Exploring Diversity and Nurturing Generativity Through in situ Teacher Education

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Abstract

This critical case study (Grosvenor & Pataki, 2017; Merriam, 2009) examines how taking up diversity and plurality within in situ literacy and language arts courses in a Bachelor of Education program created a critical discursive space within mainstream teacher education. Data in this research included interviews with teacher candidates and course assignments. Findings suggest that teacher candidates learned to seek and value diverse students' funds of knowledge, grappled with inclusive practices, and developed equity-oriented pedagogy within in situ teacher education coursework. Through this project we contribute to the rising recognition that in situ teacher education through a lens of diversity can generate curriculum drawing from the literacies and lifeworld experiences of all learners (Grant & Agosto, 2008; Moll, 2014).

In this study, we, a university professor and school district literacy coordinator, redesigned and co-taught literacy courses in which teacher candidates participated in dynamic learning in elementary classrooms. Through these in situ experiences teacher candidates explored when and how theory meets practice when children's funds of knowledge are valued through responsive teaching.

Decentring practices that disrupt historically hierarchical, transmission-oriented teaching and learning need to spread beyond diversity-specific teacher education courses (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Gay, 2002). This research examines how taking up diversity and plurality within in situ literacy and language arts courses within a Bachelor of Education program created an equity-oriented, discursive space within mainstream teacher education. Through this project we contribute to the rising recognition of how children's and families' funds of knowledge can be generative, disrupting normative

practices and structural inequalities that have historically gone unchecked (Darling-Hammond & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; Nieto & McDonough, 2011; Taylor & Sobel, 2003; Wells, 2007).

Theoretical Framework

In Situ Teacher Education

A growing body of research suggests that taking coursework concurrently with fieldwork can enable teacher candidates to better understand theory, apply concepts, and support student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Risko et al., 2008; Zeichner, 2010). *In situ education* refers to “immersing the learning process in the setting that is the actual focus of the learning” (Dennison & Oliver, 2014, p. 27). In the United States, professional development schools (PDS) were created in the late 1980s and continue to strive today to address the theory–practice gap through in situ methods (Zeichner, 2010). A PDS is a site of learning that focuses on the preparation of teachers, faculty development, inquiry directed at improvement of practice, and enhanced student achievement (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2001). However, PDSs have been critiqued for lack of theoretical depth and for replacing coursework with fieldwork that reinforces the status quo. Overall, they struggle to counter the dominant discourse of schooling such as technical-rational perspectives about the production of knowledge, skills, performance, and accountability (Breault & Breault, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2005; Korthagan, Loughran, & Russell, 2006). The teacher education courses in this study sought to offer theoretically rich learning that marshalled social-justice-oriented social theory related to literacy learning and diversity to decentre normative practices and engage teacher candidates as teacher inquirers in schools with cultural, cognitive, and socio-economic diversity.

Equity-Oriented Pedagogy and Teacher Education

Within educative settings and relationships teachers mediate how children make meaning; educators enact a “hidden curriculum” in classrooms through the curricular values, perspectives, topics, expectations, and teaching strategies they explicitly and implicitly communicate. This directly and indirectly impacts the knowledge students construct about themselves, each other, their place and community, and the world beyond their immediate lives (Giroux, 1992; Nieto & McDonough, 2011; Wells, 2007). This social construction of meaning, identities, and students’ literacies occurs not only at the classroom level through interactions between children and teachers, but also at the school level—through school procedures and structures such as grouping children together based on perceived language proficiency, labelling children using medicalized deficit-oriented descriptors, and offering some children enriched opportunities while limiting the experience of others (Ball, 2009; Fisher & Frey, 2001). The social worlds experienced through verbal and non-verbal interactions within the school landscape are internalized and reflect what knowledge is privileged and which ideas, values, and practices are validated or discouraged (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Moll, 2014; Wells, 2007). This

social mediation helps shape learner dispositions and identities, by either nurturing or suppressing their funds of knowledge, identities, interests, and engagement.

