroom.

First 90-minute interview. This 90-minute semi-structured interview began at a mutually agreed-upon time in the teacher's classroom and included the tour of the school and teaching spaces. This interview had three purposes. First, was to continue to get to know the participant and to begin to understand how she saw herself as a teacher. The second was to become familiar with the setting in which some of her success stories took place. The third was to assign the task for the second interview. Two prompts were used to stimulate the conversation:

- At a social event, you and your colleagues are having a fun and funny conversation about classroom mishaps. People start sharing stories that begin: “I will never forget that one time...” What do you contribute to the group?
- Are there some stories that you can tell to some people that you can't tell other people? Why is that the case?

The interview concluded with the assignment of the metaphor task that was used to evoke stories in the second interview.

Second 90-minute interview. The purposes of this interview were to begin capturing narratives related to success and struggles and to continue developing rapport. A 90-minute semi-structured and task-oriented interview took place in the participant's classroom after school. The following two prompts were used to evoke stories:

- Reverse roles with a parent of one of your students. If you (as the student's parent) were going to write a thank you letter to you (the student's teacher), what would it say?
- Back at the social event, the stories change from “I remember that one time...” to “this one kid...” Do you have a story about one particular student?

The task for this interview was to share stories evoked by considering dichotomous pairs of metaphors for success and struggle. The interview concluded with the assignment of the task that was used to evoke stories in the final interview.

Third 90-minute interview. The purposes of this final interview were to continue capturing narratives related to success and to gain deeper familiarity with the participant and the setting to inform the profile. A 90-minute semi-structured and task-oriented interview took place in the participant's classroom after school. Again, two prompts were used to initiate the conversation following the friendly greeting:

- Imagine that your principal invites you to present a workshop on the in-service days before school starts for next year's first-year teachers. The topic is to be something related to acclimation to the new environment based on your experiences. What would you include in the workshop? Are there any things you would like to include but hesitate for some reason?
- Back at the social event, somehow the conversation took a negative turn and everybody started complaining. Then, an upbeat young teacher reminded everybody that they should feel blessed that they even have a job in this economy and recommends that everyone should share what they are thankful for. What did you want to complain about and then what are you thankful about?

The task for this interview was to gain an understanding of the participant's teaching persona by considering fictional characters with which she may identify.

Analysis

The problem with analysis is situated in deeper, very contemporary, discussions on the question of *whose story is it?* Efforts towards trustworthiness were explicated earlier. In the end however, the researcher provides the analysis. This section describes the tools and methods employed to shape my analysis. The data from these interviews

were analyzed using traditional qualitative methods as well as through a lens informed by literary criticism. That is to say that as the data were interpreted in the form of stories, the analytical methods predisposed to story were used in conjunction with standard inductive procedures and iterative technique.

Interview transcripts were coded and traditional iterative and inductive qualitative analysis was conducted (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). First, I listened to each interview several times and took notes. Each interview was transcribed in its entirety by me. The first two interviews and half of the third were transcribed using voice recognition software and a technique called ghost transcription—that is, I listened to the interview in an ear bud and repeated the participant's and my statements into a microphone to create text. That software failed near the end of the transcription process requiring me to transcribe the last half of the third interview by manually keyboarding as I listened to the recording.

Iterative analysis began immediately following the interviews and continued until completion of the final draft. To facilitate the analysis, the transcriptions were formatted with line numbers. There were 903 lines of text. Continued re-reading and coding revealed ten stories and data in the two categories used to create the profiles. The line numbers were used to associate the narratives with the emerging categories.

Using the features of story provided another method or tool for analysis. The prompts and stems were used to evoke the stories. The features or elements of story were used to evoke the analysis. This study looked at the transition from preservice to

teaching using story as method. To look at this transition, narratives generated from interviews were used to collect conceptions and perceptions of one novice teacher. To get at an understanding of these conceptions and perceptions, stories were crafted from the narratives. The features of story provided a common schema for interpretation. Examples of how features of story can be used as an analytic or interpretive device are explicated below. Interpretation of the data gathered from the interviews revealed distinct patterns associated with these features of story: setting or context, character, tone, and theme.

As discussed earlier, this interpretation method provided exciting potential for using features of story as an analytical tool to yield patterns that assist in understanding the central question that guided this research. This analysis tool provided for the wide range of possible outcomes. It is the nature of story to invite multiple interpretations using features as a tool of analysis. “A story captures nuance, indeterminacy and inter-connectedness in ways that defy formalistic expression and expands the possibilities for interpretation and understanding” (Doyle & Carter, 2003, p. 2).

The goal of the analysis, as guided by the research questions, was to begin to understand what patterns emerged from one novice teacher’s stories. The nature of story provided a built-in framework for potential analysis. The nature of analysis is to break things into smaller parts and look at the relationships among the pieces. So this characteristic of story to provide a built-in framework for potential analysis was

comprised of the recognized elements or features of story (events, character, timeline, setting, tone, theme, etc.).

The central goal of this study was to capture the success stories of one novice teacher in order to more deeply understand the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. Carter (1993) described the alignment of the analytical method with the research questions for this study: “story is a way of knowing and thinking that is particularly suited to explicating the issues with which we deal” (p. 6). The issue this research addressed was the collection and interpretation of a novice teacher’s stories of success and the features of story provided a familiar analytical device.

This analytical method provided a form that connected the story of success presented here with what we understand about others’ stories and experiences (Hollingsworth, 1992; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The collecting, sharing, and interpreting of beginning teacher stories is an analytical method proximal to the very nature of how we understand. “Narrative is not only one of these modes of thinking and expression but also a structure for organizing knowledge” (Athanases & De Oliveira, 2008, p. 2). The storying of characters, events, timelines, settings, tone, and themes is how we understand.

Analyzing Stories by Considering the Features of Story

What are the essential ingredients of story? Doyle and Carter (2003) offered that the "practical knowledge teachers acquire from teaching arises from actions in situations-the essential ingredients of story" (p. 2). Literary analysis traditions have identified

many other ingredients. As indicated above, these ingredients could also be called features, or elements. They include plot, point-of-view, character, setting, theme, tone, mood, conflict, and more (Murfin & Ray, 2003). This section explains the use of these story features as a device for interpretation or heuristic. By their nature, stories provide a framework that helps organize and understand our environments and experiences. Stories have structural elements that allow a framework for understanding and a vehicle for communication. The use of these recognized features as an analytical tool provided a map to navigate the narratives. Interpretation in terms of these commonly recognized features connected narratives to each other and allowed for the recognition of rhythms. In this study these rhythms are called *patterns*. In other words, stories of success provided a vehicle for organizing consideration of many complex ideas including the important domain of study of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

Examples of using story features as an analytical tool. Features of story functioned as an analytical tool for this study. Events, characters, setting, and timeline, are among the features that have been associated with teacher education narrative inquiry research. Literary theorists might add theme, conflict, resolution and more (Murfin & Ray, 2003). Generally speaking, though, the bare skeleton of a story includes events, characters, setting and timeline (Carter, 1993). Below are examples of how these features have been used as an interpretive and analytical device to look at issues related to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

Event. Gudmundsdottir (1991) asserted her perspective on event as a feature: “If an event has no significance to something that happens later in the story it does not belong in the narrative” (p. 216). This proclamation shows some insight into the difficulty novices may have in storying success because their capacity to discern has not been developed to understand what elements of the story are relevant to the outcome. A metaphor often used to describe this is “she can’t see the forest for the trees.” Doyle and Carter (2003) described how story can help novice teachers begin to make sense of the plethora of new events experienced during induction:

... beginning teachers, as novices in teaching situations, lack the rich conceptual, i.e. narrative, frames that experienced teachers gain from repeated execution of teaching episodes in classroom situations. They lack experientially grounded categories for apprehending and interpreting classroom events, and yet cannot rely on more abstract disciplinary knowledge to make sense of everyday experiences. They are likely, therefore, to fall back on a cognitive strategy they have been using for most of their lives: they construct stories (p. 3).

In other words, a pattern that may emerge in regard to events as a feature of story is the capacity for discernment. The specific point of time that marks the transition from preservice teacher to teacher is when many of the concepts, models, and schemas novices use to understand teaching are formed through story or the construction of narratives. As these frames are in the process of being formed, each event contributes to the construction of a concept, model or schema rather than situate neatly into an established narrative. This pattern identified through analysis was a refrain from the findings from the expert-novice studies introduced in chapter two.

Character. A standard organizing device using features of story is to categorize around a character, or the role of a specific individual, that may emerge as a pattern. As

an example, this feature of story as an organizational tool is represented in this quote about one character, Jimmy: “One does not have to spend a long time in the teachers’ lounge to hear them swap stories about ‘what worked for me when I had Jimmy in class’” (Gudmundsdottir, 1991, p. 211).

There are a number of archetypal or typical characters that emerged from stories related to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher and specifically to stories of novice teacher success. These characters included the novice teacher herself, students, of course, coworkers, formal or informal mentors, administration and support staff, parents and teacher educators.

Timeline. Another example of using features of story to organize understanding is the organic timelines established in the rhythm of school (Clandinin, 1989). These are the weeks, grading units, and school years that are cyclical in nature for school and function as a natural timeline to frame stories. The outcome of this interpretive approach was reported in several of the cases reviewed in chapter two. The case of Leslie and Aaron (Hollingsworth, Teel, & Minarik, 1992) provided an example of the archetypal timeline showing the process of getting to success after overcoming struggle.

Very similarly, a pattern that emerged regarding timeline as a feature of story to understand the transition from preservice teacher to teacher was identified in the teacher development literature reviewed in chapter two. In archetypal stories timeline is great anticipation met by significant transition shock (Corcoran, 1981). "What happens

next..." involves each individual teacher's unique path to a point reflected on the continuum of the simplistic bifurcation outcome of success or failure.

Conclusion

This study used qualitative methods to learn about the transition from preservice teacher to teacher by identifying patterns from one novice teacher's success stories. Qualitative methods generally and story specifically recognize the very specific and situated nature of this understanding. Yet, are qualitative researchers overly modest about the potential of story to help understand questions about teacher education? Because this case is the single voice of a beginning teacher responding to tasks and structured prompts it could be considered dismissible and eludes generalization. However, a "counter intuitive secret that all good storytellers understand is that the more specific the story, the more universal the connections" (Simmons, 2001, p. 123). The deliberate capturing of narratives and explication of stories using features as analytical schema provide insight into the specific nature of novice teacher success, deepens understanding, and leads to more universal connections about the nature of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. The findings summarized in the next chapter reflect the richness with which the elements of story contributed insights and deepened understanding of the success stories of the central character in this study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter contains the results and findings of this study. An iterative analysis process was employed to make sense of the narrative data captured through interviews. The continual chunking, coding, sorting, and (re)organizing of meaningful phrases into categories yielded two profiles and 10 distinct stories. The profiles and stories are presented as distinct units comprised of vignettes and expository comments. The aim was to present interpretations that represented the perspectives and voice of the participant's persona.

The results are presented in the first two sections of this chapter. These are the profiles and stories generated from the interviews. Following the results are two sections reporting the findings of this study. These are patterns identified using features of story as an analytical frame and a composite section that considers specifically how the profiles, stories, and patterns inform a deeper and richer understanding of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

Profiles

In this section, two profiles are reported. These profiles provide context to facilitate deeper understanding of the stories that will follow. First, the participant, Ms. Dahlsim, is introduced. The second profile describes the school in which Ms. Dahlsim experienced her novice teacher success: Forestgreen High. Ms. Dahlsim and Forestgreen

High are pseudonyms and any identifying features are either broadly generalized (mid-sized Western city) or fictitious (pseudonyms for characters in her stories).

Ms. Dahlsim

This profile introduces Ms. Dahlsim to provide some context and backstory. The participant in this study was a female in her mid-twenties. She studied at a liberal arts college in New York and received her Master's degree in teaching at a major research university on the West Coast. She did not dream of being a teacher from childhood or go to college with the intention of entering the profession. The path that led her to education, however, strongly influences her work and how she views herself as a teacher.

I grew up in upstate New York, went to a regional SUNY for an English Lit. bachelor's degree after I did community college for 2 years. Initially I wanted to be in publishing in some capacity: copyediting, writing—I really like grammar and punctuation. I actively did not want to be a teacher. People would say “what are you going to school for?” and I'd say that I'm studying English and they'd ask “are you going to be a teacher?” No! No! I am not going to be a teacher! I resented that assumption.

Clearly, however, Ms. Dahlsim did become a teacher. She described what influenced her change of heart and the part-time job that became a gateway to the teaching profession and awakened her unexpected passion.

