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Contents

A Message from the Editors...

The Spring 2012 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 observation skills and tools, service for individuals with Asperger's Disorder, WebQuest peer assessment activities, assets-based service learning in cultural diversity classes, and the phenomenological *event* as the motivational stimulus for reflection.

The first article by Young and Bender-Slack examined how Teacher educators are responsible for scaffolding preservice teachers in the use of the appropriate and effective observational skills and tools. This three-year study describes how preservice teachers engaged in field experience observations to improve learning about teaching. The implications for teacher preparation are discussed.

The second article by Welton, Vakil ,Boit, Kline explored the challenges faced by pre-service early childhood teachers working with families and children with Asperger's Disorder in inclusive early childhood programs. Recently, Asperger's Disorder has become increasingly identified and recognized as a constellation of academic and social differences requiring both understanding and unique, coordinated intervention strategies in order to facilitate optimum success in the educational setting. This article is designed for pre-service teachers to understand and support the improvement of services for individuals with Asperger's Disorder in inclusive educational setting.

The next article by Li presented a study that integrated peer assessment activities to facilitate pre-service teachers' WebQuest development. Pre-service teachers created their initial WebQuest versions, and then served as assessors and assessees to rate and comment upon each others' projects. Afterwards, they revised their own WebQuests based on peer comments. Findings of the single group pre- and post study suggested that the quality of WebQuest projects was significantly improved after pre-service teachers participated in peer assessment activities.

The fourth article by Vaughan details the effects of integrating assets-based service-learning as a component of a cultural diversity class to help preservice teachers to be more culturally responsive. Prior to beginning the service, students were asked to select a marginalized cultural group that they would like to work with, write a two- page paper reflecting on their own identities and experiences with diversity, as well as the various prejudices and misconceptions they may have about the group. A pretest 18 item Likert-type scale consisting of two categories was completed prior to the experience, and a posttest 27 item Likert-type scale consisting of 3 categories with additional 9 items at the conclusion. A second paper was also written reflecting on their experiences and the contents of the first paper. Quantitative and qualitative data indicated overall positive beliefs and attitudes toward service experiences.

The final article by Wlodarsky and Walters explains the importance of an authentic, phenomenological *event* as the motivational stimulus for reflection leading to change in professional practice cannot be overstated. This is the conceptual bedrock that allows a discussion of learning in or through practice, as opposed to learning about practice in a depersonalized manner. Certainly the more complex view of the precipitating event suggests that later considerations—the disposition of the individual, the socio-cultural and political environment, and the personal life of the individual—are ever more complex and more deeply connected to the outcomes than our model and the models of others suggest.

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

Sarah Cecire
Virginia McCormack
Spring, 2012

Looking to Learn: Improving Observations in the Classroom

Teresa Young, Ed.D.

Delane Bender-Slack, Ed.D.

Field experiences are typically required in most teacher education programs. In fact, throughout their teacher preparation, preservice teachers spend a large number of hours in observation, gaining experience and learning to teach. "Although Dewey argued that first-hand experience in schools is critical to the education of teachers, he also argued that not all experience is necessarily beneficial" (Gallego, 2001, p. 312). Moreover, the time preservice teachers spend with practicing teachers in the field has increased dramatically, and preservice teachers believe that time in the field equates to learning (Bullough, 2008). Preservice teachers are typically placed with mentor teachers in authentic K-12 classrooms with the goal of observing teaching. In recent methods courses, however, preservice teachers indicated that after engaging in hours of classroom observations "nothing happened." This was problematic because preservice teachers were placed in authentic classrooms so that they would have the opportunity to observe classroom teachers modeling effective teaching. Observing teaching and learning in classrooms is essential to the professional development of preservice teachers at all grade levels and disciplines. In fact, the K-12 field experiences can provide rich opportunities to learn about teaching not available in the college classroom.

Readers interested in improving their preservice teachers' field experiences will find practical application of an observational process that includes scaffolding and the use of unguided and guided tools. First, we situate the process and tools within a theoretical context that describes scaffolding of observation and types of observations. Second, is a brief description of the data. Next, we explicate the three essential components of the observational process. Last, we provide insights for improving the effectiveness of preservice teachers' field observations.

Theoretical Context: Scaffolding Observation

Learning occurs via multiple pathways, but for the sake of this research, the focus was solely on observation. Preservice teachers hope to observe effective teaching, and simplify it into basic rules of effective teaching so that they can produce similarly successful results. "Relevant features can be extracted by repeated exposure to specific exemplars which share the common property. *Exposure alone, however, does not ensure that the relevant features will be noticed* [our emphasis]" (Bandura, 1986, p. 100). In fact, without guidance, preservice teachers find it challenging to recognize what matters in teaching and to expand on what they see (Berliner, 2001; Santagata & Angelici, 2010; Santagata, Zannoni, & Stigler, 2007; Star & Strickland, 2008; van Es & Sherin, 2002). Engaging in classroom observations is critical to teacher education because most human behavior is learned by observation through modeling (Bandura, 1986). Consequently, observation plays a key role in learning to teach. An important goal of field experiences is that preservice teachers acquire knowledge of teaching by observing classroom teachers.

Placing preservice teachers in contemporary classrooms with authentic learners and teachers positions them as active participants in existing cultural communities. Scaffolding preservice teachers to develop as professionals who

engage in effective lifelong learning demands more than showing and telling. In fact, Hammnerness et al., (2005) identified three major principles of learning: to develop competence in an area of inquiry, to identify preconceptions that inform what they learn, and to adapt a "metacognitive" approach to instruction that can help teachers learn to take control of their own learning.

A review of the literature revealed that observation experiences can, in fact, enrich and refine the thinking and conceptual understanding of preservice teachers with regard to teaching and learning (Cherubini, 2009; Chiang, 2008; Loyens & Gibels, 2008; Parkison, 2009). Moreover, the quality of the time spent in observations as well as the skills, expertise, and feedback of the professionals in the field help to determine the value of the experience (O'Brian, Stoner, Appel, & House, 2007; Shantz & Ward, 2000; Tang & Chow, 2007; Whitney, Golez, Nagel, & Nieto, 2002). However, preservice teachers are often "armed with extensive personal observations of teaching with little or no access to teachers' rationales for acting as they did," resulting in a common and simplistic view of teaching as telling (Martin & Russell, 2009, p. 320).

There are two distinct methods of observing teaching by preservice teachers: guided and unguided (Anderson, Barksdale, & Hite, 2005). In conducting unguided observations, preservice teachers are given only a general area of foci, such as focusing on a literacy event, language arts instruction, or the use of language in the classroom. According to Bell, Barrett, & Allison (1985), unguided observation requires observers to organize their thoughts to individually-devised frameworks rather than a given and possibly limiting structure. Moreover, preservice teachers who engage in unguided observations view the classroom through multiple lenses, acquiring a greater understanding of teaching in an authentic classroom (Anderson, et al., 2005).

In contrast, guided observations allow preservice teachers to recognize and concentrate on one component of teaching or learning. For example, pre-identified types of teacher and student behaviors such as gender of student response or types of texts used are provided before the observation, so that preservice teachers have a clear focus. The benefits and limitations of both the unguided and guided approach are explained as follows:

Guided observations allow preservice teachers to identify and focus on a single aspect of teaching or learning. Yet, in viewing classrooms through a single lens, preservice teachers Preservice teachers in unguided observation settings see the classroom through many lenses and get valid understandings of the complexities and realities of teaching. Yet the views from multiple lenses may not provide solid data that could result in improved teaching practices (Anderson, et al., 2005, p. 101).

There appears to be a void in the literature blending guided and unguided methods of observation, and therefore our study addressed this gap.

Data: Focus on the Tools

This three-year study is the synthesis of educational research and practice, with a clear goal of informing our teacher education program. Therefore, data were collected from 79 preservice teachers in semester-long Language Arts methods courses, in early childhood and middle childhood. Throughout weekly field experiences, preservice teachers took observational field notes during one-hour of unguided observation in classroom language arts instruction. Using the notes as a foundation, preservice teachers then chose one significant event to further explore on a theory-to-practice tool (see Appendix). This tool directed preservice teachers to choose their own experiences interacting and teaching, observations of students interacting with each other, or teaching episodes facilitated by the classroom teacher. Moreover, the tool required preservice teachers to provide a narrative description, explain their role, make a connection to course texts, reflect, and recommend.

The data underwent content analysis, which is studying "a set of objects (i.e., cultural artifacts) or events systematically by counting them or interpreting the themes contained in them (Reinharz, 1992, p. 146). The cultural artifacts of interest in this study were the preservice teachers' artifacts, specifically their field notes and theory-to-practice tools, which were triangulated with the course syllabus/calendar as well as researcher journals.

During year one, the data from the observation notes and theory-to-practice tools were analyzed using

analytic induction, a process in which initial coding categories are identified from patterns within the transcripts (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). In this case, qualitative grounded theory coding meant creating the codes as the data were studied (Charmaz, 2004). Data were coded into literacy events such as instructional strategies (mini lessons, writing workshop, etc.) and classroom organization, further categorized into classroom management, transitions, and physical environment. Due to our interest in the language arts, in years two and three, data from the observation notes and theory-to-practice tools were also deductively analyzed using the modes of language. Deductive analysis is a process in which initial coding categories were identified from an established framework (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

The Observational Process: The Trifecta Concept

Our interest was how to improve the observation component in preservice teachers' field experience. As previously stated, preservice teachers remarked that they did not always know what to observe and record or what was important about their observation when in the classrooms. Consequently, our purpose was twofold: scaffolding our preservice teachers in recording observational field notes, and implementing a two-step process of observation we term a blended approach. The focus was to assist the preservice teachers in using observation to help them make sense of the classroom experience and to use this knowledge to learn about and impact their teaching.

Scaffolding Observation Skills

During year one, preservice teachers practiced using unguided observations by visiting a public space (student union, coffee shop, dormitory, etc.) or a K-3 classroom and practiced taking field notes. In doing so, preservice teachers had to engage in preparing the mind by learning how to focus because observation involves enormous energy and concentration (Patton, 2002). Preservice teachers' practice observations were followed with a discussion of the challenges and benefits when observing in a complex space as well as the purpose of developing the skills to be a keen observer. Both early and middle childhood preservice teachers shared their challenges such as maintaining extended concentration and viewing multiple people and events, making it difficult to capture all that was occurring. The discussion also provided an opportunity for preservice teachers to reflect on their own observations as well as listen to comments from other preservice teachers.

In the second and third year of the study, prior to beginning their field placement, the early and middle childhood preservice teachers were presented with information together about using observation in the classroom and implementing the two-step observational process, utilizing the unguided and guided approaches. They completed two simulated observational experiences. The preservice teachers watched video clips of two separate classrooms. In the first example, they watched a kindergarten student writing a short story. Preservice teachers were asked to write down what they observed; however, we quickly noticed that they were not writing, and therefore, prompted them to write while they were observing the video clip. The preservice teachers then discussed their observational notes with each other and compared their findings. Preservice teachers commented on how difficult it was to capture the entire event and how similar and different their notes were although they were watching the same scenario.

The preservice teachers then recorded their observations while watching another video clip. This clip focused on a teacher engaged in a writing workshop minilesson on revision. They compared their field notes again, noting how difficult capturing the experience was and how their observational notes were similar and different. To assist the preservice teachers in writing observational field notes, we discussed the importance of recording just the descriptive details while observing rather than including their interpretations. The preservice teachers asked questions. For example, they were confused about the differences between objective observation and interpretation because they naturally interpreted during their note taking. We provided the example of a little boy putting his head down on his desk. They assumed the boy was bored. We then brainstormed other reasons for his behavior such as illness, vision problems, or lack of supplies. They were scaffolded in their understanding of recording their observations separately from their interpretations. We discussed the importance of observing for detail, looking conscientiously and closely for the smaller parts that make up the whole experience, and then recording these observations as field notes. The preservice teachers were encouraged to be keen observers and record details during their time in the field.

