Collaboration and Teacher Development:
Unpacking Resistance, Constructing Knowledge, and Navigating Identities

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Research has shown that quality professional development can change teachers' practices and positively affect student learning (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2000). It is widely accepted that such professional development should be anchored in teachers' reality, sustained over time, and aimed at creating peer collaboration (Chan & Pang, 2006; Richardson, 2003). Grounded in the assumption that teacher growth does not happen in isolation, current professional development seeks to create learning communities where participants engage in meaningful activities collaborating with peers to co-construct knowledge about teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Shulman & Shulman, 2004). Nevertheless, there is still need for more research that explores the complexities of teacher learning in these redefined professional development contexts (Borko, 2004).

This article presents a study of the Collaboration Centers Project (CCP), which is a pseudonym for a three-year, federally-funded program that focused on

helping in-service teachers better address the needs of English language learners (ELLs) in their classrooms. The CCP is important to study because of its clear intention to integrate real teachers—their understandings, voices, selves, and practices—into professional development by providing an experiential, collaborative and school-centered context for ongoing reflection on teachers' practice.

It is important to understand the complexities of teacher development in the context of a project that sought to break with the short-term transmission model that Richardson (2003) described as the still dominant approach to in-service professional development. By investigating the ongoing collaboration created by the program, we seek to provide a multi-layered understanding of how collegial and collaborative professional development affects teachers and how teachers affect professional development. Therefore, our purpose is to add to the existing research that explains the complexity of teacher collaboration by uncovering the meaning of teacher resistance and by providing an in depth look into how a group of teachers co-constructed knowledge and negotiated their identities over time.

Theoretical Framework

In recent years, collaboration has been the focus of extensive research across disciplines, especially from the perspective of the co-construction of knowledge in the context of shared enterprises (John-Steiner, 2000) and learning communities (Wegner, 1998). As John-Steiner stated, "a collaboration bears the complexity of human connectedness, strengthened by joint purpose and strained by conflicting feelings" (p. 91). Collaborative learning is at the core of communities of practice involving co-construction of meaning and mutual relationships through a shared enterprise (John-Steiner, 2000; Wegner, 1998). Accordingly, collaborative practices have been defined as central to professional development because they further opportunities for teachers to establish networks of relationships through which they may reflectively share their practice, revisit beliefs on teaching and learning, and co-construct knowledge (Achinstein, 2002; Chan & Pang, 2006; Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990; Little, 1987). Likewise, Shulman and Shulman (2004) positioned teacher development in the context of learning communities in which teachers as learners create environments that integrate a common vision and their reflections on learning processes and practices.

Fundamental to understanding the implications of collaborative practices in teachers' professional development are the discursive concepts of knowledge and identity. Knowledge is produced through social interaction and is historically and socially situated (Britzman, 1991; John-Steiner, 2000; Wenger, 1998). As we learn and develop, we grow from absolute dependence on others to interdependent relationships that allow us to become autonomous and independent as we internalize different abilities and knowledge (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). However, knowledge is impacted by political and social forces rooted in "communities of discourse, rela-

tions of power, and social change" (Britzman, 1991, p. 24). Teacher knowledge has been the focus of extensive research, some of which has concentrated on exploring teachers' knowledge of self as central to the profession. Lytle and Cochran-Smith (1994) argued that the metacognitive dimension of teachers' knowledge, or "knowing one's own knowledge" might be key to differentiating quality teachers. In other words, teaching expertise "may not be mastery of a knowledge base, but rather standing in a different relationship to one's own knowledge, to one's students as knowers, and to knowledge generation in the field" (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, p. 31).

The relationship to knowledge has been defined as the manner in which each of us engage in knowing about the world, and our particular "ways of knowing" involve the assumption that certain sources for knowledge are more valuable than others (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). From this perspective, knowledge can be characterized as given, received, procedural, or constructed. Our different ways to envision knowledge and its sources shape and are shaped by the discursive practices we engage in, the way we position ourselves in relation to others, and our understanding of how we engage in predominant discourses (Britzman, 1991; Danielewicz, 2001).

