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Teacher Development through Exploration: Principles, Ways, and Examples

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Abstract

To truly develop as teachers, we need to be free to explore teaching, and exploration can be based on a set of principles and ways to explore. Principles can include: (1) transcending the goal of improving our teaching by aiming at seeing teaching differently, (2) taking responsibility for our own teaching while recognizing the need for others, (3) taking a non-prescriptive stance; (4) basing teaching decisions on description, (5) being nonjudgmental, (6) being reflective, (7) going beyond a problem solving attitude, and (8) exploring through different avenues, such as by trying the opposite of what we normally do. There are a variety of ways to explore our teaching.

Three ways I highly recommend and discuss and illustrate through examples include (1) self-observation, (2) observation of other teachers, and (3) talk with other teachers about what we observe in a nonjudgmental and non-prescriptive way.

Introduction

I am delighted to be invited to write this article on second language teacher development and exploration as I have had a strong interest in this topic for a number of years. My interest started when I began my first full time TESOL position teaching English to businessmen in Japan who needed to communicate with people outside Japan. It took me a short time to realize they knew a lot more about grammar than I did, but could not communicate basic ideas in English. Not many materials were on the market in the mid-1970s to teach students to communicate across cultures, so I knew I had to learn to design my own communication activities. To do this I studied books on

interpersonal and cross-cultural communication theory and practice, as well as group problem solving processes and activities. In short, I used my teaching context and curriculum goals as my catalyst for development, and I saw my development as improving my teaching by looking for better ways to teach these Japanese businessmen.

I later moved to Thailand where I taught university English majors. As these students took classes in literature, speech, and writing, I again found myself needing to develop my way of teaching to match the goals of the curriculum. But, this time I decided to read, as well as observe classes and try out other teachers' materials.

In both Japan and Thailand I was doing what most career oriented EFL teachers were doing. I recognized a need to improve my teaching, and I was looking for better ways to teach. However, it was not until later, when I enrolled in a graduate program in TESOL that I became aware that teacher development includes much more than looking for ways to improve teaching in order to adapt to the demands of a job. After reading and practicing the ideas in Fanselow's (1977) article Beyond Rashomon: Conceptualizing and Observing the Teaching Act and studying in his classes, I learned that to truly develop as a teacher, I needed to be free to explore teaching, and to explore I needed to transcend the idea that development should be based only on the concept of improvement. Instead, I needed to be able to explore teaching to see my own teaching differently.

Over the years I have had the pleasure of adapting and building on John Fanselow's exploratory approach to teaching, as well as using exploration to see my own teaching differently. I have also taught other teachers ways to explore their teaching. Bringing this background we me, the goal of this article is to explain principles of exploration, as well as discuss and illustrate ways we can explore our teaching.

Principles: An Exploratory Approach to Teacher Development

I have put together the principles in this section over a 25-year period. They are based on my own experience and synthesizing the ideas of others. I especially owe Robert Oprandy my gratitude. Through our meaningful exchanges we put together our earlier understanding of some of these principles (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999).

Principle One: *The goal of exploration is to see teaching differently*.

Fanselow (1988) emphasizes that the goal of development through exploration is to *see teaching differently*. To accomplish this we need to be willing to explore by making small changes to our teaching. For example, if you usually teach from the front of the classroom, what would happen if you taught from the back? If you always stay in the classroom when students are reading, what would happen if you left the classroom? To use analogies from outside the classroom, if you always sit in a chair to read, what happens if you sit on the floor? If you usually eat a big meal at 6:00 pm and a light

meal at noon, what happens if you reverse the times and meals?

Through exploring to see teaching differently by trying out new behaviors to see what happens affords us chances to "construct, reconstruct, and revise our teaching" (Fanselow, 1988, p. 116). When we try new things, we can compare them with what we usually do, and based on this comparison we can see our teaching differently, including our beliefs about teaching and learning.

This goal of *exploring to see our teaching differently* is quite different from a usual goal of teacher development, that of *improving our teaching*. By aiming to improve, we want to discover better ways to teach. By aiming to see our teaching differently, we want to discover new things about ourselves and consider our teaching beliefs and practices. I believe the goal of exploration transcends the concept of improvement because we can gain so much more awareness of our teaching when we do not limit ourselves to improvement and are open to discovery. For example, when I was teaching Japanese businessmen and focusing intensely on improving my teaching by creating cross-cultural communication activities for them to do in class, I was closed to discovering other aspects of my teaching, such as what might happen if I asked them to create their own cross-cultural communication activity.