The Blended Process

Essential to scaffolding was what we termed a *blended process* for the observational requirements during the preservice teachers' field experiences (Author & Author, 2010). By the blended process we meant that preservice teachers would be scaffolded to use tools that supported first unguided and then guided observations in order to reap the benefits and mitigate the limitations of both approaches. For example, only *after* using unguided observations did we require preservice teachers to use a guided tool, called a theory-to-practice tool, to mediate these observations. This tool would direct preservice teachers to choose their experience interacting and teaching, observations of students interacting with each other, or teaching episodes facilitated by the classroom teacher. Moreover, the tool, which has evolved over the three years of the study, required preservice teachers to provide a narrative description, reflect/interpret the event, make a connection to theory, provide recommendations, consider how this would impact their teaching, and state the reason for their area of focus.

Preservice teachers of all grade levels and disciplines can learn to become more engaged in the observation process and reap the benefits of their time spent in contemporary classrooms, however, observation is not an innate skill. "The fact that a person is equipped with functioning senses does not make that person a skilled observer" (Patton, 2002, p. 260). Teacher educators must spend time scaffolding preservice teachers to engage in effective observation, analysis, and reflection. The blended approach was effective in helping preservice teachers make the connection between observation and learning to teach. With proper education and practice, preservice teachers can use tools common to ethnographers in the field and improve their observation skills, making them more accurate, authentic, and meaningful.

Through our two-step observational blended process of unguided observations with the guided theory-to-practice tool mediating the observations, preservice teachers' benefited from their field experiences and extended their learning about teaching practices. Field experiences hold great potential for observation,s and we wanted to maximize this opportunity. Rather than simply recording and accepting what they observed, they were encouraged to find and test meaning and "to think – about the ill-defined problems of teaching in ways that enable productive problem solution" (Bullough, 2008, p. 6). Due to utilizing the two-step blended observational process, preservice teachers were able to focus on teaching practices as well as reflect on the effectiveness of those practices.

The Use of the Tools

In order to educate preservice teachers about the relationship between observation and learning to teach, we first scaffolded observational skills, taught the blended process, and then provided them with appropriate tools to utilize within the environment of the classroom. The tools to which we are referring are the classroom field notes and the theory-to-practice tool. During their teacher education program, preservice teachers can learn to be more effective in using observational tools in the field experience. In fact, Patton (2002) lists the following essentials for observers:

- learning to pay attention, see what there is to see, and hear what there is to hear
- practice in writing descriptively
- acquiring discipline in recording field notes
- knowing how to separate detail from trivia to achieve the former without being overwhelmed by the latter
- using rigorous methods to validate and triangulate observations
- reporting the strengths and limitations of one's own perspective, which requires both self-knowledge and self-disclosure (pp. 260-261)

The process of using both tools can meet the needs for preparing observers. Although we believe that developing preservice teachers' observational skills is crucial to learning to teach, those skills are invaluable once in the field. Being a keen observer helps them make sense of their present classroom experience, which is a goal of teacher education programs.

Looking to Learn: Insights on Observations

In teacher education programs, preservice teachers of all grade levels and disciplines spend time observing teaching and learning in classrooms with the goals of understanding the complexities of that space and impacting their own behavior. The benefits of observation include acquiring a better understanding of the content, being open and discovery-oriented, having the opportunity to see things that routinely escape awareness of those in the setting, and drawing on personal knowledge when reflecting on the observation (Patton, 2002). Observations can be engaging and

intellectually stimulating as they produce learning about teaching, schools, ourselves, and others.

> When you see your primary role as a teacher as closely observing children and communicating what you see, you find yourself surrounded by learning encounters. Becoming a keen observer is a way to learn child development, to find curriculum ideas, and meet requirements for assessing outcomes" (Curtis & Carter, 2000, pp. xvi-xvii).

We believe there is a need for scaffolding preservice teachers in the use of the available observational tools, specifically observational field notes and the subsequent theory-to-practice tool, as a foundation for effective teaching. We want to emphasize that *all* three components -scaffolding of observational skills, the understanding of the blended process, and using the tools - are essential to improving observations. We caution against implementing only a portion of the recommended observational process. For example, isolating the theory-to practice tool as the only way to mediate observation will not have the desired outcome. It is using all three components in tandem that reap the benefits of improving observation.

Preservice teachers hope to view effective teaching, and simplify it into basic rules of effective teaching so that they can produce similarly successful results. That requires a process that involves observation, interpretation, and reflection. Teacher educators are responsible for scaffolding preservice teachers in the use of the appropriate and effective observational skills and tools. Honing effective observational skills is critical to impacting teaching because preservice teachers spend an inordinate amount of time observing teaching and learning in classrooms. We began the three-year study knowing that exposure to the contemporary classrooms was not enough. Consequently, we blended the observational approaches so that preservice teachers would use both guided and unguided so that they could better understand the complexities of the classroom and impact their future teaching. Therefore, by first scaffolding their observational skills, providing an understanding of the blended process, and directing the use of specific tools, preservice teachers were able to focus on improving their observations. We plan to continue to refine the three components of the observational process to promote growth and reflection in preservice teachers' field experiences in order to improve their observations.

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Appendix
Theory-to-Practice Tool

The theory-to-practice log entry will serve as a tool for you to record and reflect on your observations. Your entries may pertain to (1) your own experiences interacting and teaching, (2) observations of students interacting with each other or (3) teaching episodes facilitated by the classroom teacher. Be sure to include an APA style works cited.

Date _____ **Name** _____ **Role**_____

Narrative Description:
Reflection/Interpretation:
Connection to Theory:
Recommendation (s):

How will this observation impact your teaching?

Why did you select this area of focus?

Addressing the Needs of Young Children with Asperger's Disorder in the Inclusive Classroom

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Understanding Asperger's Disorder and Educational Implications

The legal mandate IDEA (2004) has held that all children must be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Interpretation of LRE has changed over the past 25 years, with the regular educational setting being the norm rather than the exception for children with disabilities and special education needs. In addition, parents have become increasingly more aware of their rights and have emerged as strong advocates for their children. These conditions contributed to an increase in the ability of all children to access the general education curriculum (Bauer & Shea, 2003) and receive services among their typically developing peers in inclusive educational settings.

While access to the regular education curriculum has received a lot of attention, the individual's unique academic needs, team communication and process becomes challenging when determining the most appropriate course of action for social and behavioral concerns. The process is further challenged when the individual with disabilities presents with a great deal of scatter within his or her own ability profile. In other words, some skills may be within or above average range while others are significantly below what is expected. It is possible that this discrepancy in performance levels is due to a lack of skill with an understanding of the characteristics of the disorder and difficulty with completion of functional behavioral assessments; resulting in an increased subjective analysis of behavioral problems and individual interpretation (Kaufman, 1997). It is also possible that team inter-action is at risk due to the increased stress levels that result from behavioral or social challenges. Stress can often be found in families and educators and also impact the children /youth themselves (Lecavalier, Leone, & Wiltz, 2006). Brooks (1991), states that professionals often respond with blaming and anger when they should be communicating nurturing and caring. The tendency toward blame may be the result of the frustrations felt by team members who are committed to improvement, but are unaware of the methods necessary to achieve their goals.

Cooperation is sometimes hard to come by when team challenges arise. Epstein (1995) stated that most parents care about the students, want them to succeed and want to work with schools and communities as partners in their children's education. In addition, it is stated that while most teachers and administrators want to collaborate and include students, they may not know how to build positive relationships. Epstein identifies a "rhetoric rut" in which educators talk about partnerships but never actually put those statements into action. The development of productive and cooperative relationships between all stakeholders would serve to ease the tensions of both parents and educators thereby resulting in better services for children with Asperger's Disorder.

School personnel may be in a unique position to help parents alleviate their stressors and work toward positive growth. Variables such as constructive and clear communication are particularly important. Thomas, Correa and Morsink, (2005), suggest that school personnel are primarily responsible for initiating and maintaining positive

collaboration between family and educators. The manner in which teams perceive and communicate their concerns is essential for effective problem solving and alleviation of stress. While progress has been made and strategies have been developed to increase empathy and sensitivity (Fish, 1990; Margolin & Brannigan, 1990), parents continue to report significantly negative and difficult experiences in the educational process.

Helping the Team through the Understanding of Asperger's Disorder

Qualitative Language Impairments

Among the characteristics associated with Asperger's Disorder are qualitative impairments in language and restricted, repetitive or stereotyped patterns of behavior or interests (Smith, 2010). It must be noted that while there are qualitative differences in language most of these are in the form of expressive and receptive pragmatic skills. McDevitt & Ormrod (2007) define receptive language as the ability to understand what one hears and reads; and expressive language as the ability to communicate effectively either orally or in writing. They further define pragmatic skills to include verbal and non-verbal strategies for communicating effectively with others including strategies for initiating conversations, changing the subject, telling stories and arguing persuasively. Language development does not appear to be impacted (Smith, 2010); therefore, the individual develops expressive and receptive language skills such as vocabulary within an expected range. Areas of weakness are demonstrated in those language skills which are necessary for effective social skills, conversation and the more abstract qualities of language such as humor.

Because there is no delay with vocabulary skills, it is sometimes difficult for educators to understand the difficulties individuals with Asperger's Disorder encounter in their day to day social and educational environments. Receptively, the individual may lack the ability to understand and therefore, predict outcomes and consequences of certain behaviors (Griffin, Griffin, Fitch, Albera,& Gingras, 2006) . For example, the person may make impulsive and socially inappropriate comments due to a lack of recognition that these comments may be offensive. In addition, due to their relatively restrictive interests, the individual may lack conversational topics that would be age appropriate or perseverate on topics not of interest to others. It is possible that this then becomes a self sus-

taining cycle. Consequently, the characteristics of Asperger's Disorder result in social isolation which then diminishes opportunities to learn more socially appropriate behaviors and skills. Prosody is also frequently evident in the speech of individuals demonstrating Asperger's Disorder. Specifically, speech quality may be relatively flat and lack modulation, which tends to make it difficult for individuals with Asperger's Disorder to interact socially with peers (Rao, Beidel, & Murray, 2008).

Language is often mistakenly considered to only imply the use of word knowledge. From an objective standpoint, children must master the four basic components of the language. According to McDevitt & Ormond (2007), they must master phonology which requires that they know how words sound and are able to produce them. They must master semantics; which is concerned with the meaning of words. Children must have a good command of syntax, which requires that children know how words can be combined to form understandable phrases and sentences and they must master the pragmatics of language, which refers to the ability to use social conventions and linguistic strategies that enable effective communication with others. While this may also be an area of difficulty for children with Asperger's Disorder the more abstract and nonverbal aspects of language reasoning are more often impaired. Therefore, understanding and using appropriate body language can also be impacted. While it is reasonable that a speech and language therapist develop goals and objectives for pragmatics in collaboration with teachers, parents and other professionals, all need to understand the role and function pragmatics play in communication, and therefore should embed these goals in interactions throughout the day.

Qualitative Social Impairments

Children vary considerably in their social skills (strategies used to effectively interact with others) competence. Some children know the right things to say in conversations, some are less skilled and are more prone to offending in social situations, while others; whose unskilled strategies make them so anxious in social situations that they keep to themselves. For young children, these social skills affect the number and quality of their friendships as well as their overall adjustment at school (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2007). During play activities, social relationships are easily observable among children two to six years old. Toddlers and older preschoolers are apt to exhibit dif-

ferent behavior characteristics and most children have been observed to be increasingly interactive and cooperative in play activities Social skills and behavior are both areas of significant concern and misunderstanding for children with disabilities and especially children with Asperger's Disorder (Smith, 2010). Teachers sometimes believe that they must focus only on academics. They must recognize that teaching occurs at all times in the school setting and that some children acquire social skills through incidental learning, children with Asperger's Disorder rely on intentional instruction for the acquisition and development of social skills. This has been further reinforced by the perception of mandates expressed by No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2000). In drafting the law, social skills were not considered an appropriate part of the IEP nor within the teacher's role and function. Appropriate consideration was no given to understanding the difficulty individuals would have with incidental learning and social modeling that is characteristic of children with Asperger's. The law reflects an expectation that the physical placement of the child in a regular education classroom, where the child could observe appropriate behavior would, by itself, lead to social and behavioral improvements.