Getting into the publishing world proved difficult. My dreams of working in Rockefeller Center were not realized. I stumbled into a tutoring job working in an inner-city school that was in a very impoverished school district, really high poverty, higher crime rates than New York City, incredibly diverse, mostly minorities: African-American, Hispanic. Schools were being closed left and right because of NCLB [No Child Left Behind]. It was a middle and high school and I was in the seventh grade classroom. I ended up with the tutoring job just trying to

pay the bills after undergrad and I ended up in love with it. It was hard, the first couple months I had no idea what I was doing. I started out just trying to pay the bills and then I didn't even want to leave. I fell in love with it and decided I wanted to be a teacher. I don't even know how it happened.

Before her experience as a tutor, however, her apprenticeship of observation influenced the development of her teaching persona as well. She described her journey through school—a journey that ended one semester late as she was short of credits and did not graduate with her class.

I was a good student up through middle school, straight A's without really trying, doing anything a grown-up told me just because they said so. I couldn't even imagine being one of those people in class teachers were begging to turn in homework. But then in high school I started skipping classes and shirking my homework duties.

Ms. Dahlsim had reflected on this transformation and had a keen awareness of why she abandoned the role of perfect student as she transitioned into high school. She described the artificiality of schooling and how this synthetic approach to what goes on in classrooms influenced her alienation from the system but introduced her to being present and living in-the-moment.

I heard a lot of teachers and adults say things like “well, in the real world...” I got this idea that they were negating the experiences of students and the school environment without an acknowledgement that it really is a microcosm of the real world. I saw life as being this endless stream of responsibilities of elementary school, middle school, high school. Do a good job in high school so you can go to a good college, go to a good college so you can get a good job, get a good job so you can save money and then ultimately retire and then that's when life starts and you do all the things you've always wanted to do because you are always too busy doing all of these compulsory things. And it just seemed tedious and horrible and awful so I just kind of, not consciously, thought... I will do it now. And I did.

These two experiences, her disenfranchisement with the artificiality of schooling and falling in love with teaching while tutoring at an impoverished, inner-city school, shaped the formation of her teaching persona. Here is her perspective on this issue of the artificiality of schooling:

The whole idea of "well in the real world"... I have never said that. I have vowed to never say that to my students. And I hope to never say it. And if I do I hope to catch myself. Because it totally disregards their experiences as legitimate and as having an impact on their lives. And I won't do that. I don't want to say "what happens here is only important here" because it's not. I also hope then that my projects and lessons expand to the outside world, that they don't seem to be in-and-of-themselves, that they have greater application. I hope I show all students that there is a greater application.

Her concern for all students intimates her underlying ideology just as falling in love with teaching while working as a tutor at an impoverished school foreshadows Ms. Dahlsim's explicit social justice orientation. This is a distinct pattern that emerged in the stories below and bears mentioning in her profile. Ms. Dahlsim identified as a teacher with a deliberately social justice inclination. This orientation was nurtured and reinforced in her graduate program in teacher education.

The University's education program is strongly rooted in social justice. They're very much pushing the idea that we need to serve all students. We care very much about doing that and making sure our curriculum is very diverse and multicultural. You cannot say that you're for diversity and multiculturalism if your literature list is all white guys from 1800 and earlier. You cannot say that you are for diversity and for social justice if you teach out of a history book that has Christopher Columbus being an explorer instead of a genocidal maniac... kind of a thing. So they really push that home in all of the methods courses.

Her social justice orientation was not grandiose, however. It was fundamental: feed and nurture. She believes that one of the roles of school is providing students a safe

place to be. She cares about students and is concerned about their well-being. A feed-the-hungry narrative is a refrain that occurred in her novice teacher success stories—a distinct pattern. For example, the following vignette demonstrated this fundamental concern about the physical well-being of her students:

We offered free oatmeal in the morning. Anybody could go get it. It's in the attendance office. And I had students miss a few minutes of class to go get it. They ask, and I say yes, go get it because I know that if you are hungry you are not focusing on anything else.

Her social justice orientation is fundamental and it is deep-seated. She sees this orientation as an essential part of what it is to be a teacher. But she realizes that caring deeply about equity comes at an emotional cost. She described how some teachers become cynical and jaded:

On the one hand it's hard to blame them, because it's like how much can you do? Even if you devoted every second of every day for the entire year to this job you're not going to get every student to pass, or even care, you know? So it can be really defeating. So to try to save some of their sanity they say "I can't do it. I can't be held accountable. I can do what I do and that is it."

On the other hand, she was quite clear about her perspective on the matter. She perceives the role of the teacher as an advocate for equity. She described how her graduate program in teacher education reinforced this perspective in juxtaposition to how others might describe the role of the teacher:

It is because of my training at the University I know that it is part of the job. And working toward equity always has been part of the job. This is nothing new. Some teachers really love to teach so they end up glomming on to the students that want to be taught. Don't get me wrong I love to teach, I love being in front of the classroom and I like it when they are rapt with attention and I am educating them. But the major reason I love to teach is because I love the students. I think they are interesting. I love to watch them develop and if you don't love the

students then you are not going to care that they are hungry... It's not that you wouldn't care it is just that you don't look at that as your responsibility or it's outside of your job description. I would say that it *is* the job description.

Ms. Dahlsim had no intention of being a teacher. She fell in love with the role after working as a tutor at an underprivileged school and quickly found a career path with potential to express her nurturing demeanor and social justice attitude. She expressed satisfaction in her decision and does feel like she is in a role with the potential to make a difference. The stories presented below describe some of these little victories in the ongoing struggle toward social justice. Teaching at Forestgreen High School was a “good fit” for her. She saw the actual work of being a teacher as worthwhile and important—especially to students that needed extra support. She described in some detail what her actual work was like. Her days were busy, but she moved through them at a steady pace, maintained a strong student-centered orientation and stayed present or in-the-moment. She described her schedule:

I had two sections of English 11, two sections of English 10, one freshman focus which was kind of a glorified study hall and one learning lab which was credit recovery for students who needed to make up a credit quickly. So we put them in a room and had them do a lot of projects on computers so it was mostly proctoring and grading on my part.

In addition to the contact time with students during the day, Ms. Dahlsim also planned lessons and units, designed and implemented assessment strategies and worked to provide a safe learning environment. She engaged in other standard professional duties (IEPs, faculty meetings, paperwork, etc.), and, as an English teacher, she also stayed busy with the evening and weekend labor of reading and marking student papers. She identifies with a character that is similarly stretched from *Street Fighter*, the popular

video game. In the video game, this character has some internal conflict. Dahlsim is a pacifist and yoga-master that competes in fighting tournaments to make money for his village. It is this character, obviously, that inspired her pseudonym.

Dahlsim is this guy that has really rubbery limbs. One of his skills is that he can punch or kick or whatever from across the screen so his opponent can't quite get to him. The fighting component isn't really what I want to highlight but just, the idea of being stretched in one million directions at the same time. And you're over here with one arm trying to take care of the student that has this problem and then you have this one who has been absent all last week and you need to help get caught up on the work and can't find enough copies of the worksheet that you did the previous week. Meanwhile you are supposed to still be conducting class. And then you have an IEP meeting in 20 minutes and you don't have your stuff ready. It's not just standing in front of a classroom or grading papers or coming up with a lesson plan. You're in every facet of the students' lives. And always feeling like you're not doing enough.

While the demands of the job made her feel stretched, she maintained a healthy and positive teaching style. She did this deliberately to maintain rapport with her students. She described her style as being either laid back or matter-of-fact depending on the circumstance:

I like to be friendly and upbeat. I try to greet the classroom with a smile and a "good morning" or "good afternoon" or "hello, how was your weekend?" You know, that kind of the thing... I had one student say that she likes my class because I talk like a teenager. I don't know what that means exactly but I guess that I use a bit of slang—I use abbreviated profanities like, you know... like I've been known to say "freaking". I guess I just try to talk to students like they are people instead of like I'm the teacher and they are the student. And I'm pretty transparent about this with them, unless I can't. If it's a class where I can't be friendly and familiar with them, then I will pull in the reins and just be teacher lady and you can be students. I am laid back until they give me a reason not to be basically. And for the most part it works. We tend to get a good rapport going and they like me, and so they are respectful in class and behave as they should. If they have an off day I'll reign it in. They are cowed for the most part, and then I'm always willing to start over the next day.

The healthy relationships Ms. Dahlsim developed with her students are coupled with interesting and engaging pedagogy to create a positive learning environment. She showed great pride in the “cool” or “fresh” tasks, assignments, and projects she developed.

I really like my students’ illustrations. They were always on the wall depending on what we were reading. We had Atticus Finch and Scout up during *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Or I had them write an omitted scene from a book. My sophomores studied *Lord of the Flies* and had really great short stories. I had them do a portfolio for it. And one of the options for it was to rewrite the *Lord of the Flies* with an all-female cast. Those came out awesome. And we studied the book through a psychoanalytic lens, so another option was I had them write what they would do if they could give into their *id* for a day. They appreciated having a lot of options...they could write poems as part of it, so their portfolios were really impressive. I think the lowest grade on that was a C. Those were awesome.

Ms. Dahlsim’s pride in designing and implementing innovative tasks for her students extended back to her student teaching experience. She related the successful implantation of a unit using student-produced video to study literature that she created and taught during her preservice experience.

When I student taught at the school across town, we did a book-to-film unit. We did literature circles and each circle read a book that had a film translation or iteration. So they read the book as a group, watched the film and then they made their own film—either a deleted scene or something that was in the book but wasn't in the film. Or something that they did in the film that they didn't like how they did it, or just a reimagining of it, a reinterpretation. And those were awesome also.

In regard to her relationships with students and her strength in the methodological aspects of teaching Ms. Dahlsim felt confident, well-prepared, and successful. Ms. Dahlsim was significantly less confident, however, in some of the other aspects of the teaching profession.

I am still really confused about all the bureaucratic stuff. I still feel totally lost at staff meetings. Completely lost. Don't know anything that is going on. I never talk. There are really three or four people who are the regular talkers. It's not unlike the classroom. I don't know if they assume that I know, or, maybe I kind of got lost in the shuffle because I was hired on a month and half into the school year. Or if I'm supposed to go ask, which I do, but, I feel like the little sister tugging on the big brothers coat: "excuse me, what does this mean". Of course it's a paradox: I'm not knowledgeable about it and so I'm afraid of looking like I am unprofessional by asking about it, which is why I continue to not know. It's like the union stuff, I still don't understand the contract book. I don't even know how to read my paycheck. For the first couple months I'd ask somebody what does this mean, who do I talk to about this? There is so much... trying to learn all the names of all my coworkers. When we did forecasting—which is when students had to pick which classes they want for next year—I didn't know how to do that. It's like during preservice I had no idea how much I didn't know. I still feel like I'm never going to get caught up in that.

These feelings of confusion caught Ms. Dahlsim a bit off guard. She felt prepared to teach and felt successful in regard to her pedagogy. She attributed this capacity and efficacy to her pre-service experiences, particularly her graduate program in teacher education. She offered some perspective on how she may have been more prepared.

I don't know how I could've been prepared for all the different parts of the job in preservice. But maybe a little heads up of "also, in addition to knowing what to do in your classroom, you're going to have to... (laughs) figure out how to do all these other things that you didn't ever anticipate and they are going to take you a long freaking time".

Overall though, the participant in the study clearly felt that her first year of teaching was a success. She felt competent at doing what she considers the most important part of the job—being student-centered, nurturing or caring. Ms. Dahlsim sums up her general orientation toward teaching with a metaphor from her childhood.

I don't want to sound glib but I just love to teach. My family used to play a lot of Rummy games. And who ever would get the *twos* would always say I'm giving the *twos* a home. They are the ones that no one wanted because they were the lowest, even though they're all worth the same points as the rest of the numbered cards, it was just kind of the idea of the *twos*... So my mom and I both used to say they are giving the *twos* a home. I feel that way about being a teacher too. Because I felt like a *two*, so to speak, when I was in high school, so I just really want to make sure that students that feel alienated or uncomfortable or are disinterested or feel unsafe can find a place to go or find something that resonates with them while they are at school.

This beneficence she recognizes in who she is as a teacher, however, surprises her. She described her developing teacher persona as inconsistent with her way of thinking of herself outside of school.

I don't have any idea where it comes from, because I do not have anywhere near the level of patience in the rest of my life that I do when I am with the students, and I don't know why. I really am a very grumpy person actually... quite cantankerous. But not as a teacher, maybe that's why I like it so much is because it brings up the side of me that is maybe a little bit more the kind of person that I would like to be.

Sadly, while Ms. Dahlsim seems to have found her calling and had many great successes as a novice, her future as a teacher is uncertain. Forestgreen High School was going through significant financial turmoil when these interviews were conducted.

The district has a \$10 million deficit this coming year. They're trying to bridge the gap and we found 7 million so far. But they have already rified, which is "reduction in force", pink-slipped basically, all probationary teachers. Also, second year teachers are not going to be asked back. So if any positions open up with the hope of over-enrollment for next school year I will have to go back through the application and interview process. It's nerve-wracking. I cannot think that too much. But, yeah, it's incredibly stressful. It's very stressful that first and second-year teachers were alerted that they won't be here next year necessarily. But, I am remaining hopeful. My department chair and the upper administration are doing everything they can to keep me. I will be in a different role though.