Principle Two: *To explore teaching, we need to accept responsibility for our own teaching, but we also know that we need others to explore.*

As teachers we need to take responsibility as to what we want to see going on in the classroom. As Edge (1992) puts it, "As an individualÉwith or without official training and education as a teacher, only I can really understand what I am trying to do in class, how it works out for me, and what I learn from it" (p. 3).

However, exploration cannot be done in a vacuum. As Edge also explains, "I want to investigateÉmy own teaching. I can't do that without understanding it, and I can't understand it on my ownÉ (I) need other people: colleagues and students. By cooperating with others, we can come to understand our own experience and opinions" (1992, p. 4). Fanselow (1997) says this in a different way: Seeking to explore by ourselves, alone, "is like trying to use a pair of scissors with only one blade" (p. 166).

Principle Three: *Prescriptions can limit exploration*

Most us have experienced supervisors or colleagues who believe they know the best way to teach, or we have read journal articles with prescriptive messages. "You should always teach difficult vocabulary before students read!" "Group work is the best way to get students to talk!" Whether it is supervisors who are prescribing, or other teachers or even we, there are problems with the use of prescriptions. First, research on the relationship between teaching and learning offers some interesting ideas that we can try out in our teaching, but research has not, and likely never will, produce *the* methodology we should follow to be effective teachers (Kumaravadivelu, 1994).

A second problem is that prescriptions can create confusion. Some of us may want to explore by trying something different to see what happens. But, we might decide to refrain from doing so because we think there has to be a *correct* or *best* way to teach. This quandary could lead to a feeling of "half-in-half-out engagement" (Rardin, 1977).

A third problem with prescription is that it might make us feel we need to comply with what those in authority believe we should be doing in the classroom. This does not allow us to depend on ourselves, rather than on others, to find answers to our teaching questions. A result of others making decisions for us is that we can also lose the chance to discover awareness of our own teaching practices and related beliefs. Such experiential knowledge can liberate us and build our confidence so that we can indeed make our own teaching decisions based on our teaching context and knowledge about students, teaching, and ourselves (Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999).

Principle Four: *Exploration is enhanced through description.*

Rather than following prescriptions, I suggest we gather and study descriptions, such as by audio or video taping interaction, making short transcriptions, taking snap shots, or by simply writing down descriptions from memory. Such descriptions can then be studied, and based on these descriptions we can think about our teaching and generate alternative ways to teach. Descriptions allow us to do this because they provide a mirror image that we can use to reflect on teaching. In short, it is through descriptions, more than prescriptions, we can gain deeper awareness of our teaching and to see our teaching differently.

Principle Five: *Exploration is enhanced when we take a nonjudgmental stance.*

As teachers, we need to let go of judgments about teaching because they can get in the way of seeing teaching clearly and differently. In other words, judgments, whether positive or negative, our own or others', can raise emotions which can interfere with a focus on description (Simon & Boyer, 1974). For example, if a guest teacher says, "Great job on that problem solving activity!" we might feel so good that we don't really hear, "but I wonder what would happen if you did it in small groups instead of pairs."

Principle Six: *Reflection is a part of exploration.*

Educators who write about reflective teaching (Bartlett, 1990; Dewey, 1933; Farrell, 1999, 2004a, 2004b; Greene, 1986; Murphy, 2001; Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Stanley, 1998; Zeichner & Liston, 1996) point out that reflection includes thoughtful persistent consideration of beliefs or practices. Richards and Lockhart (1994) add that a part of reflective teaching includes "collecting data about teaching, examining their attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and teaching practices, and use the information obtained as a basis for critical reflection" (p. 1). Such notions are a part of exploration.

Further, the more we explore, and the more we are able to see our teaching differently, the more we gain in our abilities to *reflect-in-action* and *reflect-on-action* (Schön, 1983, 1987). This is what "reflective practitioners do when they look at their work in the moment (reflect-in-action) or in retrospect (reflect-on-action) in order to examine the reasons and beliefs underlying their actions and generate alternative actions for the future" (Stanley, 1998:585).

Principle Seven:

To see teaching differently, we need to go beyond trying to solve problems in our teaching; we can do this by taking different avenues to awareness.