Teachers' decision-making and actions are affected by their knowledge about themselves, their interpretations of who and how they are as teachers, and their experiences as learners (Lytle & Cochran-Smith, 1994). Gee (2001) explained the interplay between knowledge and identity, and how identities are shaped through interpretative systems that impact the ways we interpret ourselves and the ways we are recognized by others. Identity is developed through the taking up of discourses that are considered part of a particular community, and one is considered to be knowledgeable in that community by virtue of mastery of those discourses. Discourses as system of beliefs and values exist within social practices and are enacted through language. "Engaging in these language practices (such as conversing, analyzing, writing reports) shapes an individual's identity" (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 11). Britzman (1991) discussed how discursive practices impact teacher knowledge and identity by defining three cultural myths about teaching: "everything depends on the teacher" (p. 223), "teachers as experts" (p. 227), and "teachers are self made" (p. 230). These myths embody a discourse that defines teachers as naturally born into the profession, who possess the capabilities to control students' learning, and who should be certain of all required knowledge for teaching. The pervasiveness of these myths in discourses affecting teachers and teaching undermines the significance of teacher education and professional development.

Here we contend that each approach to professional development, implicitly or explicitly, legitimizes certain ways of knowing as more valuable than others by appealing to specific discursive practices and that each group of teachers involved in professional development bring their pre-existing knowledge and identities to the endeavor. Moreover, contesting prevailing discursive practices can entail some degree of resistance. Research on teacher resistance has shown that instances of

opposition, confrontation, or conflict might involve teachers' attempts to claim or recover a sense of agency and capability (Achinstein, 2002; Hargreaves, 1994; Zell-ermayer, 2001) typically questioned by the very nature of traditional approaches to professional development (Richardson, 2003). This study focuses on the discourses taken up, negotiated, resisted, and adapted by teachers (CCP Co-Facilitators) as they engaged in professional development and narrated stories about their new roles as teacher leaders.

Context and Methods

The CCP was a partnership between a local school district and a large south-western university. Central to the project was the creation of seven Collaboration Centers—local classrooms in different schools where two intensively trained teachers, or Co-Facilitators, team-taught and served as professional development resources to other teachers in their school. Fourteen certified and experienced bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers from six different schools were selected and trained as Co-Facilitators. During the first year of the grant, they met for biweekly seminars and summer intensive sessions conducted by CCP Coordinators, one univer-sity faculty member who specializes in ESL and two of the district's ESL specialists. Then Co-Facilitators co-taught in second grade ESL or bilingual classrooms for the ensuing two years, while at the same time continuing their participation in seminars and summer sessions. As a result of this professional development, Co-Facilitators received enough academic credit for a master's degree, which was finalized with a final inquiry paper and the collaborative construction of a website.

Co-Facilitators' classrooms were meant to serve as models of effective bilin-gual/ESL teaching at each CCP by inviting novice ESL teachers (Guest Teachers) at each school site to participate in the project. During the life of the project (three years), Guest Teachers volunteered to spend two weeks at a CCP collaborating with Co-Facilitators with the goal of learning pedagogical strategies for meeting the needs of ELLs in their own classrooms. In addition, Co-Facilitators visited Guest Teachers' classrooms to offer feedback on the effectiveness of their bilingual/ESL pedagogical practices. Team teaching allowed Co-Facilitators the flexibility to observe and teach in the Guest Teachers' classrooms while maintaining continuity for their own students. Such a structure was intended to promote teacher growth by giving Co-Facilitators and Guest Teachers an opportunity to team teach and collaborate, opening a professional development space at each school site to ultimately generate a community of learners.

Participants

Seven CCP Co-Facilitators were selected as subjects in the study because they participated in the CCP from the beginning to its end: Alice, Betsy, Christy, Julie, Laura, Mary, and Sonya (all pseudonyms). There were seven additional Co-Facili-

tators who completed only part of the program, so they were not included in this study. All Co-Facilitators but one were seasoned elementary teachers with more than five years of experience. Julie, who had only been an elementary teacher for two years, was the exception, but she was an experienced adult educator prior to entering the elementary classroom. All were state-endorsed ESL or bilingual teachers. Alice, Christy, and Julie held ESL endorsements; and Betsy, Laura, Mary, and Sonya held bilingual endorsements. Alice, Laura, Mary and Sonya taught in Dual Language Immersion classrooms, and Julie, Christy and Betsy taught in classrooms with high percentages of ELL students using a sheltered instruction approach.