The concept *funds of knowledge* recognizes the cultural knowledge that families possess and pass on to their children as educational resources to teachers, peers, and schools (Ball, 2009; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Nieto & McDonough, 2011; Sebolt, 2018). Vélez-Ibáñez and Greenberg (1992) described the term to mean “those historically accumulated strategies (skills, abilities, ideas, practices) or bodies of knowledge that are essential to a household’s functioning and well-being” (pp. 91–92). Educational applications of *funds of knowledge* (FoK) seek “to overcome the lingering deficit perspective in education, by improving relationships between families and schools, and by designing culturally sensitive and contextualized curricular activities” (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018, p. 145).

Teacher education programs, classrooms, and schools have the potential to disrupt normative practices by recognizing and communicating that teaching and learning are cultural and relational processes imbued with historical and contextual commitments that give some individuals power over others. The discursive spaces that teachers and students create together mediate how they engage with diverse cultural, cognitive, and social identities through social interactions, cultural artifacts, and the use of language (Moll, 2014; Schnellert, Kozak, & Moore, 2015; Wells, 2007). Ball (2009) noted that

achieving this vision [disrupting normative practices; developing classrooms and communities that welcome all students as capable] requires changes in teacher education programs that include the development of teachers who are prepared to teach students from backgrounds different from their own. (p. 69)

However, education systems are faced with the “sluggish pace” at which teacher education programs are addressing equity (Breault & Lack, 2009; Nieto, 2003). Breault and Lack’s 2009 review of 95 papers and articles from 1999–2006 found little published evidence of equitable pedagogy and student outcomes: “In those cases where equity was mentioned as a factor, it was nearly always in terms only of improved test scores with no mention of the empowerment of students, teachers, or community” (p. 152). Efforts to develop teacher candidates’ beliefs, understandings, and practices through multicultural coursework have had minimal impact on teacher candidates (Kozleski & Waitoller, 2010; Xu, 2001). Studying PDSs, Abdal-Haqq (1999) found that educators’ views of diversity did not

appear to include any recognition of the possibility that student diversity might promote learning among professions and peers, stimulate expanded capacity for educators in schools, or provide opportunities for educators to exercise their responsibility to assist in advancing social justice. (p. 146)

However, promising studies suggest that “lived experiences, mediated thoughtfully and consistently by skilled practitioners, teacher educators, teacher candidates and their PK-12 [pre-kindergarten through Grade 12] students provide a better context for a transformative teacher education experience” (Kozleski & Waitoller, 2010, p. 656). In situ learning with practitioners and students may offer a pathway to developing teacher candidates’ equity-oriented pedagogy, but only if we “critique the gap between rhetoric and practice” and

seek out and enact equitable pedagogies that welcome students' funds of knowledge and home literacies as assets to their learning (Breault & Lack, 2009, p. 153).

Inclusive Education

Rolheiser, Evans, and Gambhir (2011) noted that "inclusive education cannot remain at the level of theoretical discourse.... The goal is to have inclusive education become evident in teachers' practices and students' learning" (p. 5). Burton and Pace (2009) suggested that having positive attitudes related to inclusion and diverse learners cannot compensate for insufficient preparation. Developing a philosophical stance without lived experience puts teacher candidates in a precarious position. "Preservice teachers must also feel that they have the strategies and capability to execute inclusive practices" (Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014, p. 248).

Preparing teacher candidates as responsive, diversity-positive teachers requires attention to how student learning is "influenced by their home languages, cultures, and contexts; the realities of race and class privilege ... the ongoing manifestations of institutional racism within the educational system; and the many factors that shape students' opportunities to learn within individual classrooms" (Darling-Hammond & Garcia-Lopez, 2002, p. 9). Teacher candidates need opportunities to encounter and interrogate "rarely contested structures, approaches and beliefs" (Berault & Lack, 2009; Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Connor & Ferri, 2007) such as historically used resources absent of diverse representation of culture, sexual orientation, and gender identity; assumptions regarding socio-economic status and family structure; transmission-oriented pedagogical approaches; and labelling students, families, and communities as deficient.