But, right now, perhaps it is a little reckless on my part, I am counting on being back next year.

Forestgreen High School

Forestgreen High is one of several large, public high schools in a mid-sized metropolitan area in the western United States. The school would be considered urban, poor, and diverse. The well-maintained, but aging, campus sits tightly on two blocks in a neighborhood known for its inexpensive housing and strip clubs. The school and the neighborhood have a bit of a reputation, but Ms. Dahlsim sees it differently. She juxtaposed the judgmental attitude about the school that some members of the community may have to her perspective:

When I meet new people at a party, for example, and they ask what I do, I always say "I am an English teacher at Forestgreen High School!" And I always say it with a big smile on my face. It's not infrequent that they'll say, "Oh, Forestgreen High School..." implying an I'm-sorry-about-that tone. "How's that working out for you?" they ask with this knowing look... "that's a tough school." And I smile back and I say "it's awesome". That's pretty much the extent of it.

The diversity of the school is typical of many Western cities with a significant population that identifies as Latino or Latina. The principal identifies as Latina and offers her welcome comments on the school website in both English and Spanish. Ms. Dahlsim continually praised the administration for their equity work. The Spanish welcome is one demonstration of the deliberate efforts made toward inclusion.

Forestgreen is a comprehensive, four-year high school with a full program of student activities and afterschool programs. Murals created by student artists adorn the breezeways in the open-concept campus that consists of several separate buildings. The

athletics programs represent Forestgreen well in the large-school division although surely some suburban teams might not enjoy coming into the neighborhood for competitions after dark. The bands, choirs, dance, and student theater are reportedly all supported and thriving. Graduation rates are about the national average and Ms. Dahlsim described that the academic program offers both academic and vocational curricula:

Forestgreen is in a pretty blue collar part of the city. Lots of people work in unskilled jobs in the local industry. It's just kinda the culture. Forestgreen High is really fantastic in that it acknowledges that college is not for everyone. And it does not do it in a condescending way. It does not exalt college or careers that require college. They equally value the vocational trades as well. And it recognizes that these are legitimate and respectable professions, and if that's what you want to do, that is awesome, and we will give you the tools to go in that direction.

According to Ms. Dahsim, the diverse student body seem happy and the environment feels friendly and safe. She describes this affective quality like this:

For the most part everyone gets along with everyone else. It's like they're genuinely interested to find out someone's ethnic background. They talk about where their grandmothers are from. I don't see a lot of racial tension. There is... I mean I have had a couple of instances of racial or ethnic ignorance but I don't think that is unique to any one school or the result of one demographic necessarily.

The strong administration at Forestgreen may be influential in nurturing this healthy climate. Ms. Dahlsim described the administration as one of the best things about the entire school:

The administration is great. The administration is a new team: we have our main principal and two assistants. They have been together for 3 years. They are all young and they have really strong goals for the school. So I really love that they're like "what are your ideas? Tell them to me." They want new ideas. They

want new energy. They want something that's not the norm because they know they have tried that and it doesn't work with the kids we have here. It's been failing them. They are saying our education system is broken. How can we fix it and let's be proactive about it. I love that we are encouraged to come up with things and share them with our peers.

Although while the administration is innovative and supportive and the students seem happy, like many places, not every member of the faculty is a role model for demonstrating a positive attitude:

We have a pretty close student body here. There are not very many cliques, people are pretty friendly. Students are welcoming with each other, not to say that they are bully free, or harassment free or anything like that, but they interact really well with each other. But there definitely is some angst among the faculty and staff—just standardized test scores, student behavior, the budget cuts, that kind of stuff. I think it is foolish to not be concerned about it but I don't think that despairing about it, especially at the lunch table, is going to help.

Because Ms. Dahlsim was hired after school started due to over-enrollment, she did not have her own classroom for the first semester. For the second semester, she did get her own room, but it was in a part of the school clearly separated from the rest of the English department—a small suite in the vocational wing that included an impressive music studio with six sophisticated stations and offices for the afterschool programs. In the suite next door, computer-assisted drafting was taught. Beyond that was a very tidy autoshop. The suites opened up to a minimally landscaped macadam courtyard.

Sophomores' renderings of the characters from *To Kill a Mockingbird* in colored pencil decorate the cinderblock walls in her classroom. Thirty-five small student desks are loosely arranged in rows toward the front of the room and four large, built-in lab stations and a few tall chairs are in the back near the entrance. Stacks of poster board are

scattered on the lab tables—evidence of a student work group creating storyboards for a rewrite of *Lord of the Flies* with an all-female cast.

Ms. Dahlsim's Stories

These stories were crafted by the researcher from the narratives provided by the interview questions designed to deliberately capture authentic stories. These stories attempt to show how Ms. Dahlsim understood and talked about success as a novice teacher. The narratives were transcribed verbatim into text and were coded, clustered, and rearranged to form distinct stories. Initial coding and clustering efforts with the transcripts yielded seven potential stories. Deeper in the iterative process, 12 potential stories were identified. In the final stages of iterative analysis, 10 stories were identified that expressed a range of her experiences and perspectives with minimal redundancy.

The stories were written to honor what I perceived was her intended meaning. The words in the vignettes are hers—only modified to improve readability by adjusting tense or pronoun agreement, for example. The stories are presented as vignettes in Ms. Dahlsim's voice, framed by my expository comments. The vignettes represent Ms. Dahlsim's narratives in authentic voice. That is to say, these stories attempt to show how she understood and talked about success as a novice teacher in everyday language.

The stories exist as distinct, stand-alone units. In other words, each was crafted in such a way that it could be understood as an example of a novice teacher success story independent of the other stories. To be sure, however, the profiles and stories build upon each other to form a broader understanding of this novice teacher's success. Like the

profiles, the stories are presented as a combination of vignettes in the teacher's voice and expository commentary. The order of the stories reveals an increasingly nuanced insight into Ms. Dahlsim's teaching persona. The first stories are of successes very specific to the practical work of teaching, e.g.: planning and implementing instructional tasks. As the stories unfold, they become less about methodological or pedagogical success specifically, and more about Ms. Dahlsim's philosophies and world-views toward students, teaching, schools and colleagues. The penultimate story is the only one not specifically related to classroom instruction in some way. This story, *Avoided Advocacy*, revealed clearly a pattern in her stories that she identified as a teacher in the struggle for social justice. This set of 10 stories concludes with Ms. Dahlsim's modest description of her impact on a certain type of student.

Story 1: Standardized Differentiation

This story is represented in a vignette that describes Ms. Dahlsim's experience of teaching a remedial English course. Forestgreen High School does not use the word remedial—the course bears the same title as every other section: English 11. However, the students in this section had not passed the state reading test, and the focus of this sheltered class was to assist these students in meeting the standard. Despite the identical appearance to the other English classes offered at this grade level, the administration was transparent and overt regarding the expectations for Ms. Dahlsim and this group of tracked students: pass the test.

I was assigned another English 11 class for the second semester—third period. It's a class that was capped at 25, which is nice. With the third period English 11

class, the main goal for the entire semester was to get them to pass the state reading test. This group of students was all within five or six points of meeting the state requirements. These kids were within striking distance. I focused more on reading strategies that would increase comprehension at all levels, from literal to evaluative.

We didn't deviate much from my other English 11 class in terms of curriculum. We went a little more slowly and did more test prep around the test-taking time. Yeah, but it was hard for me when I was up in front of them on the first day of class, explaining they were here for this reason. I was like emphatic. This does not mean you're stupid, it does not mean you can't read, it doesn't mean you're bad readers; all it means is that you can't show the state that you know what they think you should know. They think you should be able to show this, this, and this. And these kids really seemed to take this to heart: they were my most motivated class. They had the highest average of all my classes. They had the best attendance of all my classes. Many of these students speak English as a second language, which is a barrier in-and-of-itself. Sure, their reading skills varied like any class would. Those who really struggled were just a handful, probably no more than a typical class.

When we took the reading test, of the 25 kids, 13 of them met. So like 64% of them met. They worked really hard. The rest had another chance to take it and only one more passed on the retry. Then integrating those that still needed to pass and the other students was very difficult.

Story 2: A Woman Without Her Man is Nothing

The story represented in the vignette below demonstrates how a very small event (the creation and use of a simple brainteaser used to teach vocabulary as an extra-credit assignment) was perceived as an important success to Ms. Dahlsim.

This one time, late in the spring, I was so happy about how *into it* my students were. Other teachers saw me smiling like an idiot and I really felt like telling someone, but I never felt quite comfortable talking with my colleagues in the English Department. Sometimes I still feel kind of like a naïve kid when it comes to them. I was warned about it in the education program but I underestimated how formidable it is... The jaded, cynical, they are like "I've-been teaching for years...it's cute that you are excited about that, but just wait". They've always

got this waiting-for-the-other-shoe-to-drop perspective. And I don't want them to steal my thunder or dampen my spirits. So, I told a couple of my friends from my graduate program and talked too excitedly about it to my boyfriend.

I did this activity and it went better than I thought it was going to go. So, I gave a little extra credit assignment. We were learning about punctuation. I put this sentence on the board. You may be familiar with it: *A woman without her man is nothing*. The object is to punctuate it differently without changing any of the words, or the order of the words, and it means the opposite of what it means with the original punctuation. I told them if they came to the next class with the right answer, they would get extra credit. The kids were just into it, this brainteaser, and I got so many submissions. Usually for extra credit, only the kids who already have the game of school figured out complete the assignment. That's fine. It's great that they do it. But, I had kids who were in desperate need of those extra points.

And with this funny little activity, I engaged them all. This time, everyone was talking about it. One simple sentence became so complex because it addressed the kids' interest...relationships. When their curiosity was ignited, so was their desire to understand the significance of a difficult-to-teach subject—punctuation. I got so many submissions; it was great. Those kinds of things, getting them buying into what we are doing, is the kind of thing I find very satisfying.

Story 3: The Rap Project

This story recounts the successful development and implementation of a three-week unit in which Ms. Dahlsim taught the literary elements associated with poetry by having students write and record rap songs.

When we finished our rap unit in my fourth and seven period English 10 classes we had our listening party. It is important to celebrate! I made bagels and we had juice... can't get good bagels on the West Coast. I'm from New York, so... Anyway, we listened to all their songs and it was a lot of fun. It was really exciting. The students who are either infrequent or late-work-turner-inners or those with chronic absenteeism or tardies... these students were among the first ones done with this project. They really dove into it. Or, if they were not one of the first ones done it's because it was a labor of love every day after school. During the period they were just really fine-tuning their work. That was just awesome to have the students who are usually checked out, usually apathetic, or sometimes downright contentious about being in school... it was exciting to have

them really be into something. Just watching them in the studio with their headphones on, you know playing on the computer, adjusting music, writing new lyrics down in the notebook, they looked like little professionals. I don't even think they knew that they were working hard at what they were doing.

We used the recording studio that belongs to the after-school program next door to professionally record the raps, and they sounded awesome. I required as part of the project that they have certain literary devices in their raps. You know like they would have two instances of alliteration, a metaphor, a simile, personification, etc. One group just made their whole rap about literary elements, and they personified the literary elements:

hey what's up, my name's alliteration
 blastin' my sic vocab across the nation
 I'm about some letters like sea shell shore
 but you gotta have two like Mr. metaphor

I loved it. Another group wrote their lyrics about Pokémon, about all the different Pokémon characters. When they were doing their music they actually sampled the music from the Game Boy Pokémon game. They used the sound of the Game Boy turning on and off for the beginning and end of their songs, just really very clever stuff. I think they impressed themselves too. They really surprised themselves.

Miss Dahlsim categorized this as a success because students were engaged, learning the content that she wanted them to learn about literary elements. Furthermore, students who do not usually participate or show excitement about their work produced some of their best personal work which was often the highest quality work in the class. She was aware, however, that not all colleagues or administrators would review this unit or lesson and share her assessment that it was successful.

I think that criticism of the unit might come from certain teachers because the fact that the two and half weeks that we spent writing the raps and recording the music, doing them in the studio, could have been spent, you know, reading great classic poetry of some kind or another or learning how to deconstruct a poem for meaning. But, Keats just isn't relevant to a 16-year-old. Pick generic classic poet

number 42, they won't remember the poet's name, they won't remember the poem, they won't remember the literary elements from the poem because it's a passive activity. But the learning through doing, even if they don't like rap or hip-hop, they have all heard it; they hear it all the time on the radio, they know that their peers are listening to it, they see it on TV, etc. etc. They can name probably a million more rap artists than they could classical poets, so to do something that is current, that is relevant today and relates to poetry will open that door. Soon, the students *can* access the more formal disciplines because I send the message: oh, if you really like hip-hop, then you might like these other kinds of poetry...spoken word, you know, would be a very logical place to go. Another thing I'd say to those teachers who are critical is that these students didn't just identify the definition of alliteration, they didn't just label the devices...they wrote their own. This level of creation placed these kids working at the highest level of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Story 4: Courageous Conversations

Ms. Dahlsim perceived success in her ability to confidently lead difficult class discussions about sensitive issues such as race and appropriate language. She considered this a skill or technique that she acquired in her graduate program in teacher education. This vignette portrays the responsibility Ms. Dahlsim accepted as an educator to set the parameters of appropriate behavior and language in her classroom while studying parts of the curriculum that might be difficult or uncomfortable for some people.