We also participated in the project, as well as taking on the roles of researchers. Initially, Musanti was a participant observer to the project; as part of her doctoral research she collected samples of Co-Facilitators' work and conducted interviews with Co-Facilitators to elicit their depictions of themselves as they moved through the three-year project. Additionally, Musanti taught the final course aimed at producing a collective website about the CCP. Pence conducted a workshop on classroom assessment, guided Co-Facilitators through the process of writing their final inquiry paper, and helped participants with their culminating website.

Data Collection and Analysis

This longitudinal qualitative study (Merriam, 1998) integrated elements of narrative inquiry (Riessman, 1993) and critical incident methodology (Angelides, 2001; Tripp, 1993). We focused on exploring teachers' stories, told individually or collectively through either oral or written accounts (Riessman, 1993). These accounts provided a medium to contextualize their lives and work while interweaving all the historical, cultural, social, and personal elements that constitute and explain who they are and the way they act.

Multiple data sources were collected during a period of three years (June 2000 to July 2003). In this paper, we analyzed field notes, interview transcripts, and written assignments. Musanti took detailed field notes during 40 CCP seminar meetings yielding a total of 172 hours of observation. Two semi-structured interviews were completed with each participant: one at the end of the first year of the project and the second one during the final semester. The interviews explored teachers' narratives about their experiences, learning, and specific events during their collaborative work with their peers. In addition, we analyzed the transcript of a focus group interview with Co-Facilitators conducted during the summer 2002 seminar. Other important data sources were Co-Facilitators' written assignments that included reflective papers on their collaboration and learning (three papers per participant), and a final inquiry paper about an open topic that was required for graduation.

Initially, data analysis involved an open-coding approach to identify general patterns and themes in Co-Facilitators' responses to their professional development experience, especially in relation to the meaning of collaboration and issues of knowledge and identity (Merriam, 1998). Codes were refined through multiple

readings and clustered into categories that represented teachers' central narratives in relation to the professional development experience. Similar categories emerged from the analysis of teachers' interactions during seminars and from individual interviews (e.g. meaning of collaboration, learning and knowing, knowledge about self as teacher, knowledge about students, and being a teacher). Second, written papers were analyzed to identify themes explored and stories narrated in connection to how teachers positioned themselves in relation to knowledge and how they negotiated their identity as teachers and CCP Co-Facilitators (Riessman, 1993). Themes and stories identified were contrasted and compared with the categories previously identified (Merriam, 1998). Third, critical incidents were selected as a means of portraying the influence of project activities in the context of Co-Facilitators' interactions during seminar meetings (Angelides, 2001; Tripp, 1993). To uncover the meanings inscribed in these interactions, we identified critical events that: (a) held some degree of conflict; (b) surprised us and became "the stimulus for reflection regarding its criticality" (Angelides, 2001, p. 434); and (c) represented some of the patterns of Co-Facilitators' interactions related to issues of knowledge and identity. CCP Coordinators and Co-Facilitators highlighted some events during seminar as particularly significant and troublesome. Each incident involved some degree of conflict, discomfort, and/or miscommunication.

Findings

When we began this study, we were searching for evidence of increased knowledge of ESL practices. We expected to investigate what teachers learned, what revelations about ESL teaching they had, and how they critiqued and changed their teaching. We abandoned our search for evidence that explicitly related to acquiring new information and teaching techniques based on the realization that Co-Facilitators were focused elsewhere, in spite of weekly seminars on ESL pedagogy. As we reflected on our initial research plans, we found that we too, like the participants in this study, were constrained by the belief that professional development is meant to fix teachers, to provide them with knowledge that they do not have, and that professional development is difficult because teachers are reluctant to change. Much like the CCP Coordinators, we were mystified by Co-Facilitators' resistance to peer observation and to talk about specific teaching strategies in their stories, reflections, and interviews. However, we soon realized that if we truly sought to understand the CCP, we needed to follow the participants' lead. We shifted our focus away from seeing if teachers were meeting the expectations of the project and began to explore how they were interpreting and composing the space opened up by the CCP.