Qualitative differences in receptive and expressive language are characteristic of individuals with Asperger's Disorder. It is imperative that teachers understand how receptive or expressive language impairments might impact social behavior. Specifically, verbal lectures, verbal redirection or admonishment (Smith, 2010) may have little or no impact on misbehavior since children with Asperger's do not respond well to direct verbal interactions. Teachers often are under the misconception that these children will process and remember admonitions and that verbal lectures will lead to behavioral improvement. They may also believe that the child's difficulty with remembering auditory/verbal directions is volitional noncompliance and a choice that is made by the child with this disorder. Because of this difficulty, those verbal interactions involved in classroom or school disciplinary procedures may be especially difficult, ineffective and even counterproductive.

There is current evidence that some individual's with Asperger's Disorder go on to engage in criminal behavior. Specifically, they may offend because of their obsessive interests such as stealing trains or electronics, because they are angry at others for treating them badly or because they are coerced or victim-

ized by others. In addition, their unusual affect may result in those charged with assisting them or evaluating the criminal behavior having significant difficulty (London,2009) .While this reference refers to adult behavior the implications for early childhood settings is clear.

Most children with Asperger's Disorder tend to have difficulty interacting with peers. Misunderstanding, the unusual skill patterns in children with Asperger's Disorder are often an area of difficulty in team meetings and can result in behavior problems. The structure of rules and the predictability of routines is very appealing to individuals with Asperger's Disorder (Smith, 2010). Nonetheless, social behaviors and interactions rely upon inferential and abstraction skills. Effective teachers   are aware of the immense difficulty with abstract reasoning and intolerance of ambiguity characteristic of children with Asperger's Disorder.

Socially, the individual with Asperger's Disorder often focuses upon a specific area of interest, accumulates a great deal of knowledge about that area and then wants to share this information with others without recognizing that the listener may not have the same level of interest in the topic. According to Myles, Hilgenfield, Barnhill, Grisworld, Hagiwara & Simpson, (2002), this can be used to an advantage for some individuals who then proceed on to a career in their field of interest. However, in the early childhood years, it can limit the child's positive experiences when peer social interactions are so critical to learning and social-emotional development.

Strategies to Enhance Social and Language Pragmatics in Inclusive Environments

Children with Asperger's Disorder need inclusive environments to learn appropriate social behaviors and pragmatics of language by watching and imitating their peers and others. However, placing them in the environment alone does not assure that social skills are successfully learned. To succeed in inclusive environments children with Asperger's Disorder need specific, targeted intervention with the pragmatics of language and social interaction. Strategies should include direct instruction of acceptable social behavior, role playing and peer modeling of the various social skills needed for success in the classroom (Bashe & Kirby, 2001). The inclusive environment provides opportunities to promote these skills in a variety of settings where multiple meanings of words, idioms and sarcasms are practiced through role-playing, games

and puppets. This allows for the natural environment of the classroom to be the key environment for social learning activities to occur throughout the day (Allen, 2009; Welton, Vakil & Carasea, 2002).

Bandura (1977) identified social modeling as one method of learning social expectations. It is implicit, that social modeling involves vicarious learning. In other words, the child would observe an individual being rewarded or punished for a behavior and then incorporate that learning into his or her repertoire of skills. Social modeling and vicarious learning needs to be adapted for individuals with autism. Specifically, the models should be trained and direct instruction of the specific social skill should be utilized. (Fulk & King, 2001; Owen-DeSchryver, Carr, Cale & Blakeley -Smith, 2008.) Specific goals may emphasize the need for the child to participate in play situations and group activities, asking the teacher or peers for help, sequencing events and taking on the listener's perspective when retelling stories or experiences (Welton, Vakil & Carasea, 2002).

Individuals with Asperger's Disorder may not benefit from vicarious learning/social modeling alone and require direct instruction. Though this is considered the most intrusive form of instruction, its effectiveness as an intervention strategy in teaching social skills to children with Asperger's Disorder requires emphasis. Direct instruction should focus on task analysis. In this instance, social skills should be task analyzed into various successive steps and taught incrementally. Direct instruction should also provide opportunities for the child to generalize the skills learned to a variety of different settings (Simpson, Myles, Sasso & Kamps, 1997).

The utilization of social stories (Gray & Garand, 1993) has also received support when designed to facilitate appropriate behavior. Social stories are pictorial representations of events that communicate expected behaviors. When designed for the unique needs of the individual with Asperger's, this activity can serve to enhance the pragmatic/ social skills expected and reduce behavioral problems. Social stories may facilitate understanding events from the viewpoint of others (Hagiwara & Myles, 1999).

Children with Asperger's Disorder have few interests, on which they tend to perseverate. It may be helpful to utilize these areas or facilitate an increase in desired areas of interest for the child with Asperger's Disorder. This can be a very challenging task; however, embedding expanded concepts into already established areas of interest may help academically and concurrently enhance social skills needed for inclusion. For example, if a child with this disorder perseverates on trains, it may be helpful to utilize this interest to expand the child's knowledge of social studies or science/engineering/math concepts. This may also serve to facilitate learning in these content areas.

Valuing the IEP to Enhance Inclusion

The IEP is a positive and functional document used to identify specific areas of need and articulates plans for improvement. In addition to academic needs, well written IEP's include behavioral and social goals and objectives which enhance the learning of all young children in the inclusive classroom. All team members play a critical role in the development and implementation of the IEP. Therefore, administrators, the regular education teacher, other professionals and parents also must take an active role in the development of goals and objectives so that the student is able to remain in the least restrictive environment and participate in inclusive settings to the maximum extent possible. In addition, the IEP process emphasizes accountability and collaboration so that all participants are members of an ongoing team of professionals dedicated to the support and enhancement of the individual child's skills across all areas of need.

Compliance with and implementation of IEP's has posed significant challenges since PL 94 142 was passed. Educators often complain about the inordinate amount of paperwork required for children with disabilities (Council for Exceptional Children: Today, 2002). Complaints generally take the form of statements such as "…education has taken a backseat to paperwork requirements and I spend more time writing IEP's and collecting data than teaching." While it is likely true that effectively juggling documentation and teaching is a daunting task, this current generation of teachers may be less aware of the days prior to PL 94 142 when there was little or no documentation required. Teachers were free to do whatever they deemed appropriate with little if any, accountability. This led to education that, in some cases, was much more akin to babysitting than intervention. Sadly, the complaints about paperwork and documentation have been manifested in a lack of reading, understanding and appropriate implementation of IEP's. There are times when noncompliance with documentation requirements are cloaked in the guise of the teachers not wanting to "bias" themselves about the child. Rather, they want to "…form their own judgments."

Well intentioned though that may be, this philosophy may have disastrous consequences. Not reading documentation can lead to application of ineffective or counterproductive strategies and may lead to inaccurate interpretation of observations, motivations of behaviors and analysis of data. The results are delays in appropriate intervention and a lack of skill acquisition. An IEP that is read, results in appropriately challenging children with Asperger's Disorder and accessing the general education curriculum with appropriate accommodations and modifications already in place.

Improve Relationships between Families and Educators to Enhance Inclusion

Collaboration and team effort are terms that have become commonplace in early childhood education teacher preparation programs. Collaboration is an organizational and interorganizational structure where resources, power and authority are shared and where people are brought together to achieve common goals that could not be accomplished by a single individual or organization (Kagan, Kauerz, Tarrant , 2008). Collaboration between individuals working with and on behalf of the child has therefore been the linchpin in the learning process of young children with special needs. Parents/guardians are recognized as the "child's first teacher" (Wright, Stegelin & Hartle, 2007; Grant& Ray 2010), and are therefore expected to play a pivotal role in the lives of their children at home, with professionals in the schools and in the larger community. A working collaboration cannot be attained without the commitment of families in all areas of learning and development of their children. Grant and Ray (2010) suggest that the reciprocal benefits of family involvement are numerous; all constituents; including children, families, educators, and the school community, reap the positive rewards of increased family involvement.

Collaboration among all team members is critical for successful inclusion of young children in the classroom. Increased knowledge and awareness about Asperger's Disorder among all collaborators is suggested as a primary strategy to enhance learning experience for the inclusion of children with Asperger's Disorder in the classroom. An understanding of the disorder, its complexities, and its implication for creating a learning environment that supports the child's academic and social-emotional success should be considered when planning interventions.

Increased communication and collaboration between the home and school reduces the frustrations many families feel with the education process. Rather than forcing families into defensive or angry behaviors when advocating for their children with Asperger's, school personnel, should recognize families as a valuable source of information and integral members of the intervention team. It is a dynamic learning process for the collaborative team, finding successful intervention strategies for inclusive classrooms also improves team communication and morale (Friend, 2008).

Barnhill (2004) suggests parents and teachers can support social skill development in the following ways:

1. Guard the child from bullies. The child with Asperger's Disorder is a likely target for teasing and is often painfully aware of rejection. Caregivers should structure play activities where the child can be taught how to respond to social cues, make friends and deal with frustration. Focus on intentional instruction that is designed for success and self confidence building by using *The New Social Story Book: Illustrated Edition* (Gray,2000) or *Comic Strip Conversations* (Gray,1994).

2. Keep explanations simple. Often too much language creates confusion and anxiety. Use concrete and simple terms. Be aware of the tone of your voice. Because of their difficulty with understanding the social elements of language, they may misinterpret inflection and believe you are angry when you are not. Provide direct instruction on multiple meaning of words and idioms and how to begin, maintain and end conversations.

3. Allow the child time to think about explanations and requests. Do not expect immediate answers or responses. The child may need to be in a quiet environment for a time to relax and process information.

4. Provide picture schedules and predictable routines. Often, the world is a confusing place for the young child with Asperger's. Providing as much structure and predictability as possible may serve to decrease behavioral problems. Teach anger-control skills; cause and effect concept and use humor to diffuse tension. Teach students to engage in such appropriate waiting behavior as counting slowly to 10 rather than screaming to gain attention.

5. Become knowledgeable about the characteristics of the disorder and then attempt to consider the environment from the child's perspective. Consult with experts if the child demonstrates behavior which you feel ill equipped to address.

Consult with the parents/caregivers. They can often provide significant insights and ideas.

Summary

Individuals with Asperger's Disorder comprise a very diverse population of students in the school setting. Often, students with Asperger's are included in regular early childhood and primary classrooms for much of their educational experience. If the parents are inexperienced or unaware of typical developmental milestone, the early childhood teacher may be the first professional to identify atypical behaviors including those associated with Asperger's Disorder. As such, pre-service teachers must be prepared to support the learning and development of all children, It is the responsibility of early childhood licensure programs to provide opportunities for candidates to study and interact with special needs children and families. For inclusion to be successful, it is critical that children's needs are identified and all early childhood professionals are able draw from a repertoire of appropriate strategies to support their learning. Consistent and early implementing of appropriate strategies for individuals with Asperger's can greatly improve their opportunities for success as they progress through the school.

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Using a Structured Peer Assessment Model to Facilitate Pre-service Teachers' WebQuest Development
Lan Li, Ph.D

Background

The WebQuest is an Internet-based lesson model that integrates meaningful web resources to engage students in higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation and synthesis (Dodge, 1995). The WebQuest model usually involves students in an inquiry type, problem-solving task, and then provides steps, valid web resources, and instructional scaffolding to guide student teams in investigations to solve the problem. Since WebQuest's development in 1995, it has been gaining popularity in education and has been "widely used by teachers to integrate technology, especially computers and Internet, into learning and teaching" (Frazee, 2004, as cited in Wang & Hannafin, 2008).

