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**SELF-REPORTED SOURCES OF LITERATURE TEACHERS'
PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE**

by

James Harley Vandergriff

**A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF TEACHING AND TEACHER EDUCATION**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of**

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As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by James Harley Vandergriff entitled Self-Reported Sources of Literature Teachers' Practical Knowledge

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SIGNED James H. Vandergiff

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated first and foremost to my mother, Mary Perkins Vandergriff Myers (1920-1999), who did not live to see me finish it. It was her belief in and support of me that gave me the courage to undertake this pursuit. I regret that I didn't finish it in time for her to see it. It is also dedicated to my wife, Donna Jurich, who believed in me, to my brother John and his wife, Susan, who fed and housed me while I went to school, and to my brother Jerry, my sister Beverly, my daughter Amy, and all those others who encouraged and supported me, and believed I could do it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	10
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	12
<u>Research Topic</u>	12
<u>Definitions</u>	13
<u>Why This Study?</u>	15
<u>Methodology</u>	21
<u>Limitations</u>	21
<u>Contributions</u>	22
<u>Overview of the Chapters</u>	23
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW	24
<u>Learning to Teach</u>	24
<u>Prior Beliefs</u>	28
<u>Role of Professional Course Work</u>	29
<u>Teacher Knowledge and Pedagogical Content Knowledge</u>	31
<u>Context</u>	44
<u>Field Experience</u>	50
<u>Learning to Teach Literature</u>	54
<u>English Teacher Knowledge</u>	56
<u>History of Literature Teaching</u>	71
<u>Conclusions</u>	77
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	79

TABLE OF CONTENTS - <i>Continued</i>	7
<u>Research Questions</u>	79
<u>The Study</u>	79
<u>Interview Questions</u>	81
<u>Choosing Informants</u>	86
<u>Informed Consent</u>	89
<u>Data Collection</u>	89
<u>Data Analysis</u>	91
CHAPTER IV: THE CASES	94
<u>The Case of Jane</u>	98
<u>A. Background</u>	98
<u>B. “Just figuring it out”</u>	100
<u>C. Publisher Materials</u>	103
<u>D. Content Courses</u>	105
<u>E. The Apprenticeship of Observation</u>	109
<u>F. Professional Conferences & Staff Development</u>	111
<u>G. Conversations with Colleagues</u>	112
<u>H. Reliance on the Professional Literature</u>	113
<u>I. Landscape</u>	114
<u>J. Summary</u>	115
<u>The Case of Patricia</u>	118
<u>A. Background</u>	118
<u>B. “Just figuring it out”</u>	119

TABLE OF CONTENTS - <i>Continued</i>	8
<u>C. Publisher Materials</u>	122
<u>D. Content Courses</u>	123
<u>E. The Apprenticeship of Observation</u>	124
<u>F. Professional Conferences & Staff Development</u>	
<u>Workshops</u>	128
<u>G. Conversations with Colleagues</u>	129
<u>H. Reliance on the Professional Literature</u>	130
<u>I. Landscape</u>	131
<u>J. Summary</u>	132
<u>The Case of Betty</u>	134
<u>A. Background</u>	134
<u>B. "Just figuring it out"</u>	139
<u>C. Publisher Materials</u>	141
<u>D. Content Courses</u>	142
<u>E. The Apprenticeship of Observation</u>	144
<u>F. Professional Conferences & Staff Development</u>	
<u>Workshops</u>	146
<u>G. Conversations with Colleagues</u>	148
<u>H. Reliance on the Professional Literature</u>	149
<u>I. Landscape</u>	151
<u>J. Summary</u>	153
<u>Summary of the Cases</u>	155

TABLE OF CONTENTS - <i>Continued</i>	9
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	159
<u>Limitations of the Method</u>	163
<u>Conclusions</u>	170
<u>Implications</u>	175
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	182
APPENDIX B: DATA CODES	187
APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM	188
REFERENCES	190

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study of what selected literature teachers report to be their sources of practical knowledge. The data for the study was collected through open-ended interviews with three practicing public school literature teachers in two school districts in a large southwestern city between 1996 and 1998. The informants were selected more on the basis of convenience of access than any other criteria, though I also considered their length of time in the profession and limited the study to persons who were actually teaching literature at the time of the study. The interviews followed an extended observation. After the interviews were transcribed, I analyzed them by the “constant comparison” method (Merriam, 1988, p. 138), using a set of data codes derived from the interview data, then sorted the data according to the codes. That permitted me to bring together pieces of conversation from various points in the interview in a way that is most useful to me (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, pp. 238-241).

While the selection and data collection methods were such that I cannot extrapolate the findings to other literature teachers, the data shows quite clearly that, for these teachers, there is a disjuncture between what the research literature assumes are teachers’ primary sources of practical knowledge and what the teachers themselves think it to be. Both their statements about their sources of practical knowledge and the metaphoric language they use to describe themselves argue that, for these three teachers,

alternative sources of practical knowledge—self, publisher-generated materials, reading in the professional literature, conversations with colleagues, and professional conferences and staff development workshops—are more important sources of their practices than are the sources upon which the research literature puts its primary focus—the apprenticeship of observation, content courses, and pedagogy courses. This finding suggests to me that a broader, more detailed study of this question is warranted.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Since I first began to study the professional literature of teacher preparation, I have noted, and been troubled by, how little what is described in that literature reflects my own experience of learning to teach. In part, that seeming disjuncture has made me curious about how others have learned and whether their sense of how they learned meshes with what is published about learning to teach, or, like my own experience, seems to be different from what is published. The focus of this study is not so much concerned with the objective truth of what these teachers say as it is simply with what they say. In other words, what do literature teachers *report* to be their sources of practical knowledge?

Research Topic

My primary research question is “what do literature teachers report are the sources of the knowledge that they use in their daily teaching of literature?” However, I will also be looking for answers to these questions:

- How do the respondents’ reports of knowledge sources correspond to the dominant knowledge sources reported in the research literature?
- Do these teachers’ reports of their knowledge sources suggest the need for additional research on the topic of literature teachers’ knowledge sources?
- Do their own educational and personal backgrounds appear to influence what knowledge sources literature teachers report?

In short, I want to specifically find out what literature teachers themselves say were their sources of knowledge—not what, for instance, math teachers say, and not what researchers, theorists, or other outsiders say, were their sources.

That is not to imply that I perceive teachers to be unimpeachable sources of information about themselves. That's not at all the case. I have heard literature teachers, including some of my informants, say, for example, that they didn't learn anything in their professional course work, even though both their own practice, and the bulk of the research, belies that. On the other hand, I believe that if we are to make teacher preparation a more effective intervention we must revise some of our assumptions. One of the assumptions that needs to be revised is that the knowledge sources we have traditionally focused on are either the only or the most significant ones, and another is that our observations of teachers' practices are more informative than their own voices. Consequently, this study is premised in the idea that we should ask teachers how they have learned to teach so we can nurture those sources, whether in professional course work, in mentored clinical experience, or in in-services.

Definitions

It is perhaps worthwhile to attempt to define “self-report.” The primary distinction I'm trying to draw is between what literature teachers themselves say are the sources of their practical knowledge for teaching and what researchers say are the sources. It is not an issue of the *accuracy*, in

some objective sense, of what the teachers say, but rather an issue of what they *do* say. So, “self-report” means simply “what teachers say.”

The terms “traditional sources” and “alternative sources” occur fairly frequently in my discussions. I use “traditional sources” to mean those knowledge sources most commonly treated in the research literature, specifically, the apprenticeship of observation, subject matter course work, and pedagogy course work. “Alternative sources” refers, in general, to any other sources of knowledge besides the traditional ones, but more frequently to these: publisher-generated teaching materials (teachers’ manuals, prepackaged lesson plans, etc.), conversations with colleagues in the school, conversations with colleagues from other schools, self (what one informant referred to as “just figuring it out,” meaning figuring it out for herself), in-services, the professional literature, professional conferences.

By “literature teacher” I mean a certified English teacher who spends at least part of her time teaching literature courses. I have focused on “literature teachers” mainly for uniformity’s sake; that is, if I am going to make any kind of meaningful comparison, I need to be studying comparable things. I assume that, just as Grossman and Stodolsky (1995a, 1995b) found that math departments, for example, differ from English departments within schools, and just as Fox (1992) found that the experiences of English teachers may differ within a single department in a school, the sources of knowledge used by literature teachers and grammar teachers might also differ. A teacher

who relies heavily on, for instance, content courses for teaching grammar may rely more on knowledge derived from reading in the professional literature for teaching composition and on staff development workshops for teaching literature. That is, one individual may not have derived his/her knowledge for literature teaching from the same sources from which he/she derived the knowledge for teaching composition. So, if I want to look at literature teachers' sources of knowledge, I need to interview and observe teachers who are teaching literature. Likewise, I assume that non-certified teachers probably would not have been exposed to the same knowledge sources as would certified teachers and are not, therefore, comparable for my purposes.

Why This Study?

One of the things that spurs me to study how literature teachers learn their craft is that there is a gap in the research that I hope to at least begin to fill. In general, the research says that teachers learn their craft from the apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975), by aligning their professional thinking with what they learn in subject matter courses—adopting their professors' ways of thinking about the subject matter, which is similar to the apprenticeship, but generally treated separately in the research literature—(Grossman, 1990, 1991), and from their professional course work. The vast majority of the research literature revolves around, assumes, or directly deals with these three topics. For example, in the NCTE position

statement on the preparation of English teachers, the composers discuss the importance of subject matter courses, but do not discuss at all what kinds of pedagogy courses or practica or mentoring English teachers should have, or what kind of access to professional journals, conferences and collegial conversations they need. The implication seems to be that one learns to teach English from subject matter courses alone. Though the research literature consistently talks about it as a source of teachers' knowledge, professional course work is generally considered to be a weak intervention (Zeichner and Tabachnik, 1985; Zeichner, 1989; Pajares and Bengston, 1995)

There is also a smaller but growing literature on the importance of context (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Fox, 1992; Grossman and Stodolsky, 1995), and, though I don't find a literature that supports it very strongly, there is a pervasive assumption that one learns to teach by watching others. For instance, it is frequently reported that many, perhaps most, teachers believe that they learned most of what they learned about teaching from their student teaching experience. A fairly extensive research literature refutes that assumption, arguing that such experience is an effective source of knowledge only when it is carefully observed and mentored (Britzman, 1991; Zeichner, 1987).

Some researchers, such as Pamela Grossman (1991), acknowledge the existence of other knowledge sources, but don't discuss them, which suggests that they don't consider them particularly important or worthy of study.

Dana Fox's "From English Major to English Teacher" is one of the few studies that looks seriously at what teachers themselves say are their sources of knowledge. For instance, Maureen refers to her English education course work, her conversations with her peers, her cooperating teacher, and professional journals as the sources of the knowledge she used in her teaching (1995, p. 22). On the other hand, these sources are noted to give the readers an understanding of the kinds of support sources Maureen had, not to help us understand the sources themselves. However, this article does make the important point that we need to listen to new teachers' voices so we can learn better how to support them.

Dan Donlan's (1990) survey, which, as I have noted elsewhere, is too methodologically flawed to be of much value, is the only other serious effort to find out from whence English teachers think they have derived their knowledge.

The end result is, as I said above, a gap in the literature: there is virtually nothing written about teachers' other sources of their practical knowledge, the sources that were most important to my own development as a teacher. For instance, I can point to specific, concrete things that I learned in my pedagogy courses—how to plan a lesson, how to compose a valid and reliable test, etc.—and my content courses that have impacted my teaching. For me, the professional course work was a strong intervention, not a weak one, quite the opposite of what so much of the research says. Conversely,

though my student teaching experience was a pleasant one, it was a time to practice what I had learned, not to learn more, again quite the opposite of what the research says.

Glaser (1967) says that the “root source of all significant theorizing is the sensitive insights of the observer himself” and that those insights can come from personal experiences (pp. 251-252). Such was the case when my personal experiences began to confront the research. My entry into teaching was not the traditional one. I taught for 13 years before I went through a teacher preparation program. For the first several years that I taught, teaching was a difficult task. I never felt that I knew enough—about the literature, about literary criticism, about students’ prior knowledge, about how to present a lesson, about how to tell if students were really learning. So, I spent that 13 years scrambling—mimicking colleagues lectures, reading and appropriating the contents of articles in The Explicator and College English, and similar journals, talking with colleagues, attending conferences, ordering teachers’ manuals, purchasing commercial packets of teaching materials, and the like. Over the years I learned a lot in this most unsystematic way, but often thought there must be easier ways.

Though I had taken a couple of teacher education classes—Foundations and Adolescent Psychology—in the late 1960s, I didn’t really involve myself with teacher education until 1984, when I enrolled in the teacher preparation program through which I was finally certified. There I

learned that there were systematic ways to construct lessons that stood a better than random chance of ensuring that most of the students understood. I learned that there were ways of teaching that I had never dreamed of, ways of composing testing instruments that didn't require students to read my mind and that were both valid and reliable. In short, I learned a great deal from my professional course work, especially my English methods course.

Not all was positive, though. At this time, the program in which I was enrolled required only eight hours of field experience prior to student teaching. For my "field experience," I tutored a high school student who voluntarily came to the university campus for help. Besides that, in the late 1960s, when I had taken the Adolescent Psychology course, I was required about 10 hours of observation in a lab school, where I observed from behind a glass. I don't consider either of these field experiences to have been very influential in my process of learning to teach.

Today, teacher preparation courses routinely require preservice teachers to both observe and work in school settings. In fact, as I point out in chapter two, the required number of hours has burgeoned, despite the fact that there is a rather extensive literature questioning the value of these experiences, partly on the basis that there is scant evidence that one learns to teach by watching someone else. Novices are particularly hard put to learn this way because they don't know how to interpret what they are seeing. So, not only does my own experience oppose the traditional wisdom that early

field work is salient, but there also appears to be a contradiction between how we teach teachers and how teachers actually learn.

Thus, some disagreement between my own experiences with learning to teach and what the research says, as well as some internal problems in the research, have led me to believe that a study such as I am proposing has value for teacher preparation faculty.

I believe, too, that such a study is timely because of the movement to reform teacher education by such groups as the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. That group proposes, essentially, removing certification authority from the universities, where it currently resides, and vesting it in an independent professional board (Ballou and Podgursky, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2000). Part of this move is premised in the notion of establishing professional standards against which teachers will be judged for certification and recertification. Whether one agrees with the direction or not, it seems likely that university-based teacher education programs are going to be held increasingly more accountable for teacher performance after graduation/certification. It follows, then, that we need more information about both what influence teacher preparation programs have on how teachers teach and all of the other influences on how they teach. A study such as mine, which attempts to fill a small gap in the research, is a move in that direction.

Methodology

This is a qualitative study, so my data collection and analysis are consistent with that fact. As Chapter Three explains more thoroughly, the primary data comes from semi-structured interviews with three literature teachers who, at the time of the interviews, were teaching literature in public schools in a large southwestern city. The interviews were preceded by an observation period. The observations, however, were intended as sources of data for refining the interview questions, not as sources of data about how the teachers learned to teach. Analysis of the interview data will be by means of the constant comparison method. Following analysis, each interview will be written up as a case.

Limitations

My study is limited in several ways. First, and probably most important, my primary intent has been to determine whether there is sufficient cause to conduct a more thorough study on this topic, so I have not interviewed as thoroughly as I might have. For instance, one of the interview questions asks the informants to talk about what they would do if they were required to teach a poem with which they were completely unfamiliar. For more thorough and reliable information, I would borrow the technique used by Grossman in her dissertation work and other research, which is to ask the informants to actually construct such a lesson, then discuss the process with them after the fact rather than depending on the hypothetical. Because I

didn't approach the issue that way, the answers to that particular question cannot be considered completely reliable. If I were to do a larger, more thorough, study, with an eye to drawing conclusions about literature teachers' sources of knowledge, I would use a variety of data collection devices, such as those Grossman (1990) has described.

The second limitation is that, though I wanted to get teachers own voices, I presented them with the categories within which to frame their knowledge. My purpose in doing so was to be able to compare their responses to each other. I'm wanting to determine whether there are other knowledge sources literature teachers routinely use which should be incorporated, for example, into literature methods courses, so I thought I needed some degree of uniformity in the responses, even if I had to trade off some of the authenticity of voice in order to get it. Nonetheless, to whatever extent the results reflect my thinking about knowledge sources instead of the teachers, to that extent they limit the value of my research.

Contributions

The contribution this study is likely to make, then, is to add to the existing research on how teachers of literature learn their craft and to add to the store of data in teachers' own voices. I believe, too, that my findings will add support to the development of school-site based teacher preparation programs that both focus on development within a particular school context and provide close mentoring of the teacher candidates.

Overview of the Chapters

Chapter Two is a review of the research relevant to this topic. I have looked at the literature on teacher knowledge, including teacher beliefs and pedagogical content knowledge, the literature on early field experience, the literature on the importance of context in learning to teach, the literature on learning to teach, and the literature on learning to teach literature. Chapter Three discusses the methodology I used in selecting informants and collecting and analyzing the data. Chapter Four will present and discuss the data as cases. Chapter Five will discuss the conclusions drawn from the research and its implications.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

When I began this dissertation, I thought I would need to investigate the literatures on Pedagogical Content Knowledge, on Teacher Knowledge, on Situated Cognition, and on Learning to Teach. Because my research is focused specifically on literature teachers, I also expected to review the research on how literature teachers learn their craft. My presumptions were wrong in several respects. For one thing, there is not a large literature on Learning to Teach *per se*. In fact, Lee Shulman once referred to it as “almost totally missing” (1987, p. 5). However, I will review what there is. There also is not much of a literature specifically on how literature teachers learn to teach literature. Likewise, I found that the divisions of the research literature were not necessarily what I outlined above.

Learning to Teach

One of the earliest scholarly efforts to determine how teachers learn their craft was Lortie’s “Five towns” research reported in Schoolteacher (1975). The concept of the “apprenticeship of observation” articulated in that study has been, and to a great extent still is, a dominant belief about how teachers learn their profession. Specifically, Lortie says that the approximately 13,000 hours the average pre-service teacher has spent observing teachers ply their craft constitutes a kind of socialization into the profession: preservice teachers enter teacher preparation programs with an extensive—though usually unconscious and unarticulated—set of beliefs about students, about

the learning process, and about the act of teaching. That this knowledge is not usually consciously held makes it difficult to affect it.

Lortie says that, in his research, two-thirds of teachers said they learned to teach through classroom experience, “44 percent indicating employment as teachers and 23 percent practice teaching” (p. 77). He also says that 39 percent cite “other teachers” as having taught them their craft. However, they report having been very selective in their adoptions, generally referring to very specific kinds of classroom activity—tricks of the trade, not the philosophical underpinnings of education. He goes on to point out that the adopted practices must be perceived by the adopting teacher as consistent with his/her existing practices. Finally, he says that “training in pedagogy does not seem to fundamentally alter earlier ideas about teaching” (p. 79).

Several important points come out of this book. First, of course, is the effect of the apprenticeship of observation. Other important points are that teachers’ beliefs guide their acquisition of new practices, that teacher education course work is not a strong force, and that teachers generally learn on the job.

Following Lortie’s publication was a large quantity of research material that set the stage for the ideas that now seem to dominate the research on learning to teach. Though I don’t intend to survey that literature here, it is characterized by Doyle’s early work. In order to get to the kind of thinking that permits us to notice that, just because a teacher is teaching a model

lesson, it doesn't necessarily follow that the students are learning what the teacher is teaching, our ideas about teaching and learning had to be revised. In other words, we needed to understand such things as the notion that teaching is a complex activity (Doyle, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1986) and how students negotiate academic work (Doyle, 1983) and a number of other such things, in order to understand how to prepare teachers for them.

One stream of this literature was that on teacher thinking. By and large, this literature was based in some assumptions that may not be tenable. For instance, one of the assumptions was that observation of teaching somehow caused teachers to adopt the observee's methods/strategies. Another assumption was that making students familiar with various practices, e.g., Madeline Hunter's lesson plan format, would lead to use of those practices. As Clark and Peterson say, "Process-product researchers have typically assumed that causality is unidirectional, with teachers' class behavior affecting students' classroom behavior. . ." (p. 257). Researchers and theorists have similarly assumed that learning to teach is, if not exactly unidirectional, at least causally related to teacher education course work and practice. My point here is not the particular examples, but the generalization that teacher education programs have assumed a cause and effect relationship between university course work and practice in the field that may not be supportable. The process seems to be much too complex to support assumptions of unidirectional correlations.

As noted above, and echoed by many researchers (Grossman, 1999; Feiman-Nemser, 1996), there is not a massive literature that deals specifically with how teachers learn their craft. However, Shulman's statement seems to be a bit of an overstatement. There is actually quite a bit written about learning to teach, though much of it is anecdotal or based in unfounded assumptions.

Zeichner (1989) confirms that teacher socialization is a complex thing that includes Doyle's "classroom ecology" (1975, 1977, 1979, 1986), the nature of the school itself, influence of colleagues, and even the local cultural context, i. e., parental influence. He talks about the weakness of both teacher education course work and the practicum experience, and concludes by saying that the socialization process is "highly interactive"—by which I think he means mutually influencing—and that it involves "constant interplay between choice and constraint" (p. 341). Though he recognizes and lists a number of areas in which research needs to be done, this article is more a cautionary than a survey of how socialization occurs. An earlier article, authored with Tabachnick (1985), supports this position. In that study, the authors found that novice teachers' prior beliefs were fairly resistant to "institutional processes," that novice teachers didn't always change to conform to the culture of the school; rather, they often managed to hold onto prior beliefs even in the face of a dominant opposition.

Prior Beliefs

One of the more consistent themes in this literature is that novices “. . . gravitate toward images of the teacher that are consonant with their own motivation, style, preference—and reject those that are not” (Atkins, 1992, p. 385). Ennis (1994) says, for instance, that “when knowledge presented is inconsistent or incompatible with the [learner’s] belief system, it will not be positioned in the knowledge structure and will not affect future practice” (p. 172). Likewise, Clandinin and Connelly (1995, 1996) point out the importance of teachers’ landscapes—the ways teachers hold their knowledge.

Joram (1997) speaks very directly to the difficulties of changing prior beliefs. Not only do novice teachers’ beliefs often receive false reinforcing feedback, they also often don’t receive corrective feedback. As an example of false feedback, she offers the example of a novice watching a cooperative learning group and failing to see that learning is occurring but rather seeing only that the teacher is not in control of the learning. Lack of corrective feedback she exemplifies with the popular movies, such as Dangerous Minds. From such films novices may come to believe that there is some “magic button” to motivate students. Unless that belief is actively corrected, the novice will continue to hold it.

Overall, Joram argues that in order to teach students to teach, we must focus on changing prior beliefs that constitute obstacles to what we want them to learn. She does not deal with the issue of whether changing beliefs

results in changes in practice. She apparently assumes that it does.

Feiman-Nemser (1996) also talks about the importance of prior beliefs as “barriers to change” (p. 80), asserting that teacher educators must contend with them.

Role of Professional Course Work

Pajares and Bengston (1995), though reasserting that teachers’ prior beliefs are difficult to change, argue that students do learn from professional course work. In this study, their focus is on how that can be problematic when it leads teachers to focus on the material more than on the student. This study showed student teachers who placed more emphasis on how students composed poems than on how they engaged with their poems and attributed that orientation to what the teachers had learned in Educational Psychology courses. The general point of the article is that, to paraphrase Kurt Vonnegut in Mother Night, students do learn what we teach them, so we must be careful what we teach them.

Kim Graber’s work (1995) also argues that student teachers learn from their teacher education courses and apply it to their teaching. She acknowledges the impact of situation, but contends that her data show that the student teachers try to apply what they have learned. Thus, she argues for an effort on the part of teacher educators to determine which parts of the teacher education curriculum are effective, not for scrapping the whole system.

Quinn (1997) also reports that course work affects knowledge and attitudes. His study, which is based on the pre- and post-test results of the Aiken's Revised Mathematics Attitude Scale and the Essential Elements of Elementary Mathematics Test administered to a group of students in Math Methods courses, found fairly significant changes in the elementary students, but not in the secondary candidates.¹

While I don't want to over-value Quinn's study, it is consistent with a trend in the research, which is that by focusing specifically on teachers' problematic prior beliefs teacher educators can change them.

Tom Russell (1998) perhaps goes a step farther by advocating that teacher education programs actually provide the prior knowledge. He describes a new program at Queen's University that begins with experience. In that program, teacher education students are placed in classrooms for eight weeks, then moved to campus for two weeks of intensive courses, then returned to the classrooms for six more weeks. At the time of his writing, all his evidence was anecdotal, but he claims that, when these students came to his secondary science methods course, they had more and better questions than any other group he had ever taught. He also indicates that the "experience" of these students is closely supervised and mentored. Thus, the

¹ He explains the differences as an instrumentation problem: according to him, for instance, the tests he used focused on "meaningful mathematical content," whereas secondary Math teachers generally hold rule-based mathematical knowledge. The instrument was better suited to Elementary teachers than to secondary teachers.

overall focus of this program is to replace the rather random prior knowledge candidates bring with them to the teacher education program with knowledge that is more amenable to the theory and practices to which they are going to be introduced.

Fox (1996) offers teacher research as a possible way of helping novices overcome some of the problematic beliefs with which they enter teaching. Essentially, this technique seems to work by causing teachers to focus closely on what they are doing, why they are doing it, and to whom, within the “situated realities of classroom life” (p. 114). It has in common with Russell, Quinn, and others, a grounding in the idea that prior beliefs may be an obstacle to learning to teach.

Many of these studies, and a number of others, make the point, either directly or in passing, that we need to know how individual teachers learn.