Simply preparing teachers through a focus on the technical aspects of practice and curriculum development is inadequate if the complexities of education are to be addressed. What is needed by today's teachers is a more critical approach to education that enables them to better understand the context(s) in which their work takes place to become "active agents of change" (Neito, 2003, p. 20). Classrooms can be windows to and mirrors of the outside world providing children—and teachers—with opportunities to learn with and about others while also finding and validating their own identities and learning to disrupt normative practices (Botelho & Rudman, 2009; Sims-Bishop, 1990; Steele, 2002). In Taylor and Sobel's (2003) study, teacher candidates identified certain elements of curriculum and pedagogy as having a positive impact on their preparedness to provide effective instruction in multicultural, multilingual, and inclusive classrooms. The pre-service teachers in the study found value in guided exposure to cross-cultural interactions, observations of theory–practice applications in schools, and opportunities to interact with classroom teachers to unpack how and why they were taking up inclusive approaches.

Teacher Education as Intellectual and Identity Work

Teacher candidates arrive in education programs with socially and experientially derived perspectives on schools and teaching. The literature identifies the need to nurture new teachers' reflexivity, the importance of empowering educators to articulate and construct a teacher identity, and the potential of educators' reciprocal learning with students, families, and community (Ball, 2009; Gay, 2002; Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner,

& Cain, 1998; Lambeth & Smith, 2016; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2016). In essence teacher education has a crucial role to play in supporting teacher candidates in the development of their professional identity, by disrupting preconceived notions, welcoming and introducing non-dominant perspectives, decolonizing oppressive structures that suggest knowledge is standardized, and recasting teachers as inquirers and possibilizers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Richardson, Cherkowski, & Schnellert, 2015; Schnellert, Richardson, & Cherkowski, 2014). Ball (2009) concurred, noting that teacher education programs must be reconceptualized as places where pedagogical approaches appropriate for working with diverse populations are modeled and observed, in order to scaffold teachers' development as generative practitioners (also see Dennis, 2016; Fisher & Frey, 2001).

Theory and research point to the importance of teacher candidates examining and articulating their teaching identities in relation to their philosophical commitments, societal practices that reproduce inequalities, and personal and professional experiences (e.g., Darling Hammond, 2002; French & Garcia-Lopez, 2002; Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009; Nieto, 2003). Critically oriented in situ coursework offers an opportunity for teacher candidates to wrestle with the ways that society shapes their own and students' identities and lifeworlds (Moll, 2014), but only if these courses explicitly attend to these factors. Bridging and integrating philosophy, methods, and fieldwork from diversity and identity perspectives invites teacher candidates to "mediate between ideal practice and the realities of everyday life in institutional contexts ... developing learning environments where all differences are seen as assets for learning" (Darling-Hammond, 2002, p. 202). Teacher education as identity work positions pre-service educators in the present, interrogating the past, to imagine the future, developing practices and dispositions for future situations (Darling-Hammond, 2002; Stard & Prusak, 2005).

Rethinking how schools frame the pathways and life chances of diverse children and how these children and youth construct their learner identities and potential societal contributions should become central to teacher education methods courses. Exploring and developing responsive pedagogy that takes into account students' funds of knowledge and the structural barriers constructed by standardized, value-laden curriculum can position teacher candidates as having agency to influence school routines and processes and the lives of the students in their care (Moss, Girard, & Haniford, 2006; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2016). Braiding diversity-positive theory and practice into in situ methods courses allows teacher candidates and their students to develop identities together. When teacher candidates co-construct their identities with students in context, "teacher and student learning are two sides of the same coin" (Kelly, 2006, p. 516; also see Grossman et al., 2009). Ball (2009) extended this notion to suggest that generative educators

continually add to their understanding by connecting their personal and professional knowledge with the knowledge that they gain from their students to produce or originate knowledge that is useful to them in pedagogical problem solving and in meeting the educational needs of their students. (p. 47)

Trent and Lim (2010) noted that teachers' identity construction takes "place through mutual engagement of teachers in joint enterprise, in community" (pp. 16–17). Darling-Hammond (2002, p. 203) explained that "finding space for reflection and discourse about

who we are, individually and collectively, in relation to one another and to society at large,” is an important and ongoing project in teacher education.