At Bowling Green State University, the classroom technology classes have introduced the WebQuest to pre-service teachers as a training framework to help them effectively and efficiently design the Internet-integrated teaching resources in ways that engage students and promote students' constructive learning. Pre-service teachers have embraced this innovative technology integration model and have perceived the WebQuest as an interesting, informative, and practical means of incorporating the World Wide Web into curriculum and pedagogy. However, lacking teaching experience often makes it difficult for pre-service teachers to foresee and assess the feasibility and functionality of their WebQuests in a classroom environment. A significant amount of their WebQuests failed to present effective and meaningful approaches to learning in their designated discipline areas. The major issues identified on WebQuest projects developed by pre-service teachers include the following three areas:

1. Providing scaffolding in WebQuest activities. Pre-service teachers generally lack the understanding and application of scaffolding practices (Karen Paciotti , Margaret Bolick , 2009; Verenikina & Chinnappan, 2006). Despite clear enthusiasm about using scaffolding tactics and strategies to support student learning, a disconnection between conceptual knowledge and a lack of experience in the role of teacher, seems to confuse pre-service teachers about what scaffolding guidance should be provided and how it should be provided on their WebQuests.

2. Engaging students in activities that promote higher-order thinking skills. Inadequate understanding of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK) and knowledge in problem solving inhibit pre-service teachers' ability to integrate higher-order thinking in lesson planning (Shen, 2010). Quality WebQuests often engage students in inquiry type activities that challenge students beyond direct and rote comprehension. Many beginning developers tend to design WebQuests involving students in mere memorization and regurgitation of already existing facts on the Web.

3. Integrating effective and meaningful technology strategies. Many pre-service teachers only have a superficial understanding of the effective use of technology and their roles in implementing technology integrated lessons (Hsu & Sharma, 2006). Simply adding use of computers and Internet elements to classroom activities does not automatically convert them to

WebQuests. Class instructors identified technology integration in some WebQuests developed by pre-service teachers as impractical and unrealistic.

To assist pre-service teachers in understanding what a quality WebQuest is and to further help them develop well-structured WebQuests, the course instructor (also the researcher) had spent a significant amount of time in each class session providing feedback on individual projects and aiding students in revisions. While these instructor-student interactions often resulted in satisfactory outcomes and better quality WebQuests, the one-to-one communication method was very time consuming and often impeded the starting and progress of other class projects. In order to carry on the course as planned while ensuring the quality of instruction and student projects, the researcher designed and implemented a formative peer assessment model in the classroom technology classes to facilitate pre-service teachers' WebQuest development.

Peer Assessment

Peer assessment is a process in which students of similar status evaluate each other's work (Topping, Smith, Swanson, & Elliot, 2000). Peer assessment usually engages students in two roles: assessors and assessees. As assessors, students review and comment upon peers' work. As assessees, students receive peer feedback and improve their own projects (Li, Liu & Steckelberg, 2009). Peer assessment can be either formative or summative. Formative peer assessment aims to empower students and promote student learning, while in summative peer assessment, students rate each other's projects and provide summative grading.

Value of peer assessment has been widely studied and well documented. Patri (2000) views it as an activity that has "significant pedagogic value." Pope (2001) suggests that peer assessment motivates and engages students in meaningful and deeper learning. Freeman (1995) argues that peer assessment promotes students' autonomy. Topping (1998), after an extensive literature review of 109 peer assessment articles, summarizes that peer assessment may benefit both assessors and assesses in multiple ways such as increased time on task, cognitive development, understanding of critical elements of quality work, and a greater sense of accountability and responsibility.

The purpose of this paper was to examine the effects of a structured peer assessment process on the quality of pre-service teachers' WebQuest projects. Specifically, the researcher asked two research questions.

1) Is there a statistically significant difference in quality of pre-service teachers' WebQuest projects before and after peer assessment?
2) What percentage of major issues (scaffolding, higher-order thinking skills, and technology integration) identified in the initial version of WebQuest projects are addressed after peer assessment activities?

Methodology

Participants

A group of pre-service teachers students (n = 43) enrolled in two sections of a classroom technology class were invited to participate in this study. Pre-service teachers ranged from freshman to senior standing with various concentrations such as math, sciences, language arts, and social studies. Most participants were female (n=35), Caucasian (n=37) with an average age of 21.3.

Peer Assessment Procedure/Model

As Figure 1 shows, the peer assessment model directed students through the process of peer assessment training, initial WebQuest development, peer review process, and WebQuest final revision. Since

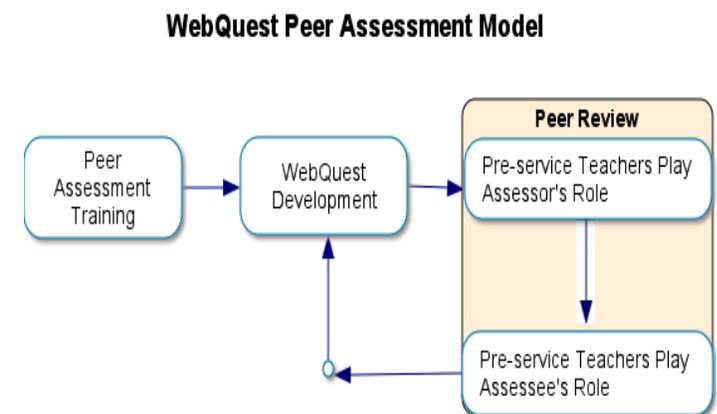### WebQuest Peer Assessment Model

Figure 1. WebQuest peer assessment model illustrating the process from training to project completion

most pre-service teachers had never had any previous peer assessment experience, training was provided to introduce peer assessment to them. Pre-service teachers were encouraged to ask questions and voice their concerns. A clear message was delivered to pre-

service teachers that peer assessment would be used only as a formative approach to help them improve their WebQuest projects. Therefore, their final project grades would not be influenced by peer ratings. Afterwards, pre-service teachers studied and discussed the marking criteria of the WebQuest projects. They were then presented two example WebQuest projects and practiced on rating and commenting upon these projects based on the marking criteria.

WebQuest projects created by pre-service teachers were uploaded to the Discussion Board forum in Blackboard for peer assessment. Blackboard is a course management system that provides an integrated set of web-based tools. Embedded in Blackboard, Discussion Board is a communication tool that enables users to post messages asynchronously online. Each pre-service teacher was randomly assigned two peers' WebQuests to review (assessor role). As a result, each pre-service teacher received two peer reviews for his own WebQuest (assessee role). During the review/assessment process, pre-service teachers were explicitly instructed that they should not only rate their peers' performance, but also identify issues and provide constructive feedback on how peers should further improve their WebQuests. After viewing grades and feedback provided to their own projects by peers, pre-service teachers were instructed to go back to view and improve their own WeQuest projects. At that point, all participants were informed that peers' rating and feedback may vary in quality. Therefore, they should judge the quality of feedback and decide which suggestions to adopt or not adopt. After WebQuest revisions, pre-service teachers submitted their updated WebQuest projects to the instructor (researcher).

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collected in this study include both versions (prior to and post peer assessment) of pre-service teachers' WebQuest projects. Once collected from the students, both versions of WebQuest projects were graded and analyzed by the instructor and an independent rater to identify issues in the three areas previously discussed (scaffolding, higher-order thinking skills, and technology integration).

To ensure that the scoring process of pre-service teachers' WebQuest projects was consistent, the researcher and one trained independent rater blindly graded all WebQuest projects based on the same rubric used in peer assessment. The inter-rater reliability of the researcher's scoring and the independent rater' scoring was satisfactory at 0.89. The researcher and

the grader also examined both versions of all WebQuests (pre- and post peer assessment) and identified issues in the three major areas presented in those projects. The researcher and the grader reached 100% agreement on issue identification after discussion.

Results

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 18.0 was utilized for data analysis. The assumption that data came from a normal distribution was tested using the Shapiro-Wilks test. Results indicated that the Sahpiro-Wilks Test was not significant at the normal 5% level in both groups. Therefore, a normal distribution of the scores of WebQuest projects was assumed. Differences in quality of WebQuest projects before and after peer assessment were compared by Paired Sample T-Test, which indicated that scores of the final version of WebQuest projects were significantly higher ($M = 31.30$, $SD = 4.95$) than scores of the initial version ($M = 26.95$, $SD = 5.52$), $t (42) = 8.8737$, $p < 0.0001$, Cohen's $d = 0.83$.

Examination of the initial version of WebQuest projects (prior to peer assessment) identified 78 issues in the three areas (21 issues on scaffolding, 22 issues on higher-order thinking skills, and 35 issues on technology integration), as some projects had more than one issue recognized. Comparison of the issues found on the initial and final versions of WebQuests suggested a considerable improvement by reducing issues from 78 to 33 (see Figure 2). In other words, a little
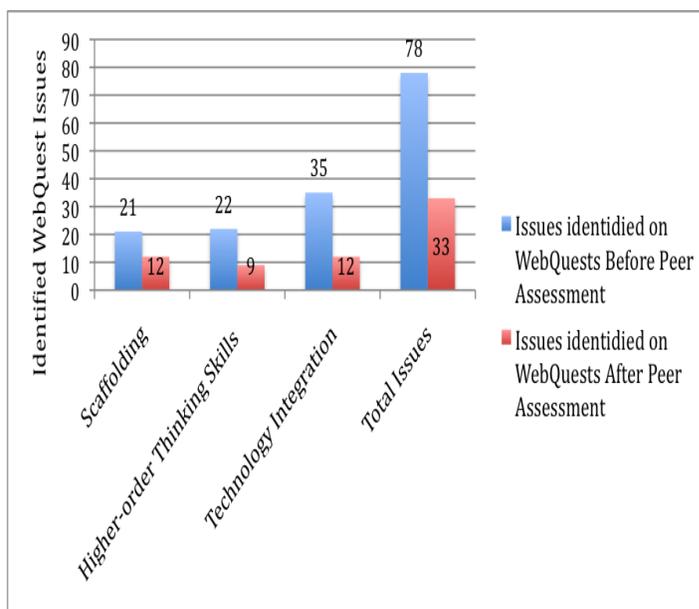

Figure 2. Identified issues on WebQuest projects before and after peer assessment

over half of the issues in the three areas were addressed (58%) after peer assessment.

Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the impact of peer assessment on the quality of WebQuest projects created by pre-service teachers. Findings of the study suggested that

suggested that there was a statistically significant difference on the quality of WebQuests before and after peer assessment. The quality of WebQuest projects was largely improved after peer assessment. Furthermore, data analysis showed the issues identified in the three areas (scaffolding, higher-order thing skills, and technology integration) on the initial version of participants' WebQuests decreased from 78 to 33 after peer assessment, with a 58% reduction.

The results suggested that the structured peer assessment activities in this study had a positive effect in terms of assisting pre-service teachers' WebQuest development. Not only did participants' overall performance on this task improve, but they also addressed more than half of the common issues of their projects after peer assessment. The improved project quality and reduced number of issues would certainly facilitate and speed instructor and student interactions afterwards.

In the 21st century, teacher education programs have faced great challenges to prepare students as competent, confident and critical technology users. Pre-service teachers should be prepared not only on technology skills, but also on effective technology integration strategies that promote student learning. As one of the promising models incorporating the World Wide Web, WebQuest has been widely used in teacher preparation programs (Wang & Hannafin, 2007). The WebQuest model includes five critical sections: introduction, task, process (resources), evaluation and conclusion. Although the pre-defined structure of the model makes it seem rather straightforward to create a WebQuest, the ease does not necessarily guarantee high-quality products. WebQuests created by pre-service teachers have been portrayed as "shallow" and failing to provide meaningful learning activities to engage students (Jonassen et al., 2003). The absence of actual classroom teaching experiences makes it difficult and probably undesirable for pre-service teachers to develop WebQuests. The researcher advocates that scaffolding approaches should be provided to assist pre-service teachers in this process.

The findings of the study also imply that peer assessment may be an effective strategy to engage pre-service teachers in active learning, and thus enhancing their performance. In recent year, peer assessment, as a formative assessment strategy, has gradually gained attention in teacher education. Sluijsmans and Prin (2006) argue that peer assessment is an effective strategy to foster pre-service teachers' essential skills that are critical in their professional life. They further define peer assessment as a "powerful didactical method for teaching skills" (p. 7) and suggest that peer assessment facilitates communication and collaboration, fosters development of reflection skills, promotes critical assessment skills, and cultivates life-long learning. Despite the potential of peer assessment, research examining the use of this innovative learning and assessment strategy in teacher education is still uncommon. Little is known in regards to how peer assessment has been implemented in teacher education, and what kind of impacts peer assessment may have on pre-service teachers' learning as well as their assessment skills. Future studies are warranted in the aforementioned areas.