Exploration of teaching includes the use of *avenues to awareness* (Gebhard, 2005; Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999). The most traveled avenue is that of problem solving. For example, when students stop doing homework, teachers consider how to get them to do it again. If students don't understand the teacher's instructions, that teacher works on ways to give instructions differently so they can understand. However, by only focusing on trying to work out problems, we miss chances to see teaching outside of these problems (Fanselow, 1987, 1988).

Although problem solving makes sense and is certainly worth doing, we can go beyond looking for solutions to problems by taking a variety of other avenues to awareness. One of these avenues is to *explore simply to see what happens*. To do this, Fanselow (1987, 1988, 1992a, 1992b, 1997) suggests we try the opposite to our usual classroom behavior. For example, if we are aware that we say "very good" after most student responses, we can be silent, and then describe what happened. If we usually have students sit in rows, we can have them form a semi-circle. If we always teach from the front of the classroom, we can try teaching from the back. If students read aloud in every class, we can ask them to read silently. The idea is to discover what we normally do and to try the opposite to see what happens.

Another avenue to awareness is *exploring to see what is*. One way to do this is *exploring what we actually do* in our teaching as opposed to *what we think we are doing*. For example, if a teacher thinks she has designed group work activities that keep students talking in English and staying on task, she could tape record students' group work interaction. By doing this, she could analyze the interaction to determine if students are talking in English and staying on task.

Another way to explore *what is* is by considering *what we believe as teachers in relation to what we do*. Do our beliefs match our actual practices? For example, some teachers don't believe in correcting students' oral errors, but they constantly correct them anyway (Jimenez-Aries, 1992).

We can also *explore to gain emotional clarity*. By exploring our feelings, we can gain awareness about things we feel deeply about or don't really care about, or are

ambivalent about. As Jersild (1955) and Oprandy (1999) emphasize, we can pay attention to the affective side of teaching, including how we feel about the students, teaching, and ourselves as teachers.

Processes: Ways to Explore To See Teaching Differently

Exploration: A Variety of Ways

As Bailey, Curtis and Nunan (1998, 2001), Richards and Farrell (2005), and I (Gebhard, 1992, 1996; Gebhard & Oprandy, 1999) show elsewhere, there are a variety of ways that we can explore our teaching. We can read professional books and journals on teaching and learning languages. We can establish a mentoring relationship with a more experienced teacher, especially if the mentor understands and practices the principles of exploration discussed earlier. We can also learn another language. By doing this we can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges that the learners face. Keeping a teaching journal is another way to explore, especially if we take time to read and think about what we have written. We can also explore teaching by doing action research. Action research can be quite useful as a way to identify, pose, and work through problems in our teaching. However, as I point out elsewhere (Gebhard, 2005, 2006) because action research focuses so much on problems, it can also limit our abilities to explore our teaching outside these problems.

Other ways to explore our teaching include self-observation, observation of other teachers, and talking about teaching we observe. In the pages that follow I elaborate on these three ways to explore teaching because I have found them to be quite conducive to seeing our teaching differently.

Self-Observation

Bailey, Curtis, and Nunan (2001) point out that self-observation is the cornerstone for all professional development. It is through the process of observation that we can have something to say in journals, work through action research projects, and talk about our teaching with others. But, self-observation as a way to explore our teaching for the purpose of seeing our teaching differently has its own unique approach separate from other professional development activities. In this section I discuss and illustrate how we can explore our teaching by describing, analyzing, interpreting, and generating teaching alternatives in a nonjudgmental systematic way through self-observation.

Teaching while Collecting Samples of Classroom Interaction

To make self-observation possible, we can collect samples of our teaching, and this can be done in a variety of ways. I like to audio tape parts of classes I teach because an audio recorder is easy to use. I can carry it with me, like an extension of my hand, and

set it down in different places. However, some teachers prefer to videotape because it is easy to recognize who is talking, and possible to study nonverbal behaviors.

At first the audio recorder or camcorder may seem a novelty, and some students will change their behavior because they are being taped. But it really doesn't take long before students accept it and act normally. I have audio- and videotaped many classes, and it is amazing how fast students accept the recorder, especially if it is treated as a natural part of the classroom setting.

