

Influences on Preservice Teacher Socialization: A Qualitative Study

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Introduction

Teacher education programs endeavor to transform university students into effective teachers who are competent not only in pedagogy and management, but also in content knowledge, assessment, and issues of diversity. To achieve this end, university classes are added, amended, or reconfigured. Despite these changes, however, the quality of new teachers is still a concern (Eldar, Nabel, Schechter, Talmor, & Mazin, 2003).

The variability of graduating teachers' effectiveness is mainly due to how much they transfer the content, skills, and philosophy from education programs into K-12 classrooms. Three specific obstacles to this transfer include preservice teachers' preconceptions about teaching, preoccupations with performance as instructors and students, and misperceptions of their own teaching abilities.

Preservice teachers often enter education programs believing they already know what teaching entails due to a 13-year "apprenticeship" during their own K-12 education (Lortie, 1975). During this apprenticeship, students watch their teachers, learning what teachers are and what teachers do (Lortie, 1975; Schempp & Graber, 1992). The observations made during this phase are often incorrect as students view the actions without understanding the teachers' internal motives, expertise, and work away from the front of the classroom. Nonetheless, these preconceptions are often strong and change-resistant, impeding new learning from occurring, thereby limiting an education program's impact (Joram & Gabriele 1998; Pajares, 1993; Wubbels, 1992). Likewise, new learning may be erased due to field experiences when preservice teachers enter classrooms similar to the ones they attended: new ideas are often removed and pre-conceptions from their apprenticeship are re-fortified (Eisner, 1992). Some researchers state

that no substantial changes in beliefs or conceptions are made during the educational program and thus there is nothing to “wash-out” during field experiences (Tabachnik & Zeichner, 1981).

An additional barrier to transferring learning is that preservice teachers anxiously focus on their own performance and actions rather than on the learning by their students. They are concerned about their performance regarding content knowledge and how they appear to their cooperating teachers and university supervisors (Fuller, 1969). However, at the end of their field experiences, they are given good grades that allow them to believe they are successful teachers even though they may not have transferred any methods or strategies from the university. When they enter their own classroom, they continue the same practices, believing themselves to be successful. Once again, the impact of the education program disappears.

A third barrier to successful transfer of learning is that preservice teachers may be overly confident and unrealistically optimistic regarding their own abilities as teachers. “[S]tudents who hold unrealistic expectations about their own success may devalue the need for professional preparation and may experience severe ‘reality shock’ when they actually become teachers” (Weinstein, 1989, p. 59). Thus, they do not accept and internalize university teachings because they do not value them as necessary. Without a deeply internalized understanding of the relationship between their instruction and the students’ learning, preservice teachers cannot plan nor adapt their instruction to promote student learning. They are often “poor duplicators... instead of initiators of learning” (Foss & Kleinsasser, 1996, p. 429). Once again, the changes in conceptions encouraged by the university are not apparent in the actions of the preservice teachers.

This qualitative paper presents case studies of four secondary social studies preservice teachers during the last two years of a five-year undergraduate/two-year post-baccalaureate

education program at a large, urban university with a nationally recognized education program (Wulf, 1997). During the first year, preservice teachers took all of their education courses and completed the coursework for their bachelor's degrees. Additionally, they spent 50 and 60 hours, respectively, in two quarter-long field experiences. They took their secondary social studies methods course concurrent with this first field experience. Their second year consisted of an internship as a half-time teacher-of-record in a Professional Practice School (PPS) partnered with the university. The schools' strong commitment to these partnerships was evidenced in their actions: They paid each intern a significant stipend and committed personnel to act as mentors and school-based liaisons. Preservice teachers also attended weekly team meetings at their PPS, consisting of the intern(s), mentor teacher, university supervisor, and site liaison, and weekly seminars at the university focusing on best practices in secondary social studies. University expectations printed in a preservice teacher handbook centered on constructivist philosophy, student-centered instruction, authentic assessment, and the use of a variety of resources, materials, and methods. These methods were modeled by professors within the education classes and assignments correlated with these expectations. At the end of their internship, the preservice teachers created portfolios to show their understanding and abilities within these expectations.