Although the present study provides support for the potential value of peer assessment on development of WebQuest projects, caution should be taken when interpreting the data. The major limitation is that a one-group pre- and post design was implemented in this study. Therefore, this study may be weak in controlling threats to internal validity. No causal relationship between peer assessment and quality of WebQuest projects should be inferred from the findings. Future studies should employ more robust empirical designs to further investigate the impact of peer assessment on learning. For example, instead of a single group study, a control and experimental design could be used, where the experimental group receives peer assessment and the control group does not. Therefore, the only difference between these groups would be peer assessment activities, which would rule out the threats to internal validity in single group designs.

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Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers: An Assets-Based Service -Learning Approach
Winston Vaughan, Ph.D.

Today as we educate preservice teachers in higher education, we must constantly be reminded of the changing demographics within our society. If we are to prepare our preservice teachers for these societal changes, it is paramount that they not only be aware, but also be culturally competent as they carry out their classroom duties. Gay (2002) argues that culturally responsive teaching can be defined as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively. Students' cultural backgrounds are integrated into the classroom with the goals of maximizing academic achievement.

Based on research one way to help achieve this is through service learning. Students can provide service to the community while examining societal issues such as social power, privilege and oppression (Nieto, 2000).

In defining service learning, Rosenberger (2000) argues that there is consensus among scholars in the field as to what constitutes service learning. Most would agree that service-learning is action and reflection integrated with the academics to enhance student learning and meet community needs. Jacoby and Associates (2003) suggest that service-learning is a form of experiential education where students engage in activities that address human and community needs with reciprocity and reflection as key components. McCarthy and Corbin (2003) note that service learning is a teaching/learning approach through which students can achieve their academic goals by participating in community service. Billingsley (1994) and Eads (1994) suggest the internal focus of service learn-

ing is on academics where individuals engage in community activities in a context of rigorous academic experience achieving enhanced self-worth, critical thinking skills, greater capacity to effect social change, and a greater commitment to being socially responsible in a pluralistic democratic society. Likewise O'Grady (2000) agrees that the focus on academics moves service learning beyond volunteerism or just community service. O'Grady argues that service learning allows teachers to employ a variety of teaching strategies that emphasize student-centered, interactive, experiential education.

Flannery and Ward (1999) in analyzing the struggles that students often encounter between their cultural community and the academic community argue that service learning is a way to bridge the gap between their campus and community lives, as well as assisting in linking theory to practice. They argue that this is particularly important given that most college campuses are predominately white.

A number of scholars in the field have cautioned about the strengthening rather than reducing stereotypes of students during the service learning experience (Anderson & Guest, 1994; Berry, 1990; Kretzman & McKnight, 1993; Waldock, 1995; O'Grady, 2000). They cautioned that if service learning is not organized and delivered with careful planning, it can easily reinforce oppressive outcomes. Racism, sexism, or classism can be perpetuated to the extent of reinforcing the idea of superiority. Some scholars (Battistoni, 2002; Berry, 1990; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Waldock, 1995) offer additional cautions about strengthening

rather than reducing stereotypes in students during their service learning experiences. They suggest that although there is mounting evidence to show service-learning has a positive impact on civic responsibility, there is also mounting evidence within the community that suggests service-learning not only fails to connect students to public life, but may reinforce students' stereotypes about people who are different from the community being served. Some scholars (Nieto, 2000; Rosenberger, 2000; O'Grady, 2000) have indicated that the current models of service learning reinforce the idea of privilege and power within our society and sustain the hegemonic power of the elite. In fact, Nieto (2000) argues that the primary recipients of service are those who society sees as disadvantaged whether it be race, class, ethnicity or ability, and those who serve are those who may be privileged. She continues to argue that concerns about racism, injustice, oppression, and unearned privileges should be featured when doing service learning.

Kretzmann & McKnight (1993) and Hess, Lanig & Vaughan (2007) in arguing for assets-based service learning suggest that service learning should go beyond the "Do Gooder aspect." They suggest that the individuals who are being served have assets to offer those who are serving. Hence, any learning that takes place should be reciprocal in nature. Likewise, Sigmon & Pelletier (1996) argue that service learning is distinguished from other forms of experiential learning by the intention to benefit students and recipients equally.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the effects of integrating assets-based service learning into a cultural diversity class in a Midwestern urban university to help build an understanding of cultural awareness and responsibility. The philosophical base is rooted in suggestions that those being served in service learning have cultural information that would be very valuable to students participating (Kretzmann & McKnight 1993; Hess, Lanig & Vaughan 2007).

The goals for the participants were: to gain a better understanding and appreciation for the racial, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity that exist within our community; to decrease their biases and misconceptions they may have about groups different from themselves; to develop a sense of their own cultural identity though the process of self-reflection and reciprocal learning; and, to increase their commitment to working toward social justice.

Method

Data collection was based on two research paradigms, quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The quantitative methodology was the primary source of data collection using 18 and 27 item Likert-type pretest and posttest questionnaires. The qualitative data were based on students' pre and post service reflections, as well as their class presentations.

Subjects

Participants in this project were 100 undergraduate students who were enrolled in two sections of a cultural diversity in each of three semesters. Of the 100 students, 10% were males and 90% were females. Of the females, 5% were African Americans, 1% was Hispanic, 1% Asian and 83% were Caucasians. Students enrolled in the course were predominantly sophomores and juniors majoring in the areas of early childhood education, middle childhood education, special education, and Montessori education.

Instrument

The instrument used in this study was The Social Responsibility Inventory (Howard and McKeachie, 1992) which is a 27 item Likert-type questionnaire with validated psychometric properties. The pretest consisted of 18 items divided into two categories, while the posttest consisted of the 18 items plus 9 additional items with three categories. Category 1, which was on a four-point scale, addressed personal importance. Category 2, which was on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, examined feelings about societal issues and category 3 (posttest only), which was on a four-point scale ranging from not at all to a great deal examined the impact of their participation in the experience service- learning experience.

Procedure

At the beginning of the course students were asked to select a marginalized group that they would like to learn more about. Some service-learning activities chosen were: Tutoring African Americans (low income); working with after school programs and students with various disabilities; serving in soup kitchens; working with Hispanic organizations; assisting in hospitals and homes for the elderly; and working with the homeless population.

They were then required to write a two-page self-reflection on their experiences with diversity,

what they know about the particular culture chosen identifying the various misconception prejudices, or stereotypes they may have or heard about the particular group Students were then asked to complete a brief self-administered pretest questionnaire about their personal and societal beliefs through a series of 18 Likert-type items. Students were required to enter their identification number so as to permit comparisons of their pre/post courses responses.

After discussions and readings about the importance of service-learning in today's society, students completed 10 weeks of service-learning with the chosen group. They were required to keep a log reflecting on each student's experience with the group.

At the end of the service-learning experience students were required to complete a 27 item Likert-type posttest questionnaire consisting of 18 items from the pretest plus 9 (posttest only) items. They were also required to give an oral report to their classmates on their experiences. Emphasis here was not on what ser-

vice they had provided but whether reciprocal learning occurred. In other words, students indicated or shared what they learned from the group, and what the group learned from them. They were also required to write a two-page report on their experience focusing on the concerns and misconceptions they had prior to the service, as well as the impact of the experience on their values and beliefs.

Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of service-learning experiences on students' personal and societal/political beliefs about marginalized groups, the impact of the course experience on their attitudes towards disadvantaged groups, and most of all to build a sense of cultural awareness.

Quantitative results indicated that participants showed positive responses toward marginalized groups who may be different from themselves with reference to providing service.

Data for 98 students (pretest/posttest) were analysed using ANOVA for category I and 99 students for category 2. Results in category1 (personal importance) yielded a non significant value $F (1, 97) =$

Table 1

Percentages for Service-Learning Impact

No	Item	Not at all	Somewhat	Quite a bit	A great deal
Y	Intention to serve others in need	8%	36%	38%	18%
Z	Intention to give to charity	14%	49%	25%	12%
AA	Sense of purpose or direction in life	19%	34%	31%	16%
BB	Orientation toward others and away from self	6%	41%	40%	13%
CC	Intention to work on behalf of social justice	8%	31%	39%	22%
DD	Belief that helping those in need is one's social responsibility	6%	30%	43%	21%
EE	Belief that one can make a difference in the world	5%	34%	29%	32%
FF	Understanding of the role of external forces as shapers of the world	5%	34%	29%	32%
GG	Tolerance and appreciation for others	3%	17%	37%	43%

2.28 p> .05. Category 2 (societal/political views) yielded a significant value F (1, 98) = 6.53 p< .05. A comparison of the means is listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Personality and Political Issues

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Pre personality	98	21.03	2.34
Post personality	98	21.38	2.71
Pre political	99	39.94	4.15
Post political	99	41.23	4.88

In this category 3 (course impact), data were analysed using descriptive statistics and frequencies. Data were drawn from nine questions pertaining to the impact of the service–learning experience. Students responded to nine questions on a scale of 1-4 ranging from not at all to a great deal. Responses for scale 1 were treated as negative gains while 2-4 were treated as positive gains. Results indicated the following: Intention to serve others: 92 % reported positive impact while 8% was negative. Intention to give charity to help those in need: 86 % positive, 14% negative. Sense of purpose or direction in life: 81% positive, 19% negative. Orientation toward others and away from self: 94% positive, 6% negative. Intention to work on behalf of social justice: 92% positive, 8% negative. Belief that helping those in need is one's social responsibility: 94% positive, 6 % negative. Belief that one can make a difference in the world: 95% positive, 5 % negative. Understanding the role of external forces as shapers of the world 95% positive, 5% negative. Tolerance and appreciation for others: 97 % positive, 3% negative. Table 1 describes the complete analysis of the data for this category.

Qualitative Results

Qualitative data, drawn from pre/post reflections and class presentations, were analyzed to add strength to the quantitative data. Various themes emerged from the reflections as well as class presentations. Emerging themes were: better self-understanding; new perspectives on societal issues;

misconceptions about disadvantaged students and individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds; how one can learn from each other; having a better understanding for others, and dangers of stereotypes and misconceptions.

Better Self-understanding.

Students seemed to suggest that their experiences with marginalized groups helped them to reflect more about their racial and cultural identity and how privileged the y were in our society. One student suggested that she discovered that the individuals she worked with had some qualities in common with her, and that she had a greater compassion for people. Another student commented about her realization of being raised in a very sheltered environment, and the need to be more culturally responsive in her working with students in the teaching/learning process. She has a strong belief that culture is very important in shaping an individual's life and in order to be effective, one must try one's best to be more culturally informed.

New Perspectives on Societal Issues

Perspective teachers articulated their understanding of how society is stratified in reference to those that are advantaged and those who are disadvantaged. Some students made mention of how fortunate they were in a society where there are all kinds of social issues. They indicated an understanding of family life as compared to their own, and a willingness to work more closely with their communities especially with minority students in schools.

Misconceptions about Disadvantaged Students and Individuals from Lower Socio-Economic Backgrounds

Before students went out into the field for their service, they were required to identify the various biases, misconceptions, and stereotypes about the groups they were going to work with. Most students, due to their lack of diversity depicted some stereotypical notions about disadvantage groups. One example cited was homeless people are individuals who are lazy and don't want to work. Those who worked with homeless individuals quickly realized that anyone can become homeless due to some unfortunate circumstance. Another student suggested that she had many negative cultural misconceptions going into her experience, but after self- reflection through the service-learning experience her misconceptions were no longer valid. She and others finally realized that some

homeless people are not in their situation by choice, but rather by chance. Other students who worked with minority students also reported very positive outcomes in building relationships and trust with them dispelling the various misconceptions they had prior to going into the experience. One student reported that her cultural misconception about African Americans was that they were "lazy". After her experience she concluded that this was a prejudiced and stereotypical thing to say because it was dispelled in her service experience.

