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A Message from the Editors...

The Fall 2009 issue of *The Ohio Journal of Teacher Education* has an open theme. The articles cover a range of topics of interest to teacher educators such as using practitioner inquiry, embedding value-added outcomes into teacher education courses, expanding teaching strategies to response to the needs of diverse learners, summarizing and discussing current research and application to meet Ohio TESOL Endorsement Program Standard 6.2 and identifying professionalism and emotional intelligences as qualities in effective teachers.

The first article by Harris, Keener, Hess, and Johnson discusses practitioner inquiry by examining the effectiveness of an online practicum seminar for pre-service teacher candidates. The evidence suggests that the virtual learning community successfully facilitated reflective practice and developing cultural effectiveness. The authors continue to engage in practitioner inquiry, accessing and assessing the development of teacher candidates' reflective thinking and cultural competence to inform practice and guide program improvement.

The next article by Covert explores the role of culturally responsive teaching in minority literacy Education. Culturally responsive teaching uses the students' culture as a resource to scaffold learning for culturally and linguistically diverse students. The author suggests steps toward expanding teaching strategies and making instruction more meaningful to all students.

The third article by Micek investigates the Ohio TESOL Endorsement Program (TEP) Standard 6.2 that calls for candidates to employ current research to develop strategies to advance age/grade-appropriate social and academic English learning. In the study, the students were assigned a two page-report in which they were to summarize one piece of current research and discuss how they would apply it to their teaching. The evidence from the study shows that this assignment allows students to see what research is available, choose what is relevant, and apply it to their teaching.

The fourth article by Collopy and Kelly analyzes the development of curriculum materials created to answer the mandate that all teacher education programs incorporate outcomes related to value-added measures into their curricula. Several designs were implemented including an expansion of Bernhardt's four categories of data, creating materials that allowed flexibility and consistency in the content conveyed the four themes from the University of Dayton's School of Education and Allied Professions' mission and by providing clear examples, step-by-step explanations and glossaries of potentially unfamiliar terms. The data from the pilot of the curriculum in the fall of 2007 and lessons learned is shared.

In the final article by Patel, France, Boyd, and Wonders describes a three-phase study on explores the effectiveness of a teacher education program with input from a K-12 principal focus group, a principals' reports of teachers who are recent program graduates, and graduates' reports of their program experiences. The framework consists of six interweaving strands that articulate the shared vision and alignment with state, learned society, professional, and the NCATE 2000 standards for preparing teacher candidates and candidates for professional school roles. The analyses revealed that principals hiring program graduates feel professionalism and emotional intelligence best align with their student achievement missions.

We hope you enjoy this issue of the journal, and we hope you find these articles to be informative and helpful in your various roles preparing teacher educators.

Sarah Cecire
Virginia McCormack
Gayle Trollinger
Fall, 2009

Building a Virtual Learning Community to Promote Reflective Practice and Cultural Effectiveness

*Charlotte Harris, Ed. D. Deborah J. Hess, Ph.D., R.N.
Catherine Keener, Ph. D. Doris G. Johnson, Ed. D.*

Introduction

Providing coursework and experiences that prepare teachers to meet the needs of diverse students and communities is a goal for many teacher education programs. Our college of education, for example, articulates the desire to provide curricular and field experiences that “enhance the awareness and cultural competence” of teachers, and foster the development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn.

To operationalize this vision, the college requires pre-service teacher candidates to have practicum experiences in both urban and suburban partner school sites. However, we, teacher educators, contend that simply spending time in diverse school communities is insufficient for developing what Storti (2001) referred to as cultural effectiveness. Storti suggested that culturally effective individuals interact from the perspective of the other person’s view of what their culture considers appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Furthermore, culturally effective people are aware of the impact their behavior has on others and the behaviors of others have on them. We recognized that, rather than developing cultural effectiveness by experiencing a diverse urban placement, for example, teacher candidates who entered urban schools with negative assumptions often emerged with their negative assumptions confirmed. We proposed that structured opportunities that stimulate reflection and inquiry, and enable teacher candidates to message, challenge, and expand the attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions they take into the classroom, would facilitate the development of their cultural

effectiveness.

To address this concern, we designed a practicum seminar as a virtual learning community that enabled teacher candidates, through guided electronic discussions, to identify and connect, share experiences, and support each other’s professional growth. The purpose of this seminar was to (a) provide structured opportunities for teacher candidates to process their experiences with diverse student populations, (b) promote reflective practice, and (c) foster cultural effectiveness. This article reports the findings of our practitioner inquiry to examine the success of the seminar in accomplishing these objectives.

Learning Communities for In-Group Reflection

Teacher education literature supports the development of reflective practice and the use of learning communities as effective strategies to enhance teacher learning.

Value of Reflection

Reflective practice has served as a cornerstone of many teacher education programs (Valli, 1993). Researchers believe that reflectivity improves understanding of teaching as well as the quality of one’s own teaching (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Richards, 1998). Schon (1987) recommended that teacher education programs enable teachers to reflect more deeply upon their own classroom behaviors as well as their reactions to teaching situations. Evaluating the learning of preservice teachers, Schon (1983) concluded that reflection would result in issues for further reflection, additional questions, and improved understanding. Zeichner

and Liston (1996) believed that “reflective teaching, when used as a teaching tool, entails a recognition, examination, and rumination over the implications of one’s beliefs, experiences, attitudes, knowledge, and values as well as the opportunities and constraints provided by the social conditions in which the teacher works” (p. 20). Similarly, Loughran (1996) stated that, “The value of reflection . . . is that it gives (teachers) the confidence to test their hypotheses about their teaching and their students’ learning. They are able to think about what they are doing and why, and reason through their problems” (p. 50).

Several strategies have been recommended to encourage teacher candidates’ reflections. Journal writing has been a frequent means of gathering reflections of teacher practice (Cole, Raffier, Rogan, & Schleicher, 1998; Johnson, 1994; Loughran & Corrigan, 1995; Maloney & Campbell-Evans, 2002). Additionally, arranging a group into a cohort provides a structure to assist in-group reflection within a learning community (Peterson, 1992; Tom, 1997). Teachers learning through reflection, collaboration, and sharing what they learn “requires settings that support teacher inquiry and collaboration and strategies grounded in teachers’ questions and concerns” (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995, p. 597).

Power of Learning Communities

Learning communities, organized around relationships and ideas, can offer opportunities to “create as well as receive knowledge” (Lieberman, 2000, p. 226), and facilitate “the social, interactive, and connective construction of knowledge” (Stone, 1994, p. 226). Noddings (1994) discusses the characteristics and power of a “caring” learning community: modeling to “encourage responsible self-affirmation”; open dialogue to engender “the search for enlightenment, or responsible choice, or perspective, or means to problem solution”; practice that encourages candidates “to support each other,” provides “opportunities for peer interaction,” and values “the quality of that interaction”; and confirmation to enable the candidates’ self-actualization (pp. 174-178). The power of the caring learning community is in the sharing of knowledge.

Many teacher education programs use internet technology to facilitate reflective practice and to extend learning communities beyond the face-to-face classroom. Ferdig, Roehler, and Pearson (2002) found that the use of an electronic discussion forum with preservice teachers afforded them “numerous

opportunities for posting, reflection, and the internalization of key ideas associated with a deeper understanding of teaching and learning” (p. 94). A virtual learning community can provide a place for teacher candidates to freely express their beliefs and feelings. Our goal was to create a virtual learning community for our teacher candidates to engage in guided in-group reflection that would facilitate the development of their cultural effectiveness.

Method

Beginning in the fall of 2004, teacher candidates enrolled in the Adolescence to Young Adult and Multi-Age graduate initial licensure programs were required to participate in an online seminar. The seminar engaged them in electronic dialogue journaling via WebCT in conjunction with their fall and winter quarter practicum experiences. The teacher candidates were divided into eight discussion groups with 7 or 8 members in each group. Each quarter, the groups participated in four dialogue journal conversations. During the practicum orientation, the teacher candidates were introduced to the web-based practicum seminar dialogue journaling process, as well as invited to be participants in our practitioner inquiry. Sixteen of the 60 interns (26%) in the 2004-05 cohort agreed to participate and composed two of the eight groups.

Each virtual conversation consisted of two steps. First, the teacher candidates reflected upon and responded to a dialogue journal prompt, each with a designated topic (e.g., urban students, expectations, school regularities). To guide the reflective process, we used a guided reflection protocol (Hole & McEntee, 1999). In accordance with this protocol, for each prompt, they told the story of a relevant “ordinary event” from their experiences in the field, responding to the following questions: (a) What happened? (b) Why did it happen? (c) What might it mean? and (d) What are the implications for your practice? Then, they read and responded to the posted stories of fellow group mates. They were encouraged to raise questions and engage in conversation about the event and any new insights that might emerge. Three of the four prompts each quarter included a required reading, which provided further direction to the conversation. We monitored these conversations but did not participate in them.

The text of the dialogue journal conversations provided data that we analyzed to assess the teacher candidates’ engagement in reflective practice and developing cultural effectiveness, and to gauge the ex-

tent to which the virtual learning community facilitated this process. The discussion that follows reflects the findings from the data provided by the conversations of the two groups of consenting participants.

Findings

Reflective Practice

A careful review of the data clearly indicated that, in telling their stories, the participants engaged in reflective practice. In responding to each other's stories, they also reflected on their own experiences. Through peer interaction, they supported and learned from each other, as reflected in the story, "Easier To Do It Myself," and the resulting response:

Participant #22: The students were busily working on keyboarding and electronic calculators, and one student raised a hand for help. I walked over and she asked a question about the keyboarding software, a question that had already been gone over numerous times in class, both visually and verbally. I attempted to verbally walk her through the steps she needed to take. A look of confusion remained on her face and no physical response was taken. Before I knew it, my hand was on the mouse and I was clicking through the steps for her. This incident obviously occurred because I allowed myself to be impatient with a student.... I robbed a student of a learning opportunity.... As a result of my actions, the student might assume that every time she asks for my help, I will simply do the task in question for her.

Participant #7: Isn't it amazing what you realize when you reflect on your situation. I have read your entry and didn't respond immediately because I wanted to see if I was doing that to any of my students. And surprise, I caught myself.... It really made me stop and look at my own actions as a teacher. During their electronic conversations about their experiences, the participants engaged in, not only reflective, but also collaborative practice. Their responses often built on each other. This collaborative, in-group reflection led to further reflection and improved understanding of teaching and learning. As illustrated in the following excerpts, in responding to each other, the participants asked probing and challenging questions, shared strategies, and recommended solutions.

Participant #22: What does this incident say about our growing responsibility as teachers? About the

changing school environment? About new precautions that must be taken as a result of the rise of violence in schools?

Participant #11: I agree that teachers should not waste valuable learning time on minor student infractions. I also would like to believe that students at the high school level know the rules. However, some students will try to get away with as much as they can.... My suggestion would be to monitor students who commit minor infractions. If the infractions occur rarely, then I think that may be a battle that you might not want to take up....

Participant #22: To what extent do you think communicating high expectations and a positive caring attitude to students from day one impacts their academic performance?... How can we, as teachers, avoid favoritism? How can we teach students to respect one another in the classroom, regardless of which clique they belong to, what background they come from, etc.?

Caring Learning Community

Conversing with each other in this virtual environment resulted in community building. Through dialogue journaling, the participants supported, affirmed, commiserated with, and learned from each other. Responses were substantive and caring, as illustrated in the conversations about the concept of nurturing pedagogy (Mantle-Bromley, 2004):

Participant #6: I am working with a questionnaire in order for me to learn more about their interests, strengths, and weaknesses. This has helped me during different topics we have covered because I know going into the lesson that I have a student who will need some extra attention....

Participant #22: I think your questionnaire is a terrific idea... I would like to see your questionnaire. Would you mind posting it on WebCT? Maybe the rest of us could use it as a template for future classes.

Participant #19: I was wondering if any of the students resisted your attempts to be nurturing and helpful?... If you have experienced this, how did you handle it?

Participant #4: I guess at times, some of the kids may resist. Usually this seems to happen when they don't really understand that I am trying to help them.

Developing Cultural Effectiveness

Several participants reported having had little interaction with other cultures growing up, but responses clearly reflected their developing cultural effectiveness:

Participant #3: When I came into this program I thought myself a culturally open person. I thought that I knew all I needed to. I was wrong.... Through all of this it has taught me that, as an educator, I need to be more aware of my students' as well as my own bias. I don't need to think that I have it all figured out because I don't. I am still learning. I may teach my students, but they teach me as well.

Participant #2: The one thing that...I hadn't thought of when I posted my first response on WebCT was that just because my students...all have a similar cultural heritage, it does not mean that they are all the same.... By reflecting back on my teaching attitudes, beliefs, and personality this quarter, I have been able to think about the different ways that I approach students.

The prompts encouraged this development. In one prompt, the teacher candidates were encouraged to reflect on their experiences with urban students in comparison with their experiences with suburban students in relation to the reading "Who Are Our Urban Students and What Makes Them So 'Different'?" in which Goldstein (2004) challenged the reader to confront his/her current assumptions of who urban students are, and "look beyond what you *know* to what you *think* you know" (p. 51). The prompt requested that they describe one ordinary event that they believed addressed this topic and relate that response to the article. An example from the resulting conversation "Book Conferences" illustrates the developing cultural effectiveness:

Participant #11: Upon reflecting, I realize that my own assumptions about students in an urban school formed my suspicion that the student in the urban school was abused and the student in the suburban school was not.... I learned that in the future just as you cannot judge a book by its cover, I cannot judge students by the books they choose to read.

Participant #2: The one thing that I found myself doing when I first got to my [urban] placement was play-

ing "let's spot the cheater." My challenge now, after realizing what happened, is to overcome those thoughts in my head.... I am hoping that as I realize and wonder about more and more of these differences, I will be able to overcome these silly opinions and reactions.

Participant #12: I have also found myself making those same types of assumptions.... When I find myself leaping to conclusions now at my urban placement, I always try to ask myself if, given the same situation, I would have made the same assumptions at my [suburban] placement. The answer is often "no."...we have all grown up hearing the same misconceptions about inner city schools.

This dialogue journal topic about urban students posed a direct challenge to the participants in their field placements. Discussion responses indicated that they found that stereotypes might have labeled the students in urban settings with an undeserved negative image.