The four preservice teachers in this study received a very consistent message about the university expectations as one professor, Dr. Wilson, taught many of their classes. He taught the Instructional Strategies class, the Social Studies Methods class, and coordinated supervision for their field experiences. Further, he acted as the university supervisor at a few of the PPS's and facilitated the biweekly seminar classes during the intern year. In addition, he was instrumental in the creation of the university's educational reforms and in writing the printed expectations.

Analysis of the copious data yielded an important construct consisting of three factors affecting the transfer of learning in individuals. These include the strength of preservice teachers' initial beliefs and self-efficacy; the acceptance and internalization of knowledge and skills from university classes as well cooperating teachers, students, and institution; and the relationship and acceptance of feedback from university supervisor.

Theoretical Framework

Two theories provide a foundation for analyzing the data. The first, Cognitive Dissonance Theory, states that a person's behavior changes when those behaviors clash with held beliefs, attitudes, or perceptions (Festinger, 1957). When a clash occurs, a person changes the behaviors or beliefs so that they match, allowing for the restoration of equilibrium. Thus, preservice teachers' espoused beliefs need to match their classroom practices.

In the second theory, the Dialectical Theory of Socialization, equilibrium again is the goal; however, the clash is between students' beliefs and societal expectations (Schempp & Graber, 1992). For preservice teachers, the "society" whose expectations need to be met include their professors and education programs and/or their cooperating teachers and the schools. According to this theory, preservice teachers need to work through four levels of conflict in the socialization process. The first, internal socialization or the pre-training stage, includes all of the experiences and development up to entering the teacher education program. Their so-called "apprenticeship" (Lortie, 1975), educational experiences and beliefs, and personal self-efficacy are some of the components of this stage; university programs do not directly affect this stage, but admissions into a college program may be based on them. The second stage is the university teacher education in-class stage, during which preservice teachers learn the basics of becoming a teacher. If their perceptions about what teaching is conflicts with what occurs or is being taught

in the classroom, they may opt to drop out of the education program, dismiss the new information as incorrect/unrealistic, or change their perceptions to accept these new ideas. The third stage consists of field experiences and student teaching, during which preservice teachers ostensibly take what they have learned and apply it. Weinstein (1989) noted that tug-of-wars occur during this stage when university and school-based demands conflict. Again, the preservice teachers need to find internal equilibrium based on their accepted truths about teaching, learning, and education. The final step is the induction stage during which the preservice teachers begin their teaching careers and maneuver through institutional constraints.

Methodology

In an Instructional Strategies course, eight of sixteen secondary social studies education majors volunteered to be part of this study. Of those eight, I chose six using a maximum variation strategy for purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990): The participants equally represented males and females as well as graduate and undergraduate status. Two subsequently dropped out of the education program and the study, one due to time constraints and one due to lack of program prerequisites.

Research of the preservice teachers occurred over a two-year period beginning in an Instructional Strategies course and continuing through two field experiences until the end of their year-long internship. In order to triangulate the data, I used three groups of information. The first source included interviews, focus groups, and direct observations. The second set of information consisted of the written observations and formal evaluations composed by the mentor teachers, site liaisons, and university supervisors. The final set contained the preservice teachers' written work including reflective journals, lesson plans, and class work. Additionally, mentor teachers were interviewed regarding their teaching philosophies and practices. The observations,

including those that I made and the ones made by their mentors and supervisors, revealed the preservice teachers' actual practices. These data were compared to the preservice teachers' espoused beliefs, lesson plans, and reflective journals for congruency.

Data was initially coded openly according to the university-designed rubric in the areas of Instruction and Student Learning. I inductively added codes regarding relevant background experiences; a total of 30 codes were used. I then re-coded the data according to Schempp and Graber's (1992) four stages of socialization. This allowed the data to be structured along a theoretical framework, for longitudinal patterns to emerge, and for comparisons to prior research to occur.