So, several themes emerge from the literature on learning to teach. First, pre-service teachers’ prior knowledge affects the impact of teacher education programs on them. Second, teacher candidates need to be made aware of their prior beliefs. And, third, teacher education course work can be an effective intervention.

Teacher Knowledge and Pedagogical Content Knowledge

I also found that it is difficult and not particularly fruitful to divide the Teacher Knowledge research as I had expected to. The researchers themselves usually do not make the distinction I had made. Not only do I find

different names for similar concepts, but I also find that, for instance, many scholars see pedagogical content knowledge as a kind of teacher knowledge. They write about both, not one or the other. The end result is that, instead of two separate literatures, the Teacher Knowledge literature is more accurately a single literature that ranges from the general to the more specific and individual. It was necessary to distinguish practical knowledge from “knowledge about” (Clandinin, 1985; Clandinin and Connelly, 1987; Elbaz, 1981, 1991, 1993) in order to get to the idea of “narrative knowledge” (Carter, 1994; Carter and Doyle, 1995), and it was necessary to think about narrative and situated knowledge (Lave, 1990; Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989) in order to arrive at the idea of contextualized knowledge (Fox, 1992; Grossman, 1989b, 1991b; Grossman and Stodolsky, 1995b) and, more specifically, the role of departments in knowledge creation and transmission (Gutierrez, 1996).

Yet it seems fairly evident to me that, despite the small amount of research, the currently most fruitful area for research is this area of contextualized learning. Not only does this literature seem especially promising, it also corresponds to my initial reason for beginning this study, which was that the other research literature on learning to teach didn't match my personal experience of learning to teach.

This investigation of the literature on teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge leads to the conclusion that both are

necessary for effective teaching, that neither is alone sufficient for effective teaching, that both need to continue to grow over time (with experience), and that both are best nurtured *in-situ*. It also leads me to believe that perhaps the distinction between the two is problematic.

Hugh Munby's work (1986) on teachers' metaphors, for instance, argues that analysis of the metaphors teachers use to define their work can be an important source for our understanding what knowledge they hold and how they hold it. Clandinin and Connelly's work on "landscape" and "narrative rhythm" (Clandinin 1985; Clandinin and Connelly 1986, 1987, 1996; Connelly and Clandinin, 1987, 1990), consistent with Munby's work on metaphor, offers useful ways of discovering teachers' knowledge through their figurative representations of it, as does Grace Grant's 1992 study of teachers' structural metaphors.

Freema Elbaz's work (1981, 1991, 1993) is also important to my study, partly because she is one of the earliest students of teacher knowledge, but also for her support for the idea that teachers hold their content knowledge in individual ways. She credits Connelly for the idea, saying, "Connelly's notion of the teacher as 'user-developer' acknowledges the autonomous decision-making function of the teacher in adopting, adapting, and developing materials appropriate to his or her situation" (1981, p. 44). Without saying so directly, Elbaz supports the idea of the alternative professional knowledge sources, as well as the constructivist idea that

knowledge is held individually, even idiosyncratically.

Several of the pieces I looked at begin with a distinction between subject matter knowledge for “experts” and subject matter knowledge for teachers. For instance, McNamara (1991) argues that “[i]t is at least questionable whether and in what instances another layer of representation should be imposed upon subject knowledge which is itself a form of representation” (p. 122). His argument revolves around the idea that “the logical acts of teaching such as explaining, informing, giving reasons and so on cannot be separated from subject content and require content knowledge on the part of the teacher” (p. 115). McNamara then points out that “there are no studies demonstrating an empirical link between teachers’ content knowledge of a subject and the pupil learning they hope will occur” (p. 117). Then, he cites a few existing studies (Ball, 1990; Kruger *et al.*, 1990; Post *et al.*, 1988), which he labels as “indicative rather than conclusive,” to indicate that pre-service teachers “may have a limited, sketchy or misinformed knowledge” of their subject areas, especially primary teachers, which he tempers by stating that

what a prospective teacher needs to know about a subject may not be so much the sort of knowledge acquired through conventional undergraduate study but rather specific knowledge which relates to the teaching of a subject and of children’s cognitive process with respect to acquiring knowledge in particular subject areas (p. 118).

From this point, he argues that, since subject knowledge is itself a representation, and since representations of content are what lessons are often

about, it is moot whether representation is a function of pedagogical content knowledge or of content knowledge, concluding that Shulman's distinction is "at least questionable" (pp. 121-122). In short, he sees little value to the distinction between content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge as it relates to specific subject matters. Having established that position, McNamara turns to a discussion of the relevance of focusing on content and concludes that, despite the recent shift of attention toward content knowledge, there is not yet enough evidence to justify a conclusion about the place of subject matter knowledge in either teaching itself or in teacher preparation.

McEwan and Bull (1991) are not so kind. Their position is that Shulman's "distinction between content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge introduces an unnecessary and untenable complication into the conceptual framework on which the research [on the growth of teacher knowledge and thinking] is based" (p. 318)." These writers reject the idea of pedagogical content knowledge on the grounds that it is dependent on an empiricist rationale, and that the empiricist (objectivist) view of knowledge has been debunked. In that debunking, they contend, lies the idea that "justification of scholarly knowledge is inherently a pedagogical task, and successful scholars must engage in the sort of pedagogical thinking supposed by Shulman to be a hallmark of pedagogic reasoning" (p. 324). In short, Shulman's distinction does not make sense to them.

The writers then turn to a consideration of whether the distinction can

be made on other grounds, specifically by looking at Dewey's thinking about subject matter and teaching. Their conclusion, after a detailed analysis, is that Dewey saw teachers' thinking about subject matter as the equivalent of the scientist's hypothesizing: "For scholars the leading idea is represented by scientific hypotheses; for teachers it is organized subject matter. Thus, hypothesis and subject matter are part of a developing system of knowledge" and Shulman's distinction is untenable (p. 330).

These voices, though important to consider, are not in the majority. Patrick Ferguson (1993) studied the effects of subject matter knowledge on teacher performance and found that "while subject matter knowledge is an important prerequisite for effective teaching, it is not sufficient in and of itself and that knowledge beyond that typically required for certification does not result in increasing the quality of teaching performance" (p. 56). Not only was this conclusion supported by his literature review, it was also supported by his study of 266 secondary student teachers over a seven year period in which he compared student teachers' performance ratings by their supervisors, cooperating teachers and school administrators to their Education GPAs, major GPAs and NTE Specialty scores. He says, "education course work is a more powerful predictor of teaching effectiveness than measures of content expertise," which "strongly suggests that it would be counterproductive to increase content course exposure at the expense of course work in pedagogy" (p. 61).

Mosenthal and Ball (1992) seem to generally concur with this finding, stating that “good teaching depends on—but is not guaranteed by—a teacher’s subject matter knowledge” (p. 347). Their article analyzes a summer institute they conducted to help in-service teachers develop constructivist teaching practices. The analysis ends with a discussion of the role of subject matter knowledge in the program, pointing out that the program is premised in the idea that the teachers participating in the institute will have a “deep” subject matter knowledge. Thus, when participants’ subject matter knowledge proved, in some cases, not to be strong, it was problematic. The authors are left questioning, and calling for research on, the connections between constructivist teaching and subject matter knowledge.

Diane Holt-Reynolds’ (1997) report on a study of pre-service teachers’ development of subject matter expertise over a period of six semesters points to another problem area. Her informant Taylor, because she had not reached a stage in her own intellectual development where she could accept the ambiguity of no right answers about the meaning of a piece of literature,

resolved her dilemma by redefining what authorities do and by embracing multiplicity as an end in itself. The stance she adopted toward literature, teaching and school children was born of an intellectual activity [William] Perry would call temporizing or retreat. . . . [S]he hid her own lack of intellectual development behind a rhetorical facade few teacher educators might recognize as hollow (p. 6).

Part of what this suggests is that, at least for some teachers, subject matter courses are not important sources of pedagogical content knowledge for literature.

At one point in the research interviews, Taylor says, “. . . I’m afraid I’m not learning how to go about interpreting all books and the steps and processes and how to read to look for the interpretations and that’s what I’m hoping to get out the most” (p. 9). Not only is Taylor at the wrong place in her own intellectual development to learn to teach from her content courses, the courses are not providing the kind of instruction she would need if she were.

Near the end of her discussion Holt-Reynolds says,

Teacher education programs assume that prospective teachers have a body of knowledge they want to teach. We are not set up for routinely helping prospective teachers imagine that they ought actually teach something. We realize they may come to us prepared to teach inaccuracies or thinly understood subject matter. But that we might be working with subject matter majors who see no subject matter at all that is worth knowing—this is beyond what we’ve imagined as our task (p. 21).

Holt-Reynolds is not focusing either on sources of teacher knowledge *per se* or on sources of pedagogical content knowledge. Nor does she contend that Taylor is representative of preservice teachers. Nonetheless, her study is strong argument against content courses as important sources of literature teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge and classroom practices.

Marks (1991) discusses when and how pedagogical content knowledge should be taught—though the assumption that pedagogical content knowledge can be taught also needs to be tested. In the course of his discussion, he points out that when teachers are left on their own to develop pedagogical content knowledge it is a “hit-or-miss affair,” that many teachers

develop little or no pedagogical content knowledge even over a thirty year career and that some develop values that are not appropriate. He advocates requiring teacher candidates to deal with this problem “sometime in their formal preparation for teaching” (p. 3). That position calls into question the value of clinical experience in the development of pedagogical content knowledge, or at least buttresses the arguments for careful mentoring of new teachers. Finally, this study suggests that perhaps neither content nor pedagogy courses currently are very powerful sources of pedagogical content knowledge. However, to Marks, the issue is whether they can be made so. He seems quite firmly grounded in his assumption that pedagogical content knowledge can be taught and that it should be taught prior to student teaching.

Manross, Fincher, Tan, Choi, and Schemp (1994) also looked at the interplay between subject matter expertise and teaching in their study of physical education teachers. While their study doesn't directly address the issue of subject matter knowledge versus pedagogical content knowledge, it does show a marked difference in pedagogical practices and reasoning when a given teacher is teaching a subject in which he/she feels expertise versus one in which he/she does not.

These differences include: (a) recognition of problems in student learning, (b) detail in planning and organizing subject matter, (c) comfort and enthusiasm for teaching, and (d) the ability to accommodate a range of learner skills and abilities. Subject expertise also permits teachers to better identify problems in student learning and provide specific remedies to overcome student difficulties (p. 15).

This study is a little unusual in the literature because it looks at a single teacher as both expert and non-expert in the subject matter in question, thus lessening the influence of teacher preparation course work as a factor. And, though it doesn't deal directly with the issue of the relative importance of content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, it supports the proponents of "deepening teachers' subject matter expertise as a way of improving teaching" (pp. 15-16).

Also on this side of the debate is Calderhead and Miller's (1986) monograph entitled "The Integration of Subject Matter Knowledge in Student Teachers' Classroom Practice." This article basically contends that practice itself is the main source of student teachers' planning and thinking in class. One of the salient findings in the study is that of the sixteen students, "[o]nly one student explicitly linked a college experience to her lesson planning" (p. 18). And though "[o]bviously, students' subject matter knowledge could be influencing their lesson planning indirectly . . .," "[a]t no time did students refer to their own store of subject matter knowledge or to ideas or insights that might have originated from their particular degree studies" (p. 19). In short "possession of subject matter knowledge alone . . . obviously did not strongly influence the on-going thought and action of the student teachers in the classroom" (p. 24). Rather, "their thinking about teaching was very much based upon their own practical experience in the classroom and their observation of, and discussions with, other teachers" (p.

26).

This finding seems consistent with Elbaz's (1991) contention that "teachers' knowledge (at least in contrast to researchers' knowledge) is primarily 'high-context', whereas researchers' knowledge is 'low-context' (p. 13). Elbaz is primarily concerned, of course, with the place of 'story' in educational research, but it directly connects to concerns with teachers' knowledge as well. She contends that "teachers' knowledge in its own terms is ordered by story and can best be understood in this way" (p. 3). She goes on to talk about those "war stories" all teachers tell and suggests that they may be expressions "which encapsulate something important about our work that we have not found it necessary to elaborate in a more explicit way" (p. 4). This seems to me to be in agreement with Schön's (1983) idea of "knowing-in-action." In other words, given the literature on story, it seems to me quite reasonable to say that teachers may hold their knowledge of both content and pedagogical practices in ways that are not readily accessible to researchers except through narrative research. So, I take her statement that "teachers' knowledge grows out of a complex, dialectical relationship with the discursive social matrix that shapes it" (p. 5) to mean that how knowledge is articulated or used depends on the circumstances that call it into play: "as a tale told on an occasion it can change easily, and is unlikely to become frozen into a fixed form" (p. 6). That is, teachers' knowledge is situated knowledge (Brown, Collins and Duguid, 1989) and is called up as they need it

(Gudmundsdottir, 1991b; citing Jackson, 1989).

Both Elbaz and Calderhead and Miller (along with many others) seem to be moving away from the dichotomizing of teacher knowledge into content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge and looking more carefully at the interplay of the two. In this vein, Kathy Carter (1993) says that “the mind is constantly engaged in a process of building models of the causal structures of events, in creating the world ‘according to its own mix of cultural and individual expectations’” and that story is central to our organization of knowledge (p. 7). One of the distinctions between expert and novice teachers is the richness of their stores of “situated or storied knowledge of curriculum content, classroom social processes, academic tasks, and students’ understandings and intentions” (p. 7). Carter contends that stories “convey the multiplicity of ways actions and situations intertwine and thus accurately represent the complex demands of teaching” (p. 10). However, she concludes with the caveat that “[w]e have a great deal to learn about the interpretive space within which story can become teacher-education pedagogy” (p. 10). In her more recent article on “well-remembered events” (Carter, 1994), though, she discusses more directly how stories can be used in teacher education. What I find most salient in this discussion is her statement that “knowledge is organized into explanatory frameworks and, in turn, serves as an interpretive lens in comprehending experience” (p. 236).

Gudmundsdottir’s (1991a) discussion of the relationship between story

and pedagogical content knowledge also works from a similar conception of the nature of knowledge. She says, for instance, that each of the curriculum stories of Harry and David (the teachers on whom she was reporting) “includes events that are significant to its development and excludes those that are insignificant” (p. 215). A bit later, she says, “Teachers have to make meaning for themselves in the content they teach and they have to transform their private meaning into a form they feel students will understand” (p. 216). Given the title and focus of her article, I believe Gudmundsdottir interprets this as evidence that there is a narrative element in pedagogical content knowledge. It seems to me to make an equally good case that knowledge, whether content or pedagogical, is situated and storied. It is the immediate requirements of both the event and the context for the telling of the event that determines what is significant and what is insignificant.

Semb and Ellis (1994), in a discussion of the literature on knowledge retention, point out that “practice, relearning, advanced training, or continued exposure to, or association with, the content during the retention interval facilitates retention” (p. 272). They cite several other memory studies of forgetting and conclude that “different types of interactions result in memories that are more resistant to forgetting” (p. 276). Though this is essentially an empirical study, the researchers point specifically to the possibility that the gains in retention they noted might be better accounted for by researching the relationship between, for instance, situated cognition and

retention (p. 278).

In sum, there are two opposing camps, one favoring the idea of pedagogical content knowledge and one questioning its existence. The bulk of the literature seems to be on the side of pedagogical content knowledge, but the voices from the other side cannot be ignored. Furthermore, the recent shift toward looking at story, or narrative, and knowledge and teaching, reflected in the work of Connelly and Clandinin, Elbaz, Carter, Gudmundsdottir, and others, seems to be a move toward another, more holistic way of looking at knowledge, one that doesn't depend on dividing knowledge into content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge, but sees it as situated in individual experience.

Context

Considerable recent research has dealt with the importance of context in learning to teach. Brousseau, Book and Byers (1988) argue quite convincingly that the “effects of the ‘teaching culture’ on shaping one’s educational beliefs are pervasive. . . .” (p. 38). In an earlier study, Brousseau and Freeman (1988) found that entering teacher candidates already held beliefs quite similar to those of the teacher education faculty. These two studies together, while suggesting quite strongly that a “teaching culture” does exist, lead the investigators to suggest that there might be dangers in “accepting the beliefs of experienced teachers as a standard for teachers-to-be to work toward” (p. 34). In short, these articles argue for the existence of a

teaching culture and see the effects of context on novice teachers' beliefs as pervasive, but are unclear on when and how that culture has its effects.

Rubin (1989) contends that what he calls "pedagogical intelligence," by which he apparently means the ability to make good pedagogical decisions, pedagogical content knowledge included, develops primarily in the classroom, if at all. While he doesn't enter the debate over the value of early field experience—he is studying in-service teachers, not credential candidates—he says

[p]reservice training should provide general education, a knowledge of teaching content, a grounding in instructional theory, and an exposure to tested teaching methods which tend to produce desirable outcomes. Each of these, however, through real-world experience, must be fit into a teaching style that takes advantage of individual aptitudes. Once teachers enter practice, both one-on-one mentoring and involvement in cooperative classroom analysis become essential (p. 33).

In short, according to Rubin, expertise in teaching develops in the classroom, and largely through compilation of experiences filtered through knowledge and theory. Context, then, becomes crucially important.

Rink (1997) supports this argument. One of the important points she makes is that one of the focuses of teacher education must be on helping students create personal meaning. She says that "until students act on/with information it has no meaning for them" (p. 18), an idea she attributes to Maxine Greene. Likewise, Carter and Doyle (1995) say that ". . . foundational content does not typically penetrate novice teachers' personal understandings" (p. 192). Rink follows with a discussion of transfer of

learning, which she sums up by saying that the closer the practice skill mimics the context in which it will be used, the more transfer there will be. In other words, one of the reasons that teachers deny learning from professional course work is that their teaching context hasn't called on that particular information. She also offers as another possible reason for such denial that the teachers never learned the information simply because it was divorced from practice. Thus, she argues for aligning teacher education programs more directly with teaching contexts.

The other important point Rink makes in this article is that simply placing students in varied contexts will not produce appropriate teaching. In other words, Rink advocates something on the order of professional development schools—teaching teachers within specific contexts and carefully guiding their experiences therein.

Rachel Buck, *et al.* (1992) add support to the ideas both of the importance of context and the need for close supervision during induction. Generally, they argue that teachers' perceptions of the school's values in part determine how they will teach. However, their primary finding is that when the school's values are in conflict with the teachers' own beliefs and values, teachers will not align their practices with the school's values. That is, this study seems to argue that the influence of context has limits.

Dana Fox (1992), in her case studies of Rob and Daniel, also argues briefly for the importance of context in learning to teach, though her work

perhaps defines context more narrowly than, for instance, does Gutierrez (1996). In Fox's study, context is the circumstances within which an individual teacher works. Two teachers (Rob and Daniel) within a single department have quite different values and experiences. Thus, the context is the individual teacher's classroom, not the department within which he or she works.

Gutierrez, on the other hand, generally defines context at the subject matter department level. Gutierrez argues that secondary teachers tend to identify themselves with their departments rather than their schools. She doesn't do a very good job of explaining how it happens, but makes a pretty good case that faculty in Math departments she labels as "successful" share a commitment to students and that unsuccessful ones don't. Teachers in the successful departments "relied on a shared conception of the department's main goals to guide their work" (p. 515). They were also more likely to engage in professional development, to network with other teachers, and to participate in professional organizations (p. 516). However strong her arguments, though, Gutierrez doesn't address the issue of whether teacher gravitate toward departments which share their existing beliefs, or whether those beliefs are shaped by the department, even though much of her point seems to be premised in the latter.

Grossman (1999) also believes that departments have an important influence on teachers' beliefs and values regarding their subject matter, but

sees the department as only one of several influential settings. (She uses Lave's distinction between an arena and a setting. The arena is the larger institutional framework; the setting is the more personal context.) Though she doesn't specify her sources, she says very directly that the culture of the schools "mediates teachers' thinking in powerful and lasting ways" (p. 18). She also argues that individuals' own characteristics are important elements in what they appropriate—what theories, beliefs, attitudes, techniques they adopt. These characteristics include the apprenticeship of observation, personal goals and expectations, and knowledge and beliefs. Overall, this article is a call for use of activity theory as a means of reshaping professional development and, as such, argues for the personal and context-centered nature of learning to teach. According to Grossman, once teachers join the work force, the school becomes the primary activity setting for developing conceptions of teaching and learning.

In another article co-authored with Susan Stodolsky (1995), Grossman argues for more attention to the influence of "context" (i. e., "department") on secondary teachers' beliefs and values regarding subject matter. She says, for instance, that "teachers of different subjects bring differing frames of reference to their teaching" (p. 8) and calls for more research, both within and across subject areas, on how various departments socialize new teachers.

In still another 1995 article, Stodolsky and Grossman surveyed all academic teachers in sixteen high schools, in all nearly 500 teachers, to elicit

their conceptions of their subject matter and their perceptions of the amount of control they exercised over their teaching. They contend, as a result, that “teachers’ conceptions and beliefs regarding the subjects they teach, in tandem with departmental policies and norms, may greatly facilitate or deter reform efforts” (p. 245). In this study they also noted clear differences between departments that impact how teachers teach within a given subject field: subject matter creates “distinctive operational contexts” (p. 246).

In their most recent work (2000), Stodolsky and Grossman present a situation in which some teachers within a department are influenced and others aren’t, thus leaning more toward Fox’s perception of context. This recent article, though, is focused more on teachers adapting to the educational needs of diverse students than on influences on teachers. Nonetheless, it shows a pair of teachers in an English department and another pair in a Math department. In both departments, one teacher changes and one doesn’t. One can only conclude from this that department culture is at best a weak force. In fact, the article strongly suggests that individual context is stronger than departmental context.

Gudmundsdottir (1991) also discusses subject matter orientation somewhat. Though her focus is on how pedagogical content knowledge develops rather than on influences on it, she says (citing Herron 1971) that specialization within a content area “gives rise to an orientation to the discipline” (p. 412). That is, subject matter strongly influences teaching

practices. She also says that “[m]aking content knowledge pedagogical involves a reorganization that derives from a disciplinary organization” (p. 412). Like all too many other researchers, she doesn’t explain how this happens.

In sum, there is a burgeoning literature that perceives subject matter departments within most work places to have an important, and strong, role in the shaping of teaching. There is little clear understanding of how that role is enacted, but a seeming consensus that deciphering it is crucial to teacher education.

Field Experience

Such conclusions have led to a strong focus on early field experience in teacher education programs. As it is defined in the literature, the term “early field experience” is used to mean both the student teaching experience and the pre-student teaching experiences, such as the various kinds of observations students do as part of their teacher preparation course work.

In the last two decades, the number of hours of actual in-classroom time required of pre-service teachers has burgeoned. Nancy Hoffman, of West Virginia University, for instance, told me that the teacher preparation program there requires over 400 hours of field experience, not including student teaching.² The national average is probably somewhere around 100

² Personal conversation, AERA, San Francisco, April 18, 1995. I attended a round table discussion with her at AERA, during which she commented that students’ sense of efficacy changes little after their first early

hours. The fact is, though, that “nearly all teacher education programs in the United States include some type of early field-experience requirement” (Stone, 1987, p. 372). Guyton and McIntyre (1990) point out that not only do many teacher education programs include field experience and on-campus components that “lack articulation, function independently, and probably even conflict with each other,” they add hours “without examining what occurs during these experiences” (p. 516). However, the research literature does not support the notion that early field experience has a strong positive effect unless that experience is carefully directed and monitored, something that is not often done.

Jesse Goodman (1985a) says that “just placing students into classrooms does not provide meaningful educational experience” (p. 47). However, he also says that early field experiences, if carefully structured and supervised, have the potential to provide students with the opportunity to develop in various important ways (p. 46). In fact, in another article (1985b), he speaks directly to the negative effects of such field experiences:

[T]he findings of this study suggest that these field experiences do little more than assimilate novices into traditional patterns of teaching. Overall, the field experiences within the EEP had a conservative effect on the students’ perspectives and actions, tending to inhibit students’ creativity, intellectual involvement in curriculum and range of teaching practices (p. 47).

field experience. That first experience is the shortest of the four they have and occurs in the late sophomore or early junior year. I asked how many hours total students spent in classrooms. Her response was “400 or more.”

Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985) seem to share this opinion. Though they speak specifically about the student teaching component, they argue that, because the classrooms are deceptively familiar to students' prior experiences, and because school classrooms are not set up for teaching teachers, the "pitfalls" students may encounter in actual classrooms have a negative impact on their learning to teach, that they actually impede such learning.

Jane Applegate (1985) is perhaps a bit more positive (or perhaps only less negative) than Goodman. She says that ". . . there is little opportunity [for practicum students] to question or to reflect upon their observations and experiences with people in the school setting. Sometimes students finish the field experience wondering what was to be learned; they spent time watching teachers and students in classrooms, much the same as they did for 13 years as students themselves" (p. 63). In a later article (1987), she says both that what one learns during field experiences is arbitrary and individual, and that it will remain so until more research is done on it.

McIntyre and Killian (1986) argue that, since secondary field experience students "do not interact with the students in any way during a substantial number of the visits," we must question whether these experiences really introduce students to the "real world" of teaching (p. 5).

Britzman (1991) likewise argues against field experience as the best way to teach teachers. As her title (Practice Makes Practice) implies, her

study points out that many teachers believe that one learns to teach by doing—on-the-job training, learning by experience, and the like—but that the overall effect of these beliefs is the reinforcement of existing classroom practices, the molding of novice teachers into the image of the veteran teachers. The kind of unreflective experience she looks at teaches novice teachers to reshape/modify their ideas about what teaching is and how to do it into conformity with what is already being done. She says that “. . . to place student teachers in compulsory school settings and to expect them to act as if they have entered a neutral zone where they can single-handedly fashion it into places of learning sets them up for the discursive practices of self-blame” and “. . . inhibits the development of practices that could be internally persuasive” (p. 221). If the purpose of teacher education is to replicate existing practices, then student teaching does its job, but if its purpose is to be an internship during which a novice learns to be a professional, then it falls quite short.