How taping is done often depends on the goals of exploration. For example, if you are interested in the students' reactions to instructions or explanations, the audio recorder or camcorder can be focused on the students. If you are interested in what happens during group work, it is logical to place the audio recorder or camcorder with a group of students for a period of time. The idea is to think about the objective of the exploration and to consider how to tape the class to obtain useful samples for later analysis. Of course, it is also possible not to have an objective, and to simply collect random samples of teaching. Sometimes such descriptions can lead to interesting discoveries about our teaching.

Analyzing the Samples of Teaching

An analysis can also depend on the objective of the exploration. For example, if you are interested in knowing about the number of questions you ask, you can tally each question you ask, as well as jot down examples of actual questions. You can do the same thing for the number of errors you treat, the number of times students speak English or their native language, and the seconds you wait for students to answer a question.

A second way to analyze the collection of teaching samples is to make short transcripts from the audio- or videotapes. Again, what you decide to transcribe can depend on the focus of your exploration. For example, if you are interested in learning about how you treat language errors, you might make and study short transcripts of the times errors are treated. If the interest is on learning about the accuracy of the students' language during group work, you can transcribe and study short sections of interaction among students during group work activities. As I pointed out earlier, it is also possible not to focus on a specific observation objective. For example, it is possible to tape a class, view the tape, and while doing this, make short one minute transcripts of classroom interaction five, ten, and twenty minutes into the class. These transcripts could then be studied simply to see what is going on.

Interpreting and Reflecting

After doing an analysis, you can stop to make sense of the descriptions of classroom interaction. To do this, I suggest a focus on several questions. One set of questions I like to ask include: "How does the interaction in this class provide chances for students to

learn the language?" and "How does the interaction possibly block students from learning the language?" Of course, you can narrow the question based on a particular interest. For example, if you are interested in error treatment and have analyzed the patterns of interaction around the treatment of students' oral errors, you can ask, "How does my way of treating students language errors possibly provide chances for the students to be more accurate in their use of English?" Possibly hamper their accuracy?"

As I introduced earlier, we can also ask: "Do I do what I think I do in the classroom?" I have found that most teachers are surprised by the answer to this question. It is not until they have had a chance to describe their teaching and think about it that they realize that what they believe they are doing does not always match what they think they are doing. For example, later in this chapter I give an example a teacher who thought that she was motivating the students through lots of praise, while in reality the students were not paying attention to the praise.

Other exploration questions include "Are there any issues of 'self' I need to address?" and "Am I facing my 'teaching self'?" There are a wide range of issues that we, as teachers, might not want to face, more than I can possibly write about here. One example is that some teachers avoid certain issues that trigger negative feelings, such as disciplining students or getting personally involved in troubled students' lives. Another example is the teacher who struggled in facing the realization that not all students appreciate or accept his friendly highly personal way of interacting with them.

Jersild (1955) points out in his book *When Teachers Face Themselves*, to gain in knowledge of ourselves, we need to find the courage to seek it, as well as the humility to accept what we discover. Such exploration of the self is not easy for some teachers. But, such exploration can be well worth the effort.

Deciding on Changes in Teaching Behavior

At some point we will want to decide on changes we want to make in our teaching through such questions as: "What do I want to continue to do?" and "What small changes do I want to make in my teaching behavior?" Here I agree with John Fanselow (1987) who has observed that small changes can have big consequences.

Returning to a point I introduced earlier, one reason to change the way we teach is because there is a problem to be solved: Students don't talk; instructions aren't clear; students habitually speak their native language. When we are problem solving, we can make calculated changes aimed at solving the problem. For example, if some students aren't talking during whole class discussions, the teacher might try group work to see if these students will talk with classmates. If the teacher discovers that students do not understand instructions when they are given orally, the teacher might write them down.

Problem solving is the usual way that teachers make decisions about what to change in

their teaching. However, as I have said, it is also possible to explore teaching simply to explore, to see what happens. This could include doing the opposite of what we usually do or trying out something we have never tried before. For example, even if the students understand the oral instructions, it is still possible to write them down and let students read them just to see what happens. If most of our questions are from the text, we can ask questions that are not in the text. There are endless opposite possibilities!