The high drop-out rate from this study is an obvious limitation as the loss of one-third of the initial participants can make patterns invisible. In order to remedy this problem, findings are presented in case study format which "provide[s] more valid portrayals, better bases for personal understanding of what is going on and solid grounds for considering action" (Patton, 1990, 99).

Descriptive Findings

The four preservice teachers that remained in the program included Theresa, John, Kim, and Frank. The first two were in the Masters program while the latter two were undergraduates in the five-year program. Included are descriptions of each participant (See Table 1).

Theresa

Theresa greatly feared failing. She was insecure about her ability to teach and responded defensively to any criticism, constructive or otherwise. She did well in her university lecture-based history classes, but not as well in the education classes. She believed that low grades earned and the request to re-do certain assignments were because her professor "hated" her personally. She therefore belittled the professor, assignments, expectations, and overall program.

Table 1: Overview of Findings

	Frank	Kim	John	Theresa	
Educational Status	Undergraduate	Undergraduate Non-Traditional	Graduate Second Master's	Graduate	
Self-Efficacy	Very Strong	Strong	Very Strong	Weak	
Initial Beliefs	Highly Resilient	Accommodating	Accommodating	Highly Resilient	
Acceptance & Internalization from University	Field Experiences	Enthusiastically accepted and implemented university teaching in first placement; attempted implemented in second placement	Accepted and implemented university teachings throughout both field placements	Espoused University Teachings, but chose not to implement them due to time and control issues	Increasingly Accepted & Internalized Teachings during Early Field Experiences
	Internship	Attempted to implement university teachings but believed that he was unable to be 100% effective.	Attempted to implement university teachings even when it conflicted with mentor's expectations	Chose not to implement university teachings after two months, citing problems with students	Quickly Discontinued University-based Practices
Supervisor	Dr. Wilson	Dr. Wilson	Dr. Timons	Dr. Timons	
Cooperating Teacher	Fully Supported Education Program	Supported Education Program Somewhat	Fully Rejected Education Program	Fully Rejected Education Program	
End Results	Internalized Program Objectives; Dropped Out of Program	Internalized Program Objectives; Completed Program	Espoused Program Objectives; Chose not to Practice them	Rejected Program Objectives; Refused to Practice them	

During her first field placement, the cooperating teacher supported Theresa so much that she felt personally indebted to him and fully accepted his philosophy and expectations – which happened to mirror those of the university. Thus, despite her negative attitude towards the university program, Theresa ended up accepting the university endorsed constructivist practices and showed she could implement instruction that promoted this type of student learning.

She proved the strength of this acceptance during her second field placement when her cooperating teacher commented negatively about the abilities of his students: in an interview, she criticized him for not holding high enough expectations for his students and for not caring about their learning. Thus, prior to her internship, she accepted the relationship between instruction and learning as the university held it.

After her field experience, Theresa interned at Oakmont High School, whose student population consisted mainly of low socioeconomic status students. Initially, she attempted to implement instructional strategies consistent with the constructivist principles. These were dismissed off-handedly by the school's liaison to the university. In an interview, Theresa recounted a discussion with the liaison about what would occur during a formal observation:

I said, "Oh, we're doing this great thing with these groups and the kids are going to present." And she [the site liaison] said, "But then I'd be watching the kids."

And I'm thinking, "The creators of their own learning." And she's like, "I'd rather watch you."

The understanding by Theresa was that the liaison did not equate cooperative learning with teaching. Her dismissal of university expectations was echoed more directly by her mentor teacher, who stated in an interview,

These kids need structure – you need to care, but you’re the teacher and set rules.... I stress getting the kids involved, not doing straight lecture.... Many of the interns show up and have no clue about teaching inner-city kids – the professors don’t either. The interns show up and try to bring theory in and want to do group stuff. Theory may work beautifully in some classes and not at all in others. Lots of theory is trash; I go with my instinct.