Chastko (1993) also argues that we need to perhaps reexamine the focus on field experience. She suggests that, because of the variations in teachers, and because of the difficulty some experienced teachers have in shifting from classroom teacher to teacher educator, field experience may do nothing more than perpetuate an unproblematized view of teaching and learning to teach. In all, she calls for a careful reanalysis of the field experience issue.

Bonar (1985) argues that the key element in the value of early field experience is structured activities. He says, "Field experiences that operate without planned curriculum emanating from sound theory provide little hope that future teachers will act differently on the job than the teachers whose classrooms they visit" (p. 44).

While he also supports the idea of such structured experiences, Zeichner (1987), though, argues that we don't yet know enough to determine the value of such experiences and calls for studies that are thorough enough to examine the whole "ecology" of the experiences.

One thing that remains consistent throughout much of the literature on early field experiences is that we really don't know what impact, if any, these experiences have on subsequent teaching (Guyton and McIntyre, 1990; McIntyre and Killian, 1986; Gleismann, 1984; Zeichner, 1985, 1987; Bonar, 1985; Applegate, 1985, 1987; Waxman and Walberg, 1986; Goodman, 1985a, 1985b). The researchers consistently call for more, and more systematic, study of early field experience, and more careful monitoring.

Learning to Teach Literature

Little seems to have been written on how literature teachers learn to teach the things they teach, though it seems a natural area to probe given the voluminous interest in teachers' knowledge in general. In fact, Dan Donlan's study (1990) entitled "Where English Teachers Get Their Ideas" is one of two I turned up that is directly on the subject of my interest. This study

surveys twenty-five English teachers about their sources of ideas with a ten-item survey, which was formulated by brainstorming with his colleagues and graduate students, and which includes such items as the definition of a preposition. Donlan makes the point that “it is possible for an English teacher to choose from nearly fifty thousand ways to build a language arts lesson around one work of literature” (p. 4). His purpose is to study teachers’ use of theory and research, commercial texts and materials, tradition and lore, staff development workshops, and original creation as their sources. A weakness in his study is that he establishes these sources through the literature rather than asking teachers.

Pamela Grossman (1988, 1989a, 1989b, 1990, 1991a, 1992), Sigrun Gudmundsdottir (1991), Carol Grant (1992), and others, have published a number of works on the pedagogical content knowledge of English teachers. These works, though valuable for their contribution to knowledge about learning to teach and the nature of teaching, all presume a degree of similarity in English teachers that I cannot accept. That is, they ignore or overlook the less formal sources of information that Donlan, for instance, focuses on.

Grossman says that:

[t]eachers can acquire pedagogical content knowledge from a variety of sources. Beginning teachers can draw upon their subject matter knowledge and can also refer back to their own apprenticeships of observation that provide them models of teaching particular topics. Teacher education, particularly the subject-specific component of teacher education, represents a third potential source for the acquisition of pedagogical content knowledge (1989a, p. 25).

In another article, "Selection and organization of content for secondary English" (1991a) Grossman deals rather cursorily with teachers' sources of knowledge about the teaching of English. She lists the apprenticeship of observation, subject matter knowledge, classroom teaching experience, colleagues, and professional preparation as sources (p. 40), but the main focus of the article is on the influence of subject matter course work. In fact, one of the main points of the article is that those teachers who have gone through "professional course work" think differently about literature teaching than those who are not graduates of teacher education programs. For the purposes of my study, the flaw in this article is that it assumes the teachers' sources of knowledge rather than researching them. In fact, in her discussion of sources of curricular knowledge, Grossman asserts that the six teachers drew upon a number of sources, but then lists only three—the apprenticeship of observation, subject matter courses, and teaching contexts, which she elaborates as curriculum guides and departmental expectations.

Though I find both Grossman and Donlan's discussions of some value, neither makes a serious study of the sources. Both accept the standard assumptions about how teachers learn.

English Teacher Knowledge

Besides the general literature, there is also a literature specifically devoted to English teachers' knowledge. For instance, Dana Fox (1992) suggests that novice teachers need to be helped to develop "personally-

situated theories of learning and teaching” and contends that they must be enabled “to begin to see themselves as knowledge-makers and knowledge-creators rather than knowledge-receivers” (p. 11). In a later article (1994), Fox stresses helping students to examine and, perhaps, restructure their beliefs about English and English teaching. Both the sentiment and the wording of her conclusion is consistent with the idea that, though pre-service teachers may not be either clear or consistent in their beliefs, those beliefs are part of a larger belief structure situated in their own experiences and values. But, as Fox points out in her 1995 article, consistent with Calderhead and Miller (1986), the learning to teach seems to have to occur in the practice of teaching. Maureen and Susan’s quite different beliefs about what English should be and their different first-year experiences in both cases led to quite similar results: a need to readjust preconceptions both about English and about teaching as a result of experience. She cites Wilson, Ritchie, and Gulyas’ (1993) statement that

... what students come to understand and practice as teachers is largely shaped by the murmured stories they’ve heard over their years of experience as students in school and as members of our culture [and] also the result of their own identities, personal histories, and agendas and how those identities are mobilized as they come in contact with the roles held out to them by the educational culture (p. 2).

Though this article is in the tradition of the critical pedagogues, and thus uses “story” and “narrative” in a slightly different way than the other works discussed herein, it nonetheless belongs with those other works that see teachers’ knowledge as in a perpetual state of “becoming” and as shaped by

practice.

In the article discussed above, Grossman (1991a) speaks to the issue of the sources of English teachers' knowledge, contending that, though it is influenced by a number of other external factors, such as district guidelines, "it is a teacher's own knowledge and beliefs concerning the teaching of English that continues to exert a major influence on the particular version of English appearing in any given classroom" (p. 39). This study of six English teachers, three of whom were products of a teacher education program and three who were not, illustrates clearly that the two groups "hold differing knowledge and beliefs regarding the nature of English curriculum" (p. 44). She points out that the teacher education graduates based their decisions about works to teach and emphasis and organization in their courses on what they had learned in their teacher education courses. She also points out that "the contexts in which they taught also served as a source of knowledge" (p. 48), consistent with what we have seen in the other articles discussed above.

Dana Fox's "The Influence of Context, Community, and Culture" (1992) focuses on the forces or influences that surround teaching and impinge on what a teacher does in the classroom. One of Fox's ideas that strikes me is that student teachers "struggle for their own individual voices" (p. 2). I believe that struggle to be, at least for many teachers, a career-long one because one's conception of literature and of teaching literature is not static, and it occurs in all three of the contexts Fox presents. As she says near the

end of "From English Major to English Teacher" (1995), "*we should remember to reconsider the importance of context in learning to teach* (p. 23, emphasis in original).

In "What is Literature?" (1994) Fox points out that subject-matter methods courses are not always and necessarily the source of English teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. If Larry failed to be influenced by his methods course (Fox, p. 399), might not others? Where do teachers' ideas come from? Fox's most recent article on this subject, "Learning to Teach through Inquiry" (1996), suggests that learning to teach one's subject is a skill that occurs in the classroom. Fox says, "recognize that your research will probably lead to changes in your attitudes about particular students, your teaching methods, or even the overall design of your classroom curriculum." (p. 117). While she does not discount the value of content courses or pedagogy courses, she sees the kind of case study research she is reporting on as enabling students "to rethink their conventional conceptions of learning to teach" and "to move toward a view of teaching as a continual learning process" (p. 116). Overall, this article, then, supports the idea that sources other than those described by the Knowledge Growth Project are important.

Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) say that "learning to teach is a form of '(un)becoming' the identity one brings to the process of learning to teach" (p. 81). Their article, though not directly related to literature teaching, suggests very strongly that learning to teach happens after certification and

employment as a teacher. While that doesn't necessarily exclude the traditional knowledge sources, the central focus of this article is on ways of overcoming the less desirable preconceptions and practices that novice teachers bring with them and that currently permeate, albeit unseen, teacher education curricula.

Anne Reynolds' interesting article (1995) on the disjuncture between what novice teachers are expected to know and what they really know is also relevant to my study. Probably most salient is the comment that one of Grossman and Richert's findings was that "secondary school teachers *created* frameworks for thinking about the purposes for teaching specific subjects, *even though their teacher education courses did not address this aspect of teaching*" (p. 214, my emphasis). This, and numerous other similar statements about the process of learning to teach, argues that much of the knowledge teachers use they generate for themselves. That is, though content courses, pedagogy courses, and apprenticeships of observation are important knowledge sources, other sources are significant as well.

Feiman-Nemser and Remillard (1995)'s Issue Paper 95-3, prepared for the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, citing an enormous quantity of research material, also supports some focus on the alternative knowledge sources when it makes the direct statement that "learning teaching inevitably occurs on the job" (p. 4).

Wilson, Ritchie, and Gulyas' "Composing Experience and Knowledge"

(1993) also supports my belief about how English teachers learn: “. . . what students come to understand and practice as teachers is largely shaped by the murmured stories they’ve heard over their years of experience as students in schools and as members of our culture” (p. 2). I believe that process does not end when those students become teachers in their own classrooms.

Furthermore, I think Wilson *et al.* are referring to the apprenticeship of observation more than to the kind of focused conversations specifically about teaching literature that I have experienced. However, the idea of “murmured stories” suggests to me the informal knowledge sources—sources outside those usually treated in the research literature.

One of the problems with trying to determine teachers’ sources of knowledge is, of course, determining what knowledge they have. Considerable research supports the idea that teachers hold their knowledge in individual ways.

Diane Holt-Reynolds’ (1996) study, entitled “Teaching What I’ve Learned: Prospective Literature Teachers’ Use of Their Own Expertize [sic] to Conceptualize A Teaching Role,” points out the importance of understanding how pre-service teachers “envision” their profession and the effects those visions have on their learning of literature. What teachers learn and do is, according to Holt-Reynolds, intimately connected to how they think about literature.

Arthur Applebee’s Curriculum as Conversation: Transforming

Traditions of Teaching and Learning (1996) argues for helping students acquire “knowledge-in-action,” rather than “knowledge-out-of-context,” for helping them enter the “conversation,” rather than learning about the conversation that constitutes the center of any discipline. He says, for example, that “only through participation guided by others will students develop the knowledge-in-action that will enable them to participate effectively on their own” in the cultural conversation (p. 62). Later, he says that students “learn the characteristic discourse of each subject through the mediation of the teacher’s actions” (p. 103). In short, teachers are crucial to the learning process as mediators and as models for the process of thinking about the contents of a field. That answers the objections to reader-response, for instance, as “anything goes.” Teachers model thinking and how to support one’s thinking, and students learn by following the model. Teachers help student to learn, not just to think, but to *think about*.

Applebee also argues against aligning teacher education with school curricula. He contend that, because, for instance, the discourses are different in history and geography, we need to prepare history teachers and geography teachers so they understand the discourse of the discipline. Schools, on the other hand, would probably prefer the more generalist “social studies” teacher who can teach in both disciplines. But, since students learn by modelling the teacher’s discourse, they are better served by the more specialized history or geography teacher. In English, it follows, then, that we

would do better to prepare literature teachers and writing teachers, rather than “English” (or “language arts”) teachers.

Implicit in both these arguments is the idea that teachers come to the schools prepared to teach, with command of the material and a vision of the subject-matter. Though he doesn’t speak directly about how one acquires these things, it seems obvious that Applebee perceives the disciplinary course work as shaping the prospective teacher.

Though Bretz and Persin’s (1987) “The application of critical theory to literature at the introductory level: A working model for teacher preparation” specifically outlines a course in teaching methods for Hispanic literature, what it describes, as the authors point out, could also be applied to English literature. Because of their concern that there seem to be no courses that teach how to teach literature, coupled with the well established notion that novice literature teachers approach analysis of literature in the same mode that they learned to analyze it (usually Formalist), these authors designed and taught a course that focused on how to teach literature through a variety of critical perspectives. Though they don’t give very specific details about the day-to-day, they do describe the course in general terms. Essentially, the course was built around “here’s how you might teach this piece from a feminist critical perspective; here’s how you might teach it from a meta-literature perspective,” etc. Students first studied a particular critical method, then applied that method to a piece of literature, then learned about

ways of transferring that to their own classrooms.

Though the article very directly relates to what I am inquiring into, unfortunately, it lacks detail, and it also assumes, without supporting the assumption, that literature teachers approach literature as they were taught.

Britzman's (1992) "Structures of feeling in curriculum and teaching" is a rather interesting article and is valuable to my inquiry for both what it has to say about the nature of English education students and what it implies ought to be the focus of English methods. First, Britzman characterizes the English education student as essentially conservative about the content and purpose of English curriculum. That is, "many . . . students expect to teach what they have been taught, the 'canon'" (p. 253). They are, she says, simply so thoroughly socialized that they can't think otherwise, can't imagine other "identities of teachers and students and the knowledges they produce in the classroom" (p. 253). This monolithic view makes it difficult for them to "make sense of the contradictory realities of the classroom" (p. 253).

Those contradictory realities are the connections between curriculum and social life—issues of domination and subjugation, issues of voice and power and authority. And there, Britzman suggests, is where the focus ought to be in English methods: on illuminating how such things ("students' structures of feelings") interact with the text to generate meaning, on helping students understand that methodology is a social rather than a technical issue.

Cavanaugh (1995) reports the findings of a survey he conducted of

150 English teachers to find out what they thought about how English/Language Arts teachers might be better prepared for teaching. Essentially what they call for is “more substantial knowledge of the major literary works” (p. 43), better knowledge of planning—both daily and long-term—better knowledge of classroom management, which the respondents tied to a “more substantial field component during teacher preparation” (p. 44), and so on. While this study offers no surprises, it does lend support to the idea that “guided participation” is important in preparation of literature teachers.

Renee Clift (1991) argues, primarily, that teacher preparation programs need to help pre-service literature teachers acquire the complex knowledge schemes, or schemata, that help them bring together domains of knowledge they hold separately. For instance, a teacher may hold knowledge of how to analyze literature and knowledge that individual students learn differently. What may be lacking is a bridge between these domains—Pedagogical Content Knowledge.

Clift recommends, though in a very soft-peddling way, use of carefully constructed cases as a possible way to nurture development of such schemata. She also makes a strong case for research that inquires “into developing teachers’ understandings of [the teacher education] curriculum throughout teacher preparation for the purpose of redesigning that curriculum” (p. 369). Her recommendation to use carefully constructed cases is consistent with the

literature on learning to teach and the literature on context.

Collins' 1992 book, Vital Signs 3: Restructuring the English Classroom, is a collection of essays, according to the editor, "about change and who should control it" (p. v). Of particular interest in considering literature teachers' preparation is Smagorinsky's essay, "Reconfiguring the English Classroom for Multiple Intelligences" (pp. 35-45) because, as the title says, it calls for reconceptualizing what English teaching is. His own study of the organization of English Methods courses in 81 universities (Smagorinsky and Whiting, 1995) points out that English Methods is conservatively conceived in most University programs, so this article provides a kind of nice solution to the problem he describes in the 1995 book. However, this essay, which offers numerous suggestions for classroom activities in restructured classrooms, and points out clearly its philosophical position (constructivist), doesn't talk about how to reorganize literature methods courses to prepare teachers for such classrooms, nor does it deal very directly with the issue of how literature teachers learn their craft. Rather, like so much else in the research literatures, it assumes that, if the teacher education professors will but tell the preservice students, the preservice students will go do. There is little in the research literature to support such an assumption.

Though its focus is on elementary teacher preparation, Craig, Bright and Smith's (1994) "Preservice teachers' reactions to an interactive constructive approach to English language arts course work" is rather

interesting for its affirmation of the necessity of teacher educators' modelling the kind of practice they presume to teach, an idea the authors substantiate through their own study and by reference to prior research. The article makes a similar case that pre-service teachers must experience the practices they are going to use with their students. That is, "[t]o construct new schemata for teaching, students must link prior knowledge and experiences of teaching and learning with observation of and participation in practice congruent with current views of English language arts research, theory and instruction" (p. 96). Only through such direct experience can the effects of the "apprenticeship of observation" be overcome. Like much of the literature on English teacher preparation I've looked at, it argues for pedagogy course work that (1) provides authentic experiences with teaching, such as cases, guided observations, and/or small group inquiry, (2) models the teaching practices being touted, (3) is grounded in a constructivist philosophy, (4) aims to enable pre-service teachers to develop new schemes of knowledge about teaching and learning, and (5) values real learning above "coverage" of content. In short, the work recognizes knowledge sources other than the traditional ones on which so much of teacher preparation is currently based.

"Teachers' perceptions of the goals of education in the USA," by Hoffman, Hudson, and Hudson (1991), reports a study of 279 teachers in Atlanta, GA, which asked them to rank-order various statements about purposes of education. Generally, teaching basic skills seems to be the

consensus, findings the authors hold to be consistent with Goodlad's findings.

I find that depressing, because it calls into question the value of any kind of reform agenda in a Methods course. On the other hand, it strengthens my agreement with Applebee that university teacher preparation faculty should not try to align teacher education curriculum with the schools' conception of what a teacher should be. More to the point of my inquiry, though, this study calls into question the influence of course work.

Chapters 9 and 10 of Kutz and Roskelly's An Unquiet Pedagogy: Transforming Practice in the English Classroom (1991), though, speak to a solution. The authors characterize the teacher as "an informed reader who models useful responses" (p. 274), one who works at shifting classroom authority to the learners themselves. They recommend, for instance, using response groups in literature classes in which the teacher only models responses, not directs them. In essence, their idea is based in Freire's idea that learners teach themselves and that the teacher's role is to enable them to do that.

Chapter 10 deals primarily with adapting standard curricula to these teaching methods. The writers describe in great detail how one student teacher makes this adaptation, commenting that he "reinvents" the standard curriculum by "connecting these details [from the novel The Outsiders] with the events and people in [his students'] own world, and illuminating that real world as well as the world of the novel" (p. 305). In general, this seems to be

what Kutz and Roskelly advocate: “reinventing” the imposed curriculum as a “responsive” curriculum that is built around students’ ways of knowing.

[E]ffective sequencing of work will grow out of discovering what learners know and helping them build on that knowledge, seeing and reseeing it from different perspectives, negotiating about it in dialogue with others, and representing it in different ways to different (and real) audiences” (p. 313).

The final section of this book, “Strategies for the teacher and learner,” details a process whereby teachers can begin learning this kind of teaching, a process that might be adapted to the literature methods course to begin moving pre-service teachers toward thinking about teaching in this way.

Anne Reynolds’ “What is competent beginning teaching? A review of the literature” (1992) provides a list of what Reynolds and those she cites seem to agree are the minimal qualifications for beginning teachers in any discipline. Those characteristics are:

- knowledge of the subject matter they will teach;
- The disposition to find out about their students and school, and the ethnographic and analytic skills to do so;
- Knowledge of the strategies, techniques, and tools for creating and sustaining a learning community, and the skills and abilities to employ these strategies, techniques and tools;
- Knowledge of pedagogy appropriate for the content area they will teach; and
- The disposition to reflect on their own actions and students’ responses in order to improve their teaching, and the strategies and tools for doing so (p. 26).

While the list is nice to have, it doesn’t speak to how one goes about acquiring those qualities.

Stephen Tchudi’s Language, Schooling, and Society: Proceedings of

the International Federation for the Teaching of English Seminar (1984) contains a couple of essays of value to my inquiry. Mary Maguire, in “Language, Schooling, and Teacher Education” (pp. 81-88), says, “The essence of Teacher Education . . . is how to make people . . . aware of their own meanings and the meanings of others” (p. 88). This statement, coming at the end of a brief essay grounded in Polanyi’s ideas about how people learn, suggests that the “what to do on Monday morning” approach to literature methods is doomed to failure. Humans are not computers, so linear, positivistic approaches to teaching don’t fit how humans learn. Methods courses need to be built around providing pre-service literature teachers with opportunities to study and reflect on how students make meaning (or don’t) out of literature—context-centered, individualized, perhaps case-based.

In the essay that follows Maguire’s, James Moffett (“Hidden Impediments,” pp. 89-100) offers a grim picture of education, making the point that, as schools collapse—as he thinks they certainly will—they will be forced to involve the community (i. e., non-educators) in teaching its children. Moffett specifically focuses on three keys to improving the curriculum:

(1) individualization of the learning tasks so that individuals are frequently doing different things from one another at the same time; (2) interaction among individuals for oral language development and the benefits of small-group dynamics in all of the language arts; and (3) integration of learning across subjects, media, and kinds of discourse so that individuals may continuously synthesize their own thought structures (p. 97).

These, he says, will require much heavier dependence on the lay

community; not only are schools going broke, but the increasing pluralism of schools also demands a change in how schools operate. From all this, I take the idea that pre-service teachers need to learn teaching methods compatible with the three elements he outlines (above). “No longer will it be possible to pretend to educate well by a single, standardized curriculum” (p. 99). Moffett specifically mentions “language-experience” and “read-along,” but implies a wider range of tactics, all of which are more labor intensive and require, therefore, different adult-to-student ratios than currently prevail in schools. Of particular interest to my inquiry is that he outlines a kind of constructivist “teaching” that is at odds with traditional teacher education.

History of Literature Teaching

There is also a fairly substantial research base on how literature is being and has been taught, a brief review of which will help to situate my study of literature teachers’ discussions of how they have learned to teach.

Beach and Marshall’s Teaching Literature in the Secondary School (1990) is one such work. As a methods textbook, it seems like a very useful one. It provides a lot of strategies for teaching literature (and writing), considerable discussion of selecting works, discussion of assessment alternatives, and the like. I can easily imagine using it as the anchor text in a literature methods course. It doesn’t add much to any debate about what literature methods ought to be, but does provide a good glimpse of what literature methods currently is. As is the case with so much of the methods

literature, it doesn't test its own assumptions about how teachers learn to teach.

Bunbury and Ross' "How teacher education can focus on the teaching of English" (1985) is mildly interesting because it gives a quick picture of the state of the profession. Basically, it finds that teachers are divided in what they consider the best approach to teaching literature. The main choices are "aesthetic knowledge" (traditional literary criticism) and "involvement" (a variant of reader-response). The authors point out that most of the assessment in both camps moves toward "involvement," regardless of teaching focus. The article concludes only that "[t]his important meeting ground of theory and practice is certainly open to further research" (p. 9). It offers no suggestions about teacher preparation, for instance, nor any arguments or judgements about preferred practice.

Aimed primarily at teachers instead of teachers of teachers, Bushman and Bushman's Teaching English Creatively (1986) is little more than a collection of activities of varying quality. While it might function quite well as a supplementary text in a literature methods course, it offers no discussion of teacher preparation, does not engage in any considerations of the nature of the literature curriculum, and generally seems to assume that all that is wrong with literature teaching in secondary schools is the kinds of activities teachers use. It is, in short, a resource book for desperate teachers, but, because it does not seem to recognize that there is any problem in literature teaching, it tells

me something about how the profession is perceived by teachers.

Robert Probst's book, Response and Analysis: Teaching Literature in Junior and Senior High School (1988), is really aimed at the classroom teacher, not the teacher of pre-service teachers. As such, it doesn't seem to have much value to my specific inquiry. I don't mean to disparage the book in any way; from the classroom teacher's perspective, it is a very useable book. It offers a lot of "how-to," a lot of explanation of Rosenblatt's theory, and several reading lists. Thus, I see its major usefulness in a literature methods course as being "additional readings." For the purposes of my research, it is useful only as a picture of what is currently going on in classrooms.

Shuman's volume of essays, Education in the 80's: English (1981) has little to offer—despite its subtitle—in regard to how literature teachers are, or should be, prepared. Several of the essays address particular aspects of teacher preparation, such as Betty Cleaver's chapter entitled "The Media and the English Curriculum" and Jan Guffin's "English for the Gifted and Talented," but none of them directly discuss pre-service literature methods courses as they currently exist, or as they ought to be. Cleaver's article, for instance, ranges widely through the technology available (in 1981) to teachers, but doesn't consider how it is to be included in teacher preparation. She discusses its availability and its value in the classroom, but not how it fits into teacher preparation. Even more distressing is the opening statement in

Shuman's own chapter, entitled "The training of English teachers in the '80's," that "[t]he content of teacher training programs in English should reflect English as it is defined by the schools" (p. 89). I say "distressing" because it is an idea in conflict with what the majority of researchers I looked at are saying, and one that implies that teacher preparation should be a force for conservation rather than for change, that there is no need for improvement in how literature teachers are prepared.

Smagorinsky, McCann, and Kern's (1987) Explorations: Introductory Activities for Literature and Composition, 7-12 gives a useful picture of how English gets taught. While the central focus is the activities themselves, the activities are broad-ranging but centered on the idea of providing students with schemata for comprehending literature. The authors accurately point out that most "pre-reading" exercises, such as those found in many anthologies, don't provide such schemata. So, on the one hand, we can see that there are efforts in the direction of constructivist teaching, but, on the other hand, we also see that traditional teaching is alive and well in English classes.

Stables' An Approach to English (1992) is a discussion of the place of English in the school curriculum in the United Kingdom following the imposition of the National Curriculum. As such, it is of some value as background material for those just entering the secondary school teaching profession. The author says, "[i]f we have any belief in any kind of democratic system we must encourage new teachers to formulate answers to

these question [about the nature and function of English as an academic discipline] during initial training and to modify those answers continually in the light of professional practice and further informed reflection” (p. 1).

The answer-frame Staples suggests is what he calls “a pragmatic liberalism” (p. 2), an effort to find some accommodation with the mechanistic view of teachers, teaching, learning, and students underlying the National Curriculum in Great Britain. While this book doesn’t really help me in trying to figure out how a pre-service teachers should be taught or how a literature methods course should be organized, it provides food for thought about imposed standards, a reality most of my students will probably confront in some form or the other.