Overall participating students were convinced that their biases and misconceptions about minorities and lower socioeconomic groups were all stereotypes, and these groups have many assets that would be beneficial to them as future teachers.

How One Can Learn from Each Other

The idea that students reported that their groups had much to offer reinforced the concept of reciprocity in service-learning. Students were advised prior to service experience that they were not to be doing what some scholars have termed "volunteerism or missionary" work. Kessinger (2010) offers an historical overview of the evolution from volunteerism to service-learning. Students were required to approach their experience from the perspective of assets-based service learning. That is, believing that the groups they were going to work with had information to offer as well. Students reported that their experiences were very rewarding and learned a great deal to enhance their cultural understanding. One of the things realized was the fact that there were more similarities than differences between themselves and their groups.

Dangers of Stereotypes and Misconceptions

Stereotypes and misconceptions have been part of societal behavior for years. In fact Nieto (2000) argues that after awhile stereotypes in our society are perceived as truths. People tend to believe them and material and psychological resources are doled out accordingly. As perspective teachers working in a society where the minority population is growing at an increasingly rapid rate and the majority of the teaching population still reflects the dominant culture, stereotypes should not be prevalent in the mind of any teacher. If teachers harbor stereotypes, then when they have to work with individuals who fit their stereotypes the situation could become very problematic. Most students realized that the stereotypes, biases, prejudices and misconceptions they harbored before the experience were all proven to be incorrect. The underlying

conclusion was that you need to get to know someone before making judgments.

Discussion

Several research studies have addressed the impact of service-learning on preservice teachers' attitudes. This paper examines the impact of infusing assets-based service-learning as a component of a cultural diversity in education class. The main purpose was for the participants to gain a better understanding and appreciation for the racial, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity that exist within our community. Other purposes included: to develop a sense of their own cultural identity though the process of self-reflection and reciprocal learning; and, to increase their commitment to working toward social justice. Areas addressed were personal importance, societal/political issues, and the impact of service-learning experience on their personal beliefs.

Data was collected and analysed using quantitative and quantitative methodologies. Results from these two methodologies suggest that the service-learning project had a positive impact on participants, helping them to become more culturally aware.

ANOVA analysis for category 1 (personal importance) showed no significant differences. However, a comparison of the prestest/posttest means as shown in Table 2 shows a slight increase. Significant differences were recorded in category 2 (societal/political views). Participants seem to suggest that they have a greater understanding of their political views of societal issues. This was also reinforced in the qualitative aspect where participants indicated that there is a greater need for social justice issues to take effect and go beyond the rhetoric that is prevalent in our society. There was also an indication of a willingness by these participants to do more in their communities especially working with minority students in schools.

In category 3 which addressed the impact of the course on their personal lives, results indicate that there was positive impact. Participants indicated a willingness to serve others in need through: giving to charity; thinking more of others and away from self; working on behalf of social justice issues; trying to help those in need because one can make a difference in the world if they try; and the need for tolerance and appreciation for others who may be different from themselves. Evidence of this is seen in the qualitative analysis where participants acknowledged that this experience gave them an opportunity to self-reflect on their cultural identity, and their perception of people

who are less fortunate. It also helped them to grow as individuals. One student indicated that she learned a great deal from the experiences. She reported that from the experience she had grown as an individual and had expanded her knowledge and understanding of the poor in our community. She was also happy to see that the common stereotypes were inaccurate. Another student reported that she became more compassionate, and more cognizant in not making assumptions about people and their situations. There was also the feeling that she not only helped the group, but it was beneficial in helping her understand the problems of those who may be less fortunate. Students indicated the need for dismissing stereotypes and misconceptions and the importance of knowing individuals before making judgements. Most students indicated in their class presentations that the experience was valuable and rewarding and wanted to continue outside of the course.

As suggested by Vadeboncoeur, Rahm, Aguilera, & Lecompte (1996), preservice teachers need to take responsibility and espouse democratic values such as equity, respect, tolerance for others, and reflect critically on their own biases. Preservice teachers need to develop a social consciousness not only to identify with victims of oppression, but help to work toward social justice to bring about or make changes within our society.

These findings confirm suggestions made by Middleton (2003) that service-learning is a powerful mechanism for educating prospective teachers to understand and acquire a pedagogical repertoire for addressing diversity and social justice issues. It also reinforces findings by Simons and Cleary (2006) whose study found that participating students in service learning showed improvements in diversity, political awareness, personal and community engagement. Likewise, Moely et al. (2002) found that students showed positive changes in civic and community issues, political awareness, social justice attitudes, and diversity attitudes.

Conclusion

From the results of this study it can be concluded that assets-based service-learning may help preservice teachers gain a better understanding of the societal issues and help develop a better sense of cultural awareness. Results from the quantitative and qualitative data showed evidence of changes in their personal as well as their societal/political views on marginalized groups within society. The researcher believes that with the changing demographics in our society and the profile of preservice teachers staying constant, it is imperative that future teachers understand the terms of privilege, oppression and social justice if they are going to make a positive impact on students in our nation's classrooms. Being culturally responsive should be at the heart of every teacher. From this study and work by (Markus, Howard & King, 1993) it can be argued that service-learning can help to bring about changes in students' attitudes and behaviors in understanding groups that may be different from themselves.

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The Event Component as a Phenomenological Trigger in the Pathway of Professional Reflection

Rachel Wlodarsky, Ph.D.
Howard Walters, Ed. D.

One could argue that all teachers, as with all adults, *think*. However, not all teachers are equally adept at posing, analyzing, and solving problems; nor do all teachers recognize good teaching practices such that the practice can be sustainably replicated. Yet a highly developed disposition for analytical and reflective thinking promotes teacher development and contributes to enhanced student learning (Danielson, 2008).

In teacher education, reflective practice supports teachers as they move from routine actions in their teaching to more considered, cognitive actions. It is reasoned that this transformation brought about through reflection makes teachers "better" or at the very least aware of their pedagogical beliefs and practices (Vallance, 2006). Choulier et al (2007, p. 115) describe reflection as the attitude adopted by an individual in order to take an external and critical look at his/her activity (in progress or completed). It allows him/her to analyze the contextual and generic elements of a situation, to gain a critical distance in relationship to the schemas being used, and to capitalize on past successes and failures to create a more successful future.

According to Lyons, (2006) reflection is an intentional act of mind, engaging a person alone or in collaboration with others in interrogating one's teaching, especially a compelling or puzzling situation of teaching or learning to construct some understanding of it. Others have discussed reflective practice as an iterative process that seeks to compare teaching practice to theories of action, and to adjust practice accordingly. Thus, reflection on teaching goes beyond mere evaluation in that it involves the process, ideas, assumptions and beliefs behind the action and does not examine students' opportunities to learn merely from the perspective of products and outcomes (Bernacchio et al, 2007; Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2005; Kuit et al., 2001, p. 57). Other researchers do not assume that improving *how one teaches* always necessitates reflection. They do assume, however, that reflection on one's teaching is likely to raise the question of how one teaches and in the end, this activity will have a positive effect on the improvement of teaching (Hubball, Collins & Pratt, 2005, p. 60).

It is argued that reflection begins with one's perplexity about a topic and the willingness to adopt an attitude of suspended conclusion while studying the issue, gathering information, and gaining new knowledge. This reflection affords teachers conscious, deliberate insight to bring about enhanced student learning, and encourages teachers to become students of their own professional actions (Danielson, 2008, p. 130).

The Wlodarsky-Walters Event Path

Over the last five years, we have been studying a group of college faculty members, teacher educators in a large college of education in a private midwestern university. This work has confirmed that for this study population, reflection is a multi-dimensional process. Our model of this multi-dimensional process is the event path briefly described below and depicted in Figure 1 (Wlodarsky and Walters, 2006).
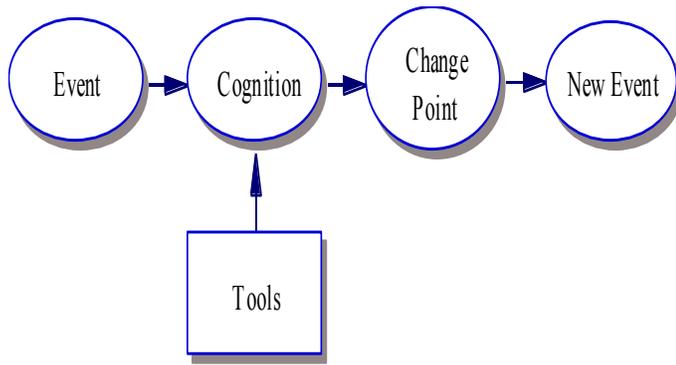
Figure 1. Event path for professional reflection.

The reflective path that we observed was driven by an event, which was uniformly a classroom teaching experience for our participants, and was fundamentally evaluative in nature—all of our respondents described the event using language that connoted evaluation, judgment, assessment of quality, success and/or failure. Our data support a conclusion that these college faculty members demonstrated reflection, and their path toward reflection included observable, cognitive processing of data from both internal sources (e.g., driving alone in a car and thinking about a class) and external sources (e.g., asking a peer for input). Additionally, the study identified the affective elements of self-judgment and evaluation as part of these faculty members' responses. The respondents "seemed concerned with finding value or judging the worth of their teaching" (Wlodarsky & Walters, 2006, p. 12).

Our research has raised concerns and questions for us related to the theoretical models for reflection in past and contemporary literature, and how relevant or accurate—or sufficiently nuanced enough— these models are for describing reflective behaviors and processes of college faculty. Namely, most of these models—as is true of much in the field of education broadly—are highly skewed to outcomes thinking: what are the results, how do teachers change, what was different during the next cycle. For the models which more thickly describe reflection as a process or pathway, much attention is devoted to cognition and preparation for cognition via background knowledge and the individual's development, stage and/or phase of life and practice. We do not question the importance of continuous improvement and professional change, nor of cognition and professional preparation and development. As we refine our model, we believe that a careful consideration of the event as a trigger for the entire process is, however, warranted and lacking in much of

this literature.

The Event

The importance of an authentic, phenomenological *event* as the motivational stimulus for reflection leading to change in professional practice cannot be overstated. This is the conceptual bedrock that allows a discussion of learning in or through practice, as opposed to learning about practice in a depersonalized manner—or merely studying the professional as a developmental or existential adult out of the context of professional life. This type of thought was termed technical rationality by Donald Schön (1987, 1983), whose now seminal works are the basis for much of contemporary thought on reflection. For Schön, the professional must expand upon technical understandings of the field of practice by an elaboration of experience—through reflection-on, reflection-in and reflection-for authentic practice experiences. Reflection-on-action occurs after the action has been completed and is a look back on experience to better understand it. Reflection-in-action occurs during unique situations requiring problem solving in the midst of the experience. Reflection-for-action occurs when the individual begins to anticipate situations before being faced with them and/or begins to plan for the future to improve the present situation or outcome. Schön's contributions have fundamentally altered the structure of professional schools—in education one observes the incorporation of reflection as a major standard area under accreditation requirements for example, and explain as much as any theoretical foundation beyond Dewey's (1933) the importance of problem-based professional development.

Campoy (2000) expanded the idea of the event using the term *opportunity* (p. 34). The *opportunity* is an integral step in reflection. As such, professional development must be linked to authentic experiences. This allows individuals to move from lower level, descriptive or scientific/definitional "retellings" toward more truly reflective, future-oriented understandings of practice.

This notion of the *event*, or Campoy's *opportunity*, is sustained and greatly expanded by King and Kitchner (1994) in their earliest (Stages 1 and 2) levels of reflective practice. For professionals at these levels, there is "an assumption that knowledge is gained through direct personal *observations*", i.e. direct personal experience. This language is consistent with Campoy and Schön, and is also consistent with our identification of the practice event. Thus, our label *event* is conceptually identical to Campoy's *oppor-*

tunity, King and Kitchner's *observation* and Schön's *professional action*. The similarity of the underlying phenomenon for each of these terms across each of these lines of research enhances the credibility of these earlier studies as well as our current research and, now, focus on the event itself.