For example, we began our first-year literacy course by bringing personal, culturally specific artifacts to class, with each of us explaining how they represented our own funds of knowledge. In the next class teacher candidates brought their own artifacts, and we introduced oral language strategies that supported teacher candidates’ identification, articulation, and elaboration of their literacy development.

In situ teacher education courses, purposefully designed, can locate teacher candidates within school learning communities that offer them access to equity-oriented discussions, reflexive debates, and pedagogical problem-solving with practising teachers and each other.

The Project and Design Description

In the context of our roles as a university-based researcher and the local school district’s early learning and literacy coordinator, we collaboratively developed a partnership between the school district and university. Together we redesigned the institution’s language and literacy course as situated within an elementary school in a culturally diverse neighborhood with a high degree of transiency and poverty. A modular (a free-standing structure comprising a classroom and washroom, sometimes referred to as a portable) at the school became the Field Studies Learning Centre, affording teacher candidates a space in which to engage in interactive inquiry-based learning with children 5–10 years old once a week for the first 13 weeks of their program. This first-year course explored key aspects of literacy learning (e.g., developmental and social-cultural orientations to oral language, reading, writing) as well as aspects of a balanced literacy program (e.g., read alouds, guided reading, word work, literature circles) and relevant teaching approaches (gradual release of responsibility, activating prior knowledge, direct instruction, open-ended strategies, etc.). The instructors and teacher candidates spent three hours together each week during the first 13-week semester of the Bachelor of Education program. Teacher candidates were divided into two cohorts—morning and afternoon. A typical class structure involved:

- Reviewing and discussing the intentions of the day and related reading.
- Teacher candidates observing one of us and/or teachers in classrooms modelling literacy pedagogy, actively joining in lessons and activities, and/or co-teaching micro-lessons to small groups of students.
- Debriefing and comparing their observations and experiences, making connections with readings and theory, and setting the context for the next week.

In between classes teacher candidates prepared lessons and materials for the next class and read foundational texts related to upcoming topics.

After two years implementing this format, we acquired the teacher education program’s second-year language arts methods course, which occurred after the first practicum. We redesigned the course as an in situ learning experience focusing on diversity-positive, inclusion-oriented pedagogies such as reading and writing workshop,

literacy centres or stations, culturally responsive pedagogy, critical literacy, project-based learning, and circle pedagogies from various cultural and pedagogical traditions (i.e., Indigenous, social-emotional learning, literature and information circles, and restitution). Throughout this course, teacher candidates were invited to deconstruct their previous practicum as part of their continued reading and reflection.

In the second-year course, we also invited 11 teachers representing different diverse neighbourhoods in the school district (rural, urban, suburban) who were willing to position themselves as co-learners and literacy mentors. Two of these teachers were from the year-one host school, while the remaining nine teachers represented seven additional schools. These 11 mentors included three teachers with 2–5 years' experience, five teachers with 6–10 years' experience and three teachers with more than 20 years' experience.

Within the second course, mentor teachers and teacher candidates co-planned lessons and literacy structures related to concepts such as critical literacy and culturally responsive teaching, and carried them out in the mentor teachers' classrooms. Critical literacy attends to the cultural, ideological, and socio-linguistic content of curriculum (Luke, 2012). Critical literacy is focused on the uses of literacy for social justice in marginalized and disenfranchised communities (Luke, 2012; Vasquez, 2017). In particular, we looked at the construction of learning environments as safe spaces, multiple literacies and diverse texts, the need to honour and draw out the background knowledge and perspectives of non-dominant cultural groups, family literacy, and how these factors relate to student engagement and learning (Gay, 2002; Luke, 2012; Schnellert & Kozak, in press; Vasquez, 2017).