Sunstein (1994) discusses how English teachers have viewed the place of the literary canon in the curriculum. The conclusion is that its popularity with teachers comes and goes, but, because textbook publishers and other non-teachers control what actually makes it into curricula, the canon endures in literature classrooms, and is likely to continue to do so. In response to the question, “Should our new teachers prepare differently?” Sunstein says the question is unanswerable (p. 53). The history of the literature curriculum in American schools that it provides is rather interesting to read, and the book’s focus on the role of commercial materials in curriculum buttresses the argument for alternative sources of teachers’ practices. Thus, the work is quite valuable to my research.

Stephen Tchudi's "How do good English curricula develop?" (1990) is a rather enlightening article. In the study it describes, Tchudi set out to determine the process by which English curricula get developed. He surveyed leaders of 132 NCTE Centers of Excellence, using an open-ended instrument that asked them to describe their curriculum revision processes. One of his main findings is that curriculum revision was most often teacher-initiated, rather than mandated by administrators or school boards. To this, he says, "If the imposition of mandated curriculum is a problem in our profession, it happens in districts other than those represented by the Centers of Excellence" (p. 18). He also says that "[t]he Center programs clearly reflect new directions, national and even international trends in English language arts instruction" (p. 18). Of course, his findings may, as he points out, apply only to Center schools. Though the study was conducted prior to the big push toward "standards," he does not dismiss the continuing public concern for basic skills and traditional, canonical standards. His discussion, though, is quite consistent with the research on the importance of context—whether "arena" or "setting"—and individual practices.

Stephen Tchudi's Planning and assessing the curriculum in English language arts (1991) discusses Language Arts curriculum development, and seems to be intended for in-service teachers and curriculum developers. It does a pretty good job of outlining not only the pitfalls of curriculum development, but also varieties of curricula that new teachers (and veterans)

may encounter in the schools. It certainly covers ground that is not normally covered in pre-service courses. Part Three, for instance, is “A Curriculum Developer’s Handbook,” not something that ordinarily gets much attention in English Methods courses, according to his own 1995 study.

Of particular value in this section is some fairly specific discussion of “curriculum patterns,” including “Language Centered,” “Humanities/Core,” “English Within the Arts,” “The Tripod,” and others. It’s a nice summary of the existing options that I think would be useful for prospective teachers to think about. Grossman’s studies of novice English teachers, for instance, shows, among other things, that how novice teachers structure their syllabi is very much determined by the models provided in their methods courses.

In summary, the research on the preparation of literature teachers, slight though it is, suggests that it suffers the same problems as the more general parts of teacher preparation. That is, there is too much reliance on unsubstantiated assumptions about how one learns to teach and too little focus on individual cases. However, there seems to be a fairly strong consensus that “context” is important and that careful mentoring of both preservice and novice teachers is crucial.

Conclusions

My survey of the various research literatures discussed above leads me to some general conclusions. One is that teachers hold their professional knowledge in ways that do not lend themselves to easy description or simple

generalization. They seem to hold it as situated knowledge, or perhaps as context-specific images—what Clandinin and Connelly (1995, 1996) call “landscapes”—and narratives. Furthermore, acquisition of that knowledge does not seem to occur in ways that university teacher education programs can easily manipulate or respond to. Rather, acquisition seems to be an extremely complex and individual system of influences beginning with the beliefs and values acquired during the apprenticeship of observation and continuing throughout one’s professional life. If indeed my interpretations of the literature are accurate, I believe they argue for a field-based teacher education experience during which preservice teachers are carefully and closely supervised and mentored. They suggest to me that there is enough truth in the widespread contention that teachers learn on the job to justify moving, for instance, the teaching of theory into a practical venue so students are getting theory in concert with the circumstances in which they need it. The research literature also suggests to me that there is considerable evidence that literature teachers learn a large portion of the specifics of their craft from what I have called above the “non-traditional” or “alternative” sources—conversations with colleagues, publisher-generated materials, etc. That leads me to the conclusion that there is a strong possibility that the knowledge sources currently routinely treated in literature methods courses are not the dominant sources of literature teachers’ knowledge.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This chapter will discuss the methodology used in acquiring and analyzing the data for this study. First, I will explain how I collected the information, and from whom, then I will explain how I analyzed the data.

Research Questions

My primary research question is “what do literature teachers report are the sources of the knowledge that they use in their daily teaching of literature?” Along with these, however, I will also be looking for answers to these questions:

- How do the respondents’ reports of knowledge sources correspond to the dominant knowledge sources reported in the research literature?
- Do these teachers’ reports of their knowledge sources suggest the need for additional research on the topic of literature teachers’ knowledge sources?
- Do their own educational and personal backgrounds appear to influence what knowledge sources literature teachers report?

The Study

This is a qualitative study because I believe the observation and interview method provide the best access to the information I am looking for—that is, I am not testing a hypothesis, but attempting to arrive at one: specifically, I wanted to learn more clearly than the existing research literature permits how literature teachers learn to teach literature. The “existing theory

does not provide an adequate or appropriate explanation” (Merriam, 1988, p. 59). To date, as I have discussed in my literature review, the published research does not completely cover the range of information sources. Partly because there is such an enormous number of possible approaches to any given piece of literature, interviews provide the most viable means of collecting the desired information about the sources of knowledge teachers use in their teaching of literature. It would be virtually impossible to construct a survey form, for instance, to adequately elicit the information about sources; there are simply too many possibilities.³ Also, I am looking for what teachers think, not for what researchers or others think they think. It seems self-evident, then, that in order to get teachers’ thoughts I needed to use interviews. Silverman (1993) says that the best way to achieve this focus on how the informants construct their worlds is “. . . unstructured, open-ended interviews . . . based upon prior, in-depth participant observation” (p. 91). Bogdan and Bicklen (1992, p. 96) say “the interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subjects’ own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world.” Thus, my primary data collection method is the interview, with some of the interview questions based in prior observation.

³ Dan Donlan (1990) says that if one considers all the critical perspectives, all the teaching methods, and all the possible activity bases one might use, there are approximately 50,000 ways one might teach any particular piece of literature. Even if his number is incorrect, there are certainly numerous possibilities.

Interview Questions

Though I observed each informant teach “a lesson” prior to the interview, the purpose of the observation, as explained below in the “Data Analysis” section, was to gather specific information to help me formulate contextualized, specific interview questions. In all three instances, the observation lasted two class periods over two different days. I specifically asked to observe at a time that I could see an entire lesson (“lesson” was defined by the individual teacher) from beginning to end. During the observation, I sat in as unobtrusive a place in the room as I could find and took notes. I also audiotaped the lessons as a backup to my notes. After the observation, and after I had studied my observation notes, the next step was to conduct and audio-tape a semi-structured interview with each of the teachers about how they learned to do the specific things they did in the lessons I had observed, and about their perceptions of their sources for the practices they used. Though I used essentially the same questions in all the interviews, I varied them to meet the demands of the particular interview and in accord with what I had observed in their classrooms (Spradley, 1979; Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Using what Sharan Merriam (1988) and Bogdan and Bicklen (1992) call a “semi-structured interview,” I started with a list of general questions that permitted me to gather similar information from all informants, but that did not require precisely similar wording or sequencing. As Merriam says,

“This format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging world view of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic” (p. 74). That proved to be very important in my first interview, for instance, because my informant mentioned a knowledge source I had not thought of. Bogdan and Bicklen assert that “[w]ith semistructured interviews you are confident of getting comparable data across subjects, but you lose the opportunity to understand how the subjects themselves structure the topic at hand” (p. 97). Since “comparable data across subjects” was more important to me than how my informants structured the topics, I chose the semi-structured interview format. However, I did include a much more open-ended question at the end to help cover the possibility that the teachers simply labelled the sources (i. e., “structured the topics”) differently than I did. One of the things I hoped to learn is the relative importance to the teachers of the knowledge sources listed in my interview questions.

My interview questions were based in Spradley. For instance, I used the loose kind of questioning that he identifies with “friendly conversation” (p. 58.) I also used questions that Spradley calls “project explanations” (p. 59). That is, I frequently reiterated to my informants what the purpose of the interview was. I also used Spradley’s “interview explanation” (p. 59). In these, I asked my informants to tell me how they would prepare a hypothetical lesson—what steps they would take. My purpose was to use these answers to triangulate what the teachers were telling me in response to

other questions. As noted above, I also observed each informant teaching for a couple of class periods before I conducted the interviews. The purpose here was to provide me with specific examples I could turn into questions. In the interviews, I returned to these observations and asked questions like, “Why did you _____,” the blank being filled with a specific reference to something I had observed the teacher do in an actual lesson. (A generic copy is attached as Appendix A; the actual questions vary somewhat for each informant.)

I used three different kinds of questions: (1) questions designed to collect background information about the informants, (2) open-ended questions designed to elicit information about the informants’ beliefs about the sources of various teaching techniques they actually used in their teaching, and (3) specific, narrow questions about whether the teacher depended on particular (specified) sources of pedagogical content knowledge. The open-ended questions were formulated after the observations. In addition to these questions, I also used probes as necessary. These were questions formulated on the spot to get more elaborate responses, or to redirect the responses back to the topic (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, p. 148; Bogdan and Bicklen, 1992, pp. 97-98). These generally took the form of “Why?” or “Explain.” This tiered approach is consistent with Bogdan and Bicklen: “different types of interviews can be employed at different stages of the same study” (p. 97).

The background questions were fairly wide-ranging and were intended

to help me triangulate the data from the interviews as I analyzed them. For instance, I asked when and where informants received their public school and college educations. That information helps me to understand the informants' responses to other questions. Since it is fairly common for a particular critical philosophy to dominate university English departments at particular times, then by knowing that an informant is a graduate of the Literature program at University X in 1990, I can make some fairly safe guesses about what kind of literary criticism she was exposed to, guesses that can be substantiated with research into the particular department at that particular time if necessary. Then, if her responses to the interview questions don't specifically use the words, e. g. "close reading," I can use the background information to further interpret the response. This is what Merriam (1988, pp. 85-86) refers to as confirming the informant's account. The literacy background serves a similar purpose by helping me to understand, for instance, what kind of apprenticeship the informant has undergone.

A second purpose for the background questions was to provide me with comparative information about the informants. As I will discuss more fully below, I chose my informants in part on the basis of years of teaching. I do not consider in this study what impact that has had on the teachers' sources of pedagogical practices; however, I am curious about whether that might be a fruitful direction for a later study and the informants' responses to these questions can help me determine that.

The second part of the interview is the heart of the study. These questions were designed to get the informants to tell me what they considered to be the sources of their literature teaching practices. Generally, these questions take the following form: “When I was observing, you did X. Where did you learn to do that?” These questions were individualized for each informant. (Spradley, 1979; Miles and Huberman, 1994). I observed each informant teach for about two hours prior to the interviews and derived these questions from particular things I saw the informants do during that time. For instance, while students were taking turns reading aloud and discussing the novel Where The Red Fern Grows, one informant frequently paused and explained things—such as what a grain elevator is—that she thought students might not know. So, I asked her in the interview where she learned to stop and fill in ahead of time the students’ presumed knowledge gaps.

The third part of the interview is specific questions about sources of knowledge. I wanted to avoid “yes/no” responses that led nowhere (Bogdan and Bicklen, 1992, p. 98), so these questions take the form of “How important has X been to you?” Since I was specifically interested in determining the role of other sources of knowledge than the three that Grossman (1991) focuses on, and since the observation time was too short to elicit examples derived from every possible knowledge source, I chose to ask specific questions about specific possible knowledge sources. These questions, though, came at the end of the interviews in order to avoid contaminating the

other responses. That is, the earlier questions were worded so that the informants would provide the sources. Instead of asking, “Did you learn that in college?” the earlier questions asked “Where did you learn that?” And, in accord with Merriam (1988, pp. 78-79, who cites Patton, 1980), I included an open-ended question in case my knowledge categories didn’t match the informant’s: “Okay, is there anything else you’d like to tell me about your sources of knowledge, or about how you came to be the literature teacher you are today?” Overall, my intent was to ask for the information about sources in as many ways as I could, which, I hoped, would help insure that I got the information I was seeking.

Choosing Informants

Because my purpose was to study what literature teachers’ believe to be their sources of pedagogical content knowledge, selection of informants was not a particularly big issue. In fact, my only real criteria were that the individuals be certified English teachers and that they actually be teaching literature classes. This assured me that I had what Rubin and Rubin (1995) call “encultured informants” (p. 67), people who are relatively representative of the culture I’m studying. Uncertified teachers are not representative of literature teachers in any meaningful sense for my present purposes because, in most instances, they will not have been exposed to the same source possibilities, such as literature methods courses and other professional pedagogy courses. Neither are composition teachers representative of

literature teachers. Thus, I sought certified literature teachers. Though many, perhaps most, composition teachers are also literature teachers, my focus is on how literature teachers have learned to teach literature.

As noted above, I also ultimately chose to interview teachers at various stages of their careers, but that has little to do with this study; I made that choice because it may have implications for a future study involving sources of knowledge at various career stages. I also chose teachers with whom I had some kind of prior connection. This was not simply for ease of access, though that was part of it, but also because it gave me a way of selecting good teachers who were willing to be interviewed. (Fontana and Frey, 1994). Of course, it worked to my advantage to have people who were already relatively comfortable with me, permitting me to avoid many of the problems associated with “building the conversational partnership” Rubin and Rubin (1995) discuss (pp. 102-103) and making it easier for me to gain my informants’ trust. (Fontana and Frey, 1994) I think, too, that these pre-existing relationships helped to avoid problems associated with my being male and the respondents female, what Fontana and Frey (1994) call “the gender hierarchy” (p. 369).

While it is not necessary to my study that these teachers be representative of the profession at large in terms of their knowledge sources, it also would not be of particular value to my study to look at the radical fringe. I’m attempting to learn what literature teachers *report* to be the

sources of the knowledge they use to teach literature, with the emphasis on *report*. Though perhaps that phrasing suggests “any” literature teacher, it also suggests that the more representative teachers’ views might be of more value (LeCompte and Priesle’s “typical-case” selection, 1993, p. 75). Mine is what Merriam refers to as “purposive” sampling. She says that “[p]urposive sampling is based on the assumption that one wants to discover, understand, gain insight; therefore one needs to select a sample from which one can learn the most” (p. 48). In short, I chose my informants primarily on two criteria that promised some surety that I would learn from them what I want to learn.

One of the teachers was an individual who had been cooperating teacher for one of my student teachers, one was a colleague of my sister-in-law, and the third was a woman who had taught a writing workshop I had taken. All of these people are well-respected members of the profession and known to me, either by report or by personal knowledge, to be “good” teachers. One, in fact, was Teacher of the Year in her state. In two of the instances I also had friendly relations with the responsible principals, further easing my access. In all, I interviewed three teachers, one who was in the very early stages of her career (6th year), one who was in her 15th year, and one who was in her 27th year. One was a middle school language arts teacher and two were high school teachers. Of these latter two, one taught primarily required freshman courses, the other taught upper level courses.

Informed Consent

Once I had selected the informants, I met briefly with each of them to explain the purpose of my study and how I would conduct it, and to arrange an observation schedule and interview time. Because my study looks at literature teachers, as opposed to the more generic English or language arts teachers, it was necessary for me to observe when they were actually teaching literature. I also wanted to observe a complete “lesson” (which I relied on the individual teacher to define), one of enough length that I could see a range of teaching practices, so I asked to observe for a two hour period.

Once all that had been arranged, I provided the informants with an “informed consent” form, which I asked them to sign. The form I used is modelled on one Dana Fox provided me in her Qualitative Research course. A copy is appended. It outlines the purpose of the study, how the individual is being asked to participate, how the data will be stored, what it will be used for, and who will have access to it (Fontana and Frey, 1994, p. 372), and, in general, seems to meet the requirements Rubin and Rubin (1995) outline for meeting the ethical obligations of qualitative research (pp. 93-101).

Data Collection

As noted above, I observed each teacher teach a lesson. During the observation, I took as comprehensive notes as I was able on what the teacher was doing. I also kept a tape recorder running during the observation. However, the purpose of that recording was simply to serve as back-up to

my notes. During the observations, I kept my attention focused on the teacher. My goal for the observations was to get material for interview questions, so I concentrated on what the teacher was saying and doing, not, for instance, on the effectiveness of a particular technique, nor on what the students were doing. Thus, the notes are not really part of the research data except to whatever extent they helped me understand the interviews. As Merriam (1988) says, “qualitative design is emergent” so one must analyze data as they are collected in order to know “what to ask, or where to look next. . .” (p. 123). Adler and Adler (1994) point out that one of the strengths of qualitative observation is that “it occurs in the natural context of occurrence, among the actors who would naturally be participating in the interaction, and follows the natural stream of everyday life” (p. 378). Though they are talking more about observations as primary data sources, their point also supports my use of observations: I needed to see the teachers’ practices for myself.

Following each observation, I studied my notes and formulated the specific questions for the interview. In each case, I scheduled the interview as soon after the observation as possible, but at the convenience of the teachers. Since the interviews required approximately two hours of the teachers’ time, two of the interviews were done over two one-hour meetings, and one was done in one two-hour meeting. In the former case, the two meetings were scheduled as close together as possible. Several of the interview questions

asked about particular things the teacher had done during the observation period, so it seemed reasonably important not to let too much time elapse. Two of the interviews were done on the teacher's planning time, which led to a number of interruptions; the other was done after school.

Data Analysis

After all the interviews were completed, I had them transcribed. As I read through the transcriptions, I looked for themes related to how the teacher thought she learned to teach what she taught during the observations—her sources of ideas and techniques—using what Merriam calls the “constant comparison” method. In this method, which strikes me as quite similar to close reading of a literary text (as Merriam also notes on p. 13), one interprets individual responses in terms of responses to other questions (Merriam, 1988, p. 138). I used the attached codes (see Appendix B) for this analysis.

The codes, following the advice of Rubin and Rubin (1995, pp. 238-241), are designed to sort the data into subunits most useful to me. Thus, my codes separate the material into the major categories of “Background” and “Source of Knowledge,” with the major categories further divided into relevant subcategories. Of course, these reflect the knowledge sources included in the interview questions.

In my analysis of the data, I also looked for figurative representations of knowledge and the craft of literature teaching. Hugh Munby (1986) has

argued convincingly that teachers' metaphors provide access to their tacitly held views of knowledge and their craft. Munby's argument is also buttressed by Clandinin and Connelly's recent (1996) discussion of teachers' stories, and their even more recent book, Teachers Landscapes of Knowledge (1997). They point out that teachers' vary their verbal representations of their practice with their audience, often telling what the authors call "cover stories." Thus, I need to triangulate the interview data; Munby's work provides me with a means to do that (Merriam, 1988).

After I completed the analysis, I wrote up each interview as a "mini-case." These cases are essentially narrative presentations of the teachers' responses to the interview questions, preceded by a summary of the background information provided by the individual and followed by a brief summary. Merriam (1988) says that some case studies are essentially descriptive accounts of the data, that "[w]hat makes them case studies is the narrative structure used to present the data" (p. 127). That is how I see my case write-ups—as narratives about the teachers' knowledge sources.

The final step is to discuss the implications of my study and suggest possible directions for future research. The implications that I expect to be most prominent will relate to organization of English Methods courses. Both Smagorinsky and Whiting's (1995) study of English Methods courses and my

own review of the literature on English Methods courses⁴ suggests strongly that most courses concentrate on what I have called the “traditional” sources of pedagogical content knowledge (by which I mean pedagogy courses, subject matter courses, and the apprenticeship of observation) to the almost complete exclusion of the “alternative” sources (which include conversations with colleagues, commercial materials, workshops, books and journals, and the like). Perhaps my study will suggest that we need to pay much more attention to nurturing and encouraging focus on the alternative sources. As to implications for future research, perhaps this study will show need for a more extensive study of literature teachers’ knowledge sources. Perhaps it will suggest that we need to seek still other sources.

⁴ This study of English methods courses was done as an independent study course supervised by Dan Kirby.

CHAPTER IV: THE CASES

This chapter presents the results of the interviews with the literature teachers as cases. The purpose underlying this presentation is twofold. The first purpose for this presentation form is simply to get the material into a narrative format, to present narratives of knowledge sources. In the interviews, as I explained in Chapter Three, I asked a number of questions about the informants' backgrounds so that I could use that information to help me interpret their responses. I also tried to get a general educational biography, both so I could make judgements about the kind of literature teaching apprenticeships of observation the informants were likely to have experienced, and so I might better judge the impact of those apprenticeships. I also asked questions about the sources of the practical knowledge they used while I was observing their teaching, and about the sources they thought they used. These are, then, "cases" only in the sense in which Merriam (1988) uses the term when she says that some case studies are essentially descriptive accounts of the data, that "[w]hat makes them case studies is the narrative structure used to present the data" (p. 127). Despite the fact that my interview protocol attempted to sequence the questions, the statements that make up any given response may come from a variety of different places in an interview. Also, because I used a couple of different query approaches to get the material I was seeking, the information did not come in a neat linear sequence. Thus, in order for me to see a teacher's full discussion of a

particular knowledge source, I often had to reorganize the interview data into a more narrative sequence.

The second purpose of this presentation format is to get the interview data into a form that lets me compare it. I want to see how the three teachers' statements compare to each other. Neither the order of the teachers nor of the material is meaningful. The teachers are presented in the order that I interviewed them. Thus, Jane's case is presented first, Patricia's second, and Betty's third. That order was determined by the vagaries of scheduling. I have organized the material similarly for the three, looking at what they have said about their personal and literacy backgrounds, and what they have said about how they have used and/or still use the various knowledge sources.

As I also noted in the Methodology chapter, these sub-units into which I divided the cases—"Just figuring it out," Publisher Materials, Content Courses, The Apprenticeship of Observation, Professional Conferences & Staff Development, Conversations with Colleagues, Reliance on the Professional Literature—are based on (1) the knowledge sources mentioned in the existing research literature, (2) sources that were important to my own experience of learning to teach, and (3) sources mentioned by the informants themselves. They are, in other words, merely working categories; they are not intended to suggest any kind of absolute statement about the nature of teacher knowledge. The "Landscape" category, which contains an analysis of the kinds of figurative representations of themselves as teachers that occur

in the data, is based in the works of Clandinin and Connelly (1995, 1996) and Hugh Munby (1986). These researchers argue that teachers' figurative representations can provide us with insight into their thinking.

There is no particular reason for the sequencing of the knowledge sources here except that the presentation follows the same sequence the interview questions followed. Though I might have separated them into the "traditional" and "alternative" categories I have used elsewhere, such an organization would have served no purpose for me. Also, I could have attempted to sequence them according to the importance the teachers attribute to them. There again, that would have served no purpose for me. I'm not trying to uncover the relative value of the various sources; rather, I'm more interested in whether or not a teacher uses a particular knowledge source than in how much he or she values it. Some of my final questions did ask the teachers to rate how important the sources were to them, but my purpose was to get them to think about how, or whether, they used a particular source. I conceived of those questions as triangulation questions, the answers to which would help me interpret their responses to other questions, or fill in blanks left by responses to other questions. My dominant concern in the construction of the protocol, after getting the information itself, was to try to bias the teachers' responses as little as possible. Consequently, I tried to approach the information from as many directions as I could.

In the following pages, Jane's case is presented first. It is followed by

Patricia's case, then by Betty's case. The material within each case is organized in this sequence: Background, "Just figuring it out," Publisher Materials, Content Courses, The Apprenticeship of Observation, Professional Conferences & Staff Development, Conversations with Colleagues, Reliance on the Professional Literature, and Landscape. Each case then ends with a brief summary. Once I have presented all three cases, I end the chapter with a comparative summary of the three cases.

The Case of Jane

“yeah, books; I can’t imagine life without books”

A. Background

At the time of the interview, Jane had been teaching for 29 years, most of those years in a large southwestern school district, and all of it in seventh and eighth grades. Except for a brief stint as a reading resource teacher for the district, she had taught middle school language arts the entire time. She was named Teacher of the Year one year by the College of Education of the local university and the following year was named Teacher of the Year by the state. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Education, with a major in English and a minor in Speech. She also has a Master’s degree in Reading from the same institution, as well as some 60 credit hours beyond the Masters. Her course work, as she describes it, seems to have been rather eclectic:

Oh, kind of a smattering all over the place, counselling, a lot of things through [the district], through staff development, [name deleted], which I don’t know if you’re familiar with [name deleted] campus, it’s actually a [district] school site if they ever need it, it’s in the [city name deleted] foothills, [city name deleted] mountain foothills, it’s [street names deleted], and they offer a number of kind of interdisciplinary type classes, mostly science focus but you can use these, use many of the classes and so for a while they were offering a lot of those I could take for credits and I’m finding that some of that is useful as we’re working in interdisciplinary teams. Another course that I took, actually I took two of them, Living History of the Western Frontier, and sometime I’m hoping to do a lot of the reading that he gave us in that, outside reading type thing. It was one of those hands-on experiential courses. I really think he teaches the class to be able to deduct his expenses for his trips, but he really does a good job and as we were working on our minerals and mining unit for our team I pulled out my notes and the math teacher used some of the recipes from that with kids for teaching fractions, doubling, I mean, so it’s coming in handy,

but you never know when it is. So it really is all over the place and it was mostly, I really didn't have anything I wanted to study, I suppose if I'd been smart I would have done a Ph.D. but my husband works for [company name deleted] and for probably the past six years he's been caught under the threat of downsizing, you know, we're getting rid of people, we're getting rid of people and you never know when your number's going to be up, so I decided I really needed to be making as much as I possibly could teaching and then we can survive if we have to, so I just kind of took what was here, there and everywhere, but mostly things that interested me. A lot of computer classes.