One example of how the program was rooted in social justice was that we learned how to have difficult conversations with the class. If we are reading a book that has racial slurs in it, or difficult language, or scenes of assault or sexual abuse, we need to be able to study the book and talk about the book while being respectful to each other and recognize that we are in school. Together we learn how to sensitively handle the material. This training has been extremely helpful, learning how to have that class discussion as part of building background for the book but also teaching more about living in a diverse community and being respectful overall.

I don't dread it anymore. Rather, it is a vital aspect of the unit, a necessary lesson that establishes purpose and strengthens community, simultaneously. I can tell that it's a little uncomfortable for some of the students. But I'm used to it, and I know exactly where my boundaries are, about levels of appropriateness in discussing these sensitive topics—what to do with the discussion gets too heated, how to defuse it, those kinds of things. I have heard stories and observed teachers and student teachers get really, really engulfed by either being embarrassed, overwhelmed or both from these heated topics. And there's just no room for that.

Story 5: I See Him

Throughout the interviews, Ms. Dahlsim never used pejorative terms to describe her students, the community, or the school. She used the words impoverished and diverse. She did not use the words disadvantaged, under-privileged, or ghetto. This vignette represents how she does not allow labels to pre-form her perspectives. Further, this story reveals how Ms. Dahlsim was dedicated to improving the situations she could control, and for which she could take responsibility...primarily in the microcosmic domain of her classroom.

Some people might look at a student and say, “Oh, his parent is on drugs or addicted to drugs...” like that is the answer. This is the end of the line for the student, they are a lost cause, that is why the student behaves this way. It feels like many teachers simply accept this futility, you know. Like what can you do for this kid? They were broken before we got them. Whereas, I think, sure that is a piece of information in the puzzle that can now help me know that student. Student A had a difficult upbringing, you know, lives with a parent who is an addict. That is going to affect their development and the way they participate in school and the way they view school. But it's not a be-all and all-definitive answer to whether or not they will achieve. Challenges like drug addiction or neglectful parents, those things exist everywhere. Those are going to exist in the whitest, oldest, wealthiest communities as well as the underprivileged ones. It's just they are better hidden. Because it is not OK for rich white people to have those problems, but it is OK for minorities to have those problems.

Ms. Dahlsim shared an example of why it is really important not to use these pejorative judgmental terms:

Yeah, I had a student who is in a special program for struggling teens—kids who are either runaways, drug addicts, or are in trouble with the law. He had made several comments over the semester alluding to the fact that he's stupid and that he is going to end up addicted to drugs and/or in prison. These comments didn't start until a couple weeks into the semester. Up until then he had been a very intelligent contributor, active in class discussions. He read the books, he knew them, he comprehended quite well. And he is really very sweet. Then he began dropping these little comments. At first I didn't think much of them because it was so subtle and it was not that self-deprecating on his part. But it kind of escalated. And once I noticed it, I pulled him aside and asked him, "What are you thinking of yourself?" or "What do you think about your future?" I was always sure to have a discussion about it and let him know all the talents that I thought I saw in him, that he does not have a prescribed road to go down. I wanted him to know that he doesn't have to believe that whatever's happened in the past, or whatever other people tell him about his future, neither of those things have to count against him. I made a point to really let him know that I see him when he is in class. I made small comments like, "Hey, nice shirt," or "How was your weekend?" or "Awesome job!" on whatever assignment he turned in. And he responded really well to it.

He met me half-way too. Earlier in the year he was writing in his journal about the government, not trusting the government. He feels they are spying on everybody and stuff. I replied by saying, "did you read the book *1984* ever?" He said he hadn't and said that he was really interested in it so I lent it to him. He immediately began reading and we would talk about the chapters he read each night.

I felt innately compelled to just make that connection with him, to help him learn how to recognize his talents and to not be a self-fulfilling prophecy, I don't know where he was getting these ideas from, but it seemed like he had really internalized them to a point where he just wasn't expecting to graduate or stay out of prison. It is awesome to see how he turned it around. I mean he turned in his work, he read an independent reading book, his negative self-talk seemed to have stopped. When I made comments on his writing, giving him positive feedback, I noticed that his written responses got longer, so maybe he felt more confident in

that or wanted to foster that talent of his a little bit more. This gave us the next step, something for me to keep my eye out for...to move further away from what others had told him and towards what he creates for himself.

Story 6: Every Day is a New Day

In this story, Ms. Dahlsim reflected on teaching the life skills necessary for her students to navigate the world of school and beyond. She exemplified this by having an intimate knowledge of herself as a person and as a teacher. The content she teaches may be Shakespeare or expository essay writing, but the essential skills that served these students showed up in the form of success when frustration was met with perseverance.

I wouldn't say that I am without faults or that my teaching style is beyond reproach, or anything like that. I guess I see my teaching style as something that has to change and evolve based on each individual class climate and atmosphere. I know what kind of teacher I would like to be and how I started out, but the way that I interact with the students changes quite a bit depending on what I know about their background. Am I motherly and encouraging and a set of ears to let them talk to? Or am I the buddy who is casual and relaxed and laid back? Or, obviously, I am one way when I am in the front of the room, addressing the entire class. I can't constantly address each of those nuances, but through making individual contacts, I show students they are able to connect with me on both levels. I try to communicate that I perceive their need to have a dependable and caring adult, and I try to especially foster these relationships with the students that I know have more struggles in their home life or other places.

What is my ultimate mission? It is not to get someone ready for college, necessarily. It is not even to get them to have a high school degree, but it is to let them know that their background doesn't define them. It is to expose them to things they might be interested in, to give them a safe place to go, where they have people who they can confide in, where they can get something healthy to eat, where they can be safe for 6 or 7 hours a day, and I guess really feel good about themselves. I know that sounds really rainbow and sparkles and touchy-feely, but if you don't feel good about yourself, if you don't think you have any self-worth,

then things like drugs, crime, and working in an unfulfilling job are going to seem OK because you have given up on yourself.

So, it's like, every day is a new day...start over! I yelled at you yesterday, I kicked you out of class, I wrote you a referral, but today I am going to greet you with a smile and tell you I am glad that you are here. When I assign a paper or activity, I don't send the message, "If you don't do this, you are going to fail the class and not graduate," rather, I want to know, "Why are we not doing this today? How 'bout you do it, so I can give you some points? I will be happy, you will be happy." It adds up to little victories, not just for me but for them. This way, when they find themselves in some kind of an insurmountable morass, they can have these little bright spots to bulldoze them into the next positive step.

For example, I had a student who was working on his rap. He is very shy, and he has a medical condition that makes him kind of self-conscious and it also affects his motivation and his self-confidence. He doesn't participate in assignments. He really didn't want to do this assignment because it is a rap. It's embarrassing I guess... so I couldn't get him to even start writing the lyrics. He had this big 50-point project in front of him, and he knew that at the end of it he was going to have to rap, and he didn't want to do that so he couldn't even get himself to start on it. So I said, it's been two days and you have done nothing on it in class so far; what can we do to get you started on this? Well, I don't know, I don't care, I am not doing it, he told me this every day. I am not doing it. I said OK why don't you brainstorm some topics that you could write about, things you like to do. He came up with a couple topics. Getting him to write something down was a big success. So tomorrow before you come in I want you to have at least four lines of your rap. I am not going to do it, NOT going to do it. And yet, he came in the next day and he had like 12 lines written.

He ended up basically every day like this, arms crossed...I am not going to do it, I am not going to do it. I had to take the seven minutes to sit down with him and say, what are you having difficulty with? What can we do? Together, we wrote those four words and then boom he could go from there. Although I got frustrated, I didn't tell him that I was frustrated. I might have some non-verbal cues that I am frustrated. Especially when I think, hooray he did it, and now he is on a roll, he can keep going. Then I think, well... OK, he did this project, so for the next one he will be ready to go, then nope. We'd have to start over from scratch.

But despite how labor intensive it was, it worked. He started turning in his work. He had an F for the first four or five weeks of the class. At the nine week mark he had a C. I think he finished with a B or C... so yeah, it worked.

Story 7: Marijuana

The dichotomous pairs metaphors chart was used to elicit recollections about stories of both success and struggle. Ms. Dahlsim's insight into struggle was quite interesting:

I guess it's hard to think of struggles because they are all worded in such a way that it sounds like one particular instance. Like strikeout or I guess all of them, wiffed, red light, fall on your face, it all sounds like one instance. Really I think a lot of the struggles for teachers are not individualized. It's something you can kind of group into broader things. Like the poverty, the school climate, the anti-intellectualism, and the culture and... it's not one thing. So, obviously struggles can be a bigger issue with some certain students that have more obstacles facing them.

Ms. Dahlsim articulated in some detail her perspective that struggles were more like the background or setting and success is like an event. The way Ms. Dahlsim used metaphor to talk about success was unexpected and interesting. Her figurative language helped draw out this distinction in her perspectives on struggles and success.

I don't know... I guess I don't know how to word this, but I would say it's like a pebble in your shoe... not in the way that a pebble in your shoe is annoying but rather that it's something that can be really small but very significant. The small successes are far more numerous than the large ones and you need to focus on each small success as much as you possibly can. Otherwise it is really easy to get jaded and cynical and exhausted and just feel like you're not accomplishing anything.

Ms. Dahlsim offered a story that included struggles associated with life at home as a backdrop for a successful classroom event. What's going on at home could be part

of the broader understanding of struggle and an event in the classroom could be seen as a success.

One of my more reluctant students had to be really motivated to write anything. So, I gave her a pep talk, “alright, let’s just write down all of your ideas and not filter them at all”. Finally she gets something down and I go take a look. She wrote this line: “I am sitting with my momma smoking marijuana”. After two days of thinking about it, this is the line that she wanted. Yeah. But, I wanted to keep her writing and not just jump on her. So I said, you can’t have that, it’s a school thing, you just can’t have that language. And she said, well that’s what I want and she wants to argue with me and the other students in her group. So we compromise. I went back and said how about “I am sitting with my momma *not* smoking marijuana”? Now with this one little word in here this line that was not school appropriate was now school appropriate, good positive message, and it makes the whole rest of your rap work, so we got over that hurdle, and they had their lyrics down...

Story 8: No Phone

In this vignette, Ms. Dahlsim articulated the frustrations created by a system ill-equipped to deal with the consequences that develop for those with fewer resources in regard to such fundamental issues as communication. This specific case referred to class, and how financial hardship directly correlated to student achievement.

I can see why some teachers get jaded. The struggles are more universal than a single instance, a single class, a single student. Whereas the successes I conceive are more individualized, unique components. Maybe for that reason, the struggles are more ubiquitous and all-encompassing, formidable even. Each success is great, but can easily get lost in the shadow of the overall struggles faced by the community

In this city, if you have to care about every person who is going hungry, or who is poor or who can’t make it to school on time because they don’t have an alarm clock, whatever the case might be, you soon become overwhelmed. Close to 70%

of your students are dealing with issues like these. How are you going to have enough empathy or compassion for that many people?

Ms. Dahlsim provided a story to further explain what she means:

I had kids who work after school all day just to help pay for the family bills. They can't stay after school for extra help with the tutoring programs that we offer because they are taking care of their siblings, because mom or dad work a second shift in the afternoon or any evening. These kids are dealing with the issues that arise from the struggle to survive, and that has to take precedence over their education. If they can eke out a C or a D, then hooray! If not, it's kind of secondary as far as importance goes in their reality.

For example, I had this one kid...he didn't have a phone. His attendance was awful, or spotty, although he is a very bright kid. It's like pulling teeth to get him to turn any work in. Last semester, I contacted his mom who was very receptive, and really helped to keep him on track; I think he pulled off a C in my class. And then Spring semester his phone was disconnected, the cell phone that is on file was disconnected, and I'm guessing their internet got turned off because e-mails went unreturned. So I had absolutely no way of getting in touch with his parents. I knew that counseling sent a letter home but that was unreliable, because often kids see something from school in the mailbox and they intercept it. In a perfect world, kids like him need a team of adults working with, and for him. And it just makes me frustrated that these are the kids who get the exact opposite, who are limited in human resources because of the limitations of their socioeconomic status.

Story 9: Avoided Advocacy

This vignette is significant because of the conflict that existed between Ms. Dahlsim's novice teacher position and the passion that so often accompanies the first-year teacher perspective. Her experience exemplified the pervasive irony facing novice teachers as they find themselves equipped with a cultural competency fostered in their teacher education program, but lacking the power to create and sustain a lens of equity, due to the often oppressive professional hierarchy prominent in the schools.