Participant #8: I truly believe that many students are misinformed about people of other races because they have not had contact with those groups on a regular basis. Many times, students from both the urban placement and suburban placement will give stereotypes of the different races that they normally do not have contact with on a regular basis.

Additionally, the participants believed that there were ways in which the students labeled themselves with a negative image. They expressed concerns that these perceptions presented an additional burden for the urban communities.

Participant #19: One of the female students told me, "You don't want to stay there anyways because this is a bad school and we are the bad kids." I asked her where she got that idea and she told me, "Everyone says so." I think by the media attention focusing on the negative aspects of (school's name) and of its student population, that this is setting up low expectations for these kids to live up to. The students are being hit from all angles with negative messages – news media, community members, some teachers and maybe even from their family (least likely from what I observed). This makes it even harder for the teachers to effectively teach the students, because it takes so

(much) more positive energy to overcome one negative comment.

The data indicated that the participants considered their own dealings with the issue of diversity within their own personal experiences, as the following excerpt illustrates:

Participant #9: Part of having an effective, active learning environment is to create a safe place for students to interact so that no one feels alienated or threatened because of their race or gender. I, too, look for the best out of everyone. I'd like to think that I judge very little. Obviously, we all carry with us certain prejudices and I am no exception. I hope that as I become aware of my prejudices I will work quickly to correct them.... I cannot control how other teachers behave nor will I be able to change the attitudes of those who think differently than I. But what I can do is work very hard to give every student, regardless of race, socio-economic status, or academic aptitude, my best effort and attention and encourage all my students to strive for excellence.

Additionally, responses suggested that participants in both the urban and suburban placements considered what materials their cooperating teacher used. They openly discussed how they would address the same choice of materials:

Participant #5: All of my students treat each other with respect regardless of race, and my cooperating teacher doesn't have lower standards for any of her minority students. I have noticed, however, that in the month I have been at my placement, the students have read very little culturally diverse material. Although they choose independent reading novels, most of the material read in class is written by and about Caucasians. As a teacher, I plan to introduce my students to racially and culturally diverse materials regardless of the number of minority students in my classroom. Reading novels, stories, poems, and plays from around the world will enrich my students' educations in a way that is vital to be successful members of our increasingly global society.

Within this virtual learning community, we discovered that the participants questioned their own perceptions as well as their teaching to understand the messages they themselves were sending students in their urban and suburban placements.

Participant #2: I plan to look at my next videotaped lesson for my interactions with my students. I would like to study my interactions to see if I make any subconscious decisions.... This experience has taught me to become more aware and more critical of how I react during teaching situations. I plan to videotape myself and look at whom I call on for the majority of answers. Is there a pattern?

Discussion

Can this virtual learning community be judged as effective in promoting reflective practice and fostering cultural effectiveness? In this structured virtual environment, in which participation, reflection, and collaboration were encouraged, the teacher candidates developed a caring learning community where they engaged in collaborative reflection and openly discussed their experiences with diverse student populations.

Consistent with Schon's conclusions (1983), the initial reflections resulted in issues for further reflection—additional questions and improved understanding. Participation in this virtual learning community promoted community building. Reflective practice was modeled, as some participants were obviously more reflective than others. The use of prompts, a reflection protocol, and readings primed the reflection, guiding it, giving it focus and direction. Participants sought and gave advice; shared strategies that worked. They related to and applied what they had learned in their coursework, which bridged theory and practice. The resulting caring learning community, with the sharing of knowledge flowing from teacher candidate to teacher candidate, possessed the power and characteristics—modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation—that Noddings (1994) described. Furthermore, it was transformative in its “social, interactive, and connective construction of knowledge” (Stone, 1994, p. 226). Additionally, the data revealed the participants were beginning to develop cultural awareness, if not fully meeting Storti's (2001) concept of cultural effectiveness. The prompts and readings did provide a structure that encouraged them to massage, challenge, and expand their professional attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions, facilitated the construction of their professional and pedagogical knowledge, and enabled their self-actualization.

The virtual seminar is now in its fifth year of implementation. We continue to engage in practitioner inquiry, accessing and assessing the development of our

teacher candidates' reflective practice and cultural effectiveness, in order to inform our practice and guide program improvement.

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What Role Does Culturally Responsive Teaching Play in Minority Literacy Education?

Kerry C. Covert, Ed. D.

How does culture play a part in learning?

Culture is a part of every student that walks through a school building and walks into our classroom. No matter if the student is Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, or another ethnicity, the culture that they bring with them provides them with a resource to interpret and view the academic world in which they learn. We use our behavior, language, values and beliefs as a foundation to learn new content and react to situations in the world around us. As members of different cultures, we bring with us different ways to interpret learning experiences and social interactions. Our experiences and interactions are interpreted through a) our social or cultural group memberships; b) a particular social language or mixture of them; and c) a particular context, that is, set of other people, objects, and locations” (Gee, 1996, p. 69). These characteristics of experiences and interactions will also have an impact on how students relate and learn in a school or academic environment.

Looking at statistics and the dramatic demographic changes over the past decade, we need to become more aware of the role culture plays in learning. According to the National Education Association (2003), 90% of teachers are White and 97% of teachers are monolingual (Darling-Hammond & Scalan, 1996). Nineteen percent of U.S. schoolchildren speak a language other than English, and 28% of these students are limited in English proficiency (Herrera, Perez, & Escamilla, 2009). It is estimated by Spellings (2005) that one out of every four students in U.S. schools will be

an English Language Learner by the year 2025.

“Surveys consistently find that although a large proportion of White pre-service students anticipate working with children of another cultural background, as a whole they bring very little cross-cultural background, knowledge, and experiences” (Sleeter, Torres, & Laughlin, 2004, p. 81). In addition, only 26% of teachers across the United States feel well prepared to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Herrera, Perez, & Escamilla, 2009). Only a small number of teachers have been trained at any point to support culturally and linguistically diverse students. And an even smaller number have been trained to teach those children in literacy acquisition. With culture being such a large part of experience, identity, and how we interpret interactions, teachers need to be able to make connections to a students’ culture in order to make learning a success in any classroom. What is literacy and how is it affected by culture?

There are several different ways of defining literacy that takes into consideration culture and the way in which students interpret and learn skills of literacy. Academic literacy as seen by Gipe (2006) is the instructional literacy children have been exposed to through personal experiences with books and other forms of spoken or written language. A student’s exposure to language, oral tradition, and their “nature of organizing, and understanding our experiences” (Gipe, p.5) plays a crucial part in how they become literate.

To be literate one must be able to read, write, and think in regards to constructing meaning from a printed text or social situation (Gee, 1992; Heath, 1983; Scollon & Scollon, 1981; Vacca &

Vacca, 2008) as well as have the “ability to do so in a culturally appropriate manner” (Perez, 2004, p. 5). Therefore, we can say that literacy is interpreted and learned through the experiences and interactions that a student brings with them to academics.

As teachers initiate skills in literacy, five research-based components are used as a basis for instruction. These components are phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency (National Reading Panel, 2000). Teachers consistently move back and forth between these components of reading to make literacy instruction possible. To be successful with the literacy skills taught, the student must be able to follow the transition from one component to another and become proficient in the individual skills that make up the components. As the teacher initiates and conducts literacy instruction, the student uses their own personal experiences and background knowledge to interpret the skills being taught.

However, the literacy instruction taking place is most likely being taught using an academic discourse which does not necessarily take into consideration varying cultures and ethnicities. The instruction taking place is also most likely being taught using Standard English and also not taking into consideration the linguistic differences in language and dialect. For students to follow and learn successfully, the teacher should provide instruction that considers the students’ culture and be able to use it as a resource for academic success. The experiences that take place in the cultural element of a person play a role in how they make meaning of interactions. The struggle to make meaning of a text or literacy instruction on one’s own terms, which may or may not be the ‘official’ interpretation, is imperative to becoming active in literacy (Perez, 2004).

Examining Examples of Minority Cultural Differences in Literacy

When we speak of cultural and linguistic differences in literacy we are speaking of aspects of a culture that are different than the “norm” taught and expected in academics. One specific culture other than the dominant European-American student that we see commonly in classrooms is the African-American student. Within the African-American culture, we can see general differences in how a student may interpret literacy based on their own personal experiences as well as differences in language or dialect. For this study, I

examined general aspects of African-American culture.

Looking at a general history of African-Americans one can see strong characteristics of culture and language dialect that differ from the “typical” academic discourse. The forms of oral tradition, communication, and storytelling are embedded in the history of African-American culture. Communication, narrative sequencing, and language content and style differences should be better understood to support success in literacy acquisition.

Communication in Literacy

A few communication styles used in African-American discourse are signification, tonal semantics, which includes rhythm and repetition, and call-and-response. These communication styles are seen in informal oral conversations, community events such as church or group gatherings, communicating non-verbally, and literary works such as poetry and music. These communication styles often carry deeper meaning and make connections to community discourse.

An emphasis is put on oral communication that may rely on implicit language, multiple meanings, and ambiguity. Within these types of oral communication, it is considered repetitive to explicitly state information that should already be understood. To communicate this way insults the listener and lacks purpose (Delpit, 1995). However, in the academic discourse, details, sequence, and relaying even a shared knowledge of information is deemed important and is required for success. This relaying of information not only must be used in listening and spoken communication but in written communication and interpretation of text as well.

Narratives in Literacy

Narratives are stories that follow a linear pattern (Labov, 2001). They “consist of an abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, resolution, and coda” (Champion, 1998, p. 252). They also include characters, details, thoughts, and feelings. Narratives have a basic expectation to infer information, understand cause-and-effect relationships, and project possible outcomes. Not only are students expected to be able to read narratives but developmentally should be able to compose a narrative using the preceding characteristics.

Research has found assorted dynamics present during narrative sequencing for African-American students. For example, African-American children some-

times begin and end a narrative with a theme but improvise the events in between (McCabe, 1992). McCabe also found that African-American student narratives have characteristics of figurative language, teasing, and a blending of facts and fantasy. “African-American children usually plot numerous sequences of events within the context of the individual experiences” (p. 29). This differs from traditional academic expectations. Another dynamic that differs from academic expectations was found by Michaels (1981) and Westby (1994). They found that some African-American children use “topic-associating” styles with implicit themes, which differs from what is the expected use of a “topic-centered” style, depicting linear events.

The use of narratives is important in academics as they lay a foundation for interpreting and inferring information from communication and text. “Narrative development is considered one of the major precursors to reading and writing and is fundamental to a child’s ability to interact with the various other discourse genres he or she encounters in school” (Polloway, Miller, & Smith, 2004, p. 11). Although there may be cultural variation, all narratives contain characteristics of narrative accuracy. Becoming familiar with the characteristics and the strengths of narratives specific to a culture can become a resource in supporting successful literacy acquisition. Using those strengths as a guide in teaching minority students can in turn lay a foundation for academic success.

Language and Dialect in Literacy

Language abilities begin to progress as early as infancy and continue to develop through school-age. These skills and abilities come in the form of phonology, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics. These structures, styles, and contexts are well developed and are based on an individual’s own personal experiences and influences of family and community. Reading and writing skills are language-based and directly affect our learning and interpretation of literacy skills. Linguistic differences are observed in African-American English in the forms of phonological differences, lexical differences, syntactic differences, and/or stylistic differences (Fogel & Ehri, 2006). Although students who use African-American English (AAE) are not considered to be bilingual, the technical differences in form, content and use make AAE differences important to know and understand.

Labov (1995) identified difficulties that may obstruct successful reading for some minority students that use AAE. He suggested that an abstract difference between sound and spelling exists, making it difficult for African-American English speakers to learn to read, which may ultimately influence success in literacy (Labov, 1995). Examples of these phonological differences can be seen in initial sounds, final consonant sounds, and switching the short “I” sound as seen in Figure 1 and Figure 1.1.

	SAE	AAE
Th—t	Thin	Tin
Th—d	This	Dis
Str—skr	Stream	Scream
Thre	Three	tree

Figure 1: Initial Sounds

SAE	AAE
Talked	Talk
Looks	Look
Best	Bess
Pin	Pen

Figure 1.1: Simplifying final consonants and switching the short I sound

Syntactical differences in how sentences are produced may also be seen in AAE. These differences affect how sentences are made up and formed grammatically. Examples of some of these syntactical differences are shown in Figure 2.

Syntactical Difference	Example(s)
Dropping <i>to be</i> verbs	Shawn is working Shawn working
Subject-predicate agreement of <i>to be</i> verbs	I am working. There were 5 dogs. I is working. There was 5 dogs.
Irregular Verbs	Latasha flew in a jet. Latasha flied in a jet.
Third Person Singular Verbs	Erin lives in Chicago. Erin live in Chicago.
Use of more for comparatives	My sister is younger than me. My sister is more younger than me.
Omission of indefinite article	Sing me a happy song. Sing me happy song.
Double negatives	My mother doesn't want any cake. My mother don't want no cake.
Use of <i>be</i>	My grandfather is seventy. My grandfather have seventy years.
Omission of pronoun	It is dark now.

Figure 2: Syntactical Differences

When a teacher is aware of and is able to identify the specific differences in African-American English, he/she will be able to identify miscues with accuracy in reading and writing. In identifying the specific miscues of each student, the teacher can then begin to implement instruction to support the transfer of African-American English to Standard English and provide a more individualized instruction. This transfer would help support making critical connections and expand a minority students' knowledge base of the sounds and rules of language development which in turn would increase success in literacy acquisition.

Using Culturally Responsive Teaching to Support Literacy Instruction

One way to become effective in the support of minority students is to use culturally responsive teaching. Culturally responsive teaching uses the students' culture as a resource to scaffold learning for culturally and linguistically diverse students. Many teachers be-

lieve that culturally responsive teaching is simply incorporating literature with culturally and linguistically diverse characters or settings or designating months to specific ethnicities.

Culturally responsive teaching goes beyond the basic inclusion of heritage into curriculum. To truly incorporate culturally responsive teaching, four areas must be specifically addressed within the classroom, and must be part of the teachers' awareness; 1) Teachers must be culturally sensitive; 2) able to reshape their classroom curriculum to incorporate culturally relevant teaching; 3) build a community of learners through the foundation of relationships (Powell, 1997); and 4) believe that all children can succeed (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Achieving academic success can be done through culturally responsive teaching. Using culturally responsive teaching engages students and builds personal connections with the content being taught. Bringing in all characteristics of culturally responsive teaching would enhance a teachers' classroom and build a stronger academic foundation for student achievement. Using culture as a resource and tool can enhance interpretations and experiences to make literacy success more attainable for those students having a hard time making connections to academic discourse.