Both of Jane's degrees and most of her additional course work are from the same large southwestern university.

As a child, Jane lived and attended school in small towns in the upper West and Midwest. Her mother was a teacher, though only during part of Jane's childhood, and herself held a Master's degree. Her father was a farmer and minister, though, as Jane points out, he didn't have a divinity degree. The home her parents provided seems to have been print-rich. Jane says of it:

Yeah, my family always had books, always had magazines, newspapers, even though we didn't have much money I don't remember that there was ever a scarcity of reading material. It was, actually my grandmother used to kind of make fun of me because I was always reading something. It was just something I loved to do and to this day I really kind of hate to take apart a piece of literature. It's like that's sort of unnecessary. You read it, you enjoy it, you inhale it and go on from there. I think all of my brothers and sisters enjoyed reading, it really was a family thing, I mean even though my dad didn't have a college degree he did a lot of reading. It was a family thing to be literate.

While she doesn't say so directly, Jane's childhood years seem to have been somewhat socially isolated, which apparently increased the role of literature in her life. She says, for instance, that she was often responsible for

caring for her younger siblings (“Let's see, when I was about ten my mother taught away from home because my parents were having a hard time making ends meet and so she taught away from home with the youngest child with her and she lived in another town during the week and came home. So I was sort of mom during the week at the age of ten, which is not something I would wish on anybody”), that she was an insatiable reader (“I’m one of those people who reads cereal boxes at the table; if there’s nothing else to read, I’ll just read”), and that she was very shy and used books as an escape (“As a real shy kid, you know, I’d interact with those books just fine, ‘cause they were safe, a lot of information, and I think my parents were both really, really busy so there wasn’t always an adult for me to talk to, it was; I’m sure escapism much of the time; yeah, books; I can’t imagine life without books”).

B. “Just figuring it out”

A number of themes emerge from the interviews with Jane, some expected, some not. The knowledge source Jane values most highly seems to be “just figuring it out.” Once, for example, she said, “So I kind of dropped that and *created*⁵, with another teacher, a different curriculum for the year.” At another point, in response to a question regarding why she thinks about literature as she does, she said, “I think just my own *personal experience*.” The specific things she focuses on in a piece of literature are often based in her intuitions — or perhaps what Clandinin and Connelly (1986) call the

⁵All emphases are mine.

“rhythms” of practice:

I’ve noticed that in some classes I’ll stop at a certain place and some places I won’t. I think it depends a little bit on the *feel* of the class, the emotional atmosphere of the class. . . . It’s mostly just whether I *feel* like it’s necessary. . . . It’s just the *feeling* at the moment. . . . But it really has to do with the *feel* of the class, with the *feel* of the moment, what’s happening right now.

In response to my summarizing question “and so you’re telling me you basically learned this trial and error and experience and paying attention to what you’re doing?” she said, “I think so. I can’t remember a single, I mean I’m sure there have been places that, you know, I picked and gathered but I can’t remember any class or any professional conference or anything where those ideas were presented.”

Likewise, when I asked her how she would prepare to teach a particular poem she wasn’t previously familiar with (“When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d”), she answered,

I would read it. I would probably, as a poem, read it aloud. I’d probably try to look for connections with my audience . . . I would probably look for metaphor and simile, and maybe point those out and that might be all I would do.

When I added a piece of historical data about the poem—that it was an elegy to Lincoln—she said she would try to coordinate it with the history teacher, if possible, but barring that, “then I would just put it in my own historical context as much as I could.”

I think it important to note here that she did not indicate that she would research it in any way. When she referred to her “own historical

context,” I believe she meant she would place it as much in historical context as she was able without doing additional research. I take that to mean “just figuring it out.”

When I suggested that the anthology the poem was in might contain the historical information in question, she pointed out that she doesn't rely much on those background sections. I think the following indicates that very clearly.

It would depend on the book, it would depend a little bit how long it is. I find it more effective, rather, I mean sometimes I read it from the book with the kids but I find it a lot more effective to know the material and tell them as kind of a personal introduction, you know. Back to the Red Fern again, this isn't in the book, I don't even know where I got it, that, I've forgotten his name, anyway, that the author didn't think he could write and he burned Where the Red Fern Grows and it was only with the help and encouragement of his wife that, Wilson Rawls, that he rewrote it and if she hadn't taken that strong position to help him and support him in this huge work and as far as I'm concerned writing a novel is a huge work, we wouldn't have that wonderful story. So that's one of the things I try to convey to the kids. If I can tell it like it's my own personal knowledge I think it does two things. There's more of a personal connection between the kids and me and I'm hoping also that it would encourage them to find out more about the big picture, that there's more than just what's on the page.

The next question asked Jane to talk about whether she would use a set of particular sources of knowledge. She responded, “I'd probably do as much as I could on my own. If I felt it was adequate for my audience I would stop there, I think.” Later on in the interview when I questioned her directly about the importance of “just figuring it out,” Jane said, “I tend to see myself as a problem solver, so that would be high.. .”

“Just figuring it out,” then, both because of its frequent mention in the

interview, and because of Jane's rating of it as "high," seems to be what she perceives to be the primary source of the knowledge she uses in her classroom to teach literature. In part, at least, this category seems to include whatever knowledge she already has. When she said she would put the poem in her own historical context, I believe she meant she would use the historical knowledge she had at hand rather than researching to acquire more information. "Just figuring it out," then, stands in opposition to "doing additional research" and "consulting more publisher-generated materials" and "asking colleagues," not in opposition to "using such knowledge as has been acquired in the past."

C. Publisher Materials

The second source theme that got major emphasis in Jane's response is the one I called "Publisher Materials." When I was preparing the interview questions, I took account of this area because my own teaching experience led me to think it might be as important a source for others as it had been for me. However, Jane's version of it is not the same as mine. When I was teaching literature, I depended heavily on the "introductions" and "reading guides" that often precede selections in anthologies, and on the "comprehension" and "discussion" questions that follow them. I also used, whenever I could get them, teacher's manuals or teacher's editions of the books. Using such materials tended to push my teaching in directions that were compatible with the material provided. For instance, such material is

often much more oriented toward factual knowledge than toward collaborative work or even personal response. One of the books I used for a number of years—initially due to a department mandate—included questions such as these. “What is the tone of the whole poem? Is it, for example, facetious? Gayly cynical? Wryly humorous? Ambivalent?” (Elkins, 1971, p. 373). At least part of the result is that the teaching practices I developed during the first few years of my teaching had the same New Critical bent these questions display.

Jane had something different in mind. When I asked, for instance, about where she learned to use webbing in literature discussions, Jane offered,

Well, it sure wasn't anything in college. I don't think I ever saw webbing until sometime within the last ten years and I'm terrible as far as concept of time relating to my life, so, I'm sure I had seen it before the Summer Institute for Writing Across Curriculum, but probably not much before that; it might have been seven or eight years ago and I don't know where I first learned it. It might have been in a literature, you know, teacher's resource material. Another really good way to structure a story came from Prentice-Hall, a story map that looks like a partial mountain. I think it's great. I learned it from the literature book.

Her response sounded much like the kind of uses I have made of publisher-prepared materials. Later, however, I specifically asked how much she used stuff from the literature books. Her answer was, “I use them sometimes, less and less all the time, a part of that is the publishing companies give us far more material than we could ever use.” Jane emphasized the importance of this source at various places in the interview. For instance, when we were talking about how she taught writing, she made this comment:

“When you go to these wonderful presentations the publishers are paying big bucks for, you pick up things from their presenters, so it’s a combination of just gleaning.” Jane characterizes this as “gleaning,” which I think in her mind puts it in the category of “just figuring it out.” To me it suggests that publisher-generated materials are an important source of information for her, despite her disclaimers.

D. Content Courses

Another area that I expected to be an important source of teachers’ knowledge is content courses. Not only does the literature (Grossman, 1988, 1989a, 1990, 1991b; Gudmundsdottir, 1991b) point to it as an important source, but so does my own experience. Thus, I didn’t expect what Jane told me. Not only does Jane appear to believe that content course have not been an important source of knowledge for her, she seems to consider them to have been a negative source.

One of the themes which occurs frequently throughout the interview is her distaste for what I know as “close-reading” of a text. For instance, early in the interview, as I was trying to establish her literacy background, Jane said,

. . . actually my grandmother used to kind of make fun of me because I was always reading something. It was just something I loved to do and to this day I really kind of *hate to take apart a piece of Literature*. It’s like that’s sort of unnecessary. You read it, you enjoy it, you inhale it and go on from there. [emphasis mine]

A bit later in the interview, in response to a question about what

motivates what she does with a piece of literature in the classroom, Jane said, “I really just want them to have a good time with it and *I don't want to pick it apart* so far that it's just been *hack sawed to death*; there's no point in that.” [emphasis mine]

Later, when I asked her to tell me what she would include in a literature course, she talked about literature being a venue for teaching children problem solving:

If you have a problem, what are your alternatives? Is there another way to deal with this? And I think you can do a lot of that through literature. Sheer enjoyment, Shel Silverstein's poetry is the best way . . . to introduce kids to poetry and let them know it doesn't have to be *dissected to death*; it can be just plain fun. [Emphasis mine]

In response to a question about whether a particular teacher had influenced her, Jane said, “No, he was really into symbolism and things I never felt I was good at.”

Later, I probed her influences by asking how she would approach a particular poem that she wasn't familiar with. Part of her response was, “I don't think I'd do anything to *dissect* it; I certainly wouldn't do, you know, this is iambic pentameter, or anything like that.” [emphasis mine]

I find these responses interesting because they have, in the tapes, a degree of vehemence that seem to suggest she has a strong negative reaction to something, probably the philosophical position of high school or college literature teachers, though nothing in the interviews points very directly to any particular thing. However, it seems consistent with her idea that she was

not influenced much by her content courses. In that vein, she says at one point, when I asked her specifically how much she thought her graduate work had influenced what she does in the classroom, “And I don’t think there’s anything from it that I would say has necessarily helped me in the teaching of pieces of literature.” And again, when I asked her where she learned how to do webs, her response was, “Well, it sure wasn’t anything in college.”

Similarly, when I asked her how important what she had learned in her literature classes had been, she said, “I can’t see or remember anything that I had in those classes that was relevant to anything that I do now.” A few moments later, she said, “. . . I don’t remember transferring much of anything from college to what we did here. I just saw it as so far removed, so unrelated.”

The only area in which she seems to recognize influence from her course work is in regard to some district staff development courses outside of the English discipline that she had taken. She talked about pulling out notes on the materials from a “Living History of the Western Frontier” course and the Math teacher in her interdisciplinary team using them. That is, she didn’t use them herself; their influence was only second hand. When I was trying to elicit information about the philosophical bent of her undergraduate courses in literature, she was critical of her major, saying,

Well, one of the things I thought was severely lacking for an English major who intends to teach in school, in public school, I don’t think there was much breadth of literature. I think I’ve had Shakespeare class, I had Chaucer, I had Victorian Literature, I don’t think I had

anything that was really contemporary and I, now maybe they've improved things a little bit. . .

This, too, suggests that there was little she found useable in her content courses.

Both of these focuses on this theme—the reaction to close-reading and lack of anything concrete—say that content courses are not an important positive influence on what Jane teaches or how she teaches it. Furthermore, she specified that some of the post-M. A. course work she had done included computer classes. Yet, in none of the conversations about her teaching and the influences on it did she mention such courses. Neither did I witness any use of the computer when I observed her teaching. She did use her computer to generate documents and for record-keeping, but not to teach. That further supports the idea that course work has not been a significant positive influence on her teaching. On the other hand, the vehemence of her opinions about New Critical techniques suggest a pretty strong negative influence.

Jane's claim is consistent with the research literature. Teachers routinely deny the influence of course work, a circumstance Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989), for instance, explain as arising from the fact that much of teachers' professional knowledge is "situated knowledge" that is called up only as needed, called up by what Fox (1992) and others refer to as the context. The teachers themselves don't know that they know until the need arises. Thus, asking them if they know something out of context will usually

elicit a negative response. Whether in fact she did or didn't, Jane appears to believe that she didn't learn much of value in her course work.

E. The Apprenticeship of Observation

Another source I interviewed for, because the literature on pedagogical content knowledge offers it as a major source of teaching practices, is the "apprenticeship of observation" (Grossman, 1991.) Seagran and Khamis (1985), in fact, argue that the most influential intervention in a teacher's professional preparation is student teaching, which, while not the apprenticeship Lortie talks about, is certainly part of the apprenticeship of observation as we define it today. Grossman (1991) calls it the most "salient component for prospective teachers." Several of my questions sought evidence of this. In Jane's responses, though, I could find little concrete evidence of it. For instance, after she talked about her distaste for hack-sawing literature, I asked "what or who made you think that way." I thought she might name a high school or college teacher who had focused on it so much that the experience turned her against it. Instead, she focused on why she thought literature should just be enjoyed and mentioned her parents, grandmother, and teachers from her early school years. She even said, "Strangely enough, except for [name deleted], I can't remember any of my other high school English teachers." She didn't include college English teachers at all. Perhaps most salient here, though, is her references to her high school English teacher. She pointed out that this teacher is the first

person who caused her to start thinking about being a teacher: “He probably was the first person who made me think about being a teacher of, specifically of an English or language arts teacher.” Later on, she says specifically that she decided to become a teacher about her sophomore or junior year in high school. Given the influence of this English teacher on her career decision and the age at which she made it, it seems more likely than not that she would have been influenced by this teacher’s pedagogical practices, even if she doesn’t specifically remember it happening and can’t recall specific instances of it.

Later, I asked if her cooperating teacher during her student teaching had been a model for her. Her response was, “Probably.” She continued on to say that what she had probably picked up from her was “a little more relaxed student-focused view,” but she did not mention particular literary focuses or approaches to the teaching of literature. Thus, I find no direct acknowledgement on Jane’s part that the apprenticeship of observation has been an important source of her working knowledge of literature teaching.

If it were a strong, if unacknowledged, influence, Jane’s teaching would likely be somewhat different. Though I can’t say it with 100% certainty, it is likely that the literature teaching methods Jane would have been exposed to in high school would have been teachers lecturing on historical/biographical analyses of literature, as was typical of the time (Applebee, 1993). In college, she would probably have been exposed to either that or textual interpretation

(the New Critical method, *explicación de texte*). In either event, if there were no other sources intervening, such as workshops, in-services, etc., I would expect her to use some combination of those methods.

Though eclectic in many respects, Jane's teaching of literature shows evidence that she is fairly well versed in New Critical close-reading. As her students read Where the Red Fern Grows orally, she frequently stopped them to probe for their understanding of words, or ask for interpretations of scenes or passages. She focused on plot, character development, figurative language, and the like, all elements suggestive of an orientation toward close-reading, though they may suggest numerous other sources. Her probing for word meanings could have been learned in an in-service or from an article in a professional journal, or some other venue that she has forgotten. In short, whether she learned these techniques in the apprenticeship of observation, from her own course work, through professional reading, or through conversations with colleagues is unclear. However, it is unlikely that she developed the technique *ex nihil*, which calls into question the reliability of her self-assessment. Conversely, the evidence of the influence of the apprenticeship of observation presented by Lortie and the researchers in Shulman's project makes quite a strong case that she, like most teachers, would have been influenced by it.

F. Professional Conferences & Staff Development

I also tried to elicit information about a number of other areas that

have been important in my own knowledge development: professional conferences, conversations with colleagues, reading in the professional literature. Jane was very enthusiastic about professional conferences (“I think it was a valuable time,” “exciting,” “a shot in the arm”), but pointed out that she had only attended two national conferences. Thus, their value seems more potential than real, valuable in the abstract. District in-service and staff development workshops she put “low” on the scale, pointing out that they are “short and there’s little follow-through” and that teachers have little time to implement them. My interpretation, then, is that these have not been important sources of the knowledge she uses in teaching literature. However, she was once a participant in an Edna McConnell Clark Foundation grant, to which experience she attributes much influence on her teaching: “I think that was probably a big part of helping me change in some of the directions that I was going.” These responses make me think this area requires more investigation. That is, one interpretation of her answers is that these are valuable sources of knowledge that have been essentially unavailable to her, that under other circumstances they might have played a larger role in her development as a teacher.

G. Conversations with Colleagues

Jane also rated conversations with colleagues as highly valued, but seldom available. She said, “It’s one of the things . . . we’ve put importance on, but the system doesn’t put importance on it, so there isn’t time. . . .” She

went on to distinguish between colleagues within and outside the building, indicating that, due to what she assumes is insecurity, teachers within a building seldom discuss practice with each other, and that the colleague she is most likely to talk to is at another school and, therefore, not readily accessible. Similarly, as noted above, when she discusses sharing with other teachers within the building, it involves other than literature teachers, for instance, the Math teacher with whom she shared her notes from the course she took on History of the Western Frontier. So, again, conversations with colleagues appear not to play a large role in her knowledge acquisition.

H. Reliance on the Professional Literature

I also questioned Jane directly about her reliance on the professional literature—books and journal articles about Literature. She said, “I also read professional journals, I’m a member of the [name of city deleted] Area Reading Council, the NCTE, National Middle School Association, and so I kind of see a lot of what’s happening even if I don’t get to read the articles in depth, skim them over.” Though she sees it as having some potential value, she (1) connects it with close-reading techniques (“I think it would be more important to a teacher who was really into dissection.”) and (2) points out that time constraints preclude its wide use (“If it were easy to find reference materials on it then I’d probably do that, but the lack of time being what it is, I can’t say for sure that I would.”) In response to my query about whether she subscribes to professional journals, Jane said, “You can’t read them all.”

But she also said, “I wish I could. There’s a lot of good thinking in most of the articles. You usually find something that you go ‘ah ha,’ but if you don’t have time to get to it and the students are number one.” In the course of my interview with and observations of Jane, though, I noted that she has a lot of journal material in her room, though it inclines toward Scholastic and Teacher Magazine, rather than Voices from the Middle or English Journal. However, Scholastic, for instance, does contain materials directed at the teacher, and I saw her consult them a few times, which makes me think that perhaps she uses such sources more than she thinks she does, even if, as she says, she only “skims” them.

I. Landscape

Jane’s figurative characterization of herself is of some interest. In the one instance of such metaphoric representation, she refers to herself as a “gleaner,” an image quite consistent with her frequent assertion that she just figures things out for herself. As I noted above, her idea of “just figuring in out” also includes the idea of taking information from wherever she can find it. That meaning is consistent with the second definition of a “gleaner” in Webster’s on-line collegiate dictionary, which is “2 a : to gather (as information) bit by bit b : to pick over in search of relevant material <gleaning old files for information>.” Apparently, in Jane’s view, such activity is more in the mental realm of creating something out of nothing than it is in the realm of research. That is, when she “gleans,” she is figuring

something out for herself, not using someone else's material.

J. Summary

To summarize, then, my understanding of the importance of the various sources of knowledge about literature to Jane's teaching, according to my interpretation of her reports, are as follows. The source she believes she relies on most is "just figuring it out," herself, her existing knowledge of literature and of her students and their needs. That perception is buttressed by her metaphoric characterization of herself as a "gleaner." Next in importance is publisher-provided/publisher-generated materials. Content courses have not been an importance source, except perhaps as a template she reacts against. As I noted above, the role of the apprenticeship of observation is difficult to chart. She contends that it has not been an influence, but my observations suggest that it probably has. Reading the professional literature seems to be of marginal importance, as do professional conferences and conversations with colleagues, though she values the latter two highly. Restricted opportunities to exploit them keep them from being important sources of the knowledge she uses in daily practice.

Also as noted above, there was some suggestion in my observations of Jane's teaching that perhaps the apprenticeship of observation had played more of a role than she recognizes. She routinely used teaching tactics that reflect the theory of "close-reading." While it is not impossible for her to have developed this method on her own, it is more likely a reflection of how

she was taught literature in high school and college. The same is true of her focus on biographical and historical information about the author and the time period in which a piece of literature is set. Though she suggests that she would not spend any significant amount of time researching the background to a work, she uses the information when she has it. She says of a piece of biographical data about Wilson Rawls,

back to the Red Fern again, this isn't in the book, I don't even know where I got it, that, I've forgotten his name, anyway, that the author didn't think he could write and he burned Where the Red Fern Grows and it was only with the help and encouragement of his wife that, Wilson Rawls, that he rewrote it and if she hadn't taken that strong position to help him and support him in this huge work and as far as I'm concerned writing a novel is a huge work, we wouldn't have that wonderful story. So that's one of the things I try to convey to the kids. If I can tell it like it's my own personal knowledge I think it does two things. There's more of a personal connection between the kids and me and I'm hoping also that it would encourage them to find out more about the big picture, that there's more than just what's on the page.

She says quite directly that she doesn't know where she got this information, which suggests no concerted effort at research. This suggests at least the possibility these influences are from her course work or from the apprenticeship of observation. It also highlights the difficulty of collecting reliable information about sources through interviews: what I think I saw in the observations and what Jane reports sometimes seem to contradict each other.

Nonetheless, analysis of this data suggests to me that more attention needs to be paid to how literature teachers learn the craft they practice. Lee Shulman's Knowledge Growth in a Profession project assumes that teachers

learn their craft knowledge from the apprenticeship of observation and course work. Jane's case suggests that other sources, particularly publisher-generated materials, are important sources.

The Case of Patricia

“I just found that it just works with students”

A. Background

At the time of the interview, Patricia had been teaching twenty-one years. At the beginning of her career, Patricia had taught for two years in a large school district in the southern U. S. However, for the last nineteen years, she had taught in the same large southwestern district in which she was teaching when I interviewed her. She had taught in a middle school before she moved to her current high school position. She had taught English in eighth, tenth, and eleventh grades, and had also taught seventh grade social studies. At the time of the interview, she was teaching “regular Junior English, which is American Literature, Junior Honors English, and Sophomore GATE, which is the gifted and talented program.”

Patricia received her B. S. in Education degree with an English major and a Music minor from a medium-sized land-grant university in the southern U. S. She also has a Master’s of Education from a large southwestern university, as well as GATE and Gerontology certificate endorsements, and a total of approximately 60 semester hours of credit beyond the Master’s degree, all of it from the same university where she had done her Master’s work.

She characterizes her family as “middle-class.” More specifically, she says, “My mother was a housewife and my father was an accountant,”

pointing out that her mother had a bachelor's degree, but that her father had not finished college.

Patricia's elementary and secondary schooling was in "suburban public schools." Given where and when she went to school, these schools were considerably different from those in the district where she was teaching at the time of the interview. For instance, she attended early grade school in racially-segregated, or nearly so, schools. Her high school years, though spent in nominally integrated schools, were in schools where minority children were bused in and there was little racial mingling. Conversely, Patricia teaches in a school in which ethnic and racial minorities comprise the majority of the student body, and she uses teaching tools appropriate to that student body. Those are not practices she would have learned from her own high school teachers, though she attributes much of her methodology to that source. In fact, the methods she highlights as being used by her pre-college teachers are distinctly not the methods generally recommended for such classrooms. (Trueba and Bartolome, 1997; Ramirez, 1982; Beckum and Daslo, 1981; Claxton, 1990; Sleeter, 1991; Goldberger, Tarule, Clinchy, and Belenky, 1996). So, knowing her educational background helps me interpret her statements.

B. "Just figuring it out"

One of the sources that Patricia seems to value highest is "just figuring it out." For instance, when I asked her where she learned to repeat her

students' responses so the whole class could hear them, she said, "It just seems to work in my classes. I've heard the other flip side that you shouldn't do it but for me it tends to work." A moment later she said, "In fact, I learned that it was wrong to do it. That's what I was taught. It was wrong to do it; but I do it anyway because, for me, it works."

She carries on both of these themes throughout the interview: the idea that she just figures things out for herself, and the idea that much of what she knows didn't come from her classes. When I asked her where she picked up the practice of typing her lecture notes on overheads and showing them as she was talking, she said, "I just developed that myself." I then probed by asking, "And you think . . . You basically developed that technique?" to which she responded, "That is just some thing that I use that I am comfortable with."

In my observations of her teaching, I had noticed that she tended to focus on particular passages from the novel she was teaching (Grapes of Wrath), so I asked her where she learned that particular teaching technique.

She answered,

I don't know that I did. Like I said earlier, I teach the literature that I love and so as I am conveying the love, the emotion, that comes through. Like I said to them at the beginning of the year, "I will be introducing many books to you and these are my friends and just as when you introduce you friends to your old friends you want them to like each other. I want you to like my friends." So I choose the passages that I think will help them like the book, realize that this is a classic.

In other words, in her mind, this is not a technique that she learned, but one

she developed herself in order to get students to feel about these books the way she does.

At another point, when I asked where she learned the technique of having the students go over the answers on their worksheets from previous days, she said,

I just found that it just works with students to give them kind of a little help to keep reading. If you just say to the students, "Here's The Grapes of Wrath. Read it in two weeks," Good luck. So, it's just a little something to keep them going.

To my more direct question "Do you think that you came back to that by trial and error, or did you learn it from other teachers"? She responded,

I don't recall any teacher ever giving us that. We had pieces of literature that we worked on in class but I don't know that anybody gave us kind of guide sheets to go by. This was [a result of my] frustration [at] having students not reading, so it makes them accountable.

While students were working quietly on the novel, Patricia had Big Band era music playing. I asked her where she picked up the idea of playing music, suggesting that her Music minor might have had something to do with it. She denied that connection, saying,

It didn't come about from that; it just makes the classroom come to life. I'm teaching The Great Gatsby and I'm wanting to get some Roaring Twenties music, some Charleston's going, and kids come in and they start to dance and act silly and it is like, "Okay, let's go with this book" and some of the music they don't like and they groan and "oh, she's doing it again," but it's kind of a funny, teasing; it's sort of, yeah, I'm doing it again.