For our participants, their process of professional development as college faculty members began with an incident—an event—of practice. This may have been a class session or a set of classes over a semester period. The event may have been a set of reviewer comments on a manuscript submitted for publication. The event may have been student work which became, for the professor, secondary evidence of her own professional performance. Nevertheless, for these professors, there was clearly a precipitating experience linked to a subsequent cognitive processing. This observation supports Schön's localization of the reflective act in practice itself, and not in technical rationality or knowledge-about.

This observation—that reflection must follow a practice event—suggests that one doesn't learn *how or about* practice, but *through and in* practice, a finding well-grounded in research on other professional groups but not on college faculty until this study. This fact immediately focuses a harsh light on professional development activities which are divorced from active engagement with practice events for college faculty.

Typical events for development for these professionals are conference attendance and study leaves or sabbaticals— which are generally focused on academic specializations or content and not problems of practice in higher education. Other events, such as reading books and research, participation in discussion groups and learning communities, or attendance at lecture events—are valuable for cognitive development but may be insufficiently linked to pedagogical and androgogical performance, the ability to write and perform research, or the skills and knowledge necessary for service as a faculty member. A caveat here is that conferences or other similar events can serve as the experiential basis for reflection, and so this generalization should be carefully studied.

An Ontology of Event

Because of the criticality of the event, as noted in this literature, as the precipitating or initiating first step toward reflection, we perceive a gap in current literature for a sustained focus and discussion of the nature and characteristics of the event, and a discussion of the implications of a critical event for profes-

sional development. Thus, we sought to develop this paper as a refinement of our initial model presented above with this more nuanced and careful description of that first step in the event path.

We perceive, and wish to describe two distinct categories of events; one is termed *authentic,* and the other *reproduced*, following Walter Benjamin's discussion of authenticity and reproduction of phenomena in his classic essay of 1934, *Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Benjamin describes the *aura* of an authentic object or phenomena as derived from its proximity in time and space to individual lives. We borrow this terminology and discussion as it pertains to our evolving understanding of professional reflection (Wlodarsky, 2010 in press, 2009; Wlodarsky & Walters, 2007, 2006; Wlodarsky, 2005). In our *Event Path for Professional Reflection*, the process begins with an event. We do not argue that the *authentic* event will necessarily result in reflection, nor do we argue that a *reproduced* event necessarily will not. Our discussion will eventually unfold the issue of *authentic* or *reproduced* events and whether this distinction may affect differences in outcomes of the reflection path. An aside in this discussion seems needed: the epistemological fog of extreme postmodernism has obscured the distinctions between objective realism and subjective experience. Some, such as Allard et al. (2007) incorrectly and unhelpfully insert such discussions as:

> too often, this word [authenticity] is used to suggest that authentic means some type of truth that can be stably accessed. Authentic becomes a term to suggest the teller knows the one true meaning about personal experience. Studies of memory and narrative demonstrate that, as we tell and retell our stories, they change and transmute, suggesting truth is being regularly modified and created. This process puts into question the notion of a stable type of truth (p. 309).

We will avoid linking authenticity with objectivity/existential subjectivity in terms of truth claims and the interpretation of experience whether objective or subjective, in favor of linking authenticity to historicity (space and time). Thus, an event is construed as *authentic* when the individual is embedded in time and space with the event, which is thus directly apprehended through the senses, as in Figure 2 below. This is not to say that the individual's perception is not skewed by personal socio-cultural history. In fact, it is to assert exactly that: the *authen-*

tic event is a nexus of the event itself, the individual, and the historical and socio-cultural life of the individual articulating in a singularity (Baudrillard, 1994).
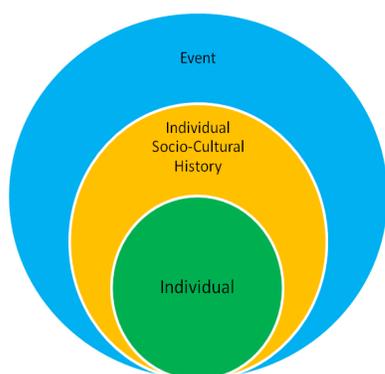

Figure 2: The Authentic Event

Figure 3 below diagrams the *reproduced* event. This event is defined as *reproduced* when the individual and his/her socio-cultural history is removed from a historical (time and space) relationship with the event itself such that it was not or cannot be experienced by that individual directly. Again, Walter Benjamin might suggest that the event, in this instance, lacks the aura or patina of historical or biographical reference.
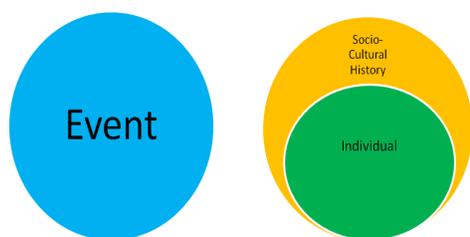

Figure 3: The Reproduced Event

As we've worked through several of our own analyses and interpretations as well as a broad literary frame, we have developed our working definition of reflection:

> *Reflection is a multifaceted construct comprised from different types of events—authentic or reproduced— which are experienced both through and outside of the individual and his or her socio-cultural history. It is further understood that the cognitive process occurs on a continuum of subjective to objective based upon the tools incorporated in cognition.*

Consequently, the distinction between the *au-*

thentic and the *reproduced* event results in a dichotomy of more subjective (*authentic*) or more objective (*reproduced*) which is created from a singularity, or lack thereof, of the individual's socio-cultural history in time and space with the event. Likewise, the cognitive process is dichotomized into more subjective (a lack of information derived from the use of data collection tools) or more objective (through information derived from the use of data collection tools). These dichotomies occur independently of each other due to the innate variability of experiences for the individual and the preparation for or knowledge of cognitive tools, suggesting that elements of the earlier *Event Path* (Wlodarsky & Walters, 2006) are more nuanced and complex as diagrammed in Chart 1 below. In this chart, the *authentic* event (because it includes the socio-cultural history of the individual) is consequently more subjective. The *reproduced* event (because it does not include the socio-cultural history of the individual) is consequently more objective. Cognition is then skewed more or less subjectively/objectively depending on the use of outside information collected systematically by the individual through the use of some cognitive tool (Wlodarsky, 2010 in press; Wlodarsky, 2009). In Wlodarsky's analyses of cognitive tools used for reflection, it is clear that, with respect to these cognitive tools, the appropriateness of the tool and one's ability to use the tool will affect a subjective or objective stance for cognition (2009).

In this emerging re-conceptualization of our event path (Figure 1 above), the newly revealed complexity of the process with respect to the nature of the event itself creates a series of questions and possibilities for outcomes deriving from the nature of the event and the eventual reflection. Whereas other researchers (King and Kitchener, 1994) have suggested that the individuals themselves are arrayed on a developmental continuum of more or less reflective, we suggest that differences in reflective thinking are derived, not only from some stage or phase of capability inherent in the individual adult, but also from differences in the nature of events and subsequent cognitive processing. The apparent differences in reflection can be explained by differences in the nature of the event and the emerging dichotomies of subjectivity and objectivity (which produce differentially weighted proofs in the mind of the individual if we view this epistemologically), and the eventual degree to which the individual can re-embed the response to the event into his or her biography, following Schutz (1967) and Jarvis

Authentic Event (Subjective)	⟶	Cognition (Uninformed by Tools/Subjective)
Authentic Event (Subjective)	⟶	Cognition (Informed by Tools/Objective)
Reproduced Event (Objective)	⟶	Cognition (Uninformed by Tools/Subjective)
Reproduced Event (Objective)	⟶	Cognition (Informed by Tools/Objective)

Chart 1: The Refined Event

(2006). Based on our discussion, we have identified the multi-various complexities of event and outlined them in Chart 1 below. These complexities suggest a more nuanced view of the original event path. Each of these complexities may or may not lead eventually to reflection. However, expressing these complexities as possibilities is a more realistic description of human experience.

Implications and Caveats to an Event Typology

As we have worked through this conceptualizing process for more accurately describing the event component in our reflective path, it has become clear to us that this identified complexity raises questions for further discussion. It is also clear to us that there are implications for professional practice and for situating and describing the broader event path that should be considered. These broader implications are several; however we choose to focus on three of them:

1) Whether the event is authentic or reproduced, it is more likely to result in reflection when it occurs to an individual with a predisposition toward reflectivity. This predisposition has been described as an innate value system or an existential way of being (Birmingham, 2003; Le Cornu, 2009) wherein reflection has been described as a moral characteristic of an individual.

We have invested much of this paper in more carefully describing the event as the precipitating trigger for a path that the professional follows leading to reflection and a subsequent adoption of refined practice behaviors or a re-conceptualization of self as a professional. In either case, the *authentic* or the *reproduced* event, the individual professional must be receptive to learning from experience. This receptivity has been characterized in two ways at least: attitude or preparation for a response, and disposition or

developmental readiness for a response (Rogers, 2002).

Reflective practice can be described as the attitude adopted by an individual in order to take an external and critical look at his/her activity, in progress or completed (Choulier et al., 2007). Wong et al. (2006) argue if teachers are presented with problem-framed cases, they are naturally drawn into self-reflective inquiry. This concurs in Cochran-Smith's (2003) view of professional development as a process of helping teachers develop an attitude of inquiry toward their own teaching and learning. Evans (1985) claims that reflectivity and lifelong learning are seen as remedies to uncertainty: "it leads to pedagogy which advocates that according the learner the responsibility to participate in shaping the purpose and process of learning is the most effective route to motivation and personal development."

The prevailing notion is "a commitment to oneself which calls for the acceptance of responsibility for one's own development" (Bagnall, 2006, p. 260). Korthagen and Vasalos (2005) argue for a multi-level learning approach, which invites teachers to think about specific events in their teaching and to engage in a process called core reflection. The idea behind core reflection is that a teacher's core personality, including his or her identity and mission, profoundly influences the way that teacher practices.

In this light, the nature of the event may ultimately lead to reflection, but the nature of the individual can both enable and constrain the power of the event whether that event is *authentic* or *reproduced*.

2) An event is often authenticated by organizational climate, policy and politics (Wlodarsky & Walters, 2006). Often this authentication centers on the evaluative structures in an organization. In this way, the reproduced event has the potential to function with respect to creating reflectivity as if it were authentic.

Contrived field experiences such as those in licensure programs in colleges are perhaps inadequate to serve as *authentic*, phenomenological events for reflection where the term is used as we have above because the historicity (genuineness in space and time) of these experiences is at least suspect. Nevertheless, it is possible that highly structured grading/evaluation procedures that potentially result in punitive or negative consequences could invest these field experiences with sufficient cognitive and emotional weight to force meaningful reflection. In this view, while the event may lack historicity and thus be questioned as *authentic*, the aura or patina of history can find its substitute in the historicity of the grades assigned to the response. This response may be pseudo-reflective in this case in the same way the event is pseudo-historical, but the outcome may be the same.

The learning society and the need for "learning systems" are concepts used to make sense of a process of change. Such concepts connote growth and development which are intrinsically good, but also misleading, according to Jarvis (2006), as they relate to changes driven by economic and market priorities (read evaluative or punitive) rather than naturalistic processes of human learning.

Reflective practice is not spontaneous (Stump & Donnel, 2002) but rather implies a voluntary act (Stempfle & Badke-Schaub, 2002). Annetts and Kell found an underlying communication and induction problem between existing and newly recruited members of staff. "While the department prided itself on an established commitment to and engagement with 'professional reflection,' it was guilty of policy holding and complacency" (2009, p.68). This study demonstrated the problems associated with assumed cultural practice and socialization where organizational climate interferes, potentially, with reflection and can ascribe greater cultural importance to experiences that are not essentially *authentic*.

Lyons (2006) found that several factors interact in the activities of the teachers within her study. First, their own personal histories of teaching and learning influence their starting place, what they believe teaching to be. Then, the university itself provides a significant, new institutional context for validating discussions of teaching and learning. Last, ongoing seminars provide a scaffold for inquiry into one's teaching, a critical support for bringing to consciousness new insights into ones teaching and student learning. (p.165).