The Study: Working with Minority Students

Not being able to make connections has created an obvious gap in the academic success of African-American students and their White counterparts. This gap has fluctuated but not closed in looking at reading scores published by the National Center of Educational Statistics (Vanneman, A., Hamilton, L., Baldwin Anderson, J., and Rahman, T, 2009). Therefore, minority students are still at a disadvantage in academic success. As previously stated, one possible solution to making more meaningful connections in academics for minority students is to use culture as a resource in teaching.

Study Description

The concept of using culture as a resource in the classroom initiated a qualitative study on what knowledge White teachers brought with them to the literacy education of their African-American students and how this knowledge was implemented in the classroom through culturally responsive teaching. The research questions that guided this study were focused

on these concepts. They are as follows: 1) What knowledge of African-American culture and language do four European-American teachers bring to the literacy education of African-American students? and 2) How do these four teachers verbally report implementing this knowledge in their classroom practices?

Method

Setting and Participants of Study

This study was conducted in an urban school district in the Midwest. The study included four European-American teachers with varying amounts of teaching and personal experience. Approximately 60 letters were randomly sent out to four various schools in this urban district. The teachers that were invited to participate could have any number of years experience, however, they had to be White and had to be teaching reading and/or language arts. Teachers were asked to return a letter of consent if they had an interest in the study and interest in participating. Four teachers responded and were willing to participate. Interviews were set up and were conducted in a setting of their choice to illicit comfort in their responses.

Interviews

The teachers were interviewed and given scenarios to respond to in a way that they felt comfortable. The interview questions specifically focused on African-American communication styles, African-American characteristics of narratives, and dialectal differences found in African-American English. The interview questions also integrated scenarios that included characteristics of culturally responsive teaching. The questions and scenarios were gathered based on the research collected for the study as well as the cultural characteristics of the African-American community. A summary of the questions and the information gathered from the scenarios are summarized in Table 1. A full text of the scenarios can be found in Appendix A.

Table 1:

Table of Scenarios and Information Gathered

Summarization of Scenario	Data Gathered
Scenario that incorporates Black History Month and specific activities to celebrate the month of February	Knowledge of Culturally Relevant Teaching
Misreading of text selection that has use of African-American English	Knowledge of African-American English
Selection written by third grade student that uses African-American English	Knowledge of African-American English
Narrative as told by 7 year old girl that uses African-American English	Knowledge of Narrative Sequencing
Grammar assignment of six sentences by sixth grade student with use of African-American English	Knowledge of African-American English
Formal text selection that incorporates signification	Knowledge of Signification
Informal conversation that incorporates signification	Knowledge of Signification
Classroom scenario that makes use of call-and-response and tonal semantics	Knowledge of Call-and-Response and Tonal Semantics

Results

Findings from Study

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the participants acknowledged the cultural differences of their African-American students. They were familiar with some of the communication styles of their African-American students, but identified very few communication styles to use in the classroom as a resource for literacy acquisition. They also conveyed an acknowledgement of culture which gave insight into each participant's cultural sensitivity and belief in African-American students learning and their acquisition of literacy. The following provides further detail of the findings in the teachers' understandings of AA communication styles, narrative styles, language and dialect, and culturally responsive teaching.

Findings of Understanding Communication Styles

Being able to identify and use the different AA communication styles in the classroom would bring a strong foundation and connection to literacy skills. Not only would there be connections made to community life, but the teacher would make learning more accessible as they focus the importance of certain literacy aspects of the lessons or activities. In the study conducted, the teachers were able to identify with the communication style of signification in formal literature and felt that using it in the classroom would build skills in inferencing, figurative language, interpretation, and vocabulary building. They also felt that the students would be able to make connections to the text which in turn would provide foundation for making text-to-self and text-to-world connections in terms of comprehension skills. However, the other styles of communication, tonal semantics and rhythm and repetition, were seen more as classroom management techniques and not styles that would be used in the classroom as a tool to teach literacy skills. Their understanding took into consideration their cultural awareness of the differing discourse of their students', however, they used only one style as a resource to make personal connections to academics. While there was a definite awareness to the specific characteristics of AA culture, the understanding of how to use each of the characteristics as a strategy in teaching to promote academic success and to make personal connections was not shown. Using the styles signification, tonal

semantics, and rhythm and repetition for literacy acquisition would further communication between the student and teacher and further build subject recall and motivation. Making connections to community using these styles would also build a foundation for making interpretations to content and text.

Findings of Understanding of Narrative Styles

When given scenarios that included narratives, the teachers in the study focused more on the grammar and sentence structure. The differences in AA English and Standard English were points of conversation for each teacher. The participants were able to identify the miscues but did not identify the piece as a narrative. A lot of emphasis was placed on how to correct the grammatical errors. Strategies included revising papers and making edits to give to the students, however, the strategies did not include a way for the students to be able to identify the differences and be able to code-switch from one discourse to another.

With the characteristics of narratives not being identified, the participants did not identify that the piece had sequencing, stayed on topic, included feelings and thoughts, and included a beginning, middle, and end. Focusing on the dialectal differences of the language caused the teachers to miss the strengths of the narrative, therefore missing the opportunity to build on what the student would bring as an asset to writing or telling narratives. Becoming more familiar with the characteristics that may be seen in narratives written by African-American students would put the focus back on the skills of narratives in literacy acquisition and not on differences in dialect.

Findings of Understanding of Language & Dialect

As in the narratives, the teachers interviewed were able to identify miscues in sentences and conversations, but the knowledge of specific semantics, grammar, and syntax of African-American English were limited in scope. Teachers were willing to correct and/or edit student work but were not able to identify precise strategies to support being able to help the student transfer from African-American English to Standard English which in turn would sustain better academic success. Incorporating instruction that would compare and contrast the rules of AAE and SE would be proactive in using culture as a response to academic discourse. It would use culture as an asset

acquire a pertinent foundation of Standard English to acquire literacy skills. To be able to establish this type of strategy, the teacher must become familiar with specific differences in language and dialect that would be represented on a day-to-day basis in the classroom and in student work that all of their students could succeed given the right tools through education. They believed in their students and showed many times in comments that they cared for them deeply. They communicated with families and tried to build relationships in and out of the classroom. They also believed that culture should not be implemented only at holidays but throughout the year.

The one characteristic of culturally responsive teaching that was not present was that they did not truly incorporate culture into the curriculum and use it as tool or resource to build literacy skills and therefore create a strong foundation for acquisition. They were familiar with different communications styles but could only see one as a resource for the classroom. Dialectal differences were identified as well as the knowledge of formal and informal language but techniques and strategies for transferring from one discourse to another were not conveyed. Using the strengths of the discourse and making connections would provide for a more opportune academic success.

Implications for the Future

In looking toward the future, there is a need to embed culturally responsive teaching into undergraduate and graduate programs as well as professional development sessions. The need to build awareness of cultural characteristics and learning styles is imperative to minority student success. Undergraduate and graduate programs or professional development trainings should incorporate curriculum that integrates culture as an embedded piece to academic success. Explicitly introducing cultural characteristics and learning styles would be an asset to developing curriculum connected to culture. This curriculum should be seen in all areas of content and incorporate the premise of using culture throughout the academic year and not just at specific times that may be celebrated according to a specific scope and sequence. These programs or professional development sessions might also integrate the teaching of specific cultural differences such as communication styles and techniques (signification, call-and-response, tonal semantics, and narrative sequencing) to support an embedded curriculum. This

curriculum should provide the affects that these differences may have on academics both in a positive manner if used as a resource and a negative manner if seen as a hindrance. Finally, these programs and sessions should teach the proper, in depth use of culturally responsive teaching and require the successful application of its characteristics in a classroom setting.

While these are only suggestions, the need for further research in the area of White teachers and their knowledge of minority students is critical in education. As stated before, the teaching force is predominantly White, middle-class women. The student population is becoming much more diverse as seen in the statistics previously given. This suggests that disconnect is inevitable between the culture and language of the teacher and the students unless measures are taken to improve and widen the cultural knowledge base of teachers. We need to begin to build our own awareness of culture in academic content. We also need to begin to take steps toward expanding our teaching strategies making instruction more meaningful to all students. Including culture in curriculum and the use of culturally responsive teaching in literacy acquisition is one way in which we can attain academic success.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

As a reminder, your rights as a participant are in effect. You may opt not to answer any question that makes you feel at risk or uncomfortable. You also may leave the study at any time. If any discomfort or feelings of risk arise, please advise me. No questions will be asked of your decision.

- 1) Please tell me a little bit about yourself.
- 2) Could you describe experiences that you have had with African American students before your current teaching position?
- 3) How has this affected your teaching?
- 4) Please identify and describe any classes, professional development sessions, or workshops that you have attended that included issues of diversity.
- 5) Describe your students and your teaching environment.
- 6) What do you feel is your role as a literacy educator?
- 7) Define literacy and what it means to be literate.
- 8) How do you provide literacy support in your classroom?
- 9) A teacher incorporates Black History month into his/her yearly lesson plans. The lessons include looking at famous African-Americans from the past to the present, learning about slavery in American History, learning about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and The Civil Rights movement, having successful African-Americans from the community come in and speak, and having African- American families from the classroom bring in ethnic foods for the students to sample.
 - Do you feel that is a sufficient display of culturally relevant teaching? Why or why not?
- 10) “Imagine that you are a second grade teacher listening to one of your students read orally. The student speaks African-American English. You observe the student misread a portion of the text because he/she has translated the Standard English print to its corresponding African-American English form.” (Fogel & Ehri, 2006, p. 478)
 - How do you respond to this reading?
- 11) The following was written by a third grade African-American English speaking student. She was asked to describe her family.
 - “My name Vanessa. I have a big family. I have two brother and three sister. My older brother name Bruce. He sixteen year old. My younger brother name Tommy. He only four year old.” (Fogel & Ehri, 2006, p.478)
 - As her teacher, how would you respond?
- 12) The following is a narrative as told by a 7 year old girl. The interviewer has asked the child to tell them about a time that she was sick.

“I went to the doctors
an my mom, she had to see if I had asthma
An’ I had to go to the um store to get my medicine
An’ um they didn’t have it
An’ I had to for ‘em them to make it
An’ um my mom she wen’ back an’ back an’ finally it was done making it
An’ I xx, when I got in the car an’ she got it
I had to drink some, I’s nasty” (Champion, 1998, p. 258)

 - As her teacher, how would you respond?

- 13) You receive the following sentences for a grammar assignment from an African-American sixth grade student:
- Michaela friend she be working as a actress in a off Broadway production of *Rent*.
 - She be workin hard for her money.
 - My brother he sit in the front row so he can hear everything Michaela say.
 - He use to want to be in three play but last year he changes his minds.
 - He now want to be in fours!
 - As this student's teacher, how do you respond?
- 14) In a high school literature classroom, a group of African-American students are reading the novel, *The Color Purple*, by Alice Walker. The teacher chooses the following passage:
- "You lowdown dog is what's wrong, I say. It's time to leave you and enter into Creation. And your dead body just the welcome mat I need (Walker, p. 207)
 - How would you use this passage in a literature lesson? (signifyin')
- 15) Several African-American high school students are walking down the hallway outside of your room at the end of the school day. You are standing in the doorway of the classroom. The students are using African-American English. The conversation goes as follows:
- Sherry: I sho am hongy. Dog!
- Reginald: That's' all you think bout, eating all the time.
- John (Sherry's brother): Man, that's why she so big.
- Sherry: Aw, y'all shut up!
- John: Come on Sherry, we got to go. We'll catch you later man.
- Reginald: (to John): Goodnight. Sleep tight. Don't let Sherry eat you up tonight. (Everyone laughs- including Sherry- and gives skin.) (Smitherman, 1977, p. 119)
- How do you respond?
 - How could you bring this type of conversation into the classroom for use with learning? (figurative language and signifyin')
- 16) Listen to the following scenario:
- The teacher walks around the room as students help to pass out booklets for a writing lesson. The teacher announces, "Class, this morning we are going to practice some sentences, and when we do that I want you to listen. Can you say that?" The class replied loudly in unison, "Listen!" She said, "Do what?" and they shouted, "Listen!" The teacher repeated the word with them a few times: "Listen...listen..." and then began to clap her hands in between each utterance of the word, "Listen...[clap]...listen...[clap]...listen...[clap]." All of the children joined in with her, clapping and saying *listen* alternately. (Bohin, 2003, p. 691)
- How would you respond to this situation in your classroom? (rhythm, repetition, call and response)
- 17) Are there any other comments you would like to make at this time?

Meeting Ohio TESOL Endorsement Program Standard 6.2: One Strategy...

Tim Micek, D.A.

The Ohio TESOL Endorsement Program (TEP) Standard 6.2 calls for candidates to “apply current research to develop a repertoire of strategies to promote age/grade-appropriate social and academic English learning.” Teacher educators may feel challenged to meet this standard for several reasons. First, they may not be sure how to structure this application: should candidates apply research once or many times? Should candidates apply research directly, in the field, or indirectly, through assignments such as papers, for example? The former may be problematic as not all ESL teacher candidates have ready access to English language learners (ELLs), the latter as it is an indirect measure. Second, teacher educators may not be sure what research candidates should apply—canonical research in second language acquisition (SLA) of the teacher educator’s choosing, for example, or any relevant research of the candidate’s choice. Arguments may be made for both positions. Finally, teacher educators may be uncertain as to how to assess this application: how many strategies, and which ones, should they require candidates to develop? How can teacher educators make candidates aware of current TESOL research and have them apply it to their teaching? One answer may lie in learner autonomy, a principle that has received significant attention in language education but relatively little in teacher education.

Benson (2003) offers an explanation, a history, and principles of learner autonomy. In a definition that has ‘stood the test of time,’ he reports, ‘Holec (1981, p. 3) defines autonomy as “the ability to take charge of one’s own learning.” Differing slightly with Holec, Benson (2001, p. 47) defines

autonomy as “the capacity to control one’s learning.” Autonomy is best described as a capacity, Benson explains, because different abilities are involved in controlling learning. Researchers generally agree that the most important abilities are those that allow learners to “plan their own learning activities, monitor their progress, and evaluate their outcomes.” In his own research, Benson suggests that different abilities may be needed for “the day-to-day management of learning, control over the mental processes of second language learning and control over the content of learning” (Benson, 2001, p. 50).