When I asked how she would teach a poem with which she was unfamiliar, she said, "That would be first: what can I figure out about it first

of all.” When I directly asked her to tell me how important the technique of “just figuring it out” was to her, she said “That’s real important: just figuring it out for myself. If I don’t understand it, I can’t teach it, so that’s real . . . “

C. Publisher Materials

Patricia also ranks publisher-generated materials as pretty important. For instance, when I asked her directly to tell me how important they were to her as a source, she said, “six or seven.” At one point, she specifically referred to using Warren French’s Companion to the Grapes of Wrath. However, when I asked her other questions intended to get more information about her use of such sources, she generally reinterpreted the question and talked about something else, such as what I would call the professional literature. In fact, when I asked her if she ever went to the promotional events that textbook publishers put on to woo selection committees, and which are a good source of packaged teaching materials, she merely shook her head “no.”

I then said, “So that is not an important source?” to which she responded, “They are trying to sell textbooks, I think.” I then asked if she was on a textbook committee and she said simply “No.”

So, she thinks publisher-generated materials are an important source of her teaching knowledge, but she gave me very few specific pieces of information to support that judgement. In part, though, it seems to be an issue of definition. For instance, she specifically mentions using Cliff’s Notes

and Monarch Notes. While these are not specifically what I would call “publisher-generated materials,” because, while they are commercial teaching materials, they are not prepared by textbook publishers to accompany their texts, nor are they included in the texts with the works themselves. However, they also are not what I would call “professional literature,” so I’m inclined to include them as publisher materials. Patricia said, “I just pull from here or there.” When I asked if she would go to the internet or other places that made lesson plans available, she said, “Sure I would, and borrow and modify and add to.” Overall, my interpretation is that (a) she doesn’t attend the promotional events put on by publishers, nor (b) does she send off for pre-packaged teaching materials, but if such materials are in the file in the English office, or someone lends them to her, or they’re included in a book she’s using, or she otherwise comes on them, she has no reservations about using them, and, in fact, considers them an important source of her teaching knowledge.

D. Content Courses

Patricia does not attribute much influence to her college literature courses, none, in fact.

Jim: Okay, how important has your graduate course work been?

Patricia: I don't even remember my graduate course. I really don't.

However, her teaching shows the probable influence of her content courses. Patricia attended college in the early 1970s. At that time, the dominant theories of literary criticism being used and taught would have been

the historical/biographical and the New Criticism. These are the methods that Patricia uses, though she attributes them primarily to her high school teachers (see below in the discussion of the apprenticeship of observation).

I also asked Patricia this question.

Where did you learn approaches to literature? What I am thinking of is things like close readings of the text versus historical criticism versus psychological criticism versus biographical versus feminist criticism so on and so forth. Did you learn about those things in classes, books and journals, or conference presentations, workshops, teacher's manuals, conversations with colleagues, so on and so forth?

Her response was, "I don't know. I really don't know."

As I've noted, Patricia's teaching shows a lot of the characteristics I would expect from someone educated in literature at the time she was. Though her use of the New Criticism and Historical/Biographical approaches to literature would probably not satisfy a purist in either camp, those philosophical orientations are pretty obviously the dominant influences on her teaching. And while it is possible that her high school teachers were influential in her developing those techniques, it seems more likely that she would have learned these approaches in her college literature classes.

E. The Apprenticeship of Observation

Patricia provides a fairly strong argument that the apprenticeship of observation was a major influence on her *decision* to teach, but not so much so in regard to how she teaches. About the decision to become a teacher, Patricia says,

She required an awful lot of homework of us. A tremendous amount.

An hour to two hours a night and everyday she wanted to see it all produced. She spent time going up and down the row with her grade book looking at each page and checking off that it was all done to her satisfaction but she was a wonderful, wonderful teacher because when we went in to depth in a lot of things but the thing that probably sold me on teaching English was the fact she acted out . . . the sleep walking scene from *Lady Macbeth* and we persuaded her to do that and she turned off all the lights and she let her hair down. She had long red hair that she always wore in a French twist and she let her hair down and she did that scene from memory and I was hooked. I said that's it.

However, it is less clear that this teacher actually influenced Patricia's teaching practices. Patricia is a dynamic, active teacher, but both my observations and her comments indicate that she is hardly the traditional type she describes in the first lines above. In fact, later in the interview, Patricia seems to recognize that.

Patricia: As for as how she taught, probably people today would say that she over-analyzed literature. We understood every line in Shakespeare's plays. We understood every line of poetry and she took her time with us. She went through it very very carefully. Didn't talk down to us made us feel like it was all very, very important. Very worth our time.

Jim: Was she telling you what to think or was she helping you to pull it out, or what?

Patricia: I think both—sharing information with us. I don't recall the kinds of discussion, the kind of free wheeling discussions that I have with my students because there was this distance that we felt with her. She was somebody that we revered and we would listen to but she was certainly an inspiration.

Though Patricia does tend somewhat toward the New Critical methodology suggested here, which is not surprising, given the time when she was in college, her teaching also inclines very strongly toward reader-response. She says of her own high school English classes, "I don't recall the kinds of

discussions, the kind of free wheeling discussions that I have with my students.” Rosenblatt’s work was not published until the late 1960s, so it is extremely unlikely that Patricia would have witnessed reader-response teaching in high school, and not very likely that she would have witnessed it in college. In fact, in the late 70s, if she was not witnessing New Critical teaching, she would more likely have been seeing the influences of Jungian/Freudian/Archetypal criticism and of post-modern criticism, such as Deconstructionism. In short, it is not likely that her reader-response orientation came out of the apprenticeship, regardless of what she thinks.

In response to another question, Patricia also credits the apprenticeship. When I asked her where she learned to stop and illuminate things she thought the students might not understand (such as the meaning of the word “hod-carrier”), she said,

Patricia: Probably all through school. I can remember times sitting in class where teachers would mention things and some of them were things that I already knew and that, I thought, was somewhat tedious. Oh, she’s explaining too much. More than I ever wanted to know. I already knew that and I didn’t care.

Jim: Are you talking about High School or college or both?

Patricia: High School, and yet there were many, many times when teachers would mention things that I didn’t know and the things that they shared were things that added, for me added, enjoyment to the story, to the literature that I was reading, and I think that is just how we learned. We would just talk about it together and share other stuff. It’s not all just focused on what happened in the story but all that other stuff that goes with it.

Likewise, when I asked her about where she learned to use historical and biographical information about a piece of literature, she attributed it

directly to her high school and college classes.

That's the way that I was taught when I was in school. I think that the lives of the authors are as interesting as some of the literature that we read so I want them to be familiar with that and I also want them to see that the potential that they can be an author too with another historical perspective. That was just the way that I was taught. We learned about the authors, but we did some close readings of specific sections of a book.

She also attributed her use of close-reading techniques to her high school teachers: "Probably all through school; it seemed to be something that teachers focused on an awful lot. What was the point? What was the main idea?"

On the other hand, as I noted above, she points out on one occasion how her teaching differs from what she saw in her own education: "I don't recall the kinds of discussions, the kind of free wheeling discussions that I have with my students." In other places, she talks about not doing certain things because her teachers did:

I can remember times sitting in class where teachers would mention things and some of them were things that I already knew and that I thought was somewhat tedious. Oh, she's explaining too much. More than I ever wanted to know. I already knew that and I didn't care.

And,

As far as how she taught, probably people today would say that she over-analyzed literature. We understood every line in Shakespeare's plays. We understood every line of poetry and she took her time with us. She went through it very, very carefully. Didn't talk down to us, made us feel like it was all very, very important.

Though Patricia's teaching certainly shows the influence of this kind of background, she doesn't, as she would say, "over-analyze" the literature. In

other words, this teacher's influence seems to be considerably diluted. A possible cause of that change is that somewhere fairly early in her career, Patricia's beliefs about the importance of literature teaching seem to have changed. She says it occurred while she was teaching middle school:

When I was teaching in eighth grade, [I came to realize] that children can be very cruel to other children and I saw the literature as a chance to talk about some of those issues. The Diary of Anne Frank, for example, about how she says people were really good at heart. Silas Marner taking in the little girl and spending his life devoted to caring for her. All of those are things that makes us better people. Those are the things that make me choose the literature that I choose, so I probably came to realize the powerful effects it could have on students then.

Some of the things Patricia does in her classes, then, can apparently be credited to the "apprenticeship of observation," but others can't. It is very unlikely that she would have been exposed to reader-response theory (or teaching) during either her high school or college years. Conversely, the qualities in her teaching that can be attributed to the apprenticeship evidence considerable modification. Thus, the interview and observation data don't very strongly support Patricia's valuation of that source of knowledge.

F. Professional Conferences & Staff Development Workshops

Patricia gives quite a bit of credit to "workshops." For instance, when I asked her about the practice of writing notes on an overhead during a class discussion, she said she had *probably* learned it in a workshop.

Probably in workshops that are given to teachers. Things that we are expected to learn. A lot of times the presenter will have an overhead. So just a little more sense to use that technique in the classroom. The industry does. Professional presenters do.

She credits such workshops at other places in the interview, which suggests, overall, a positive belief about their value. However, she never points to a particular workshop, and the use of “probably” suggests pretty clearly that she is guessing. Her answer tells me more about how she views staff development workshops than about her knowledge sources.

To my more direct questions about how she would rate the importance of various sources she gave the following responses:

Jim: Professional conferences and workshops. Big ones.

Patricia: Tend to be pretty good, eight. About an eight on a scale of one to ten.

Jim: District in-services and district workshops?

Patricia: Not very good. Well, they have offered some good ones lately, so maybe a four or a five.

Overall, though, beyond these generalities, there is very little in the interviews that speaks to this topic.

G. Conversations with Colleagues

Conversations with colleagues seems to play a very important role in Patricia’s teaching. When I asked how she would prepare to teach Garcia Lorca’s “The Gypsy,” for example, she said, “I would read it and see what I would get out of it myself and might even go to the Spanish teacher.” When I asked how she would prepare to teach a poem with which she was not familiar, but which the district had mandated she teach, she said, “To my colleagues and the English Department chair.” She had already explained to me that the English Department chair seems to have a near limitless supply of

information about pieces of literature.

New teachers, professionals, we don't have time to talk to each other. You have to literally seek them out. When I started teaching here in the very beginning, the department chair was [name deleted] and I don't know if you know her but she went by the name of, [name deleted] was her nickname, and all you had to do was mention that you were teaching a unit that you weren't familiar with and did she have anything in her files that you could borrow and the next morning on your desk was everything that she could pull together for you and when you have somebody like that it is just so wonderful and English teachers are very good at sharing and we are very good at keeping lots and lots of files, and so we share with each other so it may not be on a scheduled basis and it may not be anything more than passing in the hall or I see in your room door, "What've you got? I've got to teach this or that" and we share and you pull from everybody else but it is really up to you to do that initiating. I don't think that anybody would ever go to somebody's classroom and say "Honey, let me teach you how to teach this and that." They sort of find out. The gal next door is a brand new teacher and she came over one day and said "I hear you are the expert on Huck Finn. Give me some stuff." And so that is how it happened.

This seems to be a particularly strong source for Patricia. At various points in the interview—when I asked how she would prepare to teach unfamiliar materials, when I asked her about conversations with colleagues, and when I asked her to tell me generally where she had learned what she knew—she always included her colleagues as important sources. Despite her assertion in the passage above that teachers don't have time to talk to each other, they apparently do, and she avails herself of it.

H. Reliance on the Professional Literature

It's difficult to say exactly where Patricia stands on the usefulness of the professional literature to her teaching. She makes opposing statements about it. When I asked her to rate the various knowledge sources for me, she

said, “Consulting written sources would probably be the first. I would want to at least familiarize myself with it in some scholarly criticism and then my peers.” Also, when I asked her “where have you learned the things you know and value about particular pieces of literature,” she specifically mentioned “critics who write about the literature” as one of her sources. But, when I asked if she did a lot of reading in the professional journals, she responded thus: “No I don’t.” I followed with this probe: “You feel like you are falling behind in terms of keeping up with the current literature.” She said, “I am. I am. There’s no doubt about this. I’m loaning books to my honors students that I haven’t even read yet and I can say to them ‘I’m so jealous of you because you’re getting to read this before I do.’ But that’s okay. I have the summer. I’ll get some things done.”

So, as the following interchange shows, she values it, but doesn’t do much of it.

Patricia: And [I would] do some background information on Whitman and we would read it together in class and we would talk about it and get through with it and move on.

Jim: The background reading, I assume you are talking about going to the local library.

Patricia: Or the school library. Looking up off of the internet. I don’t want to miss something about the author more than I do at this very moment.

Jim: Do you use the internet as a source.

Patricia: I do. Not as much because we have just gotten hooked up and the time. I find it real time consuming.

I. Landscape

The interview with Patricia was the least fruitful in terms of figurative

description. She did at one point use the words “lift” and “pull” to describe her methods of acquiring information: “I *lift* from Cliff Notes, Monarch Notes, the Warren French’s the Companion to The Grapes of Wrath—I mean, I just *pull*⁶ from here or there.” Like Jane, she uses them to define what she means by “just figuring it out.” In the context, there is no suggestion of great effort or struggle; rather, the sense is that of “gleaning.” The only other figurative representation that shows up in her responses is when she says that she sees literature teaching as important because it civilizes students. She said,

I don’t think that you work miracles with each student with each piece, but I think it’s a building up of these ideas throughout their time in school that we take children from where ever they are and we sort of guide them into hopefully being more loving, caring human beings and that’s as important as learning math or history.

These two representations—gleaning and building—seem to be compatible representations: the gleaning provides the materials for the building.

J. Summary

To summarize, in Patricia’s mind, her dominant knowledge sources seem to be conversations with colleagues, the apprenticeship of observation, and just figuring it out. The interview data supports this to some degree, However, it also suggests more influence of her content courses than she recognizes, less influence of conferences and workshops, and a rather large

⁶My emphasis.

influence of a collection of materials that might be labelled “found” material (on analogy with “found poetry”). This last includes a wide array of materials: colleagues notes and lesson plans, popular magazine articles, materials off the internet, scholarly articles and so on. It cuts across the commercial, the popular, and the scholarly.

The Case of Betty

“escape for a few minutes; learn something about yourself”

A. Background

At the time of the interview, Betty had been teaching for six years, all of it in a medium-sized district in a large southwestern city. Though she had done some substitute teaching prior to her certification, and subsequently done some teaching at the college level for the National Writing Project, as well as some staff development teaching for her district, all of her regular, certificated, full-charge teaching had been done in high school. While her classes themselves have ranged from Freshman to Senior, she has mainly taught Freshman English and American literature. Her descriptions of the Freshman English program is salient because the nature of the course itself seems to somewhat dictate how the material will be taught.

We have academies here, [and] the students self direct themselves into academies where their interests will be best served. And so I'm teaching in the fine arts academy and so these students are particularly interested in art, music, drama, um, any of the fine arts basically. And so, that puts a slant on everything I teach. As far as anytime we do something, we also do a project involving one of the fine arts and so it, um, it really changes the way that I teach, but other than that, as far as the literature itself, it is fairly traditional.

.....

We are taking a much more whole language approach. Even at this level and so we are doing a lot of very hands-on activities. With now that our kids are mostly kinesthetic learners and so we do a lot of projects where they can get up and perform and move around and that kind of stuff. We don't do a real grammar unit although we are supposed to be doing some vocabulary units and I've tried to do those. But, we don't really at this school particularly. We've had huge battles about teaching grammar and so right now everybody does their own thing as far as that goes. But as far as the literature goes, it is fairly

traditional Romeo and Juliet. I did Pygmalion and then I'm also doing House on Mango Street this year. There is real no classification for it, I don't think. I know other ninth grade classes in this school, one of them is doing Animal Farm and so there are some variations.

The nature of the course as it is defined by the "fine arts academy" pushes her toward a particular kind of teaching ("hands-on," "projects"), though as I learned later in the interview she would probably also teach this way by choice. Ultimately, I'm unable to tell how much influence the courses have on her teaching.

Another possible source of influence on how one teaches is one's school background. As Paul Willis points out in Learning to Labor (1981), the kind of schools one attends seems to influence how one approaches authority in one's life. Betty grew up in another large southwestern city in a family that she describes as "very middle class." In keeping with Willis, then, I can expect Betty to be a democratic teacher. Likewise, Willis considers one's family background important in this kind of development, pointing out that children, once they are adults, tend to imitate their parents' behaviors.

Betty says of her family

Both my mother and father have degrees. My father was a chemist and he worked for the government basically in a high security building. You never knew really what he did. This was, of course, during the cold war and so he went to work everyday and came home at five o'clock, basically. My mother was an English teacher but when she had children, my father did not want her to work and so she stayed at home. She continued to teach a little bit now and then. She taught Sunday school and then she taught also for an Indian school, a private religious school. But she taught Junior English down there. I mean, it was an accredited school. So she taught that, but that was pretty much after I left [that] she did that.

A little bit later in the interview, she says, "In fact, . . . all of my uncles and aunts have college degrees, too. Education was very much valued in both families." However, she doesn't attribute her interest in teaching to her family. In fact, she says,

I think that I decided in my thirties that I wanted to teach when I went back to school and I had taken courses all through my adult life. When you come from a family where you're the only person who doesn't have a college degree, what you tend to do is take a class every once in awhile, right? And I had a number of hours when I started back to school. I gathered them all together. Also, all of uncles and all of my aunts are teachers so I come from that kind of a background. So, I think it was an almost a natural thing for me to do it but I still kept fighting it so I truly decided to do it as I said in about ninety-one and that is when I decided to go for it no matter what. But never as a child did I particularly want to be a teacher. So, it wasn't a childhood dream or anything. I don't know what I wanted to be but it certainly wasn't a teacher. I had seen too many of them.

She apparently sees her family as having influenced her decision to become a teacher, but sees herself as having struggled against it.

She also indicates that her interest in literature developed outside her family's influence. I asked Betty about her philosophy regarding literature and literature teaching. She said,

I would say earlier than that, much earlier than that as far as a love of literature began. Probably when I was eighteen years old and I got married when I was eighteen and my husband and I went to Europe while he was in the service and he would work all day. The only thing for me to do would be to go to the library and I would check out two dozen books a week and I would read two books a day and that is when I started reading all of the classics. And so, I just that's what I did all day. He was gone from dawn until dusk and usually later than that. He wouldn't get home until ten. He was a private and so I had no TV; it was read and that is when I developed this love of literature that then kept getting stronger and stronger, and when I went back to

school literature was it and that is all I really ever wanted to teach.

She identifies her beliefs about the value of literature as coming from this same source.

I'm teaching values when I teach literature. I'm teaching thinking when I teach literature. The means to that end are through the written word but what I am teaching them is a love of something rather than the something, I think, and so it's certainly the written word, but it's what's behind it is what I think that I am teaching.

.....

I think that it probably goes back farther than that to a deeper way as far as a personal belief structure goes where when I was reading those two big novels everyday I realized that I was interacting with something more than some silly little stories. And although I ate them voraciously and did not give them a whole lot of thought, they would stay with me and they have stayed with me since then where you learn things from them and you learn how to cope with your life. For a few short moments you can be somebody else and I think that I learned that way back then and that is what I am trying to get across now: escape for a few minutes; learn something about yourself.

Her pre-college educational background she describes as quite good.

I specifically asked Betty if she thought her mother's being an English teacher influenced her beliefs about literature. She responded,

Yeah, I've thought about that a lot. I really have. I mean I certainly was told enough as a child to go read a book. Get out of my hair. Go read a book. I don't remember her doing a lot of reading as a child. I don't remember that. I know she is well read, but I don't remember that about her. No.

Betty points out that she attended "the best" public schools available where she lived because her parents made sure they lived in the attendance zones for those schools.

Of course, [city name deleted] at the time wasn't all that large but compared to other schools in [the state] I suppose you could consider it urban but it [the state] in the sixties was really rural compared to

New York or something. But I attended, we moved to the best parts of town so that I could attend the best schools and so I went to, supposedly, the best schools at the time, although I do not think that they were necessarily most progressive, but they were the ones where you got the good strong middle class background education type thing.

She characterizes her college experience less positively, both in terms of how she went and where she went. She didn't start college until she was in her late thirties and she attended a small state college in a neighboring state, and while she says she feels like she got a firm grounding in literature, she is rather apologetic about what that grounding is.

[I attended] a very small liberal arts public institution in [state name deleted] and I went late in life. I was thirty, thirty-seven. . . . So, but it was a very good; I think that I got a real good background in English there.

.....

Yeah, and although I look back on it and it was very, what is it? New Criticism or something; is that what it is? Is Frye in there? Okay, very much so that, I mean I was told what to think on every poem that I was ever read to. I mean, and we did a lot of British Literature. I probably know more British Literature than almost anyone in the school here and who went to really good schools just because . . . those small schools kind of focus in one area and that was the focus in that one. And so, heavy into Victorian, all that stuff. But I got a real firm basis in literature from that.

She goes on to say that she believes her views about literature were rather strongly influenced by her literature professors,

Jim: What about some of your college literature professors? Did they push you towards that or did they maybe reflect that kind of belief themselves?

Betty: Oh yes, I think so. I think definitely.

Jim: Do you think that they were influential on you or were they just out there and?

Betty: No, by the time that I went back to school, I was a sponge and I was just soaking every drop that came from these professors lips and it's taken me awhile to sort through it and decide what I

want to keep and what I want to give up. But I was such a willing subject and I believed every interpretation that they ever gave me. I believed that it was the truth so they had a profound impact.

Betty's background doesn't seem to add up to a very strong influence on her teaching except in two respects: her belief that students need to make a personal connection with the literature apparently comes, not from her family, but from her own experience with literature when she was living in Europe; and her generally democratic orientation to teaching may reflect her experiences as a student in "middle-class" schools.

B. "Just figuring it out"

When I asked Betty directly how important "just figuring it out" was as a source of teaching practices for her, she said "major." Her answers to the interview questions also support that valuation—that it is quite an important source for her pedagogical practices.

You know, I think that it is something that is based on my own reading and watching of movies—both of them; as I said, I'm voracious when it comes to things like that and I don't stop and think about it very often and I've learned over a period of time that when I do that I cannot remember things afterwards so it is something that I have had to learn to do myself. I've had to learn how to slow down. Pay attention to what is going on with what I'm reading if I really care about it. If I'm reading a Tony Hillerman novel, I just sit down and I, it's like eating a Big Mac, right? But if I am reading something that I truly want to remember, I stop and think very carefully about especially key things and that is something I had to teach myself because if you love to read that is all you want to do is read and read and read and you don't really want to be stuck being reflective about it and so what I am trying to do is to get them to start seeing that that is what you need to do and it's something that they do not want to do. They would and most of the kids in the class are pretty good readers. I have a few that, like I said, are the special ed kids and ESL that aren't,

but they are fairly good readers and so I felt like, especially for them, that they need to learn this technique right away.

In the passage above, for instance, she makes it clear that she has had to teach herself to read more carefully and that she tries to teach her students that so they don't have to learn it for themselves, but her phrasing ("it is something that I have had to learn to do myself") suggests that she is less than approving of that kind of learning.

Betty's overall assessment of her literature teaching is that she is not good at it and is, therefore, always trying to figure out ways to do it better. Her articulation of this point makes it clear, though, that she means primarily figuring it out by reflecting on the success or failure of her practices.

I don't think that I do it very well. I'm always trying to figure out how I can do it better. I think that I am a pretty good writing teacher but I don't think that I am necessarily a good literature teacher so maybe I have couched everything and all of these other things to cover up this inability. Because I often think that I march kids through things without giving them a whole lot of time to think. That's a learning process for me and how I got to this point, I think, was being self-reflective as far as doing it a few times and figuring out that that didn't work, being dissatisfied even though my kids could do what I asked them to do. Did I teach them enough of this? I think that the reason that I am there is just growing up and being a self-reflective person, trying to be.

Thus, she seems to see "just figuring it out" as a less than ideal means. She obviously has a negative view of her own ability to teach literature and characterizes this "figuring it out" as a way of hiding that inability, not a source of positive growth. For her, reflection seems to focus more on correcting negative practices than on developing new ones.

I trust my intuition a lot; that is a scary thing to realize, but I do as far as trusting what will be good in the classroom, and so once again I'm not sure it's something you can learn. It's something that you learn by trial and error maybe. You figure out, I mean you do a bad one and you catch on real quickly, right, that that didn't work, you know, and we have all had those. We have all had those that just bombed terribly. But I know I [substitute] taught down in Texas [for] several years and I have this whole slide show done and the kids sit through it politely but they go why are you showing us all these nature pictures? But you know I need to change it because obviously it doesn't work. But it was a trial and error one.

However, the sheer number of times that Betty refers to this source of knowledge suggests that it is a relatively important source of her practices. For instance, when I asked how she would approach teaching a poem she was completely unfamiliar with, such as Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," she said ". . . I would mull over the poem in my mind, what it meant to me, and then I would come up with some cute way to just show the kids, to grab their attention." Her response to similar questions about Garcia Lorca's "The Gypsy" were much the same: "If I couldn't come up with something that I thought was okay, then I would really do some more deep research on it." Her method of choice for preparing to teach both of these poems seems to be relying on her own knowledge and background—"just figuring it out"—which suggests that it is, as she says, an important source of her pedagogical practices.

C. Publisher Materials

The materials generated by publishers appear to play virtually no role in Betty's teaching. Her responses show not only her awareness of the

existence of such materials, but also knowledge of their contents. Thus, her rather negative characterization of them indicates a conscious rejection of them as a source of knowledge. I find it interesting that she seems to believe that there is worthwhile information about Raisin in the Sun in the publisher-generated materials, but chooses not to bother with it. In part, this can perhaps be explained by her essentially reader-response approach to literature teaching, but she seems also to have a general disdain for such materials.