Hubball et al. (2005) suggest that faculty developers should pay particular attention to the bigger picture of institutional norms in which faculty are situated, work toward developing an academic culture that values reflective teaching practices, ensure that there is adequate time for reflection within the context of a faculty development program and, finally, through individualized prior learning assessment, develop clear expectations and goals for reflection experiences that ideally build toward a summative document or an appropriate assignment that helps integrate reflective activities (p. 78). Andreu et al. (2003) argue one of the most important features is the creation of a non-evaluative environment where participants feel safe to raise questions about their own and others' work.

Finally, in a study completed by Michael Vallance (2008), among the many findings, two are relevant to our discussion of the socio-cultural impact on the event. Vallance found that all students had input a lot of text outside class time, possibly due to the allocation of a course grade component, a socio-cultural impact on the event. Secondly, when asked if the students would use the software again in the future as a way to reflect, results indicated that the majority would not. A possible explanation could be that the students only used the software because they were required to in order to earn a reasonable grade for the course. Hobbs (2007) has found from her own experience and research that even where a supportive environment rather than the grade is prioritized, individuals, by nature, tend to believe that writing ideas that their superiors agree with or view as intelligent and meaningful will have a positive effect on their grade or position.

With respect to the nature or type of event, whether *authentic* or *reproduced*, it is clear from the findings across this selection of research that the event itself and the very path toward reflection is highly influenced by the socio-cultural and political expectations of the practice environment. This skew will only enhance again the complexity of the pathway from any type of event toward closure and professional reengagement in practice.

> *3) The eventual degree to which the individual can re-embed the response to the event into his or her biography is contingent upon the degree to which the event is authentic/subjective or reproduced/objective, following Schutz (1967) and Jarvis (2006).*

As individuals, we do bring biases to our interpretation of experiences. Nevertheless, interpretation is not the extent of our reality. By nature, some events are historical for us and carry the epistemological weight of our direct sensory input. Some events are not historical—they are retellings and scenarios and the stories of others recast for our use and potential learning. It seems to us that the historic distance of the precipitating event from our lives may be a direct measure—though an abstract one—of the distance we must cover to re-embed the lessons learned through the experience into our responses in future, similar events. This notion is quite abstract but closes for us this paper as an intellectual exercise.

Authentic events are already embedded in our personal histories and biographies by definition. We have directly lived these events. *Reproduced* events, regardless of relevance to professional practice, are encountered secondarily at best with respect to our personal history and biography. While these *reproduced* events may serve as powerful and useful triggers for the subsequent event path and may lead to deep growth and re-conceptualizations of both self and practice, they will necessitate greater work. Their effect—if we may grasp a statistical metaphor—is diffused over greater historical distance and must therefore be more powerful to produce the same effect as a direct, historically perceived, *authentic* event.

Conclusion

In this paper we have attempted to bring focus, through discussion and a selective incorporation of relevant literature and our research as background, to the event that triggers a process leading to professional reflection. In this discussion, we have identified a theoretical and philosophical basis for categorizing these events dichotomously, the conceptions of reality and experience developed by Walter Benjamin in his work in the 1930s and later, and the work of Jean Baudrillard around authenticity and simulation. Such a discussion reveals that our earlier work on the process of reflection inadvertently masked a greater complexity for understanding the elements in this path, as well as the overall model itself. As our body of research has developed and evolved, we have identified a more accurate depiction of the real connections between lived experience, cognition, and change that are embedded in professional reflection, but do reveal that much of what we know about adult learning and change in institutions such as colleges of education is simplistic and immature. Certainly the more complex

view of the precipitating event suggests that later considerations—the disposition of the individual, the socio-cultural and political environment, and the personal life of the individual—are ever more complex, and more deeply connected to the outcomes than our model and the models of others suggest. In that vein, as we learned at our earliest developmental stages as researchers, more careful definitional work is critical and necessary.

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***Book Review: From brain to mind: Using neuroscience to guide change in education.
by James E Zull; Sterling, Virginia: Stylus Publishing , 2011***

Dora Bailey, Ph.D.

Reading this book is an interesting journey in self-awareness. Zull manages to invite thoughts about one's own brain-to-mind journey, as well as invites thoughts on how teachers help develop a brain into a mind. He is a biochemist who is able to translate clearly his understanding of the brain and current neuroscience knowledge. The content of this book makes it clear that a teacher must understand how a mind works to be an accomplished teacher. The organization of the journey is through chapters that naturally follow each other. The first chapter, 'The Natural Journey from Brain to Mind', lays out the history of brain knowledge and an overview of the book. Teaching and learning experiences occur naturally and formally as the brain develops in to an active mind. The reader easily transits to the second chapter, 'The Great Transformation', which is about changing perceptions, a brain's movement to action which is the beginning of the mind. Chapters 3-5: 'Finding the Freedom, Finding the Joy'; 'Deeper Learning through Integration', and' Getting the Picture' lay the foundation for the next three chapters: 'Basics', 'Creating Memory', and 'Using Memory'. In this progression Zull explains that using memory is the destination of the journey from brain towards mind - a journey that is not finished as long as there is life. Finally, Zull concludes that organizing knowledge to serve the learner is the 'Purpose and Principles for Education' , Ch. 9, and discuses the 'Connecting Thread', Ch. 10, which is about metacognition and an integrating the mind.

While reading the introduction it is natural to connect one's teaching journey as well as the journey of one's own mind's development. Zull outlines his role as interpreter in the journey from brain to mind, relating what is known about both the brain and the mind, through illustrative stories, and by enticing the reader to connect with the text by recalling the reader's own stories. Zull's stories are intensely personal and seemingly ordinary to, yet they anchor the information expertly as they serve as discussion bases to illustrate the neuroscience of the brain and the journey of brain-to-mind. Zull sets up the goal for the book as well as the goal for educators as he states, "Our goal should be spontaneous demonstration of habits of mind. We can claim success if learners demonstrate optimism, confidence, proceed to take actions, and ask questions when given a task. This is in contrast to getting it right. [In the future and even now] the machines will get it right if they are asked the right questions." So teaching success is really determined not by paper-pencil texts but "... by meeting individual criteria defined by the traveler himself or herself. If we say our journey is a success, it is." (p. 5) So, if a child claims boredom, an unsuccessful educational journey has occurred.

Zull continually uses simple diagrams of physical structures of the brain to illustrate his points. Each chapter begins with a diagram of the cortex with areas shaded to highlight the parts of the brain that will be discussed. Throughout the book additional cortex images are included. Imaging is explained as key to thinking therefore Zull uses stimulates the reader's own imaging in the discussions. For example, he includes a side-by-side images of neurons during sensory, short-term and long-term memory to show biochemical differences. He includes story to trigger the reader's. He

shows that the brain's engagement with these experiences activate change in the biological nerve cells, and all of life experiences comprise the experiential learning journey. Zull convinces the educator to tap into all of a learner's experiences to help the mind develop as it learns new ways of thinking. The brain and mind are predisposed to learning - we as educators can help create meaningful 'short cuts' if we do our jobs appropriately. Educators can help the mind become aware of its own thinking - metacognition, executive functions such as making choices, planning, and intentional memory recall, etc. (p. 259)

Furthermore Zull suggest there could be a dramatic synergy between technology and what we know about how the mind works which should "... put all learners on the path from brain to mind." (p. 231) In today's society folks need their brain to become a flexible mind as they shift from one type of job to another throughout their lifetimes. Lifelong learners apply insights from one type of job to another type of job as the mind adapts.

This book is a must read for the serious educator and should be read though to the end. In the epilogue - Zull coaxes the reader to consider the opportunity that exists with the influx of technology into our lives and into our learning environments. The entire system of education has an opportunity to change. Education no longer needs to be about memorizing; technology can be used to remember things and facts. Education can be about learning to learn, about metacognition, and about helping learners take 'short cuts' in the randomness of the way natural experiences appear to the mind. Although "[n]ature does not always follow our linear and logical path" (p. 159), "[m]etacognition depends on the nature of our experiences." (p. 276) Give yourself and exciting journey; experience *From brain to mind: Using neuroscience to guide change in education* by James Zull!

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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.
9) Opportunities for individual professional growth and leadership.
10) Dissemination of current information through OATE journals, newsletters, conferences, etc.
11) Collaboration with other education entities sharing common interests.
12) Legislative alerts and representation for teacher educators to provide a voice with state policymakers.
13) Opportunities for networking with other professionals for innovative practices.

2011-2012 OATE Officers and Executive Committee

President	Dora Bailey
President Elect	Rachel Wlodarsky
Past President	Linda Billman
Secretary	Therese Kightlinger
Treasurer	Sally Barnhart
Membership	Lynn Kline
ATE Conference Delegates:	Dariel Jacobs (2013)
	Linda Billman (2013)
	Lisa Huelskamp
	Jim Whiteman
Standards Chair	Dariel Jacobs
Journal Co-Editors	Sarah Cecire
	Virginia McCormack
Awards Co-Chairs	Jackie Wilbanks
	Gail Saunders-Smith
	Cynthia Geer
Field Director Forum	Sally Barnhart
Co-Chairpersons	Connie Bowman
Executive Secretary	Diane Nelson
Web Master	Ann Shelly

2012-2013 Conference Schedule

OCTEO/OATE Spring Conference
March 16-18, 2012
The Crowne Plaza Dublin Hotel
Columbus, OH

OCTEO/OATE Fall Conference 2012
The Crowne Plaza Dublin Hotel
Columbus, OH

ATE 2013 Annual Meeting
February 16-20, 2013
Hyatt Regency
Atlanta, Georgia

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

OATE INVITES YOU…*to attend and participate in conferences and/or submit a proposal for presentation of your research or project to OATE and/or ATE.*

You are invited…

To share your research and ideas
with other teacher educators!

The Fall 2012and Spring 2013 issues of
The Ohio Journal of Teacher Education
will be an open theme issue.

Submission guidelines are on the last page of this issue.

The Ohio Journal of Teacher Education

The Ohio Journal of Teacher Education provides a forum for the exchange of information and ideas concerning the improvement of teaching and teacher education. Articles submitted should reflect this mission. Their focus should concern concepts, practices, and/or results of research that have practical dimensions, implications, or applicability for practitioners involved with teacher education. The journal is regional in scope and is sent as a benefit of membership in the Ohio Association of Teacher Education.

Manuscripts are subject to review of the Professional Journal Committee and editorial consultants. Points of view are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily those of either Association.

Permission to reproduce journal articles must be requested from the editors.

Manuscript Guidelines

Content: Journal issues may be "thematic" or "open." Currently, all future issues are designated "open."

Length: Manuscripts, including all references, bibliographies, charts, figures, and tables, generally should not exceed 15 pages.

Style: For writing and editorial style, follow directions in the latest edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.* Omit the author's name from the title page. Include 100 word abstract. Please do not use auto formatting when preparing the manuscript! When preparing the list of references, please use the hanging indent feature. Do NOT press Enter at the end of each line and tab in to create the second line indent. Use of the Enter and Tab keys when formatting the reference list, creates an editing nightmare when transferring the manuscript into the publishing program.

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.

Submission: Submissions must be word processed using Microsoft Office Word (Microsoft Excel tables are permitted). Submit the manuscript as an attachment to an e-mail to mccormav@ohiodominican.edu.

Note: It is assumed that all manuscripts submitted to the editors have received local IRB approval. Any manuscripts that do not follow the above procedures will be returned.

Editorial Procedures

Authors will be notified of the receipt of the manuscript. After an initial review by the editors, those manuscripts which meet specifications will be sent to reviewers. Notification of the status of the manuscript will take place after the deadline date for each issue. The journal editors will make minor editorial changes; major changes will be made by the author prior to publication. Manuscripts are accepted throughout the year however, listed below are target dates.

Deadline for **Spring 2013** submissions is **October 1, 2012**
Deadline for **Fall 2013** submissions is **February 1, 2013**

Manuscripts, editorial correspondence, and questions can be directed to Virginia McCormack, Ed. D.., The Ohio Journal of Teacher Education, Ohio Dominican University, 1216 Sunbury Rd., Columbus, OH 43219, (614) 251-4766, mccormav@ohiodominican.edu