According to Benson (2003), the notion of autonomy first came into language teaching in the late 1960s through the adult education movement in Europe and North America and for many years was associated with adult learners who had left formal education. Many early studies were conducted by the Council of Europe’s Modern Languages Project in the 1970s. Holec played an important role in this project as director of the *Centre de Recherches et d’Applications en Langue (CRAPEL)*,” which is still “a focal point for research and practice on autonomy” (p. 291).

According to Palfreyman (2008), “the practical details of promoting learner autonomy in different contexts have been the subject of some debate (Benson and Voller, 1997b); and ideas about culture have an important part in these debates” (p. 1). Palfreyman offers three interpretations of culture, the first referring to national or ethnic cultures (for example, Chinese or Western). Learner autonomy has been promoted mainly by Western teachers and academics, and when attempts to foster it

outside the West have run into problems, they have often been attributed to cultural differences. One must ask, then, whether the idea of learner autonomy is ethnocentric. Palfreyman's second interpretation of culture refers to values and ways of behaving in different situations, for example, a classroom or school. Palfreyman's third interpretation relates to the learner in context as opposed to isolation. "Autonomy has sometimes been associated with a focus on the individual learner," he explains, "with sociocultural context seen as either restricting individual freedom, or as irrelevant to it" (p. 1-2).

Benson (2003) offers the following principles for fostering autonomy in the classroom: (1) be actively involved in students' learning, (2) provide a range of learning options and resources, (3) offer choices and decision-making opportunities, (4) support the learners, and (5) encourage reflection (pp. 294-296). Lv and Wang (2008) add that, although changing cultural foundations is beyond their control, teachers can do many things to help their students become autonomous: guide them, provide them with tools and opportunities to use them, and initiate an autonomous approach to language learning and teaching (p. 18).

Several authors (Murphy, 2008; Hassan & Raddatz, 2008; Figura, & Jarvis, 2007) discuss the role of materials in fostering autonomy in language classrooms. Other authors have discussed effects of fostering autonomy in language classrooms. Littlejohn (1983) explored ways in which learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) could be given "a more central role in making decisions about the organization and direction of their language courses" (p. 595). Learners were two groups of Arab students with lower intermediate ability in English who were repeating General English. Some of the tasks given to students to bring them into the more central role included filling out a questionnaire about learning English, reviewing the previous textbook, acting as teachers, discussing rules of use, correcting errors in small groups, correcting errors generally, and teaching lessons (p. 602-605). Classes became "very relaxed and open," with students freely helping each other and English being spoken more frequently than Arabic. Other students who had failed the first year were taking traditional teacher-led classes at the same time. At the end of the semester, all students retook the examination that they had failed the previous semester. On average, students in the experimental groups improved their scores as much as, if not more than, the other students.

In addition, these students began to develop skills and attitudes beyond those needed to learn English, developing a sense of responsibility and changing from passive to active learners. Littlejohn concludes that "if adopted in a careful and gradual way, learner-centered approaches can offer significant gains among otherwise passive, teacher-dependent students" (p. 607). Cotterall and Crabbe (1992) echo Littlejohn as they warn that autonomous language learning has advantages over teacher-dominated learning, but "it cannot simply be "clipped on" to existing programs."

Research into learner autonomy in teacher education, by contrast, is relatively limited. An ERIC search reveals only a handful of studies since 1988 that address both personal autonomy and teacher education. Rogers and Plasty (1994) describe how pre-service art teachers can develop personal autonomy and become reflective teachers. Ullrich (1992) studied personal autonomy in a "reflective, inquiry-oriented teacher education program" and found that a seminar devoted to promoting personal autonomy and collaboration "did not meet individual student teachers' needs." Karp (1991) investigated the teaching behavior and instructional methods of elementary school teachers to determine whether teachers with positive attitudes towards mathematics employ different methods in mathematics instruction than those with negative attitudes and found that, overall, teachers with positive attitudes encouraged student initiative and independence, whereas teachers with negative attitudes used methods that fostered dependence. Given the lack of research into learner autonomy in teacher education, one wonders if a teacher educator can meet Ohio TEP Standard 6.2 by having candidates take responsibility for applying current research to ESOL teaching. If so, what research would candidates choose—and why? What challenges and rewards would they experience? Finally, how would they perceive the value of such an assignment? A study was conducted to address these questions.

Method

Participants were twelve students in an undergraduate TESOL methods class; most were experienced P-12 classroom teachers seeking the TESOL endorsement. Students were assigned a two page-report in which they were to summarize one piece of current research and discuss how they would apply it to their teaching (Appendix A). Assignment in hand, students visited the campus library, where they chose articles, mostly from *TESOL Quarterly* and *TESOL*

Journal, for their research. Students wrote their reports and, later in the semester, presented them to the class. After making their presentations, students completed a survey about the assignment (Appendix B). The survey asked students which article they read, why they chose it, and how they (would) apply it to their teaching. The survey also asked students about the challenges and rewards of meeting the assignment and, on a scale of one (“Not at all”) to five (“Greatly”), the extent to which it helped them to meet the TEP standard. Finally, it asked students to choose from a list (selecting an article, writing the summary, etc.) which aspects of the assignment were most valuable and how, if at all, they would change the assignment. After grading the reports, the researcher collated the surveys and analyzed them for recurrent themes. He also interviewed the instructor’s about the assignment.

Results

Students chose a variety of topics for their research (see Table 1). Half of the articles (six) were related to literacy. Two addressed relationships between ESL and mainstream classrooms, two second language acquisition and learning, and two other topics.

Table 1
Article Topics

Literacy-related (6)
ESL and mainstream classes (2)
Second language acquisition and learning (2)
Humor (1)
Multiculturalism (1)

Students gave several reasons for choosing their articles, but most of these reasons (10) might be categorized as “relevant and/or useful.” Two responses fell into the category of “interesting and/or enjoyable.” (see Table 2.)

Table 2
Reasons for Choosing Article

Relevant and/or useful (10)
Interesting and/or enjoyable (2)

Almost every student (11) indicated that they had applied, or planned to apply, the article’s findings to their teaching; one student reported that she had not applied, and was unlikely to apply, the findings to her teaching (see Table 3).

Table 3
Application of Article

Had applied, or planned to apply, article to teaching (11)
Had applied article to teaching previously (1)

Responses to the next question, “What challenges did you experience meeting the assignment?” varied (see Table 4). Four students reported challenges doing the reading, two reported challenges doing the writing, three indicated other kinds of challenges, and three students reported no challenges in meeting the assignment.

Table 4
Challenges to Completing Assignment

Reading (4)
None (3)
Other (3)
Writing (2)

When asked what rewards they experienced, most students (nine) described the knowledge that they gained from completing the assignment while three students reported other rewards, including a greater appreciation for reading current research and validation of their teaching (see Table 5).

Table 5
Rewards of Completing Assignment

Knowledge gained from assignment (9)
Other (3)

Students indicated that the assignment helped them very much to apply current research to TESOL: on average, they gave the assignment a score of 4.33 out of 5. (See Table 6.)

Table 6
Extent to Which Assignment Helped Meet Standard

Score (Number)	Points
5 (8)	40
4 (2)	8
3 (1)	1
2 (0)	0
1 (1)	1
Average	4.33

Students reported that many aspects of the assignment were valuable. Hearing others' ideas through the class presentations was the most valuable aspect: all 12 students chose it. Selecting an article and applying the research were the second most valuable aspects: eight students chose each of them. Four students chose other aspects of the assignment. (see Table 7.)

Table 7
Most Valuable Aspects of Assignment

Hearing others' ideas (12)
Applying research (8)
Selecting article (8)
Writing summary (4)
Other (2)

Finally, most students (seven) would not change the assignment at all, and five students recommended changes—some students' more than one change (Table 8). Three students recommended adding a second "apply current research" report and/or deleting another course assignment. Two students wanted more time for presentation. Three students suggested or implied other changes.

Table 8
Recommended Changes to Assignment

None (7)
Add second "apply current research" report and/or delete another assignment (3)
Allow more time for presentation (2)
Other (3)

Discussion

It is not surprising that participants chose a variety of topics for their research: students came from a variety of backgrounds and had a variety of professional goals. Nor is it surprising that half of the articles they chose were related to literacy: regardless of the level, ESL literacy is almost always an issue. What is interesting is the variety of sub-topics within literacy that students chose—from "Whole Language in TESOL" to "The Lexical Advantages of Narrow Reading for Second Language Learners" to "Bridging Literacy and Social Studies." It is apparent that the assignment allowed students to meet their specific needs within a general topic.

Although two students chose articles because they were "interesting and/or enjoyable," the great majority of students (10) chose articles that were "relevant and/or useful." This result is not surprising, either: most students were practicing teachers, some of ESL. The remaining students were seeking to become ESL teachers. Nor is this result undesirable: as Ohio TEP Standard 6.2 calls for candidates to apply current research to promote English language learning, it is fitting that they would seek articles "relevant and/or useful" to their teaching.

It is striking and heartening to realize that almost every student reported applying, or planning to apply, the article to their teaching. Responses to this question varied, ranging from specific applications ("I planned and carried out lessons following this format") to specific plans ("I plan to apply it with all grade levels: primary—reading fiction and non-fiction on one topic; high school and middle school—reading a series by a single author and reading news articles from a variety of sources on a single topic") to general plans ("It gave me a different view of L2 learning and teaching, which is a challenge"). The one student who did not apply her research was developing exit criteria for an ESL program and "had already listed most of the suggestions in the article." The fact that students

chose their research topics probably increased the chances that they would apply them to their own teaching.

Responses to the question about the challenges of meeting the assignment were interesting because they varied so much. Whereas eight students reported various challenges (reading, writing, and other), three students reported no challenges at all. Perhaps these results speak to the appropriateness of the assignment: while some students struggled, others (perhaps better readers and writers) had no difficulty. The comments of two students reinforced the instructor's assessment that the report was too short: they reported having had a hard time summarizing and discussing their article in two pages.

Most students benefited from the knowledge that they gained from the assignment. "The reward was mainly one," one student wrote: "the acquisition of new knowledge and the incorporation of different ideas." Another student got new ideas and, she wrote, "validation that what I'm doing may be effective." For another student, the assignment went beyond the present: "I need more time to read current research articles," she wrote.

Not all the knowledge that students gained, however, came from their own reading. All twelve students reported that hearing others' ideas (through class presentations) was the most valuable aspect of the assignment. Although doing and applying one's own research is valuable, listening to others do the same was perceived to be at least as valuable. Findings suggest that class presentations should be kept a part of this type of assignment.

Results of the last question, about changes to the assignment, are somewhat misleading. Although only slightly more than half the students (seven) recommended no changes, three students recommended adding a second "apply current research" report and/or deleting another course assignment, two students wanted more time for presentations, and two students suggested extending the assignment in other ways. "It was difficult to keep the summary and application to two pages," one student wrote, suggesting that its length be increased. "Maybe extend it to reading two articles on the same topic," wrote another student, "in order to get different viewpoints." In other words, students wanted more, not less, of the assignment.

The instructor's response to the assignment, by contrast, was a little less positive. On the one hand, he acknowledged the success of the assignment in

meeting Ohio TEP Standard 6.2 and, through the oral presentations, exceeding it. He liked the way that students "went directly into the research to find articles that were relevant and/or useful to their particular teaching situation." He was impressed with the range of articles that many students chose, most of which he was unfamiliar with. On the other hand, he was disappointed with some of the reports. He thought that some of the summaries could have been more accurate or comprehensive and some of the applications more direct. He also noted that some reports contained personal responses to the articles, which he had not assigned. On the other hand, he thought that these responses were natural and even positive in that they gave students a chance to "grapple with, and not merely accept," what authors said. He stated that Mary (not her real name) did the best job of meeting the state standard in her report.

Mary had the advantage of writing from experience—she actually applied the article directly to her teaching—and she took advantage of that experience. In her report, she discusses not only what she did but how it worked—or did not work—and why. She analyzes the lesson and makes recommendations for the future:

I tried Randolph's procedure in my TESOL small groups and had great results with the elementary students. The younger children were very stimulated by the activities. After reading *Lon Po Po* by Ed Young, a Chinese version of *Little Red Riding Hood*, and *Little Red Riding Hood* by Trina Schart-Hyman, they were very eager to talk about how these stories related to folktales their parents and grandparents had old them. I experienced such an increase in discourse that I had to initiate "talking chips," round bingo chips which were used to insure everyone equal talk time. The students were so stimulated by the folktales that they created their own version called *Little Blue Scarf* and proudly performed it for the Kindergarten classes. This performance elicited even more talk because of the necessity of creating dialogue. There was a natural development of group collaboration because of the enthusiasm of the topic. It was a great

success.

Note how Mary says not only that she had “great results” but why she did. She analyzes the lesson and discusses the challenges as well as the rewards of the assignment. The best report in the class, Mary’s will serve as a model for future students.

In conclusion, assigning students a report in which they summarize current research and discuss its application, sharing their finding with classmates, appears to be an excellent way to meet Ohio TESOL Endorsement Program Standard 6.2. It allows students to see what research is available, choose what is relevant, and apply it to their own teaching. Perhaps most importantly, it allows them to share the fruits of their research with others. From the instructor’s perspective, the assignment would be even better with the following changes. First, give students greater freedom to meet the assignment’s requirements: increase the report length from two to three pages and allow them to write a response of up to one page. Second, stress the importance of a good summary (it is for their peers’ use) and review summarizing, including documentation of sources. Third, urge students to try out the research in some form. Actual, as opposed to hypothetical, applications make for stronger, more convincing, reports. Fourth, provide students with a copy of Mary’s reports as a model. Fifth, have students do two such reports during the course of the semester. This not only exposes them to more research but allows them to improve their response to the assignment. This study was conducted with a limited number of participants: it should be replicated with the changes mentioned above.

Freeman (1993) takes the position that learning to teach is a process that “can be informed by the knowledge and insight of others [but] remains principally the responsibility and work of the learner” (p. xii). An assignment like the one above encourages students to take the responsibility, and do the work, for their own learning. In the process, they learn not only about teaching but about learning.

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Appendix A

Assignment

TSL 367, Methods of Teaching Languages

“Apply Current Research” Report

Rationale

Ohio TESOL Endorsement Program Standard 6.2 calls for students to “apply current research to develop a repertoire of strategies to promote age/grade appropriate social and academic English learning.”