The CCP was designed to promote collaboration through: (a) a common project and joint work for Co-Facilitators to create a Collaboration Center at each of the six school sites; (b) teachers' active participation in the creation of a common vi-

sion for CCP; (c) peer conversations among participants that created conditions to reflect on shared teaching stories; and (d) enough trust to make collaboration and peer conversations possible (John-Steiner, 2000). Co-Facilitators' voluntary participation and the school-wide, prolonged commitment to the CCP also contributed to an environment of collaborative inquiry. Our analysis revealed that during the first year of the CCP, Co-Facilitators focused on building relationships with each other, devoting much talking and writing to figuring out how to effectively work together in the CCP classroom and work with Guest Teachers. Participants took up the discourse of teacher collaboration as a central feature of the CCP. Coordinators had intended to create a community of practice where teachers could collaborate with peers and learn from each other, but the unexpected outcome was that building a community of practice (Wenger, 1998) required a long process of learning to collaborate. Julie's reflection aptly summarizes the position of collaboration in the context of the CCP:

> Collaboration is an art in itself and I felt like it required a whole process of learning new skills on my part. Working with a peer is a new way of looking at teaching. The need to listen to [one] another and integrate someone else's ideas is a neglected, but important part of teaching. (Julie, Reflective Paper #2)

Analysis of the field notes from seminar observations showed that, during the first year, most of the conversation time was spent discussing issues related to the construction of a common vision of the CCP and the nature of collaborative work. Each semester, CCP Coordinators asked Co-Facilitators to write reflective papers on their collaboration and learning process. These papers also demonstrated that participants' reflections concentrated on issues of building relationships with peers. Co-Facilitators defined collaboration as peer interaction, peer dialogue, peer feedback, listening to one another, and sharing experiences and ideas. These collaborations provided "a team partner to laugh and cry with" (Alice, Reflective Paper #1), and an opportunity to learn from one another. Participants perceived collaboration as a means to overcome isolation, and as a way to collectively construct knowledge. They valued collaboration because it made it possible to exchange experiences, maintain interesting conversations, and build relationships with peers.

But the journey of collaboration was not without its trials. The unfamiliar ways of being a teacher—teaming with each other and modeling for and instructing Guest Teachers—created anxiety and required a great deal of time and trust. Breaking down the barriers to the Co-Facilitators' privacy of their teaching was intimidating. The CCP challenged each Co-Facilitator to open the doors of their classrooms and their thinking to others, which, Christy explained, can be "a source of anxiety and stress, because of the disruption it can create in the involved classrooms" (Reflective Paper #1). Christy also reflected many of the seminar participants' feelings: "I was always anxious when the Guest Teacher would observe me teaching or when I would serve as the primary teacher in the Guest Teacher's classroom" (Reflective

Paper #1). Co-Facilitators emphasized the time and effort involved in becoming comfortable with their new roles. Reflecting on her personal progress toward meeting the CCP's expectations, Laura explains: "it is difficult to find enough time to discuss observations from the classroom and have philosophical discussions too. Both of these discussions are essential to the process" (Reflective Paper #1). Such time was well spent, however, in establishing the trust necessary for genuine collaboration. Most teachers pointed out that trust was an essential component to build collaborative relationships with other teachers. For Sonya, one of the outcomes of the first-year experience with the CCP was "the relationship of trust that was built with [my classroom partner]" (Reflective Paper #2). Co-Facilitators recognized peer dialogue as a source for learning and development. Likewise, Mary reflected on her developing collaborative abilities:

> An important event or a situation that affected me [during CCP] was being able to meet during seminars and being able to have professional conversations with colleagues about ideas and things that we were implementing or things that weren't being implemented, but that we thought were good ideas in the schools. . . . It allowed us to have a place to think about what we were doing and why we were doing things, and, and if it worked, or if it didn't work and why. (Mary, Final Interview)

The problematic nature of collaboration can be illustrated through several critical events that occurred through the life of the project. These critical incidents, sometimes planned by Coordinators and on some occasions initiated by Co-Facilitators, created space for close scrutiny and deeper interpretation. We present two of these critical incidents in the form of vignettes, followed by our analyses of what these incidents revealed about the Co-Facilitators' learning. Through close examination of these critical events, we seek to provide a closer look at how Co-Facilitators negotiated this particular professional development space, taking up, rejecting, and adapting elements of the CCP discourse, incorporating the larger discourse of teaching, and infusing the project with their own knowledge and identities.