Methodology

Critical case study is the methodology (Grosvenor & Pataki, 2017; Merriam, 2009) taken up within this research to better understand the impact of our course redesign, which centrally focussed on the potential of literacy education as a site of learning and empowerment for diverse learners and their teachers (Schnellert & Kozak, in press). Case study methodologies are flexible, allowing the researchers to study a variety of phenomena and complex interactions. Timmons and Cairns (2010) explained that this flexible methodology “is beneficial in that it provides researchers with tools for capturing the different elements that contribute to the ... phenomena under investigation” (p. 2); in this case we were interested in the meaning teacher candidates made of their lived experiences within in situ teacher education attending to equity-oriented literacy practices. In this research approach there is no assumption that teacher methods per se are causal; indeed, particular teaching approaches that work in one setting may not work in another (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). Dyson and Genishi (2005) explained that the “aim of such studies is not to establish relationships between variables (as in experimental studies) but, rather, to see what some phenomenon means as it is socially enacted within a particular case” (p. 10). This research offers a critical case study of possibilities (Grosvenor & Pataki, 2017) by attending to whether and how teacher candidates reconceptualized language use and meaning-making, the formation of identities through literacy learning, and how privilege and forms of oppression intersect and can be challenged through in situ teacher education.

We researched whether, when, and how teacher candidates integrated learning experiences into their professional development and what supported them in their learning. Our research question was: What happens when we redesign and teach our language and literacy courses in a local elementary school using equity-oriented and culturally responsive approaches to teaching, learning, and education?

Once approval was acquired from the university ethics board and school district, teacher candidates were asked by email for consent to use their class materials and were also invited to participate in interviews. Participants could agree to either, both, or none of the options. The interviews were structured based on a series of open-ended questions (see Appendix 1), and were digitally recorded and transcribed. Approximately 25% of teacher candidates (15 of 64) sat for interviews, which were conducted approximately three months after the conclusion of the program. Participants were 3 men and 12 women, all between the ages of 22 and 32. Some had completed Bachelor's degrees, while others joined the program with three years of undergraduate education. All received a Bachelor of Education degree at the end of the program.

Using inductive approaches, we first analyzed six interviews. We selected these initial six for their ability to provide a cross-section of perspectives based on gender, geographic diversity (in terms of their practicum), and experiences within the program. We each coded for possible themes and brought them to a research meeting. Analysis was a collaborative and iterative process as we negotiated emerging themes and interpretations. If we could not agree on a code, it was discarded. For example, one of us identified a teacher candidate's statement about their practicum experience as not welcoming students' background knowledge, but when both of us read through the entire interview transcript together, we determined that the same teacher candidate contradicted this statement with later comments. We used the themes and sub-themes we agreed upon as our a priori framework to guide the coding of 9 more interviews for a total of 15. As the interviews were conducted at the end of the program as a whole, we additionally drew on class materials generated by course assignments in the second-year language arts course (see Appendix 2) from the same 15 teacher candidates to confirm and disconfirm themes, reviewing and adjusting the codes within these themes. Themes were refined throughout this process. In particular, teacher candidates' end-of-course reflective analyses and unit plan rationales (Appendix 2) offered rich data from the perspective of all 15 participants that informed and shaped interpretations of data analysis. Across all data sources we sought to understand whether and how our theoretical lenses and modes of inquiry supported teacher candidates in the development of their philosophy, practice, and learning.

Findings

Three significant themes were derived through iterative analysis of teacher candidates' interviews, end-of-course reflective analyses, and the rationales from their unit plans: diversity and funds of knowledge, inclusive practice, and equity-oriented practice. In reporting our findings, we use a series of abbreviations beginning "TC" (teacher candidate) to identify individual participants while maintaining confidentiality.

Diversity and Funds of Knowledge

Across the 15 interviews a robust theme that emerged was how teacher candidates shifted their conceptions of who learners are and the funds of knowledge that they bring with them. Many teacher candidates were initially surprised at the diversity they encountered in classrooms, but spoke about how they learned to acknowledge diversity, honour children's and families' funds of knowledge, and view learners as curricular informants. For example, in her interview, TCA reflected that holding the course in schools resulted in "the realization of how incredibly diverse each student is and all the things that I need to do in order to meet their needs."