Challenges

Massive amount of research that exists

Many applications of the research (different age/grade students)

Solution: “Apply Current Research” Report

- Survey current research (*TESOL Quarterly*, *TESOL Journal*, *Internet TESL Journal*, etc.)
- Find an article of at least 5 pages. *Get my approval before you proceed.* (How is this relevant to TESOL? How would you apply it?)
- Write a two-page (typed, double-spaced) report in which you (1) summarize the article and (2) discuss its application to teaching ESOL. The summary should allow those who have not read the article to understand it. Applications may be past, present, or future, that is, you may have used them before, be using them now, or use them in the future. As always, the quality of writing counts.
- If time allows, make a brief (five-minute) presentation in which you discuss the article and its application.
- Reports will be evaluated on the quality of the summary and the usefulness of the application. They are due _____.
- Please submit both electronic and hard copies.

Appendix B

Survey

TSL 367, Methods of Teaching Languages
“ACR” Survey

Directions: To help me rate the value of this assignment, please answer the following questions.

1. What article did you choose?

2. Why did you choose it? (For example, it seemed easy, it was directly related to my teaching, and/or it presented new ideas.)

3. How did you (plan to) apply it to your teaching?

4. What challenges did you experience meeting the assignment?

5. What rewards did you experience meeting the assignment?

6. Indicate the extent to which the assignment helped you to “apply current research to develop a repertoire of strategies to promote age/grade appropriate social and academic English learning.”

Not at all	1	2	3	4	5	Greatly
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7. Which aspects of the assignment were most valuable? Circle all that apply.
 - a. Selecting an article
 - b. Writing the summary
 - c. Applying the research
 - d. Presenting your ideas
 - e. Hearing others’ ideas
 - f. The whole assignment

8. How, if at all, would you change the assignment?

Answering the Mandate and Then Some: Lessons Learned from Embedding Value-Added Outcomes in the Teacher Education Curriculum

Rachel M. B. Collopy, Ph. D.

Mary Kay Kelly, Ph. D.

Introduction

The Ohio Legislature mandated that all teacher education programs incorporate outcomes related to value-added measures into their curricula. At the same time, teacher education faculty at the University of Dayton were reviewing what our teacher candidates learned about using assessment data to improve instruction across program areas. In this article, we will discuss the development of curriculum materials our faculty created to answer the mandate, meet the needs of our teacher candidates, build capacity among our faculty, and reflect the mission of the University of Dayton's School of Education and Allied Professions. We will also present data from the pilot of the curriculum in the fall of 2007 and share lessons learned.

A team of three faculty members, representing three of our four teacher education programs, developed the curriculum during the summer of 2007. In our program reviews, we had found the greatest need was for our teacher candidates to learn about data for school improvement, about the importance of using data to guide instructional decisions and how to analyze and interpret available data. This included data from value-added measures as well as data from the state report card and other sources. As we prepared to write the curriculum, our team read about various types of data for school improvement and surveyed available materials. In addition, one of our team members attended the Ohio Department of Education sponsored Battelle for Kids training on value-added for higher education faculty.

Curriculum Design

As we developed the curriculum materials, we considered several design considerations. First, we sought to present value-added measures in the context of other types of data because educators use value-added measures in concert with other data to make decisions. In her widely used book, *Data Analysis for Comprehensive Schoolwide Improvement*, Bernhardt (1998) proposed four categories of data: demographic, perceptions, school processes, and student learning. To create a conceptual organization for our teacher candidates, we expanded on Bernhardt's categories of school improvement data. We divided student learning data, for example, into classroom assessments and standardized assessments. Candidates learn explore formative and summative classroom assessments in other course within their teacher education program. Therefore, we elaborated on standardized assessments, particularly those used for accountability. Data from standardized assessments used as accountability, such as scores from the Ohio Achievement Tests, may be reported in several ways. In our conceptual organization, we presented point-in-time, trend over time, and growth data. Adequate yearly progress is a type of trend over time data while value-added measures are a type of growth data. Our conceptual organization supports teacher candidates in considering and comparing the array of types of data available.

A second design consideration involved creating materials that allowed flexibility in use while providing consistency in the content conveyed. We anticipated instructors would integrate the materials into a variety of courses, taught by

several instructors, and used by undergraduate and graduate students across all of our program areas. We created the curriculum as an integrated set of four online modules in which candidates explore several types of data from a school and its community.

Third, we incorporated four themes from the University of Dayton's School of Education and Allied Professions' mission into the curriculum. We sought to develop scholarly practitioners through developing candidates' data analysis skills and cultivate critical reflection on data, their potential and limitations. We sought to enable our candidates to promote social justice by encouraging candidates to consider how data inform educators about the learning of all students, including underachieving groups. We sought to build community by embedding collegial problem solving throughout the modules.

Fourth, we recognized that merely the word "data" causes anxiety for many, including some teacher candidates. We endeavored to reduce anxiety with a clear, accessible and inviting tone, providing clear examples and step-by-step explanations. Because we anticipated that candidates would differ in their background knowledge, we provided glossaries of potentially unfamiliar terms.

Data for School Improvement Modules

The Data for School Improvement is an integrated set of four online modules, which explore several types of data. The first module introduces the four categories of data for school improvement and requires teacher candidates to examine demographic data from the United States Census for a particular community. In the second module, candidates learn more about student learning data and analyze State Report Card data from one of the community's schools. The third module explains value-added measures and compares them to the types of student learning data presented in module two. For this module, we borrowed heavily from materials from the Battelle for Kids value-added training for higher education faculty (Seidel et al., 2007) and Ohio Resources, reorganizing, editing, and supplementing them. Candidates complete the module by interpreting the school's value-added reports and diagnostic reports. The final module is a culminating activity in which candidates write a school improvement plan, noting the limitations of the data they have and what data they would like to collect.

Each module has a similar format. Each begins with an introduction that reviews the previous module and provides an overview of the module's objectives, content, and tasks. Next, the module explains the content using examples of realistic data. Each module has both individual and team tasks, which when complete, are posted to a team message board. This structure ensures individual accountability as well as promotes collaborative discussions of the data and their implications. For example, in the third module, teacher candidates individually summarize a school's value-added report and value-added diagnostic report. After posting their summaries to the team message board, each teacher candidate comments on the other team member's postings. Using these postings, the team leader drafts a synthesis and submits it to the team for feedback. Finally, the team leader revises the synthesis based on team feedback and submits it as the team's final assignment.

Pilot of Curriculum

The Data for School Improvement curriculum was piloted in the fall semester of 2007 in five courses including a master's level initial licensure course, a course in the Early Childhood Program, two courses in the Adolescent to Young Adult Program, and one in the Middle Childhood Program. Each instructor used the curriculum in unique ways. Unlike our undergraduates who are required to purchase a laptop computer and have ready access to the Internet, teacher candidates in the master's level initial licensure program varied greatly in their access to technology. To compensate these differences, the instructor who piloted the curriculum with initial licensure candidates had candidates work through the online curriculum exclusively during class time. For a third-year course in the Early Childhood Program, an instructor created lectures based on the structure and the content of the curriculum. The students worked through examples of the materials as a class, not using the online or team aspects of the curriculum.

The remaining three classes represented a range of implementations from completely online to blends of online with in-class support. First, fourth-year students in the Adolescent to Young Adult (AYA) program's content methods block were assigned to teams, given a general introduction to the topics, format, and navigation of the online modules, and then completed the modules without further face-to-face instruction. The teams consisted of students

from various content areas and no attempt was made to have students meet face-to-face during the semester.

Second, students in the AYA program's third-year general pedagogy course completed the curriculum modules and tasks mainly, but not exclusively, online. These students were given a general introduction to the topics and navigation of the online modules and assigned to teams. Because several teams were having difficulty with interpreting value-added data, the instructor spent one class period, 75 minutes, on this topic. Though additional class time was not devoted to discussion of the curriculum, the teams sat together during the biweekly classes to facilitate informal conversations and coordination of teamwork. In addition to the tasks embedded in the curriculum, skills in data interpretation were also assessed on the final exam.

Third, the instructor of the Middle Childhood (MC) program's fourth-year reading methods course also utilized the curriculum's team structure as candidates worked through the modules both online and in class. Though she had originally planned for teacher candidates to use the module in an online only format, the instructor discovered that her students needed support to navigate the modules, understand the role of the team leader, and clarify some points about value-added measures. The week before each module was due, the instructor provided an overview of the upcoming module and the next week asked students to discuss what they learned and why it is important. She prompted them with questions such as "What were the key ideas?", "What will you take away from this?", "Why do we care?", and "What will this mean for your classroom?" The instructor also set aside 2 hours of class time for candidates to work on the modules with their teams.

Feedback from the instructors who piloted the curriculum was positive. They perceived it as supporting their capacity to teach candidates to interpret value-added measures and other types of data. It also provided flexibility and consistency across program areas. In order to understand the effectiveness of the curriculum from our students' perceptions, we collected and analyzed data from the three pilot courses that utilized the online format and team structures.

Methods

A questionnaire was administered at the end of the semester after candidates had completed all four of the curriculum's modules. Participants included 81 teacher candidates. Thirty-three participants were from the Middle Childhood (MC) program's fourth-year reading methods course. Twenty-seven participants were from the third-year students in the AYA program's third-year general pedagogy course. Twenty-one language arts teacher candidates participated from the fourth-year AYA methods block seminar.

The questionnaire included 24 closed-ended questions and three open-ended questions. For this study, data from the three open-ended questions are reported. These questions included:

1. As a future educator, what was the most important thing you learned related to data for school improvement?
2. Which aspects of the modules were most supportive of your learning?
3. What suggestions do you have for improving the modules or how they are integrated into classes?

Analysis of open-ended items was done through a constant-comparative method in which the authors independently coded data and then compared coding to reach consensus. Data are reported as percentages of participants who expressed the idea of each code. Because participants often responded with more than one idea to each question, the authors allowed each distinct response of any given participant to have its own code. For this reason, total percentages for each question may exceed 100%.

Results

Most Important Things Learned

Overall, participants most frequently reported that the most important things related to data for school improvement they learned from the modules were knowledge of the curriculum content (35%) and the skill in interpreting assessment data (34%; (see Table 1). In addition, 21% of participants indicated that the most important thing they learned from completing the curriculum was the value of using data to inform instructional decisions.

Table 1

Percentages of Students Responding to the Question, “As a future educator, what was the most important thing you learned related to data for school improvement?”

Percentages of students responding to each category ¹						
Type of Implementation	Knowledge of content	Value of data	Skill in interpreting data	Confused / did not retain	Other	Blank
Independent, during senior methods (AYA) (<i>n</i> = 21; 23 responses)	29	10	33	14	10	14
Linked to junior general pedagogy class, in-class support on value-added only (AYA) (<i>n</i> = 26; 26 responses)	50	4	31	12	0	4
Introduced each module in senior methods (MC) (<i>n</i> = 33; 37 responses)	27	42	36	0	0	6
All Candidates (<i>n</i> = 80; 86 responses)	35	21	34	8	3	8

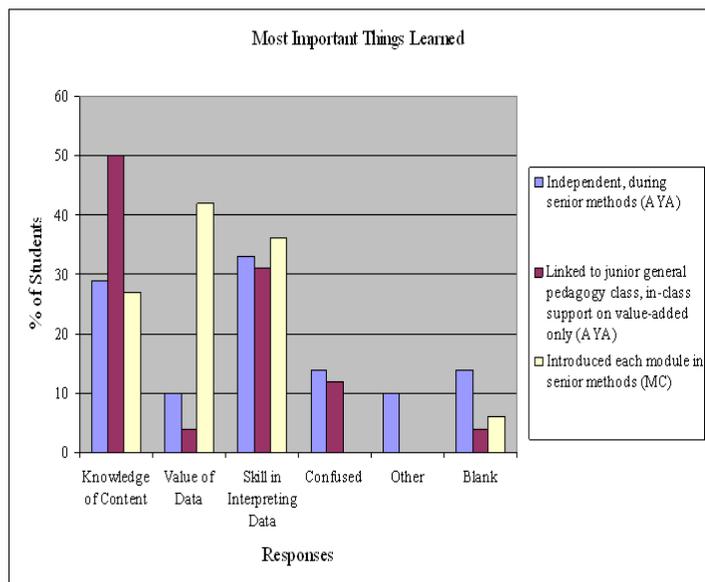
¹Note: Some participants responded to the question with answers that fit in more than one category. Therefore, cumulative percentages in for each type of implementation may be higher than 100%.

Interestingly, participants’ responses were found to differ across the three types of implementation. (See Figure 1) For example, 42% of participants from the fourth-year MCE course, which had the most in-class support, reported that the most important thing they learned related to data from the curriculum was the value of data for school improvement, while only 10% of those from the AYA fourth-year methods block and 4% from the AYA junior-level course indicated this. In addition, 50% of the participants from the AYA junior-level course reported that the most important thing they learned related to data for school improvement from the curriculum was the knowledge of data, while only 29% of those from the AYA fourth-year methods block and 27% of those from the MCE fourth-year course indicated this. Finally, 14% of participants from the AYA fourth-year methods block, which had no outside support while completing the curriculum, and 12% of participants from the AYA third-year gen-

and 27% of those from the MCE fourth-year course indicated this. Finally, 14% of participants from the AYA fourth-year methods block, which had no outside support while completing the curriculum, and 12% of participants from the AYA third-year general methods class, which had little outside support responded to this question by indicating confusion. However, no participants (0 %) from the MCE fourth-year course, which had extensive discussions regarding each module within class, responded in this way.

In contrast, similar percentages of participants across the implementation types reported that the most important thing they learned related to data from the curriculum was the skill in interpreting data for school improvement (33% of AYA fourth-year methods block participants, 31% of AYA third-year general methods course participants, and 36% of fourth-year MCE course participants).

Figure 1. Selected percentages of students responding to the question: “As a future educator, what was the most important thing you learned related to data for school improvement?”



Most Supportive Aspects of Modules

Overall, 33% of participants reported that the cooperative teams that comprised the learning community within the curriculum were most supportive of their learning. (See Table 2) However, this perception varied widely across the types of implementation. (See Figure 2) While 42% of AYA third-year general methods course participants and 36% of fourth-year MCE course participants reported that the teams were supportive of their learning, only 14% of the AYA fourth-year methods block participants reported this to be the case.