If I was not a first-year teacher—and I still think about this—I should have spoken up regardless. Like the Dahlsim character from *Street Fighter*, I feel like fighting sometimes. Any kind of discrimination, in any form, rattles my cage.

We had a student enroll in school, a transfer student, and he's... he's openly gay. Anyway, he is the only student at FHS that I know of who has come out. And he dresses pretty alternatively. He will wear makeup and have nail polish and jewelry and stuff so he's hard to miss. He had been facing a lot of discrimination after he'd only been here a week and was being seriously harassed. And so he and a couple other members of the GSA which is the Gay Straight Alliance came to the faculty meeting and talked to us about the situation. These brave kids offered up some strategies for dealing with the harassment and discussed how important it is to them as students for teachers (the adults in the building with power) to speak up when we see this detrimental behavior. You know, identifying and addressing any homophobic slurs, pejorative terms, then they reviewed the appropriate way to respond and all that kind of stuff.

Then the lady who runs the GSA said the most surprising thing. She said, “I know that there's some of you (teachers) who don't agree with the lifestyle, and to those of you I would say, think about all the kids who are being called "gay" or "faggot" who are actually straight.” She actually said this. That is the stance that she took. This showed me that she was still more concerned about protecting the kids who had more power in the dominant culture of our school, rather than advocating for the oppressed—in this case GLBTQ kids.

I just wanted to stand up, and I still think about it all the time and I'm angry that I did not, and say, “If you have a problem with that lifestyle, if you are not committed to providing a safe and inclusive atmosphere in your classroom and in your school and in your community for students of all varieties, then you are not doing your job. You do not belong here. I don't know why you are here. Sorry, if you have a problem with working to ensure all kids feel safe and respected, this is not the place for you.”

Yeah, that kind of thing definitely happens. But then again, I'm a first-year teacher, gun shy, and I don't want to make waves. I am embarrassed that I let that go by unchallenged. But also, I'm a little sad and surprised because I would not have thought that this closed mind-set existed at our school, especially with this teacher. But apparently, the opinion is well-known enough that she had to make that kind of caveat. Who thinks like that? That attitude is really horrible.

Story 10: Lasting Impact

Another part of the overarching background of struggle that Ms. Dahlsim described is what she perceives as a culture of anti-intellectualism. This way of looking

at the context of struggle that novice teachers face is distinct, at least in large part, from socioeconomic status and equity issues.

It's more of a culture in the country as a whole than any race/class/socioeconomic thing. It's just this growing... it's kind of like the get rich quick scheme has become the new American dream. Instant gratification, etc., etc. Like just the rise of the fundamentalists. You don't need to question the Bible. You take it literally. You don't question it because that makes you a nonbeliever or faithless and that's getting pushed and it's everywhere. Don't question things, don't ask questions. The president says this so it must be right unless he is the wrong color of course. The people in authority say this...do not question it because there are troops that are putting their lives on the line. And I think that "don't question authority" is filtering down to don't question anything, and don't pursue anything intellectually...

So for the students that appear to have school all figured out... it is hard to tell if they are interested or curious. I guess with those students it's less obvious, they're going to turn in their work regardless so that's not a very good measuring stick. And not always but often they tend to be more quiet and don't let you know what's going on in their lives as often, or if they do they are pretty cut and dried about it. I don't think that they feel the need to reach out as much whether they're acting out or just looking for a friendly face or hello or something like that. But for those students, what I consider a success is harder to recognize. With them I usually don't hear about it until after the fact—just having them find my class interesting is success. Because they are so driven to succeed, to do well, to perform anyway that they're going to be pushing themselves to pay attention, to take notes, do the assignments, but for them to do that and enjoy it is a success for me. For those type of students I didn't really notice it until semester changed the classes changed—I saw a student in the hall and they say "oh Miss Dahlsim, I really miss your class and blah blah blah is so boring" or "I loved reading that book." You know, at the time I didn't hear anything about it but after the fact I did.

Patterns

The previous two sections address the first research question by reporting the results of this study in the form of two profiles and 10 stories. This section and the composite section to follow report what can be found in these profiles and stories to

address the second and third research questions. The present section discusses the stories in sum using features or elements of story as an analytical frame to address the second research question. Following a report of the patterns that were found is a composite section addressing the third research question. This section is organized in four major sections based on the patterns that emerged through iterative analysis relative to features or elements of story. The four sub-sections are setting, character, tone and theme.

Patterns Related to Setting in Ms. Dahlsim's Stories

Two patterns were revealed through iterative analysis using features of story as a frame in regard to setting. The first is quite obvious—the place where her stories take place is her school. Insight into her perspectives on the school setting is reported as the first pattern. The second pattern that emerges in her story in regard to setting is less obvious and demonstrates Ms. Dahlsim's deep reflective nature. She articulates throughout her stories an understanding of struggle as the setting in which her success stories occur. Elaboration on these two patterns follows.

Clearly, the setting for these stories is her school and classroom. Her stories were set in an urban, very diverse, large high school in the poorest part of a mid-sized city. The pejorative, socially-constructed, perceived “low-income, urban, highly diverse” school images (crime, gangs, drugs, violence, racial tension, low student-achievement, low graduation rates, etc.) that seem to pervade the discourse regarding socio-economic status and school climate did not seem to reflect Ms. Dahlsim's school. On the contrary, Forestgreen seemed to me to be a good school. Happy students who seem to get along

are learning in a physical environment that is clean, well-designed, well-maintained, brightly lit and painted. Student art and accolades are everywhere. The campus design is open-concept. There are no high fences or metal detectors. Students walk from the neighborhood and enter the campus through an open courtyard sans security controls that exist in many schools. Ms. Dahlsim's warning that labeling with pejorative terms may disguise students' potential is an important refrain here. She reminds us in her stories that labels imposed by others (child of an addict) do not define the potential of a student. Similarly, the labels that some in the community assign Forestgreen High (tough school) are not adequate or accurate and may obscure the successes that occur there. Ms. Dahlsim also believes Forestgreen is a good school. Her perspective is clear in the narratives that were captured to create the profile for Forestgreen High. The words and tone she used to describe her understanding of the school through story reflects a consistently positive perspective. Yet, the pattern that emerges in regard to setting reflects a penetrating perspective about the broader milieu.

Ms. Dahlsim framed her stories in struggle so consistently that in this analysis, struggle is being considered as setting. While the events in her narratives took place in her warm and inviting classroom and a state-of-the-art mixing and recording studio, rich, descriptive narratives about these settings are absent. Rather, she frequently sets her stories in the context of multi-faceted struggle. The frequency of this struggle orientation, and the rich detail in which she describes it, is almost constant. Struggle as an encompassing backdrop is a clear pattern. In eight of the 10 stories the context or setting is, in her words, the *ubiquitous nature of struggle*. She also used the word

universal to describe the nature of struggle. It is this setting or background in which success sits upon in relief.

Two not mutually-exclusive, but certainly distinct, elements to the notion of struggle-as-setting emerged from her narratives. The less frequent was her describing setting-as-struggle related to a culture of anti-intellectualism. This is represented in the *Avoided Advocacy* story and the *Lasting Impact* story. In *Avoided Advocacy* she becomes frustrated by the non-progressive attitudes that some of her colleagues may have and links this to a broader trend of anti-intellectualism in our contemporary culture. In the *Lasting Impact* story, she shows concern about the students that seem to have “the game of school figured out”. She wonders if students really learn in her class because while they may seem acquiescent and compliant to do assignments, it is difficult to discern if they are thinking critically or are engaged with the material.

The element of struggle-as-setting that occurs more frequently has to do with poverty. The problems and difficulties associated with socio-economic status are linked to a distinct element of the struggle-as-setting pattern. Poverty as the context in which her stories take place emerged as a significant pattern. This is most clearly demonstrated in her frequent refrain that meeting the fundamental needs of students is a major role of teachers and schools. She described school as a place that provides students a safe place to spend six or seven hours per day. Ms. Dahlsim mentioned the importance of providing minimal, but consistent sustenance and kneaded the dough for home-made bagels to feed students at the closure celebration for her rap unit. This perspective permeates her

stories. Other poignant representations of this perspective on poverty are demonstrated in the story of the student that lost phone service at home and the students that have to get jobs to support their families. These conditions and demands often take precedence over attending school.

These two elements (anti-intellectualism and poverty) of the struggle-as-setting pattern are important to discern as distinct, although, as previously mentioned, they are not entirely mutually exclusive. It was important to Ms. Dahlsim in our follow-up conversations and member-checking efforts to clarify that it not be implied that she correlates poverty with anti-intellectualism. Her steadfast belief that a student's socio-economic status does not define their human dignity was attested to in her narratives. This was demonstrated in her respectful non-judgemental tone which will be discussed in the following subsection. Her narratives reflected consistently her belief that every student can learn. Yet, it is important to consider how these two elements overlap. This will be addressed in the composite section to follow.

Patterns Relating to Character in Ms. Dahlsim's Stories

The characters in Ms. Dahlsim's 10 example stories are to be expected. They are the obvious stakeholders in education and the people in immediate proximity to the storyteller. Considered in turn below are the patterns that emerged relative to Ms. Dahlsim, students, parents, administrators, allies, and fellow teachers.

Ms. Dahlsim. Clearly Ms. Dahlsim is the central character in these stories. Much of what the data revealed about Ms. Dahlsim is presented in her profile and is further

reflected in the stories about her relationships, particularly with students. Additionally, we learn more about her, specifically her attitude, in the subsection below that discusses patterns that emerged relative to tone. So, here, the focus will be on the other characters that were in (or absent from) her stories.

Students. The students that were prominent characters in her stories are consistent with the metaphor she used to describe her general orientation toward teaching that was presented in her profile—*she gives the Twos a home*. In her profile she describes the Twos as the cards no one wanted in Rummy because they were the lowest even though all the numbered cards are worth the same amount of points. She breaks it down further by explaining that her role as a teacher is to make school a place for the alienated, uncomfortable, disinterested or those that feel unsafe.

Eight of the 10 stories have characters that were coded during the analysis process as a “Two”. This code emerged after several rounds of iterative analysis within a broader code that identified her narratives related to social justice. The code “Two” indicated lines of narrative relating to students that may have felt alienated, uncomfortable, disinterested or unsafe. Specifically, for example, Ms. Dahlsim found success in helping students that have English as a second language meet the standard on the state reading assessment. She was pleased that the students that actually needed extra credit engaged in her punctuation brainteaser. She handed a copy of *1984* to a young man and coached him on his self-image. She was excited when “late-work-turner-inners” became engaged in her class. She helped a young man overcome his resistance to writing rhymes, and she

helped a young woman make her rhymes more “school appropriate”. And, she was infuriated at herself for not advocating for the students representing the GSA. The repetitious appearance of students who are alienated, uncomfortable, disinterested and feel unsafe as characters in her stories is a distinct pattern.

The strength of her orientation toward the Twos is demonstrated by the absence of any other student characters in her stories with one exception. This is the story in which Ms. Dahlsim explains the culture of anti-intellectualism and students that appear to have “the game of school figured out”. These were students that may have been quiet in her class (for whatever reason) but got their work done; therefore, she was unaware of her impact until later. This story was captured with a follow-up prompt that specifically asked about working with students that seem to get their work done and get good grades. It was difficult for her to think of any stories about those students. The narratives captured that were used to construct the *Lasting Impact* story reflect a different tone and do not similarly express the caring, nurturing and confidence in her capacity that is represented in the other stories.

Parents. Parents emerge as a minor pattern as they are included in only two of her stories. These characters serve to reinforce her orientation toward the Twos. The first parent is introduced in the story *I See You*. In this story she only alludes to parents in describing how important it is to not label students, i. e.: the child of an addict. The only other parent in her stories was introduced in the story *No Phone*. In this story she describes what seemed to be the beginning of a productive partnership with a mom to

help a student “keep a student on track” that became thwarted by poverty—the mom’s phone and internet were disconnected.

Administration. Curiously, there were no occasions in which administrators showed up in her success stories. This absence emerged as a significant pattern. She did provide some glowing comments about the administration of Forestgreen High School that were reported in the profile. These narratives though were captured in our friendly greetings with prompts intended to provide data to create the profile. The prompts used to generate success stories, however, yielded no administrative characters in this novice teacher’s success stories.

Allies. Similarly, (almost) absent are allies. Allies only occur in one story so there is no pattern. Perhaps for that very reason it may be important to point it out. Trusted allies to share her stories with were few. Obviously, she shared her stories with me and I am an implicit character as the interviewer/listener and the interpreter of her narratives. But, the only other people she mentioned feeling comfortable enough with to brag about her success as a novice teacher were her boyfriend and a couple friends from her graduate teacher education program. These few trusted allies were not immediate members of the Forestgreen High School community.