While he stressed getting students involved, he expected the classroom to be teacher-centered, not student-centered, which conflicted with the university’s expectations.

Theresa’s university supervisor, Dr. Timony, who met with Theresa and her team on Fridays after school, never appeared to challenge any team members’ assumptions about instruction and learning, but merely asked vague questions about how the week had gone. Not wanting to stay late on a Friday afternoon, Theresa believed that no one wanted to get into long conversations and believed the meetings to be useless.

When asked about her instructional strategies near the end of her internship, Theresa explained that she kept the same routine every week: introductory lecture, review of lecture, a movie or reading, a review of the chapter, and a chapter quiz. She admitted that it was boring for the students, but defended her practices in two ways: first, she said it was a quick way to cover all the information assessed on the school-wide common exam; second, she said it allowed her to be in charge with the students quiet in their seats.

I give lots of notes, I give lots of assignments, I have an assignment for nearly everyday.... Either book work or worksheet or some kind of supplemental reading and worksheet, a video and worksheet, that kind of stuff. And I think it’s a management issue and that’s why I’m so teacher-directed ‘cause I’m scared to

death 'cause I had so many management problems in the beginning that I'm *not* going to be able to teach and manage my students. So in order for management, I keep myself in constant control of the classroom.

Whether intentional or not, her mentor teacher and liaison's primary emphasis on management and certainty about lecture as effective instruction coupled with the lack of constructive feedback by her university supervisor allowed Theresa to form inaccurate image of instruction, learning, and the relationship between them.

Theresa's understanding of student learning was also very ambiguous. When asked about how she knew students were learning, Theresa answered, "I pray." After a short pause, she continued,

I don't. I don't know that my students are learning. I assume that my students are learning because *I'm* learning so much and I can't be doing the same thing that I'm having them do and them not be learning... I'm making that assumption and I don't know if they're learning it. But do we ever really know if they're learning? I know that some of my kids *tell* me that they're learning. They tell me they feel comfortable with the subject, but are they learning for sure? Who knows?

Theresa's answer illustrates her lack of understanding about student learning and the role of assessment in the classroom. It further reveals that Theresa could not justify the methods she used to instruct as no evidence was apparent to her.

Interestingly, when asked about her best lesson, Theresa chose a lesson she designed using the jigsaw cooperative learning method during her second field experience. In this lesson, she assigned students to be representatives of various countries at the end of World War I. After an initial learning session, students broke into new "treaty groups" in which each student

represented a different country. She claimed this was her best lesson, saying, “I think the kids learn the best... that mindset was so powerful. And I really think that the kids understood it.” This contrasts significantly from her response regarding her knowledge of student learning. However, when asked how she would teach if management were not an issue, she quickly stated, “I would probably keep things same way.... I still think I’d be teacher directed” as she was during her internship. Thus, after presenting a constructivist lesson as her best lesson and recognizing that it produced powerful student learning, she reverted back to her teacher-centered strategies where student learning was questionable.

Although she attempted to apply constructivist principles early in her internship, her perceived self-preservation overrode her interest in student learning when she found her classes to be unmanageable. She could not recognize the irony that she chose a constructivist lesson as the best one. Her responses about management, learning, assessment, and instructional approaches showed that she could not recognize the connectedness of the four and illustrate a nearly complete wash-out of everything advocated by the university.

John

John saw teaching as synonymous with coaching – and that’s what he loved to do. He coached little league soccer, hockey, baseball, and football and saw himself as a natural at that. By extension, he believed himself to be a natural at teaching. He opined early in his first year, I’ve been coaching so I’ve had to kind of – I’ve had those days where I’ve had to walk in prepared and other days I’ve had to do it off the cuff.... Need to have planned experiences in front of people and experiences in front of people and experiences where you kind of have to adapt to the situation. And I’ve had those experiences, so I’m definitely ready to go.