In addition to teams, many participants (25 %) reported that the explanations and examples used within the curriculum were most supportive of their learning. Here again, this perception varied across the types of implementation with 35% of AYA third-year general methods course participants, 29% of AYA fourth-year methods block participants, and only 15% of fourth-year MCE methods course participants reporting that the explanations and examples were most supportive of their learning.

Overall, the next most reported aspects of the curriculum that were supportive of learning were “working with data” (10%), “tasks” (11%), and “nothing” (11%). What is interesting, however, is to see the variation among groups across these three categories. In the category “working with data,” 18% of participants from the fourth-year MCE course, 10% of

participants from the fourth-year AYA seminar, and no participants (0%) from the AYA third-year general methods course indicated that the opportunity to work with data from real schools and districts was supportive of their learning.

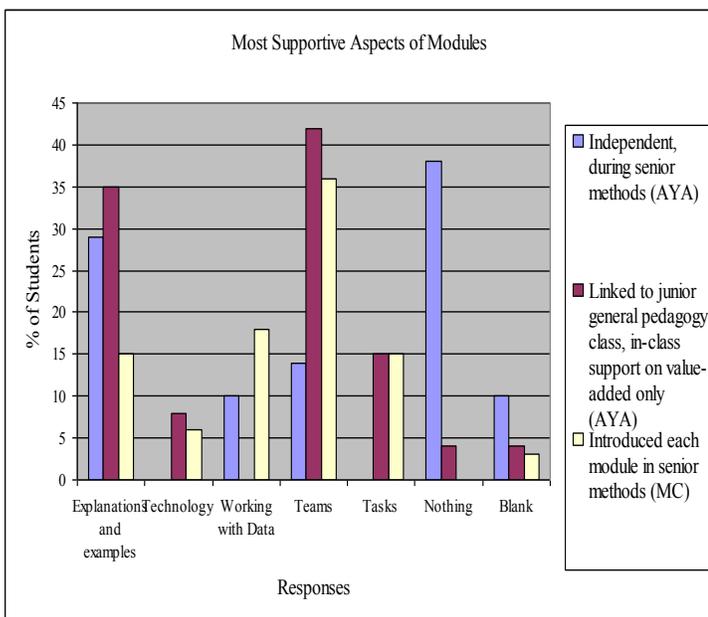
Likewise, the category “tasks” also had wide variation across implementation groups: 15% of participants from the fourth-year MCE course, 15% of participants from the AYA third-year general methods course, and no participants (0%) from the fourth-year AYA seminar indicated that the assigned tasks within the curriculum supported their learning. Finally, in the category “nothing,” 38% fourth-year AYA seminar, but only 4% from the AYA third-year general methods course, and no participants (0%) from the fourth-year MCE methods course reported that no aspect of the curriculum supported their learning. Together these last two categories demonstrate the dissatisfaction of the participants in the AYA fourth-year seminar, who had little external support, with their learning experience associated with the curriculum.

Table 2
Percentage of Students Responding to the Question, “Which aspects of the modules were most supportive of your learning?”

		Percentage of students responding to each category ¹			
		Independent, during senior methods (AYA) (n = 21; 21 responses)	Linked to junior general pedagogy class, in-class support on value-added only (AYA) (n = 26; 27 responses)	Introduced each module in senior methods (MC) (n = 33; 36 responses)	All Candidates (n = 80; 84 responses)
Type of Implementation	Explanations and examples	29	35	15	25
	Technology	0	8	6	5
	Working with data	10	0	18	10
	Teams	14	42	36	33
	Tasks	0	15	15	11
	Integrated into class	0	0	3	1
	Organization	0	0	3	1
	All	0	0	3	1
	Nothing	38	4	0	11
	Response unclear	5	0	3	3
	Blank	10	4	3	5

¹Note: Some participants responded to the question with answers that fit in more than one category. Therefore, cumulative percentages in for each type of implementation may be higher than 100%.

Figure 2. Selected percentages of students responding to the question: “Which aspects of the modules were most supportive of your learning?”



Suggestions for Improving Modules

Overwhelmingly, 59% of participants indicated that more fully integrating the modules into a class (see Table 3) could improve the curricula. This category was the most frequently reported suggestion by participants across all implementation types, with 67% of fourth-year MCE methods course participants, 62% of third-year AYA general methods course participants, and 43% of fourth-year AYA seminar participants responding (see Figure 3).

The second category receiving the most responses was the suggestion to improve the technological aspects of the curriculum. The technological difficulties reported by the participants included difficulty communicating with team members and finding the material too complex to learn online without support. In this category, 21% of participants overall, 24% of AYA fourth-year seminar participants, 21% of MCE fourth-year methods course participants, and 19% of AYA third-year general methods course participants suggested that the technological aspects of the curriculum should be improved.

Another category of note is the category “when to assign the modules.” Both groups that participated in the curriculum during their fourth-year methods block indicated that this was not ideal. Nineteen percent of AYA fourth-year seminar participants and 15% of MCE fourth-year methods course participants, but only 4% of AYA third-year general methods

course participants suggested that the timing of the curriculum should be reconsidered.

Finally, the suggestion that the team structure of the curriculum should be changed was also an issue. Nineteen percent of AYA fourth-year seminar participants and 15% of AYA third-year general methods course participants, but only 3% of MCE fourth-year methods course participants suggested that while completing the curriculum there were problems with their assigned teams.

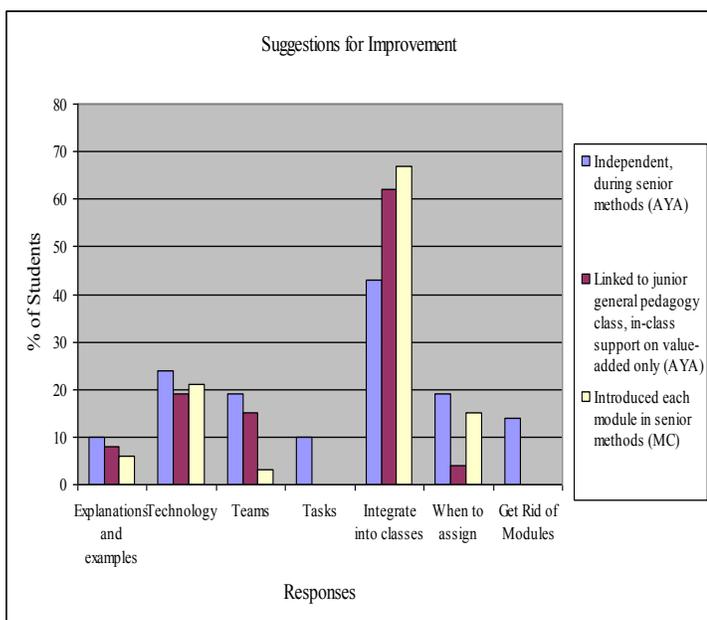
Table 3
Percentages of Students Responding to the Question, “What suggestions do you have for improving the modules or how they are integrated into classes?”

		Percentage of students responding to each category ¹			
		Independent, during senior methods (AYA) (n = 21; 31 responses)	Linked to junior general pedagogy class, in-class support on value-added only (AYA) (n = 26; 31)	Introduced each module in senior methods (MC) (n = 33; 44 responses)	All Candidates (n = 80; 106 responses)
Type of Implementation	Explanations and examples	10	8	6	8
	Technology	24	19	21	21
	Working with data	5	0	9	5
	Teams	19	15	3	11
	Tasks	10	0	0	3
	Integrated into class	43	62	67	59
	Organization	5	4	9	6
	When to assign	19	4	15	13
	Get rid of modules	14	0	0	4
	Response unclear	0	4	0	1
	Blank	0	4	3	3

¹Note: Some participants responded to the question with answers that fit in more than one category. Therefore, cumulative percentages in for each type of implementation may be higher than 100%.

Figure 3

Selected percentages of students responding to the question: “What suggestions do you have for improving the modules or how they are integrated into classes?”



Discussion

In designing the Data for School Improvement curriculum, we focused on four design considerations. First, we aimed to place the value-added data measures in the context of other types of data. The open-ended responses indicated that students came away from their experiences with the curriculum with knowledge of the types of data addressed in the curriculum, skill in interpreting those data, and a sense of value for how the data can be used to improve student learning. Second, we aimed to design a curriculum that could be flexibly integrated into all programs in the Department of Teacher Education. Through our study, we found that each program used the curriculum in unique ways.

The third consideration we took into account in developing the Data for School Improvement curriculum was to address the University of Dayton’s School of Education and Allied Profession’s mission. In so doing, we sought to contribute to our teacher candidates’ development as scholarly practitioners, enabling them to reflect critically on data. The responses to open-ended questions suggest the curriculum did contribute to candidates’ knowledge about data and skill in interpreting data. Candidates were asked to

identify the most important thing they learned was. More than a third responding noted topics in the curriculum. For example, candidates explained that they learned about demographic data, adequate yearly progress, value-added measures, the several types of data related to school improvement, and the limitations of types of data. In addition, more than a third of respondents to the same question indicated they developed skills in interpreting, analyzing or utilizing data.

We also aimed to promote social justice, which is a pillar of the School’s mission, by encouraging candidates to consider how data inform educators about the learning of all students. We found that the curriculum has the potential to make evident the value of data for improving student learning, but that this depended greatly on how the curriculum was integrated into class discussions. For example, a striking 42% of respondents in the middle childhood reading methods course reported the most important thing they learned from the curriculum was the value of data. This was a far greater response rate than for students in courses without the opportunity to discuss the importance of data in class after completing each module.

Building community was another consideration central to the School of Education and Allied Professions’ mission that was addressed in the design of the curriculum. The team structure embedded in each of the tasks was meant to promote collegial problem solving and support. Students cited teams as supporting their learning more often than any other aspect of the curriculum. However, the team structure was more effective when embedded in courses that also met face-to-face. We suspect that face-to-face course time added to students feeling accountable to their team members and being able to negotiate team roles in person. The face-to-face course with the least amount of in-class discussion time had the highest percent of students noting the supportiveness of teams. This may be because these teams needed to rely more on each other to clarify material. Typically, fully online courses offered through the University of Dayton have a module orienting students to working in teams. Because the Data for School Improvement curriculum is not a stand-alone, online course, it does not include this orientation. This may explain why only 14% of students who had no face-to-face interaction with their teams while completing the curriculum noted that their teams were the most supportive aspect of the curriculum, but

19% cited problems within their groups when asked for suggestions to improve the curriculum.

Finally, our fourth design consideration was to reduce anxiety toward data for our teacher candidates. After completing the curriculum, 25% of the teacher candidates indicated that the explanations and examples in the curriculum materials were most supportive of their learning, while 10% indicated that the opportunities that the curriculum offered to work with realistic data were most supportive of their learning, and 11% indicated that the assigned tasks were most supportive of their learning. This suggests that the 46% of the responses indicated that the curriculum materials themselves were supportive of student learning. In contrast, only 8% of students reported that they remained confused about the materials and what they had learned after completing the curriculum. This suggests our efforts to use clear and accessible language, examples, and explanations proved successful for many students.

The most important lesson we learned is the importance of integrating the curriculum into an existing course. Because teacher education courses and programs are already crowded with important content to be addressed and skills to be developed, it would be advantageous to be able to respond to the mandate to incorporate outcomes related to value-added measures with stand-alone curriculum. However, our study suggests that this alternative may meet the mandate, but is a far less effective learning experience for our teacher candidates. Indeed, of all the suggestions students made to improve the curriculum, greater connections to classes was by far the most frequent, both overall and within each of the courses. In addition, it is interesting to note that students who completed the curriculum in their fourth-year methods block suggested that it be moved earlier in the academic program. The pressures and heavy content load of the methods block course in conjunction with the perception that the curriculum was “extra” work seemed to lead these two groups to wish they had completed the curriculum prior to methods block.

Integration of the curriculum within classes likely has several benefits. First, though many students found the curriculum’s explanations and examples helpful, class discussion would help those who needed clarification or who had misconceptions. Notably, none of the students who had the opportunity to discuss content after completing each module reported being confused or finding the content too complex.

Second, as discussed above, teams functioned more effectively when team members were also part of a face-to-face class. Third, class discussions clearly can facilitate teacher candidates’ understanding of the value of data and their use in improving the learning of all students.

Since the curriculum was piloted, instructors have more fully integrated the modules into their classes. They have, for example, devoted class time to discussion of more complex content and for reflective discussions. In addition, some instructors have formalized roles of team members and all have spent time on team development.

A final important lesson learned is that before beginning the online curriculum, students should have an introduction to the technology, the curriculum content, the expectations, and the format of the curriculum. The second most suggested improvement for the curriculum was in the area of technology. While some students indicated frustration with communicating within the curriculum rather than via e-mail with group members, others reported that the material was too complex to learn online or that they were not familiar with some of the features of the program used. As discussed above, in stand-alone, online courses at the University of Dayton, participants complete an introductory module that prepares them for the online learning experience. Building on this study’s findings, instructors have provided orientations to the curriculum’s structure and content and to the technology used. Some instructors now allow teacher candidates to communicate through email rather than the online message board. We expect both the curriculum itself and its use to continue to evolve in response to changes in education policy, available technology, and the needs of our teacher candidates.

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Investigating the Effectiveness of Graduates of a Teacher Education Program Using Qualitative Data from Graduates and their Principals

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Introduction

Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) publish annual demographic summaries of enrolled students, enrollment by program, graduation rates by unit and program, etc., providing various statistical snapshots of units and programs for the purpose of comparing institutions and identifying longitudinal trends. In order for comparisons to be meaningful, not only must institutions be similar in nature, but so must be the data collected. These reports include the popular annual US News and Report ("U. S. News & Report Best Colleges," 2008), which includes statistics on acceptance rates in specific programs and faculty/student ratios per program.

Information from program graduates, or their employers, is not typically included in the majority of IHE summary reports. Although graduate feedback would be informative, it is difficult to collect. The authors implemented a three-phase research study to investigate the effectiveness of one program at a mid-sized, mid-western university. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from its program graduates and their employers for evidence of program effectiveness. The intent was to supplement the existing statistical summary reports provided by the university and other agencies such as the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) and the National Council for the Accreditation of Education (NCATE). The pilot study focused on one program to allow the College of Education (COE) to determine if the three-phase design would be informative in investigating the effectiveness of other programs. During the first data collection phase,

employers' feedback on dispositions of effective graduates was discussed in connection with the COE conceptual framework.