Resisting Peer-Observation: The First Critical Incident

It was a seminar meeting in February 2001. CCP Co-Facilitators had been asked to observe each other teaching during the previous week and bring their notes to share with the rest of the group. The task consisted of observing each other's language sheltering strategies, a topic they had been studying and discussing in previous meetings.

Different activities integrated the agenda that day. After break time, Sherry—one of the three CCP Coordinators—introduced the last activity and reminded teachers about their "homework," She explained they would be talking about Effective Sheltered Instruction (ESI) in conjunction with their observations of each other implementing this type of strategy with their students. When time came to share their peer observations, a tense silence took place. Only Julie raised her hand. She

had observed her partner Christy during the previous week, and she had taken some notes. First, Julie described the classroom they shared, and the students' demographics. Next, Sherry asked Julie to describe what she observed her partner Christy doing during that class, especially focusing on "sheltering pieces of the lesson." Julie told the group (mostly looking at the Coordinators, Sherry and Cathy, who were sitting on top of the front desk) what she had observed in a very detailed manner: the materials, the reading, the hands on, the visual elements, different language objectives, and so on. As Julie talked, Sherry wrote on the blackboard. The group was unusually silent as Sherry asked Julie to enumerate the elements of effective sheltering in the lesson. That day, seminar finished with no time left for a conversation either about sheltering practices or about the persistent silence of the group.

It was not until the next seminar meeting that the uncomfortable silence broke. A Co-Facilitator, opened the conversation with an unexpected comment on her discomfort during the last meeting activity. "Why are we doing this?" she asked. She explained she believed the activity was evaluative. She had decided not to talk about her partner's teaching because it did not seem fair. Christy, who had been observed by Julie, also confessed she felt uncomfortable and evaluated. Other Co-Facilitators acknowledged the awkwardness and difficulty of observing each other and the fears involved, while at the same time acknowledging the benefit of peer evaluation. Betsy rejected this saying "I'm not afraid of being evaluated, but it is more useful for me to do my own reflections, than having somebody else telling me what I'm doing." Sonya insisted they needed to get over the fear of people evaluating them. Later, Sherry, the CCP Coordinator, who conducted the observation sharing session, reflected on that incident: "it never occurred to [us] during the planning for seminar, that asking the folks to observe each other and then talk about what was seen would feel threatening to anyone."

Two Co-Facilitators completely refused to continue with the activity and to share their notes on their peers' teaching. Most of them reported that they felt somehow intimidated or uncomfortable being observed with the purpose of bringing their practice to the group discussion. Some stayed silent during the incident. Nonetheless, in later interviews, several expressed that peer observation could be a means to learn from each other and therefore, was relevant to their own development.

Unpacking the Incident

Co-Facilitators corroborated the importance of collegial and collaborative professional development settings (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990; Little, 1987). By all indications, the CCP was state-of-the-art professional development that emphasized ongoing reflection on practice. However, in this incident, Co-Facilitators resisted public analysis of each other's practice, perceiving it as threatening and evaluative. As researchers, we needed to understand and interpret this seeming tension.

Co-Facilitators' resistance to publicly sharing the observation of a peer's teaching may have stemmed from an assumption that teachers' deficits are the main reason

for professional development and that more knowledgeable others are supposed to provide what teachers lack. Even though the CCP sought to create a collaborative model of professional development, both Co-Facilitators and Coordinators were operating in a larger prevailing discursive frame grounded in the still prevalent assumptions that teachers are supposed to know everything or to learn it on their own. And, when they fail to do it themselves, they need professional development. Given these assumptions, observation becomes a tool to expose teachers' lack of skills, rather than a source of shared learning. Even though the CCP vision of professional development was not based on a deficit model, these assumptions were still prevalent in this incident.

Co-Facilitators had difficulty in trying to overcome the implicit vision of the peer observation as a defect detector and to evolve towards a vision of growth by genuinely sharing their practice, discussing it, collectively thinking about it, and by allowing peer questions, doubts, constructive critiques and eventual disagreement about knowledge or practice to surface. This difficulty is more likely a result of the institutional conditions of teaching (Hargreaves, 1994) than indicators of teachers' professional shortcomings. We argue that it is the result of a long tradition of teacher isolation within the classroom walls deeply instilled in school culture. When this tradition is disrupted, teachers feel exposed, vulnerable, and powerless. Moreover, the policies and practices of the accountability movement have reinforced a deficit model of teacher observation (Britzman, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994). Teachers are observed mainly to be evaluated, and ultimately controlled. Consequently, knowledge is constructed as something that is outside oneself and resides in the more expert other (Belenky, et al., 1986), and expertise is constructed as perfection in myriads of teacher standards. Alice describes her feelings of powerlessness as teaching in a "fishbowl" (Final Interview). And Julie explains:

> One of the hardest things for me is not to feel ashamed and to try to hide my limitations as a teacher. Part of me believes that in order to be a competent teacher I have to know it all and do it all. Since I don't know very much, it puts a lot of pressure on me to appear to know it all. It has taken the growth of a lot of trust in me to expose my inabilities and to work on them at the same time. (Reflective Paper #1)

The belief that good teachers are those who possess all knowledge is clear in Julie's statement. Expertise is equated to universal knowledge, leaving almost no room for the possibility of not knowing everything and being a learner.

By voicing their resistance to peer observation, Co-Facilitators may have attempted to re-establish the sense of agency and personal power that the project promised them. CCP Coordinators had assigned the peer observation activity, unintentionally rendering Co-Facilitators powerless and contradicting the project's stance of giving teachers ongoing participation in the decision-making process. Despite their initial resistance, Co-Facilitators did indeed conduct numerous peer observations and came to see them as a source for learning about their practice,

and ultimately about themselves as teachers. However, they adapted the discourse to focus on strengths rather than critique, a discourse that would allow them to maintain their relationships within the group while negotiating their individual identities (Britzman, 1991). Resistance as a manifestation of some level of conflict became, in this case, a source for revisiting a professional development practice by provoking changes within the project and in Co-facilitators' understandings of peer observation.

"Good Teachers Are Supposed to Talk More about Students": The Second Critical Incident

A second critical incident took place in the second summer. In the spring session, Sherry, a CCP Coordinator had conducted a series of interviews with the Co-Facilitators. She noticed that the Co-Facilitators usually answered questions about their practice by referring to students. The Coordinators again interpreted this as resistance to directly reflecting on their own behavior, but they wanted to investigate the reasons for this phenomenon. Thus CCP Coordinators conducted a focus group interview during the second summer seminar. Five of the Co-Facilitators, Coordinators, Pence (faculty member teaching seminar that day), and Musanti as a participant observer, were present. Conversation started when Sherry shared her observation and asked them to reflect on possible reasons. The following dialogue is a transcription of selected parts of the Co-Facilitators' conversation:

Christy: Sometimes I think we identify successes through the successful things we've done with our children. If something works really well with children then you think you've done your job.

Sally: Yeah, I agree with that. I also wonder, most of us were interviewed in the midst of the school year and you're in your teacher's mode. I wonder how the interview would have gone in the summer when you're out of that, when teachers are not so entrenched in what's happening.

Julie: Also, we spend so much more time with our students than with our partner, even though you're working with your partner, your focus is always on your students.

Christy: Right, even when you're collaborating, you're collaborating for the end result, which is your students.

Julie: It's like you're always looking this way (points in front of her) but you rarely look this way (looks at Christy, her teammate) at each other – you do a little – but not compared to looking at your students.

Laura: There were a couple of different class meetings that we found …with Guest Teachers it was much more successful to talk about what was happening with the students than directly about practice, that we could sit back and look at practice through what the students were doing and not directly at what we were doing.

Mary: These things are hard to talk about, maybe too hard so it's easier to talk about kids.

Sherry: The questions were hard, or the work of being a co-facilitator was hard?

Mary: Both, they weren't questions that had easy answers, they made you think and then when you do think about on your experience and they are tied very deeply to what happens in the classroom….

Alice: Well, the bottom line is that we are hired to teach children and we are hired to make them better so if collaboration is to work we must be on top of children, if teaming works the reason it works is because we see it in the behavior of children….

Laura: I think it's exciting that we answered questions that way. I think the teachers that I really respect, that when issues come up they turn it around to see how it impacts kids.