He espoused acceptance of university expectations early and often commented on his desire to teach like Dr. Wilson. However, most of his lessons during his early field experiences were teacher-centered and book-based.

The cooperating teacher at his first placement was a traditional, 25-year veteran who John immediately connected with because of their common background in coaching football. Within one breath, John recognized that this teacher “may not be what [the program] wants” due to his teacher-centered instruction and also that “he is what I’m going to be in 25 years probably.” His cooperating teacher’s apparent disdain for cooperative learning or “artsy” lessons coupled with John’s personal ability to learn via lecture led him to accept lecturing as a most effective instructional technique. However, his lectures did not always succeed due to lack of planning, attempts to ad lib without sufficient content knowledge, poor questioning and time management skills. Instead of accepting his limitations or recognizing the need to spend more time planning, John blamed his lack of success on being overwhelmed by his six classes plus the 60 hours of field experience; he found lecturing the easiest and least time consuming way to teach.

In his second field experience, the cooperating teacher demanded proof of student learning for each lesson via formative assessments. Although not consistently implemented, John wrote lessons that met this challenge, showing that he could create lessons that met university expectations. Many of these lessons continued to use lecture as the main instructional technique. Interestingly, throughout both of his field experiences, John expressed his intent to teach like Dr. Wilson, the social studies methods professor, using hands-on, student-centered instructional techniques that impacted student learning.

During his internship, he shared a mentor teacher and university supervisor with Theresa. Like Theresa, John began the year by planning a variety of lessons in line with constructivist

principles. Unfortunately, John failed to implement the lessons well, either because he did not follow them correctly or because he felt that he was not in control when students were working without him. For example, in one lesson plan, students were to apply the terms liberal, conservative, and moderate to “their every day lives, such as dating, parental rules, alcohol consumption, etc. Students will then apply these broad definitions to political issues such as abortion, defense spending, and the death penalty....” However, when he implemented the lesson, he lectured and chaos ensued. His mentor teacher made no suggestions regarding the implementation of the lesson nor the objectives for student learning; the only suggestions were managerial in nature, such as “Do not try to speak over the students.”

Because it took less effort to plan and to keep the students under control, John accepted the mentor teacher’s instructional style rather than using the best-practices advocated by the university by mid-October. He continued to espouse a desire to teach more student-centered lessons in the future, saying,

I can’t have a discussion with them right now. I cannot have a lecture discussion...But now it’s gotten to the point where I’m just going to have them come in; I’m going to give them a list of terms to know, give them a pre-test, give them...say, read the chapter , do the questions, do a worksheet, review, take a quiz at the end of the week.

This diametrically opposed the university’s teachings that advocated solving managerial problems by implementing effective instruction that engaged students.

Interestingly, John produced lesson plans based on constructivist principles for his weekly seminars, run by Dr. Wilson. Although these lessons were supposed to be examples of interns’ best work implemented in school, John acknowledged, “I made a few of them up.

There's no way that I can do with my kids what he wants us to do;" he knew his real lesson plans would not be acceptable. He made no attempt to hide the truth from his university supervisor, Dr. Timony, because she rarely asked to see the lesson plans and, according to John, never commented negatively on them

When asked at the end of the year how he knew that his students were learning, John focused on half-page writing assignments he gave the students. He believed that these papers showed the students' deep level of understanding and learning. In reality, the papers John deemed "excellent" were those that repeated *his* sentiments from earlier in that class period. John not only presented no evidence of students learning, but he also apparently held no understanding of how learning occurred or what evidence of learning looked like.

This lack of understanding reappeared in his teaching portfolio. In the section addressing student learning, John never once mentioned constructivist principles as tools for student learning. Instead, he focused on having a classroom climate conducive to student learning, a positive and approachable teacher, and well behaved, cooperative students. He wrote, "...the coupling of my enthusiastic and positive style with structured routines, discipline, and clear expectations will generate a 'positive classroom environment' in which students have the maximum opportunity for success." Instead of associating instruction, student engagement, and assessment with learning, he equated structure and discipline with learning.