Literature Review

Teacher Preparation Program Evaluations

In 1960, Stuit summarized various self-evaluative measures utilized by colleges, universities, and their programs, not focusing on any particular college or program. The author highlighted the importance of defining the "dimensions or facets of quality to be evaluated" (1960, p. 371), stressing that those for whom the evaluation will be a decision-making tool will determine what reflects effectiveness. For example, one student who uses the evaluation may see effectiveness reflected in faculty-student ratios, while another may view effectiveness reflected in scholarships offered. Clearly, an investigation into graduate effectiveness must have a specific topic to limit the data collection and analyses.

Twenty years later, Adams and Craig (1983) published a comprehensive summary of evaluations of teacher education programs in America, acknowledging the paucity of published literature documenting program evaluations of IHEs. The authors surveyed 779 AACTE 1980-1981 members about trends in evaluation of teacher education programs. The respondents (n = 445) indicated that teacher education programs investigate effectiveness based on a number of topics such as: accreditation type, number of graduates, and number of programs. Additionally, findings indicated that teacher education programs regularly investigate their effectiveness, collecting follow-up

data from recent graduates and their supervisors. In fact, some institutions actually observe teacher education graduates in their classrooms. The authors posit that, unfortunately, the dearth in publication is likely due to perceptions that program evaluation is not considered research. Furthermore, institutions may consider program evaluation proprietary, to be used only for use in program improvement.

Not long after Adams and Craig's 1983 report, policy makers lobbied for a more standardized approach to teacher education program evaluation; it was the beginning of the age of accountability. More and more teacher education graduates were required to pass standardized licensure exams, including the widely-used PRAXIS test (Angrist & Guryan, 2004). The theory was that scores on the state-mandated test would serve as a proxy for the quality of teacher preparation programs; the graduates of less effective programs would not score as well as those from a highly effective program. The further assumption was that those graduates with higher scores would be better teachers. However, Cochran-Smith reports that such "initial teacher licensure tests fall short of the intended policy goals for their use as accountability tools and as levers for improving teacher preparation and licensing programs" (2001, p. 347). Consequently, there was an emergence of agencies/councils focused on evaluating teacher education programs, as well as publicizing and politicizing teacher preparation. Such agencies include the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) and NCATE, both of which seek to offer teacher preparation programs assistance preparing the graduates with skills to positively impact student achievement.

Although there are a number of models to evaluate teacher preparation programs, there is no standard method to identify effective teaching; there is no standardized list of desired qualities or dispositions of effective teachers. There is a tendency, however, to equate teacher effectiveness with student scores on achievement tests, following a business model approach to determine effectiveness. In fact, the recent focus on teacher level value-added scores (McCaffrey, Lockwood, Koretz, & Hamilton, 2003) throughout the United States is very worrisome to some teachers because of the reliance on achievement scores. Many believe that an improved student achievement score is merely only one measure of teacher effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005; Edwards, Carr, & Siegel, 2006; Wandry et al.,

2008; Wenglinsky, 2002)

Teacher Dispositions

Pianta & Hamre (2005) posit that emotional support is a teacher quality that distinguishes an effective teacher, especially for younger students. Kennedy summarizes a taxonomy of qualities found in an effective teacher: improved student achievement, personal resources and performance (2008). Student achievement refers to the student performance data reported each year, documenting how many students passed or failed a particular content area. Some states use value-added scores; some use traditional percentages. All are based on assessments administered once a year. Personal resources include qualities teachers have attained prior to being employed, such as beliefs, attitudes, values, personality, credentials, and culture. Finally, performance refers to the actual instructional strategies used in the classroom and practices that occur outside the classroom. Kennedy posits that it is the convergence of the three areas that allows a teacher to become effective. Using these three broad groupings, Kennedy documents common assessment practices to measure each quality, both in the interview process of pre-service teachers and in the ongoing professional development of in-service teachers.

COEs acknowledge the importance of Kennedy's (2008) three groups of characteristics in their teacher preparation programs. In fact, through the college accreditation process, COEs develop a conceptual framework that is embedded in all teacher preparation programs. In addition to the expected emphasis on content, technology, and instruction, COE frameworks include the personal and performance qualities that Kennedy describes as paramount for effective teaching. The inclusion of the personal and performance qualities in the conceptual framework confirms the belief that it is the convergence of Kennedy's three areas that produces effective teachers.

For the COE studied in this research, the conceptual framework strands of Professionalism, Diversity and Emotional Intelligence represent the personal qualities Kennedy describes (see Appendix A for the COE Conceptual Framework). Content, Pedagogical Content Knowledge and Technology are represented in the performance factor. A study of the effectiveness of a program must include feedback from graduates and employers on the importance of the strands within the conceptual framework.

The characteristics developed in the Content,

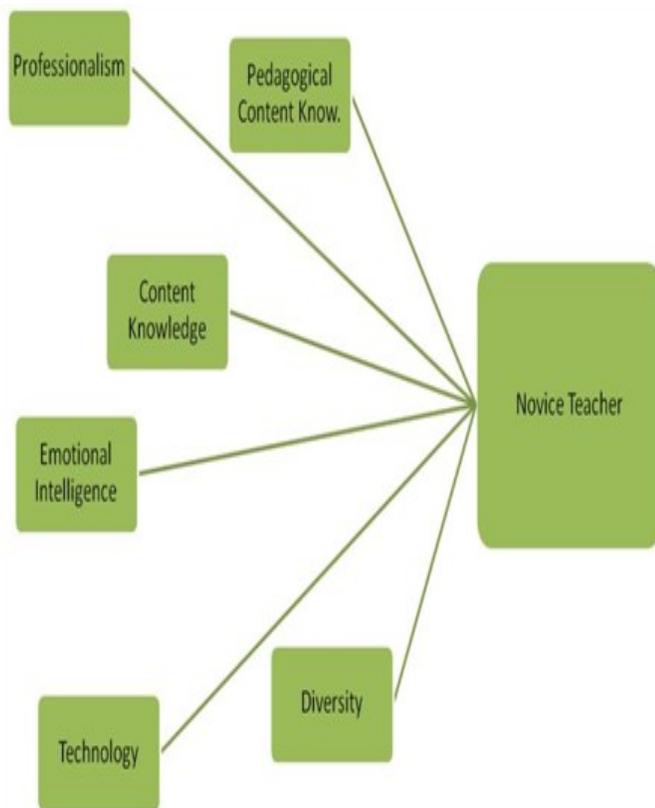


Figure 1. COE conceptual framework strands for teacher preparation

the Pedagogical Content Knowledge and the Technology strands are relatively easy to measure. Graduates and employers have test scores that represent progress in these strands. Professionalism, Diversity and Emotional Intelligence, strands in the personal realm of effective teachers (Kennedy, 2008), are the most difficult to measure in relationship to effective teaching. Diversity is the most difficult to measure since it is modeled in all the other strands of the conceptual framework. It refers to teachers being knowledgeable, competent, and sensitive in working with diverse populations and in diverse settings. Diversity is fused with the development of Emotional Intelligence and Professionalism to facilitate sensitive and respectful communication in all settings.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) first proposed the theory of Emotional Intelligence as an ability model using emotions to enhance one's reasoning skills and social interactions. Howard Gardner's (1993) work on multiple intelligences, particularly the intra-personal and inter-personal abilities also acknowledges the role of emotional intelligence in learning and teaching. The

Mayer and Salovey (1997) revised model highlights four main areas with the following abilities: (1) the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; (2) the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they help one to think better; (3) the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and (4) the ability to reflect on, manage, and regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth. These abilities are paramount in effective teaching.

Emotional Intelligence is illustrated by a teacher's demonstration of emotional support in the classroom. Some classroom observation protocols include dimensions of classroom behavior that reflect emotional support (Pianta, 2005), allowing teachers to better understand their ability to provide emotional support. In-service teachers are provided some formal feedback in the annual evaluation processes. If weaknesses in Emotional Intelligence are identified, professional development can be arranged to increase teachers' Emotional Intelligence and thereby, increase the emotional support they offer in their classrooms.

"Professionalism is a process more than an outcome—a way of encountering new students and new classroom problems and of finding meaning and solutions to them as you grow" (Kramer, 2003, p.3). Teacher professionalism extends beyond the ability to understand content; the professional teacher will strive to make sure students are being reached in an effective way. Professionalism refers to the teachers' commitment to focus on student learning, maintain high quality instruction and learning environments, and to continue to invest time in personal growth as a teacher. These qualities cannot be easily taught in teacher preparation or measured for in-service teachers; but they can be modeled and nurtured by university and K-12 faculty, particularly cooperating teachers, administrators, and other educational stakeholders.

Professionalism, emotional intelligence and diversity are qualities that teacher preparation programs weave throughout their programs. Employers of graduates of effective programs should be able to recognize and nurture these qualities in the graduates. Graduates should be familiar with these qualities and understand their impact on classroom effectiveness.

Insight into the effectiveness of a teacher preparation program can be gained by soliciting feedback from graduates and their employers about their definitions of 'effective teaching.' Finding the common definition of an effective teacher was the first phase of the research.

Methodology

To begin the study, the authors investigated the intersection of (1) the framework that guides teacher preparation and (2) the qualities that principals find most indicative of teacher effectiveness. If employers describe COE graduates as effective, they are implying that the teacher preparation program is effective. Furthermore, a teacher education program deemed effective by employers implies that the teacher preparation program's goals intersect or align with the employers' needs. With this in mind, it was important to determine how the stated framework of the teacher education preparation program match the needs of the employers.

Phase I – Describing an Effective Teacher

Phase I focused on understanding the preferred characteristics principals seek when interviewing potential hires. A list of graduates from the last three years who held teaching positions in the local metropolitan area was generated. This list was used to identify twelve principals who had hired multiple graduates in the last three years; four of the twelve principals attended a two-hour focus group session held at the university.

The focus group discussion began with two questions. First, the participants were asked to determine three qualities they look for when interviewing a prospective teacher; they were instructed to write each quality on separate post-it notes. Next, the participants were asked to think about an effective teacher in their respective buildings and to write on separate post-it notes the qualities that make this specific teacher effective.

After a review and short discussion of the COE Conceptual Framework (see Appendix A), the participants were asked to rank the six strands of the Conceptual Framework in order of importance as related to teacher effectiveness. On the walls were large poster sheets, each representing one of the six strands of the college's Conceptual Framework. After ranking the six strands, participants were asked to align each of their previously listed effectiveness qualities with a Conceptual Framework strand. Once completed, the principals discussed the qualities they had identified and the importance of each one, as well as their rationale for the quality-strand link. Some qualities were placed in multiple strands of the framework, which generated discussion to understand better the qualities, the strands of the Conceptual Framework, and the

overlap between the strands. After the discussion, participants were asked to re-examine their rankings of the six strands and were given the opportunity to modify the rankings if they so desired.

Phase II – Identifying Graduates that are Effective Teachers

Using the information from the principal focus group, the second phase of the study was designed to identify a group of 'effective' teachers who graduated from the program within the last three years. A survey was developed, using common language from the focus group, to capture principals' perceptions of the program graduates with regard to those strands consistently identified as most important during Phase I. Each question used language from the transcript of the principal focus group. For example, one item inquires about teachers 'going the extra mile.' The phrase 'going the extra mile' was a phrase used frequently during the focus group discussion about teachers who exhibited Professionalism.

Working with the COE program faculty and field placement office, the authors identified 29 principals of practicing teachers who are recent program graduates. Principals were asked to complete an online survey with the identified teachers in mind. Principals completed a separate survey for each of the teachers in their respective buildings. Thirteen principals responded to the online survey, providing information on nineteen teachers.

Phase III – Input from Teachers

The nineteen teachers were rated using their respective principal's feedback regarding Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence. The graduates who were identified as outstanding ($n = 9$) in the second phase of the study received an email request to provide feedback regarding their own effectiveness and what parts of their teacher preparation program assisted them in developing their effectiveness. Attempts to schedule a focus group failed due to conflicting commitments among the teachers. Instead, participants were sent a link to a website housing a questionnaire. Five teachers agreed to complete the survey; four followed through with the commitment.

The teacher survey focused on strands identified by principals as strongly associated with effectiveness, Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence. The goal was to understand how teachers perceived their development of these strands or qualities

in the program. First, the teachers defined the given strands/qualities and explained why the development of these qualities is important for effective teachers. In addition, teachers shared the manner in which they personally demonstrate these qualities as teachers. Finally, teachers specified how their teacher education program fostered the development of these qualities.

As with the administrators, the teachers were also asked to rank the six strands of the COE Conceptual Framework, with a ranking of one indicating that the strand is the most important as related to teacher effectiveness. Given that the data were collected from an online survey, the researchers were not able to ask participants to rank the strands pre- and post-discussion. Therefore, teachers ranked the strands in order of importance only once.

Results

Important Characteristics of Effective Teachers from Principals

When asked to rank in order of importance the six strands of the COE's Conceptual Framework, administrators were consistent in their top rankings. They indicated that Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence (EI) were the most important strands. Meanwhile, Content Knowledge, Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), Diversity, and Technology were asked to re-rank the six strands after the focus group discussion. Results of the rankings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Administrator Focus Group Pre- and Post-Discussion Rankings of the Six Strands of the Conceptual Framework

	Professionalism		E.I.	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
Participant				
A	2	2	4	1
B	2	1	1	2
C	3	4	2	2
D	4	2	1	1

The focus group discussion revealed that administrators felt that a variety of characteristics foster effective teaching: being a team player, prepared, de-

pendable, caring of students, collaborative, easy to talk to, and committed to all students' learning, as well as refusing to make excuses for a lack of student achievement. When examining the discussion related to the four lower ranked strands, it was noted that administrators did not indicate that the knowledge embedded within these four strands lacked importance. Rather, administrators were not as concerned with these qualities compared to the importance of Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence. For example, while administrators noted that it is important for teachers to "know [content] well enough [that] they understand how it fits together," they can take the time to learn higher content as they progress in their career. Administrators also indicated that new graduates have learned new, current best practices, which is why they are hired; this includes their proficiency with technology. They explained that teachers search for Internet resources as a regular aspect of teaching. This suggests that administrators are confident that new graduates from the program have knowledge related to these four strands, or that these areas can be developed as graduates begin teaching.