Unpacking the Incident

This incident demonstrates how teachers' identities are shaped by prevailing educative discourses that summon cultural myths about teachers' work (Britzman, 1991) and how Co-Facilitators negotiated the competing discourses proposed by the project. As revealed in the conversation above, Co-Facilitators' professional identities appear intrinsically related to their relationship with and knowledge of students. The Co-Facilitators saw themselves so intently focused on children that it was difficult to discuss their own or anyone else's practice without casting it in terms of student performance. In this case, unveiling Co-facilitators' resistance to deliver the expected answer suggested that when they are in "teacher mode," all that matters is seeing how students respond to their teaching. Most of their time is spent looking at students, rather than other teachers. Changing the behavior of students is the reason for collaboration. Their teacher gaze is directed primarily toward supporting students' learning, and success is determined by the congruence between their expectations and student behavior.

Understanding the meaning of the Co-facilitators' apparent resistance helps to explain its role as a generative force in teachers' development, highlighting a core assumption: what teachers do and what they teach are mirrored in students' performances. Laura and Alice referred to this phenomenon during the conversation when they point to the need for student assessment to justify and explain their practice. A good or effective teacher is the teacher whose students learn. They took up the discourse of accountability, again calling forth the myth of "everything depends on the teacher" (Britzman, 1991, p. 223), even after months in the project. However, focusing on student performance in their classrooms also allowed them to accomplish the goal of discussing each other's practice without directly criticizing their colleagues. They constructed their identities as professionals who care about children's learning above all else and shifted the focus away from explicit critique

of teacher behaviors. Discussing students enabled them to fulfill the expectations of the project while maintaining professional relationships with their peers. Ultimately, the negotiated discourse focusing on student behavior brought together the larger public discourse of accountability, the project's goal of critical observation, and the Co-Facilitators' need to maintain their collegial relationships.

Revisiting Knowledge and Identity

The CCP challenged the accepted discourses surrounding teacher knowledge and identity. The CCP purposefully created an environment in which teachers were asked to envision their own needs in terms of knowledge and professional growth. During seminar time, they were asked to make decisions about what books they wanted to read and topics to cover; in short, they had to decide what to learn about, given the project's focus on English as a Second Language. When positioned as learners and active agents of their own learning, the myth of the teacher as expert was challenged and the discourse of the teacher as learner was taken up. Julie explains how the shift affects teacher identity:

> Like me, [ESL students] try to cover up what they don't know. Covering up makes it harder to learn. In many ways this idea of "the teacher as learner," which is an idea fundamental to the concept of [CCP], contradicts what many of us think of when we think of ourselves as "teachers." (Reflective paper #1)

The CCP also challenged the myth that defines teachers as self-made professionals (Britzman, 1991), an assumption that reduces professional development to an isolated enterprise. Traditionally, teacher isolation has been confused with autonomy and independence. However, social interaction and interdependence are intrinsic to knowledge construction and learning (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). The CCP aimed to revalue the importance of human interdependence as a pathway to stronger and more knowledgeable individualities. In doing so, CCP challenged the view that defines teachers as finished products, in need of occasional tune-ups to maintain their expertise, belying the social nature of continuing growth and development.

To accomplish this interdependence, the CCP required that Co-Facilitators try out collaborative interactions with their teaching partners with the goal of learning to work collectively instead of individually. Initially, Co-Facilitators felt they gave up control as they shared their daily responsibilities with a team teacher. Alice, an experienced teacher and the oldest in the group, reflects in her final paper:

> An entry in my journal on the first day of seminar expresses my feelings on that day very well. I said, "I have jumped into a deep running river. I hope my dog paddle will get me to shore someday." Looking back, that was not a voice that shouted confidence. I also was aware that I was not alone in that feeling. So many of my journal entries were about "control issues". It seemed very important to verbalize my need to give up control. I also seemed to confuse "giving up control" with the possibility of losing self-identity. Into the fourth day of seminar, I wrote,

> "I cannot take my ball and go home when I don't get my way. Yet, I don't want to lose my "I" thoughts. I don't want you to lose your "I" thoughts either. I want the strengths of each of our "I" to become the "WE", I could never be alone." How fascinating, one year later, adding one person and I had to go through that same "letting go" exercise I had done the previous year, even though my previous concerns were unfounded.

Alice's dog paddling metaphor well represents the significance she ascribed to the CCP experience. Participating in CCP involved giving up control and risking her individuality to be able to construct a sense of "We," a sense of belonging to a learning community while negotiating her own identity and strengthening her educational beliefs. As she comments later in the same paper:

> Two years have [passed] and I am closer to "shore." So what did the collaboration experience do for me? Well, I am a stronger swimmer in that river called teaching. It is truly amazing. By working together with many different personalities, my "I" thoughts, my convictions are stronger.