While John showed that he *could* design lessons for his weekly seminars that aligned with the expected theories and methods, his responses at the end of the intern year showed that he did not understand the relationship between instruction, assessment, management, and learning. His failure to implement constructivist practices well led him to completely abandon

any attempts during his intern year. Nonetheless, he continued to espouse that “perhaps someday” he would teach in a manner encouraged by the university.

Kim

Kim, a non-traditional undergraduate, earned her GED a few years after dropping out of high school. She wanted to make a difference in lives of students, especially those like she had been: poor, unmotivated, at-risk. She believed that she held a greater understanding of their needs, motivation, and lives than her colleagues in the education program. She continually held that a good teacher who cares about her students could help any child succeed educationally. She took her duty to promote student learning very seriously: She spent hours planning, finding resources and materials, and attempting to make social studies relevant.

Kim’s two field experiences the prior year differed significantly and provide insight into Kim’s philosophies about instruction and learning. The first placement at Lockwood Middle School housed mainly low socioeconomic African-American students and employed block scheduling with 80-minute classes. The curriculum focused on the state-mandated standardized tests and the cooperating teacher wanted evidence of student learning, usually via worksheets. In the second placement, which held a much more economically and racially diverse population, the cooperating teacher held no expectations about student goals and allowed Kim complete autonomy regarding instruction and curriculum. Disappointed in this field experience, Kim commented that the cooperating teacher “played” all day, talking to her friends on the phone, and not taking teaching seriously. “I want to learn and I don’t feel like [this situation] will allow me to learn anything!” However, during the 60-hour placement, Kim implemented many of the strategies learned during her first placement and from the university.

Kim returned to Lockwood Middle School for her intern year where she attempted to implement constructivist principles. Although early lessons observed by her university supervisor, Dr. Wilson, lacked “evidence of constructivist principles,” she accepted the constructive criticism and applied it to subsequent lessons. For example, Kim began her lesson about the U.S. Flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Star Spangled Banner by asking students about sports’ teams mascots and what they represented. She then asked students what the flag represented. Later, when the students read the Star Spangled Banner, she asked for students’ observations and whether they were still applicable today. Improvement in her strategies was noted on a formal assessment stating that Kim, “provided opportunities for students to be producers of knowledge.”

Interestingly, Kim felt that the expectations from her mentor teacher and university supervisor conflicted, putting her in the middle of a tug-of-war match. She stated that while she did “not want anyone to sit in class and do nothing,” she felt that actively involving her students caused management problems and that some students needed more teacher-centered instruction due to familial and economic circumstances. Specifically, Kim commented that while Dr. Wilson encouraged and further guided Kim’s implementation of constructivist principles, she felt that her mentor teachers was not always pleased:

She says it’s too hard [referring to a test she gave her students where many of them did poorly] — that I give them too much reading. I’m faced with a dilemma of what to do. [She] has really good proficiency rates [on state standardized tests] – like 85%, but it’s all drill and practice. It’s exactly against what [Dr.] Wilson says.

According to Kim, additional conflict occurred due to the teachers' focus on the students passing the state standardized test and the university supervisor's focus on students' understanding of social studies concepts. Kim believed that her mentor "would push me to make the focus more, just factual knowledge" whereas Dr. Wilson wants students to think and construct their own knowledge; she claimed to opt for some middle ground. Interestingly, in an interview with the mentor teacher at the end of the year, she claimed that the university program "matches up fine for the most part" with her own expectations and was "really happy having Dr. Wilson on the team this year. He gave lots of support."

When asked about her top concern, Kim focused on her students' learning. She stated, "How much are my students learning? Have I made it a valuable year for them? Or have I not. Have I failed to teach them what I should have? I think that – gauging it—is a big thing for me. I'm always going back to what we did at the beginning of the year and no one remembers because I'm afraid that I'm going to have wasted their whole year. And they not know nothing. So my biggest concern is keeping them focused and getting the maximum amount of instructional time from them so that they aren't behind."