Betty: They're kind of fillers. If I know that I am going to have an extra ten minutes I may pull out one of their things and do it. But I would never center a unit on it or anything. I mean just this morning I thought well I should go look; there is a whole unit on Raisin in the Sun in that big book I have back there. I should go look at it. But that is a very minor significance.

Jim: Okay,

Betty: I don't have the teacher's edition to one of my literature classes I teach, so. . .

Even this last statement show how little importance she attaches to such sources. She simply doesn't care enough to try to get the teacher's edition of the literature text.

D. Content Courses

As I noted above, Betty attributes her love of literature to her life experiences, not to her high school or college literature courses. She is quite clear about the critical orientation of the college she attended, but doesn't appear to be much influenced by that in her teaching. However, she does, attribute her philosophy of literature teaching indirectly to her content courses.

Jim: When and how did you come to believe what you just said?

Betty: Well, a superficial answer and a easy one is that I did a paper on oral literature in college and I went back and I studied all about that and I realized the value of all of that. I had not really thought about it completely so that's certainly one area that I did. But I think that it probably goes back farther than that to a deeper way as far as a personal belief structure goes where when I was reading those two big novels everyday I realized that I was interacting with something more than some silly little stories. And although I ate them voraciously and did not give them a whole lot of thought, they would stay with me and they have stayed with me since then where you learn things from them and you learn how to cope with your life. For a short few short moments you can be somebody else and I think that I learned that way back then and that is what I am trying to get across now. Escape for a few minutes; learn something about yourself.

Near the end of the interview, Betty made what I thought was a pretty insightful comment about the influence of content courses. She said,

I think it is there. I truly do. I think, and I have heard other teachers say, "Oh, well I have been doing that a long time." We'll have somebody come [do a workshop] and [afterwards some of the faculty will] say, "Well, I've been doing that a long time." And I think teachers do that an awful lot. They may not exactly understand it — what they are doing, but I think they do do it. Now, I think that I am a little bit different from, especially from the teachers around here who are my age and have been teaching a long time. [The difference] is that, you know, I do understand the basis, the base back there. Sounds kind of bad but

In short, she assumes that not only does her daily teaching reflect the influence of her content courses but so does that of her colleagues reflect theirs. She considers herself "different" from her colleagues because she recognizes it, suggesting, then, that her colleagues deny that influence, as the research literature suggests. What is perhaps equally salient, though, is that she didn't talk about going back to notes from her classes until I pushed her

into a kind of corner with my probing questions about how she would prepare a unit.

I'm doing a fantasy unit in a few weeks and I've gathered up all these books on fantasy and how to write fantasy and that type of thing and I'm creating this unit then that is based on all of that. I mean, I've gone back to my college notes and, you know, we did Romantic literature, we did Realistic Literature, you know, and all of those, and I go back to those notes in order to get the tenets in order to, so that the kids can understand, you know, what is going on. And so, yes, a certain amount of research is always required. A certain amount of prior knowledge is, you have got to create that for the kids too and if I don't have it, then I have got to also get it myself, you know, in order to create it for the students because they wouldn't know that the lilacs bloom at Easter.

Overall, Betty seems rather unclear about the effect her content courses have had on her teaching. That is, while she says she might go back to her notes to refresh her memory about literary history or literary terminology, she doesn't seem to put much value on the information, thus setting up the suggestion that what she does is not what her professors did, though she and they utilize some of the same information.

E. The Apprenticeship of Observation

The "apprenticeship of observation" seems to be of some importance in Betty's development as a teacher. She specifically singles out two high school English teachers. Her characterization of the first one is extremely negative. She describes her sophomore English teacher in a way that makes her seem to be quite the opposite of Betty herself. The vividness of the description thirty-five years after the fact suggests that the teacher made a deep impression, so perhaps Betty's own teaching is a negative reaction to

that teacher. Though that is not what Lortie (1975) means by the apprenticeship, reasons suggests that if it works the one way it could also work the other.

Betty: I remember my sophomore and my junior English teacher. Sophomore teacher because she was so bad. Getting a...

Jim: Can you define “bad” here?

Betty: Yeah, absolutely deathly boring. I fell asleep in class sometimes during that time. I remember Romeo and Juliet—not Romeo and Juliet—Julius Caesar; and we just droned through that thing.

Jim: Meaning what?

Betty: Read page by page by page. Read out loud. I don’t remember even class participation in reading. I think she might have read it to us. Multiple choice tests, that type of thing. I remember her as being not interested in us particularly. It was just something you went and sat and you did and you got through it.

Betty’s description of her eleventh grade English teacher is also of interest. Though she doesn’t characterize her quite so negatively, she also doesn’t characterize her as a model. Too, Betty works hard at making her classes fun for her students, something she might very well have picked up from this teacher, though she doesn’t say she did. In general, she doesn’t characterize this woman as a model.

Betty: And then my eleventh grade teacher—I don’t remember her real well, but I remember she was a hippie and so it was fun and she used to be a little bit wild in class so it was a fun class to go to. I don’t really remember the literature we learned, though, to tell you the truth.

Jim: But you do remember the techniques or the tactics the methods?

Betty: Yeah, I remember she made it fun for us.

Aside from these two points, there is little in the interview that suggests that the apprenticeship of observation has been important. According to Betty’s own statements, her classes during her undergraduate years were

“old fashioned,” by which she meant lecture, essay tests, research papers. She says, “I was told what to think” and that her professors were “heavy into Victorian, all that stuff,” “New Criticism or something; is that what it is”? Similarly, she says of her high school experience that it was not “necessarily most progressive,” again suggesting traditional teaching. Neither describes how she teaches, so it seems that the apprenticeship has not been a strong force in her learning to teach.

F. Professional Conferences & Staff Development Workshops

Betty values staff development workshops experiences very highly; in fact she labels them “very important” as an influence on her teaching. She speaks, for instance, of the influence of Dan Kirby’s work on her teaching and points out that virtually all of her familiarity with his work came through staff development workshops. She neither took classes from him nor studied his work in a class. She also had not read his book, Inside Out.

I organized workshops here for five years and I did huge ones, right, with five presenters a day at [name of location deleted], things like that. I had [Dr. Kirby] to that one. I also had him at my house one time. He did a workshop for all of the English teachers. He spent a day with us. So, I got him there, and I also heard him at Writing Project. Never have I heard him taught in a class. That is kind of interesting because I think that he is phenomenal.

I noticed during my pre-interview observations that she offered her students a variety of means for interpreting the literature—write a skit, make a collage or a diorama, draw a picture, write a poem, etc.—so I asked her where she learned those techniques. She was quite clear about her source, which was,

as I suspected, Kirby's work.

[T]he reason for these particular [practices] is Dan Kirby; I've heard his little things several times about the tools, right, and why is it in an English class, we don't have any tools? I discovered that kids love tools. They just, even these juniors, they can't wait to cut and paste and make something and it is a self-expressive thing and so I do a lot of tools.

The depth of his influence on her is worthy of note also. When I tried to move on to another question, Betty added this.

But Kirby was pivotal in that thing and I don't know if you want to even say it because it does sound kind of gratuitous in some ways, but that one statement—it was like, "wait a minute, he's right."

She also spoke of the influence of Maria Montaña Harmon in the same way.

Jim: And how did you come to that way of thinking about...

Betty: Actually, I know this one. This one I know, I can even trace. This is a technique by Maria Montaña Harmon.

Jim: Okay, the person you mentioned in class the other day?

Betty: Yeah, and she, what she teaches is what's called [unclear] and I've used them. I've used them for a couple of years now and it's an organizing tool for the kids to organize before they write the essay. I was ready to make it a little bit more fun and I'm trying to get a couple of things going on in this: on their own, and from the play, their own thoughts about the American Dream. But it is, basically, her technique.

Jim: Where did you encounter that? I mean in a class, just reading her books, or in staff development seminars, or what? Has she been here to this school to talk?

Betty: Yeah, actually I brought her here.

Jim: Did you?

Betty: Yeah, and she has been here, this is her second semester. She does a five week five day training session. I've been through it twice. I know this lady's stuff and it's a lot of techniques to teach culturally diverse students and her theory is that you have to involve the kids before they are ready to do the academic things.

Betty was quite forthcoming about the benefits of staff development to her teaching, but my repeated efforts to discuss professional conference went nowhere, so I eventually quit asking. Whenever I mentioned “conferences,” Betty always reinterpreted my questions to talk about staff development workshops. When I asked her to rank the importance of conferences and workshops, she said “less than figuring it out but it would be right up there.” However, she never gave me any information about professional conferences, only staff development workshops. As she says at one point, though, she thinks of herself more as a writing teacher than a literature teacher, so perhaps she simply doesn’t value literature conferences. She says, or seems to say, that professional conferences are important to her, but she provides no evidence of that. Conversely, she leaves no doubt about the value of staff development workshops.

G. Conversations with Colleagues

When I asked Betty to rate the importance of “conversations with colleagues,” her response was one word: “Minimal.” Based on the rest of the interview, that seems a pretty fair description. When I asked her about preparing to teach Garcia Lorca’s poem, she said “I would read it first. Then, I would probably talk to some of the Spanish teachers here on campus and have them give me their interpretation of it, their feelings for the poem. What it meant to them.”

Beyond that, she never mentioned consulting her colleagues about her

teaching. Two things surfaced in the interviews and observations that are relevant here. First, Betty's descriptions of the "academies" suggests a kind of rupturing of the traditional departmentalizing. That is, since these academies are essentially "teams," her professional interactions on a daily basis would be with teachers of other subjects than literature. Also, her comments about the amount of curricular freedom she has suggests that she isn't required to align her teaching with that of other literature teachers. Secondly, the physical layout of the school is such that teachers tend to be isolated from each other. All the classrooms open onto a courtyard, rather than a central hallway, and there are several classroom buildings separated from each other by significant distances. Betty's classroom, in fact, is at the extreme end of the building it is in. Thus, it is not easy for teachers to bump into each other and have a quick informal chat. Likewise, the classrooms are far enough away from the lounge and office spaces that Betty, at least, just doesn't go there unless she has to. In short, the physical layout of the school doesn't contribute to collegiality. Many of the faculty do eat in the faculty lunch room, but the unspoken rule there is, as it has been in every public school in which I've taught, that one doesn't talk business over lunch.

In sum, I don't find it surprising that Betty doesn't rely heavily on conversations with her colleagues.

H. Reliance on the Professional Literature

Betty also indicates some reliance on the professional literature, but in

summary it is not a high degree of reliance. One of the teaching techniques she uses she attributes to a specific book, though it is difficult to tell from her statement whether this technique should be attributed to her reading in the professional literature or to her pedagogy courses. She seems to be saying that she first encountered Lindemann's work in her pedagogy courses, but that its real influence came via her own reading after she began teaching. She says she first encountered Lindemann in her undergraduate English methods course, but specifically labels the class as a "first introduction."

Betty: Free writing especially helps you think about what you are going to say before you actually have to say it. I guess that is all.

Jim: Where did you learn that particular tactic? Do you know?

Betty: Certainly not in my own schooling. I would say that I probably learned it down at the University.

Betty: In classes or informal situations or what?

Betty: The only thing I can think of because I have thought about that since and I think maybe in [professor's name deleted] class when we did Erika Lindemann [author of A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers]. Lindemann, is that her name?

Jim: Yep.

Betty: The red book. I'm sure she has a chapter on it and that was probably my first introduction to it is reading it in there.

When I asked about how she would prepare to teach a piece of literature with which she was unfamiliar, she indicated that, under extreme circumstances, she might consult the professional literature.

Jim: Okay, what about journal articles? Would you go read up on it or any other sort of thing?

Betty: Um...I might. I'm really into Louise Rosenblatt though as far as the kid's own personal response to it is more important to me than what...

Jim: Well, that's good; I mean that I'm not necessarily looking for a "yes" answer; I'm just...

Betty: Yeah I know. I'm trying to think. Now, if it were something that, um, I truly were unsure about then I would, yes. If I couldn't come up with something that I thought was okay, then I would really do some more deep research on it.

Her own characterization of how she uses the professional literature is somewhat illuminating.

I have an extensive library at home. Ironically, it's more about composition than literature. The literature is often a vehicle for me to get them to write. So, and I pick those up periodically. I'm a bookworm shopper. I hit the education section on a very frequent basis. But, text books yes. Real journals no. I never have liked magazines of any kind basically so I don't read them very much.

She makes it quite clear that she doesn't read the journal literature, though she does rely somewhat on books. She also suggests some reliance on the Internet. When I asked how she would prepare to teach an unfamiliar poem, she said, "Then, I would probably go on the Internet to see what I could find on the Internet about it."

Overall, this suggests that the professional literature is a somewhat important source of practical knowledge for Betty, but that influence is largely restricted to materials published in books.

I. Landscape

Betty's figurative representations of herself and her work were extensive. The metaphoric theme that stands out the most is of herself as a performance artist and theatrical director. She says, at one point, "It is a performance art, basically. You are creating a stage for these kids and you are saying come and join me. Come and join me. I have created this stage

up here. Come and join me and have fun.” In the context of the interview, Betty was explaining to me that the teaching technique we were discussing—her asking the students to do a choral reading of a poem—was something she hadn’t been taught, but had just figured out for herself. Her figurative representation is that this constitutes “creating.”

Another metaphor that Betty uses has interesting implications. At one point she says that she doesn’t want to make the kids into “good soldiers.” The context is that she wants the kids to think on their own about literature, not merely repeat what they’ve been told. Likewise, later, when she is talking about her belief that she is not a good literature teacher, she says, “I often think that I march kids through things without giving them time to think.” She attributes this point of view to Dan Kirby’s influence on her, which, as I noted, came in workshops. Thus, this metaphoric representation supports her contention that workshops have been a major influence on her teaching practices.

Betty also uses a couple of metaphors that characterize her as a proselytizer. She had asked her students to interview an adult at home about the “American Dream.” When I questioned her about why she chose that assignment, she talked about how it caused students to relate more personally to the literature.

I think adults want to share things like that with them and make the whole connection a little bit stronger and that's one of those ones that probably isn't sanctioned, approved by the curriculum department but I think that kids are hungry to do that kind of thing and I can give them

a vehicle to do it and give credit for it and bring it into their own writing and so you know it's my little soap box I guess.

She makes this point more specifically later in the interview.

... coming into teaching late in life, probably my biggest thing is that I think that they have been beaten down by the system. I disagree with the public school system completely. I've had two kids go through it. I disagree with it and so it is my one little way I can make a difference for these kids. For this fifty-three minutes of the day, they can have fun and they can they can enjoy learning.

A third metaphor Betty uses also confirms another of her statements about her sources of knowledge. While we were discussing her educational background, Betty referred to herself as a “sponge,” “soaking up every drop that came from those professors’ lips,” a statement that supports her belief that content courses have had an impact on her teaching.

J. Summary

Betty characterizes “Just figuring it out” and “Staff Development Workshops” as the most important influences on her teaching practices. She also indicates that “the Apprenticeship of Observation” has been important, though that is not as clear in the interview as her direct statements might lead one to believe. There is some suggestion of negative influence, but only minimal evidence of positive influence. Content courses seem to have had some impact on how she teaches, though her awareness of their effect is rather low. She seems not to value either “publisher materials,” or “conversations with colleagues,” or “professional conferences” as important sources of knowledge that affect her teaching practices.

Betty's experiences, like Jane's, suggest that there are some knowledge sources that perhaps deserve more attention, in this case specifically staff development workshops.

Summary of the Cases

All three teachers seemed to value “just figuring it out” very highly, Betty, though she rates it highly, seems to consider it a less than ideal source. In fact, in her descriptions of it, it seems to be more a kind of reflection that she uses to improve unsatisfactory practices than a source of new methods. Jane and Patricia both characterize it in ways that suggest creativity. Jane refers to it as “creating” and Patricia characterizes it as “developing.”

Unlike the others, Jane seems to use publisher-generated materials quite a bit. She characterizes it as part of what she calls “gleaning,” picking up things from here and there, including publisher-generated materials. Patricia, too, talks about this kind of source, saying she would “borrow, modify, and add to,” that she would use materials from any source. However, she doesn’t seem to recognize publisher-generated materials as any special kind of category. She would use them if they came to hand, but not seek them out. Betty, on the other hand, though indicating full awareness of the existence of such materials does not use them, even to the extent of not checking a teacher’s manual she has in the room, as well as not having teacher’s manuals for some of the books.

Both Jane and Patricia deny the influence of content courses, but Betty speaks highly of them. In all three cases, both the observations and conversations provide good evidence of the effects of content courses. Both Jane and Patricia have a negative view of what they learned from content

courses; even their level of negativity is similar: Jane says, "Well, it sure wasn't anything in college" and Patricia says, "In fact, I learned that it was wrong to do it. That's what I was taught. It was wrong to do it; but I do it anyway because, for me, it works." Betty, on the other hand, not only refers directly to using ideas and materials from her courses, but also assumes that teachers do so even when they aren't consciously aware of it, a belief very much in line with the recent literature (Graber, 1995; Pajares and Bengston, 1995).

I find no direct acknowledgement on Jane's part that the apprenticeship of observation has been an important source of her working knowledge of literature teaching, nor do I see evidence in her teaching that suggests strong influence of the apprenticeship. Betty's case shows some influence of the apprenticeship, but not much, and, in fact, the strongest influence on her practices seems to have been a negative one. Patricia's case is similar to Betty's in that she was influenced in her decision to teach by a high school teacher she admired, but her practices are not much influenced by that teacher, or her other teachers. All three informants teach considerably differently from the way they characterize their own teachers having taught.

Jane rates professional conferences and staff development workshops very highly as a source of professional knowledge, but seems to mean only national conferences when she does so. Her opinion of staff development

workshops is decidedly negative. Patricia rates workshops highly, but with an interesting twist: the things she has taken from workshops that she values, such as projecting her lecture notes while she's talking, were peripheral to the workshops, not the subjects. She rates professional conferences highly, and district workshops low, but doesn't provide any supporting explanation.

Betty, on the other hand, rates both professional conferences and staff development workshops highly and provides numerous instances of exactly how the staff development workshops have impacted her teaching. However, she provides no similar information about professional conferences.

Jane rates conversations with colleagues highly as a source, but then gives good evidence that she excludes other English teachers from this. She specifies talking with an English teacher in another school and non-English teachers within her own school, but not other English teacher in her school. Betty rates it as minimal and offers nothing in the rest of the conversation or the practices I observed to refute her judgement. Patricia, on the other hand, rates it highly and offers considerable information about how it works in her school.

Jane rates the professional literature high in terms of its importance as a source of her pedagogical practices. She says quite directly, "I also read professional journals." However, she goes on to say that, though she looks a lot of it, she really just skims it. My observations, though, suggest that perhaps she uses it more than she thinks she does. Patricia makes conflicting

statements about the scholarly literature. She rates it as the most important source, but then bemoans the difficulty of keeping up with it, indicating quite clearly that she doesn't keep up. Betty doesn't rate the literature highly as a source of her practices. She specifically excludes the journal literature, saying that she doesn't like "magazines of any kind," but claims an extensive professional library and directly connects some of her practices to particular works.

Finally, all three teachers use metaphoric language that tends to confirm at least some of their statements about their sources of knowledge. Jane and Patricia use language that buttresses their idea that they figure things out for themselves. In Jane's case, it helps me understand how she interprets my category. In Patricia's case, it helps me see that she characterizes herself and her role in way quite similar to how Jane does. Betty's figurative language also supports her more direct statements about, for instance, the role of content courses in her knowledge development.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The primary goal of this study has been to try to determine whether a wider more thorough study of teachers' use of the "alternative" practical knowledge sources is warranted. Specifically, I wanted to find out how heavily literature teachers rely on those sources—self (or "just figuring it out"), publisher-generated materials, conversations with colleagues, profession conferences and staff development workshops, and reading in the professional literature—as opposed to the sources most commonly treated in the research literature—the apprenticeship of observation, content courses and pedagogy course. The major research question—"what do literature teachers report are the sources of the knowledge that they use in their daily teaching of literature?"—is premised in the work of Lee Shulman's Knowledge Growth in a Profession Project (Shulman, 1986). The publications that have come out of that project, most notably the work of Pamela Grossman (1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1995) and Sigrun Godmundsdottir (1991), have focused virtually all of their attention on the apprenticeship of observation and on subject-matter and professional courses as the dominant sources of the knowledge that inform teachers' practices.

However, my own experiences in learning to teach literature suggested to me that other sources of knowledge might be more important than the publications that have come out of Shulman's project suggest they are. When I first began to teach, I did not have a teaching certificate, had taken only one

education course, had not been a successful student in secondary school, and had never seriously considered being a teacher until confronted with the opportunity to teach. In short, I did not have the kind of apprenticeship in high school to draw on that many who enter the profession have; neither did I have professional course work to draw on. I depended heavily on the models of my content course professors, but, from the beginning, I was painfully aware of how much I didn't know and sought information wherever I could think of to look. I'm sure I depended at least as much on what I have called the "alternative" sources ("just figuring it out," publisher-generated materials, professional conferences and staff development, conversations with colleagues, the professional literature) as I did on the "traditional" ones (content courses, professional courses, the apprenticeship of observation), and believe that many other teachers probably have done the same.

That suggestion that other knowledge sources may be important is buttressed by some of the professional literature, such as Fox's and Gutierrez's studies of the role of "context" in shaping how teachers teach. The influence of context on teachers' practices is not considered at all in the work of the Knowledge Growth Project, yet Gutierrez's (1996) and Fox's (1992) work shows how a department culture can influence a teacher's practices. More specifically, it seemed to me that, because so much was being published about the role of the apprenticeship of observation and the role of content and professional courses in shaping pedagogical practices, the other

knowledge sources were being ignored without any consideration of how important they might be.

Likewise, I believe that if these other knowledge sources play the kind of role I think they do, it would become necessary to revamp English methods courses. The research on English methods shows quite clearly that (a) English methods is organized in much the same way all over the country and (b) assumes that content and pedagogy courses are the dominant influences on how teachers learn their craft. If those are not, in fact, the dominant sources, or if other sources are also important to teachers' professional knowledge development, it would make sense to revise methods courses to include instruction in how to access and use those sources.

The nature of this study, then, was to try to find out, through interviews with practicing literature teachers, what they believed their sources of knowledge to have been. Chapter Four presented the data from those interviews, which show quite clearly that these three teachers credit much of their knowledge to sources other than those most treated in the research literature. That is, while the apprenticeship of observation and both subject-matter and professional course work seem to be influential, these teachers attribute much of what they use in their daily practice to other sources, such as conversations with colleagues, just figuring it out, and staff development workshops.

There are, of course, reliability issues, which will be discussed below,

but these teachers, correctly or incorrectly, credit much of the knowledge they use in their daily practices to the alternative sources. However, one of the points that seems to come through most clearly is that these three teachers show little real similarity in what they value most. Betty, for instance, values staff development beyond all else. Jane, on the other hand, completely discounts its value, seeming to merely pay it lip-service. Patricia seems to value conversations with colleagues very highly; Betty doesn't value such conversations very highly, whereas Jane does, but not conversations with colleagues in her own building. Jane values "just-figuring-it-out" most highly. The others, too, seem to value it, though exactly how and how much differs for each of them. How much they value the professional literature also varies. Betty refuses to read the journal literature, characterizing it derogatorily as "magazines," but relies heavily on scholarly books. Patricia recognizes its value and rather wistfully wishes she had time to read it, to keep up, but doesn't seem to use it in any systematic way. Jane denies that it is a source of her knowledge, but my observations suggest that she uses it to a higher degree than her denial would suggest. However, what Jane uses tends to be the lower-order materials, such as Senior Scholastic, rather than scholarly journals or books.

So, what conclusions can I draw from this data? First, of all, my conclusions must be limited to the individuals themselves. I did not select the informants by any scientific means intended to make them representative of

literature teachers. I chose them because they fit what LeCompte and Preisle (1993) refer to as “typical” examples. These three are known to me through personal knowledge and reports of their colleagues to be “excellent” literature teachers. I was not interested in “extreme” or “unique” cases, but “typical” ones. I also chose them because I had connections with them that would ease some of the difficulties commonly associated with interviewing, such as access, and willingness to be interviewed (Bogdan and Bicklen, 1992).

Before I discuss the conclusions, though, it is important to discuss the limitations of this study.

Limitations of the Method

Perhaps the most important limitation of this study lies in the interviews themselves. The primary goal of this study was to learn what literature teachers *report* are the sources of professional knowledge that informs their teaching. The purpose behind that purpose is to begin to gain the knowledge needed to reshape English methods classes in directions that would make those classes more useful to beginning teachers. That is itself an idea fraught with assumptions. For instance, it assumes that teachers actually attempt to use the material they encounter in methods classes, that methods classes need to change, and that what teachers say is reliable. However, the purpose of this study is not to test those assumptions; rather it is simply to collect the information in order to decide if a larger, more rigorous study is warranted.

One of the problems I encountered in the interviews was that some of the teachers tended to try to tell me what they thought I wanted to hear. Patricia was the most blatant. At one point, she told me about a technique she uses, then said, "What do you think?" Another time she said, "Give me a for instance. Give me a for instance." At another point, I asked her where she had learned the various ways to approach literature, she responded, "I don't know. I really don't know." I wanted more information than that, so I rephrased the question. She then said, "Was there something specific that I said that I could go back to?" The other respondents did similar things. Betty, with whom I had the most collegial relationship and from whom I would not have expected this, said at one point, "Actually, I know this one. This one I know; I can even trace. . ." Her response suggests that she perceives this less as an interview and more as a test, that she needs to be able to give me *the* answer. Even Jane, though less so than the others, perhaps, was concerned with telling me what she thought I wanted to hear: "I didn't give you much in the way of an answer to the question."