By the end of CCP most Co-Facilitators agreed with Alice. They felt more confident in their knowledge and their teaching; they defined themselves as stronger teachers empowered by a sense of interdependence with colleagues. Betsy explained in her final interview:

> I've always seen independence as quite a quality to have--something very valuable, to be independent, self-sufficient. But, after a lot of collaboration, I enjoy being less independent. Which is kind of a strange . . . I'm less independent than I was before. I'm a little co-dependent now!

Meaningful interactions with peers created an environment for interdependent relations, where teachers could grow as autonomous individuals within a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). Collaborative learning promoted self-governance and the negotiation of relationships among teachers, who then became more autonomous by gaining independence through cognitive interdependence (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000; Musanti, 2004).

In spite of the CCP's collaborative success, however, this study affirmed that collaboration is not always "comfortable and complacent" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 247). Moments of conflict, tension, and resistance should be expected and also welcomed. Learning and change involves some degree of disruption to what teachers know, and resistance can become a catalyst for in depth reflection on what is taken for granted. Neither schools nor teachers are accustomed to collegial relationships embedded in their daily teaching and as part of their professional development. Collaboration challenges the existing school norms of individuality, privacy, autonomy, independent work, and distribution of power. Hence, Co-Facilitators did not automatically take up the discourses of collaboration and critique presented in the CCP. Instead, the notion of teacher as learner created dissonance with their existing self-representation and they adapted the discourse of critique to maintain collegial ties.

Conclusions and Implications

This study has several implications for collaborative professional development and for research on its effectiveness. Very significant for future qualitative research is the acknowledgement that critical incidents methodology (Angelides, 2001; Tripp, 1993) allowed us to not only look at the overall evolution of the project, but also provided us with opportunities to explore the nuances of interactions and what participants deemed important. When we analyzed the language of these events in light of prevailing public discourses, individual teacher perceptions, and our own biases, we realized that moments of what we referred to as resistance were more than simple opposition to an activity or impediments to reform. We came to see resistance in the context of the CCP as a "context for learning and thus ongoing renewal of communities" (Achinstein, 2002, p. 422). Resistance has been typically characterized as a negative element of the learning process. Instead, considering resistance as a creative source through which teachers explore possibilities and become agents of their own development, allows researchers to more fully appreciate the intricacies of the professional development (Zellermayer, 2001). Here, we contend that resistance is an almost unavoidable presence in professional development programs that foster prolonged collegiality and collaboration. Redefining it as a positive force for change instead as an obstacle for growth is essential to the success and long lasting impact of such approaches.

The study highlights the value and centrality of teachers' learning about collaboration which emerged as the overriding theme for the participants. We conclude that professional development needs to be conceived as a collaborative enterprise, where a space for learning through mutual exchange, dialogue, and constant challenge is created. By looking closely at what Co-Facilitators said, we could better understand their individual and collective ways of making sense of themselves and their work. Co-Facilitators focused their talk and writing on making meaning of the interactional aspects of their work with colleagues. Even though the project aimed at increasing teachers' ESL pedagogical content knowledge, Co-Facilitators talked more about their emotional engagement and intersubjectivity with their partners and Guest Teachers. Relationship trumped knowledge, and in doing so, highlights the need for studying the interactional dimensions of teacher change.

It is evident from this study that teacher identity and knowledge are intricately interwoven. Asking teachers to team teach and to serve as models of practice and mentors for others raises anxiety and creates dissonance with the prevailing identity expectations for teachers as isolated, self-made experts. This anxiety and dissonance may focus teachers on their new roles more than on the details of their own classroom performance. As more professional development programs emphasize the need to create spaces for teachers to interact, team teach, and educate each other, more research is needed that explores how these interactions impact teachers' roles, and the way teachers negotiate identities and construct knowledge.

Moreover, this study shows that collaborative professional development proj-

ects may require a significant shift in teacher identity that integrates the collective and interactional dimension of teacher individuality. This study provides us with important evidence of the power of on-going collaborative professional development when Christy reports that "this program really changed my practice… this has been a life changing experience for me."

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