And when asked about how she knew if they were learning, she answered quickly and without hesitation,

Lots of ways. Question and answer – I do a lot of that to see where they're at. Worksheet activities, quizzes, Jeopardy – Lots of ways. Different ways: Writing activities, where I ask them to explain things in their own words. I – answer a couple of questions, and writing – and letting them make up the questions.

Sometimes I let them make up the questions for like Jeopardy. To see if they really understand what it is we're going over.

Thus, despite the tug-of-war and management issues experienced by Kim during her internship, she held to university expectations, believing that the underlying theories and philosophies would support students' learning most strongly.

Frank

Frank held no doubts about his ability to teach: his friends convinced him in high school that he would be great. His first field experience was with a cooperating teacher whose support allowed Frank to always succeed. As Frank created projects and lessons, his cooperating teacher acted as a co-author, adding ideas, making suggestions, and trouble-shooting. During the implementation of lessons, the cooperating teacher helped manage the class and added comments/instructions to clarify and improve the lesson. This incredible and easy success promoted Frank's self-efficacy unrealistically.

This success was not fully repeated during Frank's second field experience. He blamed this moderated success on the traditional expectations of the cooperating teacher. Frank said that "he didn't use as many of the different teaching styles." Nonetheless, Frank applied university methods when possible, claiming, "I'd rather a kid know how to think critically about something rather than just know when something happened – just facts and dates. Because that's what a lot of people, history teachers do. In my experience, it's just rote memorization, kids leave it there."

From the beginning of his intern year, Frank focused on student learning, attempting to create student-centered, active lessons. He explained his planning process:

I use Bloom's Taxonomy a lot when I'm developing lesson plans. When I was starting off [late August/early September], I wasn't getting much above the

knowledge level and comprehension and things like that. Now [late September] I try to incorporate application and stuff... I have 72 minutes – a lot of time. So I try to have two – I try to break the class up into two different parts.

He often revisited his social studies methods course, using activities like “like, jigsaws, and rally tables, and think-pair-square, and that kind of stuff.” For example, he assigned journals that demanded students use higher-level thinking skills. These included prompts like, “What city-state would I rather live in and why” and “Assume the role of a patrician/soldier/plebian and write a letter to a friend.” In cooperative groups, students created flags, mottos, and 60-second summaries about various city-states. However, Frank’s intentions did not always result in the desired outcome. As his university supervisor, Dr. Wilson, observed, “He passed out the reading with no question to guide student reading or indicate they had read and understood the reading.” And, although Frank questioned the students about the reading (e.g., “What do you think this means? Why did Socrates not beg for his life?”), Dr. Wilson noted that the “responses were very limited...little probing.”

In an interview with Dr. Wilson, he noted that many of Frank’s problems stemmed from the lack of time he spent on lesson construction. Frank’s participation on the university track and field team, despite Dr. Wilson’s urgings to quit, took an inordinate amount of time. Frank laughed about this, saying he graded papers on the bus going to and from track meets. However, it was no joking matter: his decision to run left inadequate time to fully plan daily lessons, meet with his mentor teacher, and find needed resources. Further, it gave the impression that he was not fully committed to his teaching responsibilities. Nonetheless, Frank felt that he would succeed based on his inherent teaching abilities.

Not so surprisingly, it was his mentor teacher with whom Frank experienced the most difficulties. Frank sometimes disagreed with the frequent directives the mentor gave. These critical directives had two contradictory negative consequences: they affected Frank's self-esteem and stripped him of any autonomy. As he explained,

Sometimes I feel inadequate – [my mentor] has some good stuff here, but he didn't tell me about it. He didn't say, 'I've used this for this or I've gotten some miles out of this.' I have to nearly pry it out of him. 'Can I use this? Can I use that?'