Fellow teachers. An interesting, albeit disturbing, pattern emerges in her stories regarding her perceptions of other teachers. No fellow teachers were cast as supportive characters and there were prompts that could have yielded such narratives. Also, no other novice teachers emerged as characters. On the contrary, on two occasions she described

feeling like a naïve kid around her colleague. Her reference to “the lady that runs the GSA” reinforces this feeling of being a kid in a world of adults. Further, the experienced teachers are frequently described, sometimes in rich, and frequently disparaging, detail:

The jaded, cynical, oh I’ve been teaching for years--it’s cute that you are excited about that...but just-wait. They’ve always got this waiting-for-the-other shoe-to-drop perspective. And I don’t want them to steal my thunder or dampen my spirits.

In fact, the word *jaded* is used frequently. A clear pattern that emerges in Ms. Dahlsim’s stories is that she perceives some of her fellow teachers to be tired, bored, and seemingly uninterested about what she perceives to be the most important thing about schooling—the students.

Patterns Related to Tone in Ms. Dahlsim’s Stories

Tone as a feature or element of story refers to the storyteller’s attitude. In literary analysis, this is most elegantly perceived implicitly by the storytellers’ choice of words and syntax. The stories crafted from narratives generated with the interview prompts yielded three distinct patterns relative to Ms. Dahlsim’s attitude. Two minor patterns regarding Ms. Dahlsim’s attitude were frustration and a strong posture toward offering students a fresh start every day. These will be discussed briefly below followed by an explication of a significant pattern of Ms. Dahlsim’s nurturing and student-centered attitude.

Frustration emerged as a minor pattern. Frustration is clearly represented in four stories: *Standardized Differentiation*, *Avoided Advocacy*, *No Phone*, and *Every Day is a*

New Day. It was hard initially for Ms. Dahlsim to talk to the section of English 11 that had been established specifically to raise test scores. Yet, she handled the situation with candor and immediacy. In *Everyday is a New Day*, Ms. Dahlsim demonstrated that her extraordinary patience with the student reluctant to do his work is real work for her. That is to say that the several minutes spent each day cajoling this young man to write a few lines does, in fact, wear on her emotionally. She points out, it should be noted, that she also works to not show her frustration about academic reluctance to her students. But her frustrations are even more intense in regard to the socio-economic conditions and non-inclusive attitudes she confronts in Forestgreen High School. In the story, *No Phone*, she wants to collaborate with parents to help a student but cannot because communication media was terminated due to poverty. And her greatest frustration, marked by her word choice and diction, was demonstrated in *Avoided Advocacy*. As a novice teacher, Ms. Dahlsim was “gun shy” and did not want to “make waves” when an experienced teacher made insensitive comments in front of leaders of the Gay-Straight Alliance. She was angry at herself for not standing up for the students and challenging the jaded teacher that did not buy-in to creating a safe and inclusive environment. Her failure to advocate for these students “haunted” her.

Somewhat related to the more broad treatment of her attitude below is the idea of *tabla rasa*. She gave students a clean slate. She did not hold yesterday against them. Each day they had an opportunity to learn and grow. This minor pattern was demonstrated in two stories: *Every Day is a New Day* and *I See Him*. These two stories can represent ends of a continuum that reflect the span of opportunity Ms. Dahlsim is

willing to offer to students. She provided them a chance to grow from wherever they start at any moment. On a day-to-day level, the student that crossed his arms and repeated consistently that he would not do the work was greeted each day with a fresh chance at becoming engaged with the class. At the other end of the continuum, Ms. Dahlsim offered a young man with some serious self-esteem issues who was enrolled in a special program a glimpse of how he does not have to allow others' perceptions to define him. She reinforced with him that he has the opportunity to be the architect of his own future by controlling his own attitude specifically reflected in self-talk.

A major pattern that emerged among the stories was Ms. Dahlsim's consistent attitude of humaneness. Her tone demonstrated a compassionate and nurturing orientation reflected in her identity as a teacher and in her relationship with her students. Her attitude of caring emerged as a significant pattern. Her word choice reflecting this attitude is replete with terms such as sensitive, caring, nurturing, inclusive, and open. This attitude was clearly consistent demonstrating a deep-seated orientation in this regard.

Patterns Related to Theme in Ms. Dahlsim's Stories

As a feature or element of story, *theme* refers to what the story is about. Iterative analysis revealed five patterns relative to the subject matter or content of Ms. Dahlsim's stories. These will be addressed in the following subheads: pedagogy, social justice, engaged learners, Maslow, and little victories.

Pedagogy. Many of the stories were specifically about Ms. Dahlsim's teaching. Of course, this is to be expected because of the nature of this study. Deeper analysis of the narratives that related specifically to pedagogy revealed three sub-themes. First is planning and preparing for teaching. The second sub-theme to emerge relates to working with students or enacting lesson plans and applying teaching tactics. The final subtheme is titled student outcomes and has to do with the product of student effort.

Planning teaching. Ms. Dahlsim took great pride in her lesson planning and considered good lesson plans a success. She thought carefully about her planning. This is demonstrated in the *Standardized Differentiation* story by her closing comments. Her concern was how to continue helping a third of her students meet the state standard after a majority of the students in the special section of English 11 had passed the high-stakes test. Ms. Dahlsim considers effective planning to be the craft and science of teaching with the actual implementation of teaching (the interaction with students), the art.

Working with students or enacting lesson plans and teaching tactics. Half of Ms. Dahlsim's stories were explicitly about successes of the specific act of teaching. Often, this is represented as one-on-one work with students. She consistently demonstrated immediacy. In her work with students, she is in-the-moment. Being present integrates with her student-centered attitude, but in-the-moment is also a pattern of what her stories are about. *Every day is a new day* is about her work with one student—spending several minutes with him daily to encourage him to engage in her

class. In the story, *I See Him*, she enacts a pedagogy of compassion as she coaches self-esteem. A distinct pattern emerges that her stories are about the specific act of teaching.

Student outcomes. Student outcomes manifest as a pattern in many ways. Some of her stories are about tiny student outcomes such as writing 12 lines of rhymes. Others depict larger outcomes like completing the three-week rap music and poetry unit or improving two thirds of the English 11 students' scores on the state reading assessment. She also was delighted by many typically unengaged students in her class getting *into* her punctuation brainteaser in *A woman without her man is nothing* and turning in submissions for extra credit. Another example is the young man with a propensity for negative self-talk writing longer, more reflective journal entries. Clearly, the products or student outcomes of well-planned lessons and specific acts of teaching form distinct patterns in her stories.

Social justice. Implicitly, this orientation pervades Ms. Dahlsim's stories and is so prominent it perhaps could also have been analyzed as tone or perhaps even setting. Two of her stories were explicitly about social justice. Social justice was a significant, albeit more implicit, theme in all but the final story. And this story, *Lasting Impact*, was generated from narratives captured from a prompt specific to a certain type of student that did not emerge otherwise in her stories. Ms. Dahlsim foreshadowed her commitment to social justice early on in the interview process.

In her profile, Ms. Dahlsim explains how she came to know that she wanted to be a teacher while working as a tutor in an inner-city, impoverished school. From there, she

went to a graduate teacher education program “rooted strongly in social justice”. As a novice teacher, Ms. Dahlsim lived out this orientation as is well-represented in her stories.

Engaged learners. Clearly related to pedagogy, her stories are specifically about students getting *into it* in half of the 10 stories. This pattern reflects both on her reflexive process of lesson planning and her strong student-centered nature. The pride and satisfaction she expressed when otherwise disengaged students “looked like little professionals” while working on their rap project in the studio speaks to the potency of this pattern.

Maslow. The term *Maslow* began to be used after a number of rounds of iterative analysis. In early passes through the stories a number of phrases had been coded as relating to social justice. However, deeper analysis of that body of coded narrative yielded that her stories are frequently about meeting the most fundamental needs of humans: e.g. hunger, safety, belonging. The phrase “struggle to survive” is used in a very literal sense in the story about the student with no phone. The pattern of her stories often being about meeting basic human needs is reinforced by specific references to food (oatmeal in the office) and safety. That school is a place to “get something to eat and have a safe place to be” is a refrain that is repeated in a number of stories.

Little victories. She uses the term “little victories” and it clearly reflects her attitude. This perspective is also a minor pattern of what her stories are about and reverberates in the story *Every Day is a New Day*:

How 'bout you do it, so I can give you some points...I will be happy; you will be happy. It's like the little victories. Not just for me but for them. So that if they can find that if they do feel they are in an insurmountable kind of morass, they can have these kinds of little bright spots to bulldoze them into bigger ones.

Other stories are about, at least in part, noticing how little victories have the potential to lead to larger successes, or, perhaps more importantly, are important in and of themselves. The latter is represented in the story about the young woman, led by guided practice, to make her rap song more appropriate for school. Ms. Dahlsim's metaphor for success provides insight into her unique perspective on the issue of little victories: a pebble in her shoe. It seems counter-intuitive. Generally, this metaphor is about an annoyance. But she reminds us that struggle is universal or ubiquitous and paying attention to the small successes yields victories.

Composite

This composite is a report of the findings to inform a deeper and richer understanding of induction. The profiles, stories, and patterns above provide interesting insight into the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. What these data show is how Ms. Dahlsim stories success. The insight reported here into the transition from preservice teacher to teacher is specific to the experiences and perspectives of Ms. Dahlsim. In other words, what the data generated in this study tells us about the transition from preservice teacher to teacher is the unique story of Ms. Dahlsim.

This section constructs a way of looking at Ms. Dahlsim to more accurately and extensively frame how her perspectives and experiences can inform a deeper understanding of induction. The section is organized into three subsections. First, Ms.

Dahlism as persona is discussed to clarify the ownership of the perspectives and experiences that informed this deeper understanding. The second section discusses Dahlsim, the *Street Fighter* character she chose to identify with and who inspired her pseudonym. The final subsection of this composite draws parallels between the persona and the pseudonym.

Ms. Dahlsim as Persona

To begin to consider what can be found in the profiles, stories, and patterns to gain new understanding of Ms. Dahlsim's induction experience it should be made clear who Ms. Dahlsim is. Ms. Dahlsim is the heroine of the overarching narrative about patterns in a novice teacher's success stories reported in this study. Ms. Dahlsim is not the participant in the study per se, but rather a composite of the participant's representation of herself in the context of the interviews and the interpretation of that representation by me as the researcher. So, for example, it cannot be said that the attitudes reported in the section above on patterns related to tone are that of the participant. They may be. But, these are really the attitudes of Ms. Dahlsim—the character generated by my interpretations of her representations. It is this persona that leads us into deeper and richer understanding of induction.

Dahlsim as Pseudonym

Deeper explication of her pseudonym reveals Ms. Dahlsim's unique insight into induction that is informed by the profiles, stories, and patterns above. One of the task-oriented interview prompts was to think of a character from fiction with whom she

identified with. She chose the character Dahlsim from the video game *Street Fighter*.

This character is a pacifist and yoga master that competes in global fighting contests to earn money for his impoverished and oppressed village. The physical appearance of this character is loosely based on Ghandi. A necklace of three skulls adorns his neck and his head is painted with three red stripes. As a master yogi, Dahlsim's fighting style is to use his flexibility to not get injured and his power of concentration to be hyper-focused during battle. He prevails not by destroying his opponents but rather by not allowing himself to be defeated.

Parallel Characteristics of Persona and Psuedonym

The parallel characteristics of persona and pseudonym reported here are organized in two subsections: struggle and survival.

Struggle. Ms. Dahlsim's perspective is that struggle permeated the environment of her first full-year of teaching. Similarly for the character Dahlsim, fighting by its very nature is struggle. For both, success emerged from this context of struggle in minimal relief. Ms. Dahlsim found success in coaching a disinterested learner to earning a C and Dahlsim's strength as a fighter was his capacity to simply not lose.

The context of struggle provides unique insight into the perspectives some novice teachers may have in regard to the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. Ms. Dahlsim's point of view helps clarify why this transition may be so fraught with difficulty for some novice teachers and reinforces the prominence and pervasiveness of the sink-or-swim metaphor in the literature and discourse regarding induction.

Survival. The participant in this study demonstrated characteristics, traits, beliefs and attitudes that reflect maturity, strength, creativity, perseverance, compassion, and resilience. Her personality, upbringing, preservice experiences (graduate education program), personal characteristics, and social justice orientation are all contributors to her self-identified success as a first-year teacher. These characteristics are not necessarily unexpected in a case of success. A deeper ramification may be Ms. Dahlsim's self-described capacity to be *in-the-moment* when teaching. Like a street fighter trained as a master yogini, Ms. Dahlsim showed up and was present in her work as a teacher.