What Teachers Have Done: Examples of the Self-Observation Process

One example is how a high school English teacher in Japan explored her teaching through self-observation. She audio and video taped her class of young teens with an open mind toward discovery. As she viewed the video tape, she became curious about her use of praise behaviors. So, she decided to count the number of times she praised students, as well as to jot down short dialogues between the students and her when she praised them. She discovered that she verbalized "very good" quite often, and she praised them even when they didn't get a correct answer or understood her. The teacher-explorer interpreted her use of praise as being ambiguous to the students. Her praise had become empty gestures. She also reflected on why she praised students and decided that praise can be an important motivating force. She also realized that if the students cannot distinguish when and why she is praising them, it is useless. As such, she decided to implement small changes in her praising techniques. For example, she monitored her use of praise and verbally expressed it only when she was genuinely impressed.

After taping and analyzing her praise behaviors again, the teacher knew that she used praise far less frequently and usually at times when students showed improvement. She also analyzed the quality of the students' use of English, and she concluded, after two months, that their work was genuinely improving.

As a second example, I draw from a previously published article (Gebhard & Ueda-Motonaga, 1992) about how a teacher, Akiko, explored her teaching simply to explore. Akiko, a native Japanese speaker, was teaching an introductory class in Japanese to American university students. She was interested in exploring her teaching simply to discover patterns in her teaching behavior. So she audio-taped and transcribed short segments of her class, and studied them for recurring patterns of interaction.

Akiko discovered certain patterns of interaction in her class. Most of her teaching consisted of drills and she followed a lockstep way of teaching: She asked all the questions, the students responded, and she reacted to these responses. She also reflected on the fact that she asked mostly display questions (e.g., questions for which she already knew the answers) and that the content of lessons mostly concerned the study of language (i.e. learning about language rather than using language for a communicative purpose).

Based on her knowledge about patterns of interaction in her classroom, Akiko decided that students did not have ample opportunities to communicate in their foreign language in class. As such, she decided to make a small change in her teaching by doing the opposite of what she usually did. Instead of drilling students on language points, she planned to ask the students questions about their lives. She knew that some students were going on a trip to a nearby city, and she decided to ask them about their trip in the foreign language. As an afterthought, she decided to bring a map of the city to class. She then audio-taped her teaching while posing these personal questions in Japanese, and then transcribed parts of the class.

Classroom interaction changed dramatically. Students asked each other questions and reacted to each other's comments in Japanese. The teacher and students asked questions that they did not know the answers to before asking them. Such query was not evident in the interaction in the earlier class. According to Akiko's analysis, this change was most likely a part of the reason why student interactions changed. However, Akiko also had students show her where they went by using the map. This map also had the apparent consequence (which the teacher was surprised to discover) of allowing the interaction to shift from asking and answering personal questions to studying the map itself. In short, Akiko interpreted the reason for the emergence of student questions and reactions to be the combination of asking personal questions and using the map. It is interesting that the teacher had not predicted that the map itself would contribute to this change in the pattern. This discovery was quite incidental, and such discoveries are one reason to explore teaching.

My purpose in giving these examples of self-observation has been to demonstrate how teachers can explore their own teaching. However, exploration does not have to be limited to looking at what goes on in one's own classroom. It is also possible to explore teaching by observing other teachers' classrooms, the topic of the next section.

Observing Other Teachers

At first the idea that we can explore our own teaching by observing other teachers may seem contradictory. However, as Fanselow (1988) points out, as teachers, we can see our own teaching in the teaching of others. When we observe others to gain knowledge of self, we have the chance to construct and reconstruct our own knowledge. Fanselow articulates this in another way: "I came to your class not only with a magnifying glass to look carefully at what was being done, but with a mirror so that I could see that what you were doing is a reflection of much of what I do" (p. 2).

While observing other teachers, it is possible to collect samples of teaching in a variety of ways. We can take fast notes, draw sketches, tally behaviors, and jot down short transcript-like samples of interaction. As with collecting samples in our own classes, it is possible to audio- or video-tape other teachers' classes and photograph interaction. These can be used later to analyze classroom behaviors. I want to point out that I

encourage observers and the observed teacher to get together to look at photos, listen to tapes, view videos, study short transcripts, and talk about the class. By doing so, exploration will be enhanced for all. The examples I give next and my later discussion on the value of talking about teaching should make this clear.

Observing Others to Explore One's Own Teaching: Some Examples

An example of the value of observing others teach is a teacher who wanted to explore the use of photography as a way to observe teaching. He was invited to observe a class at a private language school for young children, and he decided to take his camera. He was able to move freely around the classroom while the students and teacher went about their lesson, and as a second observer, I was impressed by the way he was able to fit into the natural flow of the classroom interaction in an unobtrusive way. Surprisingly, after the first few snapshots, the children hardly paid any attention to him.