One conclusion that I can draw from such instances is that I need to reformulate my data collection methods to attempt to remove the interviewer influence and keep the focus on the informants. On the other hand, individual answers to individual questions are not as important to me as the overall tenor. At one point, I directly asked Jane if she had been influenced by her cooperating teacher during her student teaching. Her response was

“Probably.” That does not prove to me either that she was or was not influenced by the apprenticeship of observation. It does, however, suggest that she considers it to have some degree of importance and tells me that I need to consider it as one of the sources of the knowledge that inform teachers’ practices. This desire to tell me what they think I want to hear does indeed limit the reliability of the information, but it doesn’t completely invalidate it.

A second problem with this data collection method is that some of the informants recast my questions and then answered their own instead of mine. Patricia was particularly guilty of this. For instance, when I asked her which sub-area of literature she found most appealing when she was a new teacher, she said, “Shakespeare.” While in some ways one might consider Shakespeare an “area” rather than an author, her response seems to be to a “who” question rather than the “what” question I asked. Of course, the confusion may arise because of the spontaneous, oral responses required by the method. Perhaps she would have answered more directly and carefully in another medium. A second part of this same response was perhaps more directly related to my question. She said, “I like American lit. a lot.” This statement was the third one in the response. Were the other two statements simply filler while her mind was interpreting the question and forming a direct response? Linguists have long categorized such oral performances as “y’know,” “uh,” and “like” as linguistic-noise, which is utterances whose

primary purpose is to give the speaker time to collect his or her thoughts while still holding the floor; they're really nothing more than verbalized pauses. That seems to me to be what Patricia was doing, but short of probes and/or follow-up interviews that could be used for triangulation, there is no way to know. Still, my ability to collect data would have been enhanced by a better constructed protocol.

While Patricia was the most frequent offender in this respect, the other two informants also recast my questions to their own satisfaction, which means that I sometimes did not get the information I was seeking. However, as I have noted several times, I was primarily interested in eliciting from these teachers information about how they believe they have acquired their practical knowledge. Part of my assumption is that teachers do not carry that knowledge around at the surface, conscious level (see Carter and Doyle, 1995, for instance), but that it must be drawn out, elicited. Entwined in that assumption is the further assumption that not every utterance is an exact representation of the speaker's beliefs (for instance, see William Labov's 1965 discussion of his research methods for his study of African-American English in the inner city.) So, I used different kinds of questions so that, while an individual response might not be an accurate representation of the informant's beliefs, the complete set of responses would give me the accurate picture of what the teacher believes. I don't think I was always successful and believe that the protocol needs to be retooled to better deal with that

problem. I don't believe that my questions always got to the essence of what the teachers believe.

A third problem with the methods of this study is that in some cases the informants simply didn't understand what I was asking for. For example, none of the three quite seemed to understand what I was asking for when I asked them to tell me how they would prepare to teach a poem with which they were not familiar. Betty and Jane basically responded "read it," though the context surrounding the answers suggests that they mean they would read it, then apply what they already know; they would not routinely seek additional information. Patricia said she would ask her principal what would happen if she refused. I was wanting a much more elaborated response, such as "I would ask so-and-so, and I would look for material on the web, then I'd check my textbooks from college, and I'd look for journal articles about it." In other words, I wanted them to outline for me how they go about preparing a lesson or unit. I don't think either of the three understood that.

By asking more direct probing questions, I was able to lead more elaborated responses out of them, but the result is a skewed picture of how they prepare. That is, their response may reflect more of my thinking about how to prepare to teach than it does how they prepare. Jane, for instance, gave me considerably more elaborate responses as I fed her questions. Her initial response to my question about how she would prepare to teach "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" was "Read it." It was quite evident

from that response that she did not know the poem, which I had not expected. So, I explained a bit of what the poem was about—an elegy to Abraham Lincoln—to which she then responded that she would coordinate it with the social studies teacher. Betty's responses to my questions about how she would prepare to teach "The Gypsy" were similar. The more I told her, the more she elaborated. However, I did not come away from those conversations with a clear picture of how these teachers routinely prepare to teach, which is really the information I was seeking.

Likewise, when I asked about theoretical orientations to literature, none of the three responded without prompting. Even though I rephrased my question several ways, I was never able to get satisfactory responses from Jane and Patricia, making it evident that they simply didn't understand what I was asking. Betty was somewhat clearer than the other two informants about what I was asking, but still not completely satisfactory. On the other hand, each of the three analyzes literature within a particular literary frame, such as New Criticism, Historical/Biographical Criticism, and Reader-Response Theory, but they were unable to tell me that directly. The result was that I had to make the determination about theoretical orientation without direct statements from the teachers.

A fourth problem with this methodology arose with my efforts to overcome the other problems by recasting my questions, probing, and providing additional information. For instance, in order to gather information

about the sources they use when they plan, I asked the teachers how they would prepare to teach Garcia Lorca's "The Gypsy." I chose that particular poem because it is not widely known and would, I thought, provide me with a fairly comprehensive discussion of the teachers' planning processes and, therefore, a look at the kinds of knowledge sources they use. As I noted above, their responses were disappointing in that respect. But, this poem choice had an equally undesirable side-effect with Betty. When I gave her additional information about the poem in hopes of stirring her thinking about teaching it, she became so intrigued with it that the conversation went in a completely unplanned, and undesired, direction. The poem itself was a distraction to the process.

Though I did ultimately get the kind of information I went in search of, even that is problematic. As I noted in the earlier chapters, I was primarily interested in what teachers *report* to be their knowledge sources. However, despite Silverman's (1993) and Bogdan and Bicklen's (1992) statements about the quality of information one gets in interviews, teachers are like everyone else in that they don't always have their knowledge at tongue-tip. Their words sometimes seem at odds with their practices or seem to contradict themselves. Thus, I'm not sure that these interviews permitted me "to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that [I could] develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (Bogdan and Bicklen, 1992, p. 96). The data I got is often less purely teachers' reports

as it is my interpretations of their reports, or reports that I coaxed out of them.

A fifth problem with my method is that I did not adequately account for gender issues. All of my informants were female. Because of the reliability issues that may arise when interviewer and informant are of different genders (Fontana and Frey, 1994), and because literature teaching is also done by males, I should have included some male respondents. That I did not is mainly because I selected these informants for convenience (Fontana and Frey, 1994), not for representativeness. The overall consequence, though, is to diminish the validity of my findings. My future studies will seek better gender balance.

In sum, the interview method did not work as well as I had hoped it would. However, it did elicit the information I wanted, but future studies in this area need to alter the process extensively.

Conclusions

Despite these problems with the collection method, I did come away with the information I had hoped for. The major conclusion that the interviews lead me to is that the “alternative” sources of knowledge are more important than the existing research suggests. That is not to say that the “traditional” sources are not important; they certainly are. All three teachers evidence a rather firm grounding in the kind of literary criticism to which they would have been exposed in college, suggesting the importance of

course work as a knowledge source. There is also rather firm evidence that the apprenticeship of observation has been important, in one way or the other, for all three of them. Based on the research on teacher knowledge development, I expected both of those sources to be important. More directly related to my study, though, I also found considerable evidence of the importance of the alternative sources. Jane, for instance, takes full advantage of publisher-generated resources. Patricia relies heavily on sharing materials with her colleagues. She also mentioned that she uses the internet. Betty relies somewhat on the scholarly literature, and depends heavily on staff development workshops. All three rely quite heavily on figuring thing out for themselves. All three rely on discussions with colleagues, though each in her own particular way.

My primary research question for this study was “what do literature teachers report are the sources of the knowledge that they use in their daily teaching of literature?” The conclusion to which this study takes me is that, while they do rely on the “traditional” sources, they also rely heavily on the “alternative” sources. Jane’s primary source, according to her, is just figuring things out for herself. Patricia also reports primary reliance on this knowledge source, though she also depends quite heavily on the resources provided by her colleagues and on the colleagues themselves. Betty also says she relies primarily on figuring things out for herself but seems quite aware that that means using knowledge she has gained from her course work. While all three

report the importance of this source, their descriptions of it suggest that, while they conceive it similarly to some extent, there are also differences which should be explored.

In short, according to the teachers' reports, they rely much more heavily on the alternative sources than they do the traditional ones. Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 1) argue that the great value of qualitative research is that it permits theory building, or, in their words, "discovery of theory from data." In light of that statement and given the data related to this research question that this study provides, it seems reasonable to conclude that there is cause to research more thoroughly into teachers' knowledge sources for practice. The next step, according to Glaser and Strauss (1967), would be to test that theory because "generating theory goes hand in hand with verifying it" (p. 2).

A second research question was "how do the respondents' reports of knowledge sources correspond to the dominant knowledge sources reported in the research literature?" My conclusion is that these teachers rely significantly on sources not treated in the existing research literature and that, therefore, their reports are not in accord with what is reported in the research literature. All three teachers deny the influence of the apprenticeship of observation, and two of the three deny influence from their professional course work. Jane, for instance, gave a detailed defense of her belief that she had not been influenced by her cooperating teacher during her student

teaching. Patricia gave a similar discussion to support her belief that she was not influenced by her course work. While these denials ought not be accepted at face value, it is important to know that the teachers feel this way. That in itself should be addressed in English methods courses. As long as they believe that they have not been affected by the apprenticeship of observation and the course work, they are unable to fully access and manipulate whatever salutary effects might accompany that course work and are less able to avoid the negative ones. One who believes she has not benefitted from the course work, for instance, is not likely to look to it for ideas. To paraphrase the philosopher Santayana (1905), he or she who does not know what has influenced him or her is unable to avoid its negative effects.

A third question guiding my research was “do these teachers’ reports of their knowledge sources suggest the need for additional research on the topic of literature teachers’ knowledge sources?” My conclusion is a guarded “yes.” Many of the sources these teachers refer to are not treated in the research literature, yet they seem to be very important to these teachers’ practices. On the other hand, this study was not designed in such a way as to make its findings easily extrapolatable. However, the simple fact that these teachers *report* reliance on these sources seems reason enough to study them more thoroughly. For example, some of the teachers reported being unaware of the range of publisher-generated materials. Since some of those materials are useful, high-quality materials and some are not, it seems to me a good

idea to introduce students to them and help them learn how to critically examine them. New teachers in particular need to be schooled in the fact that textbooks are political documents, that what they contain (or don't) and how they represent it is seldom unbiased (Spring, 2000). The teachers' guides, workbooks, chapter introductions, and test banks are also not always above reproach. Conversely, much of this material can be useful, perhaps saving teachers hours of work if (1) they know how to access it and (2) how to separate the good from the bad.

A fourth question was "do their own educational and personal backgrounds appear to influence what knowledge sources literature teachers report?" The answer is "yes." Jane and Patricia both report not remembering anything from their college course work and a heavy reliance on figuring things out for themselves. Betty, on the other hand, acknowledges the influence of her course work. Betty is only six years out of college; Jane and Patricia are both more than twenty years out. One of the possibilities that ought to be examined is exactly what that signifies. One possibility is that the influence of course work has simply dropped below the liminal level for those who have been out of college for a long time, that the difference is not whether there *is* influence, but whether teachers *recognize* the influence. Similarly, both Jane and Patricia mentioned deciding to become teachers while they were in high school, whereas Betty came to it much later in life.

Implications

These findings have several implications. Perhaps the main one is that there is a strong suggestion in this data that the issue of what knowledge sources shape teachers' practices needs to be studied more extensively. As I mentioned in the literature review, the large majority of English methods courses in colleges around the country are designed quite similarly and that design is premised in the idea that teachers will rely on what they learn in their course work when they prepare lessons. Typically, for instance, students are asked to design and teach a short lesson on a piece of literature. In the English methods courses Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) describe, the focus is on teaching students such things as using collaborative activities rather than lecture, allocating time, assessing learning, and the like, not on knowledge sources. The assumptions seem to be that students will use the knowledge of literature they have gained in the content courses, not that they need to be shown how to acquire that knowledge. While the teachers in my study evidence some use of those knowledge sources, there is also heavy reliance on other sources. If the findings of my study reflect how most teachers acquire the knowledge they use in their practice, English methods courses need to be refocused to familiarize students with the other possible sources of knowledge and to help them learn how to use them efficiently. These teachers' reports were not collected in a manner that permits them to represent what all teachers do, but they do suggest a need for more research.

The data also suggests that it might be worthwhile to study the generational element. Betty, the most recent graduate, uses quite different sources of knowledge than do the others. It is easy to assume that she simply remembers more from her course work because she is closer to it in time, but that is an assumption that needs to be tested. On the other hand, perhaps the difference is simply a function of years in the profession, that the other teachers use different sources because they have been teaching longer and therefore have shaped their repertoires in ways that Betty is only beginning to shape hers. In other words, what effect, if any, does time in the profession play in determining teachers' practices, and how?

The interviews also suggested a couple of other knowledge sources that might be worth pursuing. For instance, how do curriculum mandates from state, or other, policy makers influence teaching? Are teachers having to reshape how they teach in order to meet state standards or to prepare their students for state-mandated high-stakes tests? The teachers I interviewed did not consider even worth discussing, but as curricular continues to shift further away from the individual classroom teacher, perhaps they will be forced to respond to such authority.

How, too, is the enormous quantity of readily available information on the internet affecting teaching? Are teachers shifting, for example, toward more integration of literature and the arts because of the ready access to virtual art and digital music? Two of my informants mentioned using the

internet, but I failed to pick up on it and fold it into my interview protocol. However, since both state professional standards and pedagogy texts include it more and more, there seems to be sufficient reason to pursue it as a possible source of teachers' practical knowledge.

It would also be worthwhile to expand the study of teachers' professional landscapes (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995, 1996). Not only were these teachers' metaphoric representations of their practices somewhat useful to me in interpreting their words, further study might reveal additional sources of knowledge. Clandinin and Connelly (1995, p. 5) say that they "see the professional landscape as composed of relationships among people, places, and things, [and] as both an intellectual and moral landscape." Their discussion of this concept, especially the idea of sacred stories, cover stories, and secret stories, strongly argues that perhaps there is more to teachers' knowledge development than meets the eye. According to Clandinin and Connelly, these are things that, by their very nature, are not readily accessible to outsiders, so methods of accessing them will have to be developed. What that research could tell us about how teachers acquire and use knowledge, though, would be worth the effort.

This study also suggests that perhaps English methods courses, and the other professional course work, need to be revised to integrate this information about these alternative sources of knowledge. If what this study shows is an accurate reflection of how teachers acquire the knowledge they

use to shape their practice, then it needs to be included in, for instance, educational psychology courses, general methods courses, and/or special methods courses. First, however, there would need to be a careful analysis of how the existing courses treat knowledge sources. Both the Smagorinsky and Whiting (1995) study and Arthur Applebee's (1993) study of literature teaching suggest that there is a very high degree of similarity in English methods courses, and the same probability holds true for the professional education courses. The Arends (1998) book for general methods devotes only a small section to professional development and no space at all to using, for instance, publisher-generated materials or how best to utilize clinical experiences in developing a teaching repertoire. Neither does Slavin (1997), nor does Jean Ormrod (1998). It would behoove us to find out if this treatment of the knowledge sources is typical and, if it is, take steps to remedy it.

The alternative knowledge sources discussed in this study—"Just figuring it out," Publisher Materials, Professional Conferences and Staff Development, Conversations with Colleagues, Reliance on the Professional Literature—also may not be the only ones teachers use. Patricia, for instance, mentioned using the internet, a source I did not pursue with the other informants, but one that is undoubtedly increasingly important, especially for new teachers. It might prove useful, then, to learn what other knowledge sources teachers depend on to shape their practice.

Another implication of this study is that we should probably look more critically at the role of professional development in teachers' acquisition of their craft knowledge. Illinois, for example, has recently adopted recertification policies that require teachers to continue to acquire professional knowledge in order to get recertified. Certificates must be renewed every five years and in order to qualify for renewal, teachers must present a certain quantity of participation in professional development experiences. One of the venues by which teachers can meet this requirement is staff development workshops. (The Illinois state department of education measures this participation in staff development with PDCs—Professional Development Credits—on analogy with continuing education units, or CEUs.) If the states are moving in such directions, we need to look at how teachers' colleges can shape or reshape outreach to make professional knowledge more readily accessible to practicing teachers.

Another implication has to do with the relationship between student teachers and cooperating teachers. Not only do teacher candidates need to be taught how to access alternative knowledge sources in their planning, cooperating teachers need to be taught how to help student teachers learn how to use them. Many colleges currently require that cooperating teachers take courses in supervision of student teachers before they are permitted to have student teachers. Such courses would be a reasonable place for prospective cooperating teachers to learn how to teach future teachers how to

access these knowledge sources, both the traditional and alternative ones.

However, in states where there is no such requirement, other ways need to be worked out. The first step in this direction, of course, would be to determine what the existing requirements are. Undoubtedly, they not only vary from college to college, but also from state to state, district to district, and school to school. So, there needs to be research into requirements for supervising student teachers.

Finally, this study suggests that site-based certification programs might be worth exploring. Patricia's description of the file in her department's office suggests a knowledge source that could not easily be translated to a university setting, nor can the kinds of collegial conversations she describes be very satisfactorily reconstructed. If these are important knowledge sources, as these teachers' reports suggest they are, then teacher educators need to guide preservice teachers in learning how to use them. Fox (1992, 1995), Gutierrez (1996), and others make a good case for the importance of context in learning to teach. Clandinin and Connelly (1986) support that argument with their discussion of how teachers develop their "rhythms of practice," and so does the extensive literature of early field experience. Together these research bases and my teachers' reports of how they learned to teach argue for more study of field-based teacher education.

To sum it all up, my study set out to try to learn what three literature teachers identified as the sources of the knowledge that informs their daily

practice. Though the interviews showed more variation among the teachers' reports than I had anticipated, they did show that the alternative knowledge sources—"just figuring it out," publisher-generated materials, professional conferences and staff development, conversations with colleagues, the professional literature—play a large role. Furthermore, the interviews suggest that still other knowledge sources might be fruitfully pursued, the internet, for instance, and departmental libraries. The study also suggests a number of other areas that might be worth researching, such as the effect of time in the profession on the salience of various knowledge sources to individual teachers, and such as how to use the knowledge about sources to reshape methods courses and to enhance the pedagogical roles of cooperating teachers. The beginning step, though, is a more extensive study of teachers' knowledge sources.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

I'd like to start with some personal and educational background questions.

How many years have you been teaching?

Has it all been in public schools?

What grade levels have you taught?

How many years have you taught in this district?

In which schools?

Have you taught in other districts? (If so, where?)

What are you teaching right now?

Where did you grow up?

What did your father and mother do for a living?

How would you describe your family's socio-economic background when
you were growing up?

What kind of educational backgrounds did your parents have?

What sort of elementary and secondary schools did you attend—rural/urban,
large/small?

Do you particularly remember any of your Literature teachers? If so, can
you tell me about the ones who stand out most in your memory. How
did they teach literature?

What kind of college did you attend? teacher's college? state college? state
university? private college?

What did you major and minor in in college?

Were there any other particular emphases in your undergraduate course work?

What kind of bachelor's degree did you take?

What's your highest degree?

How much graduate work have you done?

How soon after your bachelor's degree did you begin graduate work?

What areas have you done graduate work in?

When in your life did you decide you wanted to teach?

When in your life did you decide you wanted to teach Literature?

How would you define "Literature" as a school subject? That is, what do you mean when you say "I teach Literature"?

What sub-area of Literature did you find most interesting or appealing when you were a new teacher?

Has that changed?

If so, why do you think?

As you know, I want to try to learn from you what you think are your sources of knowledge for teaching literature. So let me start by asking this—

In your opinion, why do people need to study literature in school?

When and how did you come to believe that? You know, who or what do you think influenced you to think that way?

The other day when I observed, you _____

Why did you do that? Where did you learn that technique of Literature teaching?

Each of the days I observed, you _____

How do you decide what things to focus on like that?

How did you learn to do that?

In teaching, _____, you did _____. Where did you learn to do that?

When you had the kids doing _____, what was your goal? What were you trying to get them to learn about literature?

Where did you learn to use that?

When you were asking them to _____, why did you want them to know that and to do that?

Who chose the text?

What I'm trying to get at here is how you choose what to teach in a literature unit. If you were designing a literature unit for these kids and could use anything you wanted, what would you include?

Probe: Why? What would you focus on? Why?

Do you know Whitman's poem "When Lilacs Last . . ."? If the district said you had to teach that, how would you go about preparing to teach it?

If the requirement were some poem you weren't familiar with, where, or to whom would you go? I don't want to prejudice your response here, but would you think it through, talk to other Literature teachers, read

up on it in the journals, some combination of those things, some other strategy altogether? What?

Do you know Garcia Lorca's poem "The Gypsy"? How would you tackle it under those same circumstances?

As you know from our earlier conversations, my purpose in this study is not to critique your teaching, but to learn your sources of knowledge, specifically in regard to teaching literature. So, would you talk to me about how you have learned to teach literature?

Over the whole course of your teaching career, where have you learned the things you know and value about particular pieces of literature?

Where have you learned about particular genres of literature?

Where have you learned approaches to literature? I'm thinking about things like close reading versus historical criticism versus psychological criticism versus biographical criticism versus feminist criticism and so on. Did you learn about those in classes, in books and journals, through conference presentations and workshops, from teachers' manuals and textbooks, from conversations with colleagues, etc.?

In general, tell me about the relative importance in your own view of these different sources of information to you.

How important has "just figuring it out" been for you?

Stuff from publishers—teachers' manuals, introductory sketches and comprehension questions in textbooks, etc.?

Professional conferences and workshops?

Conversations with colleagues?

Your own reading in the journals and books about literature and teaching of literature? Things like English Journal.

How important has your graduate work been in that?

Okay, is there anything else you'd like to tell me about your sources of knowledge, or about how you came to be the literature teacher you are today?

APPENDIX B: DATA CODES

- LB** Literacy Background
- PB** Personal Background
- S1** Publisher-generated teaching materials
- S2a** Conversations with colleagues in the school
- S2b** Conversations with colleagues from other schools
- S3** Self
- S4** Content courses
- S5** In-services
- S6** Professional literature
- S7** Conferences
- S8** Teachers
- S9** Authority

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM

Self-Reported Sources of Literature Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge

Jim Vandergriff, Investigator

CONSENT FORM

I AM BEING ASKED TO READ THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL TO ENSURE THAT I AM INFORMED OF THE NATURE OF THIS RESEARCH STUDY AND OF HOW I WILL PARTICIPATE IN IT, IF I CONSENT TO DO SO. SIGNING THIS FORM WILL INDICATE THAT I HAVE BEEN SO INFORMED AND THAT I GIVE MY CONSENT. FEDERAL REGULATIONS REQUIRE WRITTEN INFORMED CONSENT PRIOR TO PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY SO THAT I CAN KNOW THE NATURE AND THE RISKS OF MY PARTICIPATION AND CAN DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE OR NOT PARTICIPATE IN A FREE AND INFORMED MANNER.

Purpose

"I am being asked to voluntarily participate in the above-titled research project. The purpose of this project is to study the sources of Literature teachers' knowledge about how to teach their subject matter. It is being conducted as part of the data for the investigator's doctoral dissertation."

Selection criteria

"I am being invited to participate because I have a number of years of successful experience in teaching Literature and am inclined to reflect on my own teaching." Three teachers will be enrolled in this study.

Procedure

"If I agree to participate, I will be asked to agree to the following: the researcher will observe me teaching Literature in my classroom. After studying the observation notes, the researcher will interview me about the sources of the pedagogical content knowledge noted during the observations, as well as about my professional and academic background, the decision-making processes I use in my teaching, and my own understanding of my knowledge development."

Risks

The research entails no known professional or personal risks, stresses or discomforts.

Benefits

The benefit I may expect from participating in this research is that I may become more thoughtfully aware of the sources of my own knowledge.

Confidentiality

I understand that the results of this project will be confidential and not be released in any individually identifiable form. My name will not be identified; instead, a pseudonym of my choice will be used. Observation notes and interview transcriptions will be submitted to the investigator's doctoral committee at the, University of Arizona,, College of Education, Department of Teaching and Teacher Education. No one else will be given access to the data collected in this project. Observation notes and interview tapes will be kept in the investigator's home and/or office.

Participation costs

I understand that there are no participation costs for this project.

Authorization

BEFORE GIVING MY CONSENT BY SIGNING THIS FORM, THE METHODS, INCONVENIENCES, RISKS, AND BENEFITS HAVE BEEN EXPLAINED TO ME AND MY QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. I UNDERSTAND THAT I MAY ASK QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME AND THAT I AM FREE TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS PROJECT AT ANY TIME WITHOUT CAUSING BAD FEELINGS. MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT MAY BE ENDED BY THE INVESTIGATOR FOR REASONS THAT WOULD BE EXPLAINED. NEW INFORMATION DEVELOPED DURING THE COURSE OF THIS STUDY WHICH MAY AFFECT MY WILLINGNESS TO CONTINUE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT WILL BE GIVEN TO ME AS IT BECOMES AVAILABLE. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE FILED IN AN AREA DESIGNATED BY THE HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE WITH ACCESS RESTRICTED TO THE INVESTIGATOR, JIM VANDERGRIF, OR AN AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA. I UNDERSTAND THAT I DO NOT GIVE UP MY LEGAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING THIS FORM. A COPY OF THIS SIGNED CONSENT FORM WILL BE GIVEN TO ME.

Subject's signature

Date

Investigator's Affidavit

I have carefully explained to the subject the nature of the above project. I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge the person who is signing this consent form understands clearly the nature, demands, benefits, and risks involved in his/her participation and his/her signature is legally valid. A medical problem or language or educational barrier has not precluded this understanding.

Signature of investigator

Date

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