This continuous criticism led Frank to consult often with Dr. Wilson for additional assistance in planning. However, despite this help, he despaired, "I feel right now I could just sit down all day and plan. And my lessons still wouldn't be as good as my lead teacher."

Frank believed he was focusing on student learning and putting in the necessary time, but he did not feel successful. He shared in mid-November

I don't think I'm as far as I'd like to be right now. I am just a little frustrated, I guess. <pause> I'm not as good as I'd like to be, and I know it's first year, and, I mean, the kids.... We've got some kids that have a lot of problems, and IEPs and behavioral problems, but...I don't know. There's some days that I just walk out of there and it's like...I don't know if the kids got anything right now...And, I guess I just wasn't expecting that when I was teaching.

Less than two weeks later, he quit the program by failing to return after Thanksgiving break. He felt that Dr. Wilson and his mentor teacher's demands and expectations were impossible to meet. Coupled with the lack of perceived support from the latter, Frank's confidence in his teaching

ability was destroyed as he came to believe he was inherently incapable of being an excellent teacher and his desire to teach vanished.

Discussion

All four of these participants attended class together as they prepared to be secondary social studies teachers. However, the effects of the education program varied significantly: one preservice teacher dropping out, two abandoning the university program's teachings, and only one transferring learning from courses to classroom. Analysis of the data shows three factors that affect the transfer of learning.

The first factor was the strength of preservice teachers' initial beliefs and self-efficacy. When initial beliefs were too strong, preservice teachers discarded university teachings. For example, John and Theresa accepted lecture as a positive way to teach based on their own successful experiences as students. In contrast, Kim and Frank's beliefs about the best ways to teach were less rigid, allowing them to accept university teachings about other, more student-centered instructional methods. The overpowering strength of preservice teachers' self-efficacy could also be problematic if it were too strong or too weak. For John and Frank, the strength was problematic: John dismissed new information, believing that he already knew everything about teaching while Frank did not put forth the necessary time in planning because he believed he was a natural in the classroom. In both of these cases, the strength proved to be a negative. Theresa's lack of self-efficacy was equally problematic: she needed praise so badly that she altered her beliefs and actions in order to receive it. Hence, she initially rejected the education program, then later accepted its philosophy from a different sources, and eventually totally rejected it.

The second factor affecting the transfer of learning focuses on the acceptance and internalization of knowledge and skills from university classes and from field experiences. As

mentioned above, the strength of initial beliefs could act as a barrier to acceptance and internalization. While at various times in the program, all four preservice teachers espoused an acceptance for university expectations and showed their abilities to plan and implement these expectations, they did not all transfer them into the classroom. For John and Theresa, a major obstacle in this transfer was their mentor teacher, whose demands strongly conflicted with the university despite his employment in PPS. Kim's mentor teacher appeared to disagree with the philosophy of the education program, too, but allowed Kim to proceed as she needed in order to meet university expectations.

The power of the university supervisor is the third factor affecting the transfer of learning. The influence only exists if the preservice teacher has a relationship with that person and considers the supervisor supportive, knowledgeable, and helpful. While Frank and Kim complained about the arduous demands of their university supervisor, they both sought his assistance and worked hard to meet his expectations. Further, in the tug-of-war situation between university and PPS, Kim's relationship with her supervisor held her to university expectations. For Frank, his relationship with the university supervisor is what kept him in the school; he may have left earlier without the additional support provided. In contrast, John and Theresa disrespected their supervisor's lack of knowledge, recognized her lack of expectations for them, and they had no relationship with her. They produced the bare minimum, knowing that she would accept it without criticism. Further, the tug-of-war conflict for them ended as soon as it began: with no supervisory demands or support, they quickly accepted their mentor's opinions and instructional style, abandoning all university teachings.

Although this study is based on only four preservice teachers, the case study analyses provide serious food-for-thought regarding areas of importance within teacher education. The

factors affecting the transfer of learning in preservice education concern all education programs and are thus of serious significance. Further research with a larger cohort of preservice teachers is needed to advance additional understanding.

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