The inspirational expression *attitude is everything* informs an important point related to induction. While that common expression seems apparent, or even indubitable, strangely, not everyone knows that they can control their attitude. Controlling attitude is the essence of yoga. This attribute was Dahlsim's strength as a street fighter which led to his success. Positive attitude also increases the chances of a novice teacher's success. Ms. Dahlsim concluded that frustrations are real. Acknowledging the reality of frustrations and enduring with steadfast resoluteness is an important attribute of Ms. Dahlsim that provides deeper insight into the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. These data show that her success can be attributed to her attitude.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter is organized into three main sections. The first section is a summary of the project that revisits the rationale and cited literature in light of the results and findings. Conclusions are reported in the second section. Recommendations conclude the study.

Summary

This section summarizes the study by revisiting the rationale and cited literature in light of the results and findings. The rationale is revisited in the first sub-section. The second sub-section extends the patterns found in the analysis of Ms. Dahlsim's success stories with the extant literature that was selected to support this inquiry into induction. An overview of the study concludes the summary.

Revisiting the Rationale and Methods

The problem is that the sink or swim metaphor is pervasive in the discourse on induction. Struggling as a novice teacher is so common that figurative language has developed to describe the phenomenon. Supporting the notion that struggling novice teachers is a problem, Secretary Arne Duncan has essentially laid an indictment down on teacher education in the United States.

In response to the perception that struggle is common during the transition from preservice teacher to teacher, questions were developed to look at the variance:

1. What are examples of a beginning teacher's success stories?
2. What patterns emerge in and across these stories?
3. What do these patterns tell us about the transition from preservice teacher to teacher?

An interview study was designed to collect and interpret success stories of a novice teacher to address these questions.

Extending Patterns to Cited Literature

The use of features or elements of story as an analytical frame demonstrated usefulness as a tool to expediently gain insight by looking for patterns in and among stories. Iterative analysis yielded patterns related to four features or elements: setting, character, tone, and theme. This analytical tool seemed both useful and powerful as reflected by the number of patterns that represent the current discourse relative to this novice teacher's insights. A number of patterns identified in the present study can be extended to the extant literature. A compendary account of these patterns is offered in the sub-sections to follow.

Extending patterns related to setting to previous literature. In Scherff's (2008) study it was reported that one participant's primary source of job dissatisfaction was student apathy. Ingersoll's (2001) study linked attrition related to job dissatisfaction with "lack of student motivation" (p. 522). Ms. Dahlsim's perspective in regard to a culture of anti-intellectualism echoes these concerns. Students' attitudes toward learning and how they are influenced by our culture, including the culture of school, forms a significant part of the setting in which novice teachers' stories occur.

Another connection to the literature is more specific to the infrastructure of the school itself as an aspect of setting. Blankenship and Coleman (2009) found in their study on wash-out in physical educators that new equipment and facility upgrades inhibited wash-out. Ms. Dahlsim's great success with her rap unit was largely possible because of access to very contemporary and sophisticated technology. These two cases intimate a potential pattern that some novice teachers may appreciate and take advantage of progressive tools to improve their pedagogy, job performance, and job satisfaction.

Extending patterns related to character to previous literature. Ms. Dahlsim shares many characteristics with participants in other narrative studies related to novice teacher success. She demonstrated work capacity and positive attitude as have other successful novice teachers (Davies, 2008; Hebert & Worthy, 2001). She also did not seem to take too personally issues related to struggle. This aligns with McCann and Johannessen's (2004) finding that novice teachers that chose to persist viewed "disturbing episodes" as community experiences rather than "personal obstacles, aggravations, or attacks" (p. 142). Ms. Dahlsim's personal attributes generally align with the attributes associated with successful novice teachers in the related academic literature.

Schlichte, Yssel, and Merbler (2005) found that relationships among students, parents, fellow teachers and administration is vitally important to first-year teacher success. Ingorsoll (2001) described "lack of support from school administration" (p. 522) as one reason why young teachers leave the profession. Bergeron (2008) found that a supportive and innovative administration was a "condition of success". Among these

findings, the importance of supportive administration extends a pattern in Ms. Dahlsim's stories. This was certainly Ms. Dahlsim's perspective even though administrators did not emerge as characters in her stories. She did feel that the administration of Forestgreen High School was strong and supportive and she did appreciate their innovative orientation.

Being student-centered is a refrain throughout the literature on novice teacher success. Ms. Dahlsim demonstrated repeatedly a student-centered orientation. For the purposes of this study this orientation could be described using features of story as a tool to consider novice teacher stories. From this perspective students were clearly the main characters in her stories. Ms. Dahlsim was specifically oriented toward students that may have otherwise been marginalized in some way. This particular orientation is less frequent in the literature so this nuance in the pattern extending to the extant literature bears noting. Hollingworth, Teel, and Minarik's (1992) seminal example of narrative inquiry with novice teachers introduced readers to Leslie and her successful work with reluctant reader Aaron. Leslie, like Ms. Dahlsim, met students where they were. Both Leslie and Ms. Dahlsim storied these characters with respect for their humanity and their ability to learn.

Extending patterns related to tone to previous literature. Frustration among novice teachers is a distinct pattern in the literature related to novice teachers (Blankenship & Coleman, 2009; Corcoran, 1981; McCann & Johannessen, 2004). The frustration Ms. Dahlsim experienced aligns with the scholarly work in this area quite

specifically. Ms. Dahlsim was “confused about the union stuff” and “had no idea what was going on at faculty meetings.” She was amazed at the time IEPs and other paperwork demanded. A participant in Scherff’s (2008) study expressed similar frustrations in “the bureaucratic demands of teaching, like paperwork and special education accommodation” (p. 1326).

Ms. Dahlsim’s patient attitude and her willingness to give students a fresh start everyday also aligns with the literature (Hollingsworth, Teel and Minarik, 1992). Like Leslie Minarik, Ms. Dahlsim demonstrated relentless patience. Both share success stories of the ongoing effort to reach reluctant learners.

The nurturing attitude Ms. Dahlsim demonstrated is surely not unique. However, this perspective is less frequent in the literature than frustration and patience. Athanases and De Oliveira’s (2008) reporting of Rena and other novice teachers explicitly working for social justice is an example of this very narrow thread in the literature.

Connections to extant scholarly work related to theme. Ms. Dahlsim talks about teaching and learning, social justice, and the nature of success and struggle. Her stories are about many of the same things other novice teachers’ stories are about. One interesting pattern that extends to the broader literature is the notion that little successes can lead to larger successes. The psychology of this was articulated by Bandura (1977). This is also represented specifically in the voice of participants in narrative inquiry into induction (Athanases & De Oliveira, 2008; McCann & Johannessen, 2004).

Overview

This study provided a deeper understanding of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher by analyzing one novice teacher's success stories using features or elements of story as the frame. The two profiles and 10 stories presented in chapter four provide rich and detailed insight into the perspectives of Ms. Dahlsim, the character that represents the conveniently and purposively selected participant for this study. The profiles introduced the participant and her school—both provided contextual information that helped situate the 10 distinct stories. These success stories ranged in both scope and scale. That is to say that success might appear to be small or large in scope. And, her stories are located all along the continuum on a success-struggle scale. Presented in the form above, the profiles and stories answered the first research question that guides this study, i.e.: What are examples of a novice teacher's success stories? Deeper analysis and consideration of these findings addressed the second and third questions guiding this study, i.e.: What patterns emerge in these stories and what can they tell us about the transition from preservice teacher to teacher? This insight was gained from Ms. Dahlsim and her stories.

Ms. Dahlsim's stories were set in a context of struggle with some alienated and otherwise outcast students as the central characters. Her attitude in telling the stories was sometimes frustrated but mostly caring and nurturing and open to giving all students a fresh start every day. Her stories were about very specific issues related to her transition from preservice teacher to teacher. Deeper and richer understanding of induction has been informed by these patterns.

Conclusions

Ms. Dahlsim's stories show how she successfully navigated her transition from preservice teacher to teacher. She demonstrated attributes of a survivor with her consistent positive attitude and capacity to be present or in-the-moment. She also demonstrated qualities and skills specific to the act of teaching. Ms. Dahlsim's stories were often about teaching specifically. She spoke with confidence and articulated nuances of teaching that demonstrated a strong awareness of methodology, learning theory, classroom management, instructional innovation, student motivation, and the like. The implication is that her preservice experiences, particularly her experience in her graduate teacher education program seemed to prepare her well for the specific work of teaching students in her classroom.

She also demonstrated a sophisticated awareness of teaching. Ms. Dahlsim stressed the importance of discerning a distinction between poverty and anti-intellectualism as elements of the struggle-as-setting perspective. How she articulated this distinction is explicated above. Looking at the overlap in the two constructs (anti-intellectualism and poverty) is interesting and provides a Frierian implication. Ms. Dahlsim explicitly described the role the media plays in the cultural milieu of anti-intellectualism in the *Lasting Impact* story. The relationship among the constructs of critical consciousness, literacy, and poverty reflects and implies Frierian praxis in that critical consciousness, literacy, and poverty converge with on-going reflexive pedagogy. Ms. Dahlsim enacts curriculum at the confluence of critical consciousness, literacy, and poverty and demonstrates what it can look like.

Yet she seemed to do this mostly isolated from other adults. Her focus was clearly on the students. For example, that parents were mostly absent from her narratives is interesting. She was very interested in her students' backgrounds and differentiated her instruction accordingly. Getting to know parents is a logical extension of this interest. Nevertheless, her interest in the students' backgrounds seemed sincere, but the lack of narratives to support this interest specifically related to the parents of students, is curious. Similarly, the lack of narratives regarding administration, especially because follow-up questions to prompts had potential to elicit such (what kind of support systems are in place, for example) is also quite curious. It would seem that the detachment of her classroom from the rest of the English department geographically (her room was in the vocational education suite) reflects her isolation from other adults in the school.

Ms. Dahlsim's persona remains consistent in this regard. Like the character that inspired her pseudonym, Ms. Dahlsim appeared an heroic survivor, alone in battle against foils and foes.

Recommendations

Ms. Dahlsim's unique perspectives and her proximal relationship to her preservice experiences and the realities of being a novice teacher have potential to inform teacher education. How specifically is unclear, however. Her experience as a novice teacher was enacted in the context of continuous struggle, adversity and isolation, and therefore seems, in some respects, to align with the serious calls to reconsider the basic structure of teacher education presented in chapter one (Duncan, 2009; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). As Feiman-Nemser (2000) suggests, teacher education could be more responsive

to the realities of induction per se. But, in spite of Ms. Dahlsim's struggles, adversity, and isolation, she was successful, as self-identified as well as identified by her administration. She provides an interesting case of an heroic survivor whose insights, attributes, and teaching skills reflected in her narratives about the transition from preservice teacher to teacher could provide useful perspective for the evolution of teacher education.

But for this potentiality to be borne out, more needs to be known about teachers like Ms. Dahlsim. How unique is her case? Is adopting a persona of an isolated but heroic survivor a common stage in the development of novice teachers?

Whether or not they are ubiquitous or universal, as Ms. Dahlsim purports, struggles exist and are real. Recognizing that struggles are not only real for novice teachers, but likely common and/or frequent, could influence teacher education programming. The data and analysis in this study possibly suggest that developing explicit instruction on overcoming adversity may be a logical orientation for teacher education to consider if this novice teacher's experience is representative of the experiences of other novice teachers. Additional research is needed in order to more deeply understand novice teachers' perspectives on the relationship between their induction settings, struggle and success. Her outlook and her ability and skill in controlling negative attitudes such as frustration are compelling and may inform preservice considerations, concepts and experiences. The concept of attitude control is teachable, yet many novice teachers suffer through constant frustration.

To gain deeper understanding of the transition from preservice teacher to teacher, more novice teacher stories must be heard. Under the presumption that story is a way of knowing, experiences may go unknown, unexamined, unappreciated, and provide little insight if they go unstoried.

Conclusion

This study looked at novice teacher success using interviews to capture narratives from one purposively and conveniently selected participant. In sum, insights have been identified regarding what success looks like for one novice teacher from the stories that emerged from the narratives. Patterns that emerged from the stories have also been identified and discussed. The patterns that emerged have been considered to provide insight into the transition from preservice teacher to teacher.

The sink or swim metaphor persists as a way of figuratively describing the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. This narrow glimpse into one novice teacher's success stories as an effort to shine a light on this problem by identifying patterns and linking them to the broader discourse offers some situated insight into the complicated and multifaceted transition from preservice teacher to teacher. Specifically, the pervasiveness of an accepted understanding that the transition can be quite challenging underscores Ms. Dahlsim's deeper philosophical consideration on the nature of struggle as context, setting, or environment. From a literary analysis perspective, there are always foils and conflicts. Characters or internal conflicts are more intuitive antagonists. That the foil could be the setting is a unique insight. This literary revelation

intimates perhaps an explication for the frequency of the occurrence of the sink-or-swim metaphor in the collective story of induction.

APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT TEXT

Hello:

Thank you for helping me prospect for a participant. I am looking for one novice teacher that is willing and able to tell success stories about her or his induction. She or he must have the capacity to be able to relate experiences they have had as a beginning teacher that they self describe as successful. This can be small successes like helping one student “get it” on one specific academic task and/or big successes like planning and staging a successful anti-bullying or equity campaign. The participant will be asked to identify successes, describe them in rich detail, and explain how they self-determined that the experiences were successes. I guess you could say that the participant gets to brag about how good of a job they are doing. But this bragging must take the form of specific stories of success as a novice teacher.

Here are the recruitment and selection criteria as written in the proposal:

1. The participant must be recognized by supervising administration as a successful novice teacher.
2. The participant must self-identify as a successful novice teacher.
3. The participant must be willing and able to share stories of success through the task-oriented, semi-structured interview protocol.

Here are some details about the study:

It is a single case using narrative inquiry methods. After an informed consent process, I will interview one purposively selected participant 3 times for using a semi-structured protocol. Each interview will last no longer than 90 minutes. No observations or other interviews are planned.

The interviews should be spaced 4-7 days apart. The interviews will be transcribed and the participant will be allowed to check the transcripts for accuracy. The interviews should take place in the teacher’s school. I will need a letter from a chief officer to allow human subject research on their site. If you know of any first-year teachers that you think would be suitable for the study and may be interested in participating please let me know. Let me know what questions you may have.

Thanks,

Matt Lydum
Doctoral Researcher, University of Arizona

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

The University of Arizona Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title: PATTERNS IN A NOVICE TEACHER'S SUCCESS STORIES

Principal Investigator: Matthew F Lydum

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to discuss the study with your friends and family and to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate.

You may or may not benefit as a result of participating in this study. Also, as explained below, your participation may result in unintended or harmful effects for you that may be minor or may be serious, depending on the nature of the research.

1. Why is this study being done?

It is well documented that the first year of teaching is troublesome for many. Struggles, sometimes overwhelming, are not infrequent for novice teachers. This is a problem and more needs to be known about the transition from preservice teacher to teacher. This study addresses this problem by looking at how one novice teacher stories success.

2. How many people will take part in this study?

One

3. What will happen if I take part in this study?

You will participate in three, audio-recorded, semi-structured interviews that will take about 90 minutes each. You will also participate as much as

you would like in “member-checking”. In other words you be able to read the transcriptions of the interviews and make any changes or corrections.

4. How long will I be in the study?

Less than 2 weeks.

5. Can I stop being in the study?

Yes, you can remove yourself from the study at any time.

Your participation is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study. If you decide to take part in the study, you may leave the study at any time. No matter what decision you make, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any of your usual benefits. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The University of Arizona. If you are a student or employee at the University of Arizona, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

6. What risks, side effects or discomforts can I expect from being in the study?

There is minimal risk involved in this study. You should be aware that participating in the interviews will consume some of your time.

7. What benefits can I expect from being in the study?

It may be interesting and fun to participate in a study on beginning teacher success.

8. What other choices do I have if I do not take part in the study?

You may choose not to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

9. Will my study-related information be kept confidential?

Efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released. For example, personal information regarding your participation in this study may be disclosed if required by state law.

Also, your records may be reviewed by the following groups (as applicable to the research):

- Office for Human Research Protections or other federal, state, or international regulatory agencies

- The University of Arizona Institutional Review Board or Office of Responsible Research Practices
- The sponsor supporting the study, their agents or study monitors

10. What are the costs of taking part in this study?

The only cost is your time.

11. Will I be paid for taking part in this study?

No.

12. What happens if I am injured because I took part in this study?

If you suffer an injury from participating in this study, you should seek treatment. The University of Arizona has no funds set aside for the payment of treatment expenses for this study.

13. What are my rights if I take part in this study?

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.

You will be provided with any new information that develops during the course of the research that may affect your decision whether or not to continue participation in the study.

You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The University of Arizona reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

14. Who can answer my questions about the study?

For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact me directly at 419-438-3969.

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the Human Subjects Protection Program at 520-626-6721 or orcr.vpr.arizona.edu/irb.

Signing the consent form

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form, and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form.

Printed name of subject

Signature of subject

AM/PM

Date and time

Printed name of person authorized to consent for subject
(when applicable)

Signature of person authorized to consent for subject

(when applicable)

AM/PM

Relationship to the subject

Date and time

Investigator/Research Staff

I have explained the research to the participant or the participant's representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or to the participant's representative.

Printed name of person obtaining consent

Signature of person obtaining consent

AM/PM

Date and time

APPENDIX C: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Preliminary Meeting Guide

Purposes:

1. Informed consent process
2. Determine suitability based on selection criteria
3. Begin to get to know the participant
4. Assign the task for the First Interview

Method: This interview will take place at a scheduled time at the participant's school.

The following prompts will guide the interview:

- Friendly greeting.
- Let us go over the Informed Consent Letter together.
- You have read and signed the informed consent letter and understand that this study seeks to collect success stories from one novice teacher. The data to inform this question will be three 90-minute task-oriented interviews that will take place in your classroom after school. Explain why you are willing and able to participate in this study.
- For our first 90-minute interview, please be prepared to take me on a tour of your teaching spaces and the other professional spaces you use in your building. Also, please be prepared to share with me two well-remembered events: one situated somewhere in your teaching spaces and one situated in the other common or professional spaces. If appropriate, use props to help tell your stories.

First Interview Guide

Purpose:

1. Continue to get to know the participant and to begin to understand how she sees herself as a teacher.
2. Capture narratives.
3. Become familiar with the setting in which some of her success stories take place.

Method: A 90-minute semi-structured and task-oriented interview will take place in the participant's classroom after school.

The following prompts will guide the interview:

- Friendly greeting.
- At a social event, you and your colleagues are having a fun and funny conversation about classroom successes. People start sharing their triumphant stories that begin: "I will never forget that one time..." What do you contribute to the group?
- Are there some stories that you can tell to some people that you can't tell other people? Why is that the case? Are there successes or struggles that you may be embarrassed about or perhaps you don't want to brag?
- When you leave school feeling great about the day, who do you call and what do you tell them?
- Tour.
- Assignment of task: for our second 90-minute interview, please select metaphors from the "Success and Struggles Metaphors Dichotomous Pairs Chart" and use them as prompts to stimulate your memory and share with me stories that may be either successes or struggles or anywhere in between.

Second Interview Guide

Purpose:

1. Continue to get to know the participant and to begin to understand how she sees herself as a teacher.
2. Capture narratives.

Method: A 90-minute semi-structured and task-oriented interview will take place in the participant's classroom after school.

The following prompts will guide the interview:

- Friendly greeting.
- Reverse roles with a parent of one of your students. If you (as the student's parent) were going to write a thank you letter to you (the student's teacher), what would it say?
- Back at the social event, the stories get more boastful as the stem changes from "I remember that one time..." to "this one kid...". Do you have a success or struggle story about one particular student?
- If you were to make a scrapbook with meaningful artifacts from your first year of teaching, what would you put in it?
- Task-oriented prompt: What stories came to mind when you read the list of metaphors for struggles and success? How and why did you determine that this experience was a success or a struggle? Would others agree with your evaluation?
- Assignment of task for the third interview: be prepared to discuss how you understand your own teaching persona by relating it to a fictional character that you identify with. In other words, is there a fictional character that you relate to? Particularly in your role as a teacher?

Third Interview Guide

Purpose:

1. Continue to get to know the participant and to begin to understand how she sees herself as a teacher.
2. Capture narratives.

Method: A 90-minute semi-structured and task-based interview will take place in the participant's classroom after school.

The following prompts will guide the interview:

- Friendly greeting.
- Imagine that your principal invites you to present a workshop on the in-service days before school starts for next year's first-year teachers. The topic is to be something related to acclimation to the new environment based on your experiences. What would you include in the workshop? Are there any things you would like to include but hesitate for some reason?
- What resources were available to you to support your successful induction? Were they useful?
- Back at the social event, somehow the conversation took a negative turn and everybody started complaining. Then an upbeat young teacher reminded everybody that they should feel blessed that they even have a job in this economy and recommends that everyone should share what they are thankful for. What did you want to complain about and then what are you thankful about?
- Task: were you able to come up with any fictional characters that you relate to?

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

The interview process is informed in part by protocol suggested by Seidman (1998). Three task-oriented, semi-structured interviews will take place after a preliminary screening meeting. Each of the three semi-structured interviews will be 90-minutes and take place in the participant's classroom at a mutually agreed on time after school. The interviews follow a consistent pattern. After approximately fifteen minutes of friendly greeting, three prompts and one task will be used to initiate conversation with the intention of capturing authentic stories. The interviews conclude with the assignment of the task that will be used in the subsequent interview. The interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed. Member-checking correspondence will occur between interviews. Description of the specific procedures to be used for each of the interviews follows in chronological order.

Preliminary Meeting.

This interview has four purposes. The first is to share with the participant the nature of the study and guide her through the informed consent process. The second is to determine if the potential participant meets the selection criteria. The third is to begin to get to know the participant by focusing mostly on biographical details. The fourth purpose is to assign the task for the first 90-minute interview.

Immediately after our introduction, the nature of the study and the procedures for informed consent will be explained. Following this will be a more extensive, informal

and unstructured conversation with the dual intention of getting to know the participant and determining if she meets the selection criteria. This determination will be subjective. The selection criteria were deliberately left rather vague. Selection will, in part, be determined by my intuitive sense of the participant's ability to contribute to the study.

The meeting will conclude with the assignment of the first task that will be used to evoke stories in the next interview. This will be the task-oriented prompt of leading me on a tour of the school and classroom.

First 90-minute interview.

This 90-minute semi-structured interview will begin at a mutually agreed-upon time in the teacher's classroom and include the tour of the school and teaching spaces. There are three purposes of this interview. First, is to continue to get to know the participant and to begin to understand how she sees herself as a teacher. The second is to become familiar with the setting in which some of her success stories take place. The third is to assign the task for the second interview. Three prompts will be used to stimulate the conversation:

- At a social event, you and your colleagues are having a fun and funny conversation about classroom mishaps. People start sharing stories that begin: "I will never forget that one time..." What do you contribute to the group?
- Are there some stories that you can tell to some people that you can't tell other people? Why is that the case?
- When you leave school feeling great about the day, who do you call and what do you tell them?

The interview will conclude with the assignment of the metaphor task that will be used to evoke stories in the second interview.

Second 90-minute interview.

The purposes of this interview are to begin capturing narratives related to success and struggles and to continue developing rapport. A 90-minute semi-structured and task-oriented interview will take place in the participant's classroom after school. The following three prompts will be used to evoke stories:

- Reverse roles with a parent of one of your students. If you (as the student's parent) were going to write a thank you letter to you (the student's teacher), what would it say?
- Back at the social event, the stories change from "I remember that one time..." to "this one kid...". Do you have a story about one particular student?
- If you were to make a scrapbook with meaningful artifacts from your first year of teaching, what would you put in it?

The task for this interview is to share stories evoked by considering dichotomous pairs of metaphors for success and struggle. The interview will conclude with the assignment of the task that will be used to evoke stories in the final interview.

Third 90-minute interview.

The purposes of this final interview are to continue capturing narratives related to success and to gain deeper familiarity with the participant and setting to inform the profile. A 90-minute semi-structured and task-oriented interview will take place in the

participant's classroom after school. Again, three prompts will be used to initiate the conversation following the friendly greeting:

- Imagine that your principal invites you to present a workshop on the in-service days before school starts for next year's first-year teachers. The topic is to be something related to acclimation to the new environment based on your experiences. What would you include in the workshop? Are there any things you would like to include but hesitate for some reason?
- Back at the social event, somehow the conversation took a negative turn and everybody started complaining. Then, an upbeat young teacher reminded everybody that they should feel blessed that they even have a job in this economy and recommends that everyone should share what they are thankful for. What did you want to complain about and then what are you thankful about?
- What resources were available to you to support your successful induction? Were they useful?

The task for this interview is to gain an understanding of the participants teaching persona by considering fictional characters with which she may identify.

APPENDIX E: DICHOTOMOUS PAIRS CHART

DICHOTOMOUS PAIRS—METAPHORS FOR SUCCESS AND STRUGGLE

success/struggle
 roses/thorns
 delivered a knock out punch/K.O'.ed
 walk in the park/navigating a minefield
 pedal to the medal/gridlock
 doors wide open/hit the wall
 superstar/goat-clown
 in the zone/not in the flow
 touchdown/sacked or intercepted
 clearing the hurdle/fell on your face
 sink/swim
 heaven/hell
 green light/red light
 homerun/struck out
 knocked out of the park/whiffed
 tour de force/laid an egg
 wind at my back/facing a head wind
 soaring/freefall
 home free/shackled
 stuck in the mud/in the clover
 looking pretty/black eye
 build/destroy
 leading the pack/left in the dust
 living the dream/descended into hell
 struggling uphill/running downhill
 killed it/got eaten up
 skipping along/stubbed toe
 sailed/crashed
 breathing easy/choked
 nailed it/bombed
 sweet/sour

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