Professionalism. Principals' value of Professionalism was expressed in depth, reporting that teaching goes beyond imparting content knowledge via best practices. One administrator noted that previous expectations teachers have had for themselves were "... we taught the lesson... we assessed the kids... that's not it anymore." Principals discussed that a more professional view includes the attitude that one's job is not completed unless all students have learned. Teacher responsibility for students' lack of success was noted by such comments as "effective teachers hold themselves responsible; less effective teachers blame the parents, the community or the students."

In addition to representing a more expansive role of the teacher than traditionally perceived, Professionalism appears to include a challenge to the status quo. Administrators felt that new teachers need to recognize the additional demands of teaching in this age of accountability and utilize their newly acquired knowledge. They do not want new teachers to revert to more traditional, less effective practices that tend to be so common among more seasoned faculty. One principal noted the need for new teachers to "bring in their current knowledge...[even though] the older staff may challenge that...bring in new ideas without...stepping on toes and alienating people."

Principals noted that Professionalism extends

beyond interactions with colleagues and how teachers view their role in the classroom. Professionalism is about having a ‘with-it-ness’ about teaching. It is about having some seemingly natural understanding of how to be a teacher. The participants stated that Professionalism is about having “that gift that...teacher gift...[a] kind of intuitive, knowledge, understanding of what it is to be a teacher.” For one principal, all characteristics of effective teachers would fall within the realm of Professionalism.

Emotional Intelligence. Principals also identified and explained that Emotional Intelligence was highly important for effective teaching. They noted that they were not clear about how one “learns” Emotional Intelligence, but did not consider it to be similar to learning content knowledge, something that they can continue to expand. Emotional Intelligence was described as the “wow factor,” appearing to reflect a teacher’s ability to know, seemingly intuitively, how to respond to various situations that occur in the classroom and to take the initiative to respond effectively. Principals were emphatic that Emotional Intelligence is a basic requirement for any effective teacher; the ability to empathize when working with others, especially children, is essential.

Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence Input from Teachers

Definitions. Teachers described both Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence different than the principals. For instance, one teacher indicated that Professionalism represented a teacher’s ability to provide constructive criticism. Meanwhile, others contended that Professionalism focused on being a positive role model for students and treating them fairly.

A common characteristic of Emotional Intelligence identified by teachers included empathy and the ability to understand the perspective of others, while simultaneously fostering self-responsibility in students. Other, unrelated responses explained Emotional Intelligence as reflecting “mental stability,” and the “emotions that affect our everyday living.” As with Professionalism, none of the teachers indicated any intuitive nature related to Emotional Intelligence.

Teachers’ Ranking of COE Conceptual Framework Strands

When asked to rank in order of importance the six strands of the COE’s Conceptual Framework, teachers

were more varied in their rankings when compared to administrators. However, when specifically examining rankings related to Emotional Intelligence, analyses revealed that participants’ views mirrored that of administrators. The same could not be said for Professionalism. Results of the rankings by teachers are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Teachers’ Rankings of the Six Strands of the Conceptual Framework

Participant	Professionalism	Emotional Intelligence
A	5	1
B	4	2
C	1	2
D	2	1

Program Components that Foster Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence

Teachers were asked to consider those courses, assignments, and field experiences while in the COE’s teacher education preparation program. The purpose was to determine what aspects of their training helped to develop and/or foster the traits related to Professionalism and/or Emotional Intelligence. The results indicated that teachers felt their field experiences were most closely tied with these two strands of the Conceptual Framework. However, simultaneously, they indicated that these experiences were not sufficient to develop fully qualities related to Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence.

One teacher indicated that Professionalism focused on effective communication. While she identified this as an important part of Professionalism, her recognition of this resulted from a negative experience in the field. During her field experience there was a lack of clear and consistent communication between the university and the K-12 school. This negative experience helped her to see the importance of communication in Professionalism.

Another participant indicated that Professionalism was about having pride in one’s work. Yet, when she addressed how the program helped her develop the attributes of Professionalism, her focus was on experience, thus noting “ [what] Professionalism means in the world of teaching is to give the interns the experience needed during observations and

student teaching.” This response does not necessarily focus on any particular course in the program, but rather reflects experiences in a K-12 classroom; experiences that are not in the control of the program. In line with this was the belief that Professionalism is about knowing one’s “responsibilities and rights.” Again, the focus of this development was in the field, as the teacher was able to attend parent conferences, IEP meetings, and attend professional development workshops.

Finally, Professionalism was viewed as the way teachers treat others, particularly the parents of their students and the students themselves. It was contended that the program did not prepare teacher candidates for working with parents, as they would be required to do in their career. For instance, one participant noted “...maybe if we were required to give out a parent letter or some sort of meet and greet, it would have required us to be more prepared when it happened in our careers...”

Teachers indicated that the relationship between the development of empathy and their teacher education experience was impacted by their field experience, but also by their coursework: a notion not mentioned in the development of their Professionalism. Field experiences offered them opportunities to be placed in situations that were rather unfamiliar to them. This allowed them to develop a level of compassion that might not have otherwise developed. The role of experience was further stressed by the comment “...[the program] helped me understand the meaning of Emotional Intelligence, but my job experience has helped me develop it.”

Teachers credited specific coursework and assignments for their development of Emotional Intelligence. It was noted that assignments involving extended group work as well as class discussions assisted them in “...develop[ing] social skills...building successful working relationships which helped prepare me for teaming and the middle school environment.” Furthermore, it was noted that assignments requiring work with one specific student also fostered Emotional Intelligence. Teachers’ beliefs revealed their view that Emotional Intelligence is a characteristic that can be fostered by particular experiences and individuals, unlike Professionalism.

Discussion

Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence Rankings

The primary findings of this study revealed that both Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence were ranked by school administrators as being more important than Content Knowledge, Pedagogical Content Knowledge, Diversity, and Technology, with respect to effective teaching. The order of rankings was surprising to the researchers given the focus of both Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Content Knowledge within the field of education. For instance, before licensure, pre-service teachers are required to take tests such as the PRAXIS, reflecting their knowledge of content as well as pedagogy. Furthermore, national policies related to No Child Left Behind and Highly Qualified status revolve around teachers’ content knowledge. In a similar vein, NCATE accreditation requires a Conceptual Framework strand on both Diversity and Technology in all programs for teacher preparation. Like Content Knowledge and Pedagogical Content Knowledge, Diversity and Technology are embedded within the coursework for teacher preparation. Thus, it is possible that principals in the current study felt that they could teach new teachers everything except qualities reflecting Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence because graduates are well trained in the remaining four strands of the COE Conceptual Framework.

Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence Within the Program

In this study, teachers had difficulty identifying specific program experiences that helped them develop characteristics related to Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence. One reason for this might be that teachers’ explanation of Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence did not align with the characteristics as defined within the COE’s Conceptual Framework. The difficulty of identifying the actual characteristics as well as how they were fostered by the program may be a result of a lack of understanding of Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence. It is possible that elements of Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence were embedded within each course in a manner that was not taught explicitly, but modeled through such activities as interactions with students and instructional planning.

While they had difficulty identifying experiences within program courses, teachers surveyed were able to cite examples from their field experiences during which these characteristics were developed, indicating those surveyed viewed field experiences as

disconnected from their coursework experiences. Considering these perceptions, faculty may need to do more to connect field experiences and coursework, especially when it comes to developing Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence. Additionally, faculty may need to be more explicit about teaching and assessing students within these two strands. Given the characteristics underlying Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence, concerns arising from these two strands are often uncomfortable to address. However, principals in our study indicated these qualities are important to being an effective teacher. Therefore, faculty must take more purposeful steps beyond just modeling to foster the development of these characteristics within graduates.

Innate Qualities or Teachable Characteristics?

While some teacher candidates will undoubtedly enter programs with more Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence than others, faculty must work to develop these qualities explicitly in our teacher candidates, in ways that are focused for a classroom setting. Principals in this study agreed that these qualities seem to be innate “gifts”, which aligns with current literature (Gladwell, 2008). The notion of ‘teacher gift’ from the principals refers to a combination of characteristics; in fact, it is the combination of Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence that makes effective teaching seem natural, like a gift.

Likewise, experienced teachers and administrators must recognize their role in developing these qualities within novice teachers. A teacher’s professional development does not stop at the time of licensure and employment. She continues to grow professionally as she gains experience. The implication that teachers can be effective if they have Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence alone supports that these are very important characteristics. Such traits fall under the personal resources identified by Kennedy (2008). Qualities such as “going above and beyond”, “doing whatever it takes”, and treating others professionally are more difficult to foster in novice teachers than is the provision of instructional ideas or content knowledge. However, if Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence are truly the foundation of being an effective teacher, we must be purposeful in the development and fostering of these characteristics within our programs. Perhaps it may be prudent to confer with counselor education experts to assist in this endeavor.

Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

In this pilot study, principals emphasized that effective teachers never give up on student learning; they do not accept any excuses for a lack of students’ academic growth. The advent of value-added or other growth scores for teachers will provide additional data for future effectiveness studies. Collecting value-added scores from the teachers who are rated as outstanding in Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence would add a quantitative measure of teacher effectiveness to the qualitative data collected in this study.

The teachers surveyed in the present study were identified by their principals as being “effective” teachers. A possible follow up study would be to interview teachers who are not rated as being “effective” by their principals. These teachers may have a different perspective on the COE program; they may better be able to identify areas within the program in which components of the Conceptual Framework, including Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence, were taught. This would give the COE an opportunity to better identify areas in its programs that could be improved. Of benefit would also be to increase future sample sizes to promote the generalization of results.

Conclusions

The implementation of this study was considered a pilot project to determine if the research design could be useful for evaluating other programs within a COE. The design involved collecting data from principals who hired graduates of this program and collecting data from a specific group of graduates after they had taught for 3-5 years. The COE’s Conceptual Framework and the principals’ notions of ‘effective’ teachers were used as the framework for data collection and analysis. Though the ability to generalize the results is limited, the research design provided valuable feedback about the effectiveness of a program. Incorporating the suggestions in the limitations and future research discussion above will improve the quality of the data collection using this design. Teacher education programs will be able to use the design to collect qualitative data about the effectiveness of their programs. This design is not intended for programs that provide enrichment or new certification for existing professionals.

Within the research design, the research goal was to qualify effectiveness of teachers of a teacher

education program using more than statistical summaries of teachers licensed or teachers hired. Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence were identified as qualities that effective teachers must have. Graduates and principals provided different descriptions of both. The differences between the principals' and teachers' understanding of Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence indicate that the COE (or at least this one program) should explicitly focus efforts on helping pre-service teachers, K-12 teachers and administrators, and university faculty to develop common understandings of Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence. Furthermore, the program should focus on explicit ways to develop these qualities within its students. If these strands are most important, as indicated by principals, it is imperative that candidates complete the program with the ability to demonstrate both qualities and to be aware of experiences that engendered these qualities.

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Appendix A

Conceptual Framework of COE Being Studied

The COE's Conceptual Framework consists of six interweaving strands that articulate the shared vision and alignment with state, learned society, professional, and the NCATE 2000 standards for preparing teacher candidates and candidates for professional school roles:

1. Content Knowledge
2. Pedagogical Content Knowledge
3. Diversity
4. Technology
5. Professionalism
6. Emotional Intelligence

These six strands provide consistency for embedding the framework across the curriculum and through all programs of study in the COE. In addition, assessments identified for the monitoring of candidate progress are aligned with the Conceptual Framework. Since the Conceptual Framework is derived from state, learned society, professional and NCATE 2000 standards, graduates of the programs within the COE should meet schools' needs for classroom teachers. Figure 1 depicts the COE Conceptual Framework.

Ohio Association of Teacher Educators

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The Ohio Association of Teacher Educators (OATE) is a state unit/affiliate of the Association of Teacher Educators (founded in 1920) and is also a member of the Ohio Confederation of Teacher Education Organizations (OCTEO). OATE promotes quality teacher education programs for initial preparation, induction, and continuing professional development opportunities for P-12 school districts, agency-based, and college/university teacher educators.

Prefix (Circle): Dr. Mr. Ms. Mrs. **Name:** _____

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Please include address (even if renewing) as a way to correct any possible errors in the database on a yearly basis.

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<p>STATUS: ___ Renewal ___ New Membership</p> <p>CATEGORY and DUES: ___ Regular (\$40) ___ Retired (\$10) ___ Student (\$5–full-time undergraduate or graduate) ___ Agency Subscription (\$25) (i.e. library) ___ Complimentary Member</p> <p>Make check payable to: OATE; Dues for OATE are tax deductible.</p> <p>Are you a member of ATE? ___ Yes ___ No</p>	<p>Employment: ___ (ES) Elem./Sec. School ___ (HE) Higher Education ___ (OD) Ohio Dept. of Ed. ___ (PS) Pre-service/UG ___ (G) Graduate Student</p>	<p>Professional Area: ___ (T) Teacher in E/S School ___ (P) Professor in HE ___ (A) Administrator ___ (D) Director of ST/Intern ___ (U) Undergraduate student ___ (G) Graduate student ___ (L) Library</p>
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Please indicate your AREA(S) OF INTEREST IN SERVING:
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RETURN TO:
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Membership Benefits

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 - 2) OATE Newsletter.
 - 3) Fall and Spring Professional Conferences with OCTEO.
 - 4) Ohio Field Directors Forum.
 - 5) Annual Partnership/Connections Forum/Summit (Representatives from Higher Ed. and P-12 Schools).
 - 6) Annual Recognition Awards for Outstanding Cooperating Teacher, University Supervisor, Student Teacher, Field Experience Program, Mentor, and Service– A statewide winner and regional winners for each category (must be an OATE member to nominate).
 - 7) Membership Card and Lapel Pin.
- AND....**
- 8) Opportunities for dialogue and collective action on current issues affecting teacher education.
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 - 10) Dissemination of current information through OATE journals, newsletters, conferences, etc.
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www.OhioTeacherEd.org

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ATE Annual Meeting
www.ATE1.org
February 13-17, 2010
Chicago Hilton and Towers
Chicago, Illinois

OCTEO/OATE Spring Conference
Innovations in Teacher Education
www.OhioTeacherEd.org

April 14-16, 2010
The Crowne Plaza Dublin Hotel
Columbus, OH

Visit the Ohio Confederation of Teacher Education Organizations Website (www.ohioteachered.org) for details.

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Cover page: Include the following information on a separate sheet attached to the manuscript: title of the article; date of submission; author’s name, author’s terminal degree; mailing address, e-mail address, business and home phone numbers, institutional affiliation; and short biographical sketch, including background and areas of specialization.

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