Later, he created a photographic essay of the classroom interaction, and while looking at the photos with the teacher, he was able to reflect on his own teaching. For example, he noticed how spontaneously the children spoke up in English and wondered how he could get students in his high school class to do this. As a second observer, I was also able to see my teaching in the teaching of the photographed teacher, and as I studied the photos, I was impressed by the great number of activities the teacher did with the students, each leading naturally into the next, and I wondered how I could design lessons to do this in my own classes.

To further illustrate how we can see our own teaching in the teaching of others, I can draw from my own observation experience at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. I teach an ESL section of a Research Writing course, and after talking with a colleague about this course, I asked to observe her class. During the class she asked students to create "research project proposal posters". She began by asking students to meet in groups to answer questions such as, "What is your *trailhead question* (the one question that guides your research)?" and "What are sub-questions that will help you to answer this one question?" and "What kinds of sources will you use?" She then asked them to use large sheets of white newsprint paper and color markers to create posters that answer these questions, after which students put them on the walls. Students then read and wrote additional sub-questions and notes on each others' posters. It was apparent that students were engaged in the activity, and some said they were able to clarify their research project topic. At the end of the class I knew that I wanted to adapt this activity for the Research Writing students in my class.

Talking with Other Teachers about Observations

In addition to observing teaching, talking about the teaching we observe can offer chances to see our teaching differently. Unfortunately, talking about teaching is not something that normally goes on among EFL/ESL teachers, and when it does, it seems

to take on a face-saving nature. As Arcario (1994) points out, the way conversations about teaching normally take place begins with the observer giving an opening evaluative remark, such as, "I liked your class." This is followed by a three-step evaluative sequence. In the first step of the sequence a positive or negative evaluation is made, such as "I think the students liked the activity" (positive) or "Maybe the students don't have enough chances to speak" (negative). These comments lead to a second step, justification (explanation of why the comment was made), and then onward to the third step, prescriptions about what should be done in the class to improve teaching, such as, "You should do more group work." Arcario points out that this last prescriptive step is more obvious when a negative evaluation is made because there is a perceived problem to be solved.

This usual way of talking about teaching we observe is not especially productive. It is also not necessarily easy to change. But change can be made, especially if we take the time and effort to prepare for the discussions and follow agreed on rules that aim at nonjudgmental and non-prescriptive discussion. This was evident from an experience in Japan where I had the pleasure of working with twelve experienced American, Canadian and Japanese EFL teachers, all of whom taught in different settings (Japanese public and private schools, corporations, and language schools). We planned for and visited some of the teachers' classes in small groups of three or four. After observing, we talked about the class over lunch or coffee. We found both the observations and discussions to be highly stimulating and informative, and part of the reason was our planning. Before each observation, the teacher whose class we were to visit gave us an aspect of teaching on which she or he wanted us to focus attention. For example, one teacher wanted us to focus on the times students speak their native language, another on the amount of time students stayed on task.

We also established rules about how to talk about the teaching we observed. We came to an agreement to stop ourselves from making both positive and negative judgments about our own and others' teaching. We also agreed not to seek prescriptions about teaching, in other words, what we should do in the classroom. Rather, we worked at generating alternatives based on descriptions of teaching. We looked for possibilities to try out, not best ways to teach. The teachers and I found these two sets of rules to be very powerful. We gained lots of description of teaching and were able to generate lots of alternative ways to do things in the classroom.

Conclusion

As I wrote at the start of this article, to truly develop as a teacher, we needed to be free to explore teaching, and to explore we need to transcend the idea that development should be based only on the concept of improvement. Instead, we should feel free to explore teaching with the goal to see our own teaching differently. I explore by using a set of principles to guide me, and I hope you are willing to consider these principles. I recommend that we take responsibility for our own teaching while recognizing the need

for others, take a nonjudgmental, non-prescriptive, reflective stance, go beyond a problem solving attitude, and explore through different avenues, such as by trying the opposite of what we normally do. There are a variety of ways to explore our teaching. Three ways I highly recommend are self-observation, observation of other teachers, and talk with other teachers about what we observe in a nonjudgmental and non-prescriptive way.

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