The readings and discussion related to diversity combined with in situ experience was deemed beneficial. TCM explained,

The thing that was new to me and turned out to be extremely valuable was talking about the family literacy that happens before children arrive at school and how that shapes all of their interactions with the literacy that happens at school. So that right away opened my eyes to just the breadth of diversity that is going to happen in a classroom of 30 kids. It helped me see how imperative it is for me to really look for and know what my students have coming in and what they're working with. So to continually be learning more about them, so that I can craft our experiences together. (interview)

Similarly, TCNIN noted in her interview that "the approach of respecting all individuals, the approach of having a sense of respect and understanding for cultural identities, for those personal funds of knowledge that students bring to the classroom" informed her pedagogical stance.

For these teacher candidates, their image of learners was transformed from seeing them as passive recipients of information to acknowledging how active and generative children are as meaning makers. TCC explained:

We should not and cannot gradually build our students up to willful and capable constructors of meaning. They are already there. Students own the work and the process [in writing workshop]. They know themselves and each other as willful and capable agents of language. (reflective analysis)

TCC further illustrated how children can inform their teaching and how diverse learners are not just capable, but can lead their own learning:

If you use what the students already know and what their strengths are, then you're basically employing them in their own learning. So it's less of a top-down process—that's what I had believed, that it's a top-down teacher-to-student transmission. (interview)

There was a distinct shift in the way that many of the teacher candidates viewed children as learners. TCM explained in his interview that "a kind of evolution for me is the discovery that these students are already citizens." TCNIN found that there is a reciprocal relationship in valuing and welcoming students' funds of knowledge: "If we approach learners as people, being mindful of who they are, where they come from, and where they as individuals and a community of learners are going, we will grow in a transformative and holistic way" (reflective analysis). In her reflective analysis she wrote:

Students must be respected for their uniqueness, learn from where they are in the world, and engage with knowledge that matters most to them.... Who we are and where we come

from is so valuable to respect as a teacher. This is at the root of building and providing authentic learning experiences.

Teacher candidates connected how what learners bring from their funds of knowledge, interests, and passions can shape what happens in the classroom. TCS wrote,

To give students choice within a structured lesson is the premise of authenticity. Not every student is the same so they should not have to make connections to something in the same way. We want them to make their own connections and take from it what is most important for them. (reflective analysis)

TCB explained how “as a responsive teacher adopting a student-centred platform, my classroom curriculum must be a living thing based on the knowledge and interests of my students” (reflective analysis).

Teacher candidates had to include a rationale as part of their unit plan. In her rationale, TCA wrote:

Every learner brings unique experiential knowledge to the classroom and the sharing of these diverse perspectives support[s] students’ social and emotional needs. When I look at the students in my class I see an incredibly diverse group of students with many different interests, abilities, cultural orientations and languages. With knowledge of my group of diverse learners, it is apparent that differentiated practices designed to engage students through their cultural background will allow them to find relevance in literacy.

Finally, in his interview, TCM explained that:

Going into practicum, after our seminar, I had this idea like, okay, each of my students has a fund of knowledge, fund of identity, they’re diverse, they’re interesting, they’re rich; and how can I draw that out and help the rest of the class celebrate them? I was able to use that idea to be able to build a unit where each student was able to bring something of themselves to the class and be celebrated for it.

Holding this course in schools helped us to challenge teacher candidates’ prior assumptions while also supporting them to “form new ideas and new habits of thought and action” (Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1016) that were diversity-positive. Many were able to articulate a pedagogical stance that both welcomed and drew from children’s funds of knowledge to create curriculum and pathways to learning. Of the three teacher candidates who did not speak to diversity and funds of knowledge, all three spoke more about pedagogical approaches—or the technical aspects of teaching including those related to diversity. However, they did not share understandings or experiences that explicitly discussed their shifting conceptions of learners and/or their funds of knowledge.

Inclusive Practice

We found that 11 of 15 teacher candidates spoke about witnessing inclusive practices first-hand within their in situ language and literacy coursework. This made a lasting impact and deepened their understandings of inclusion not only in theory, but as a way of designing environments and structuring learning for all children. In her interview, TCH elaborated on the in situ aspect of her learning, describing it as “just really seeing what we were reading happening in actual classrooms and trying it out ourselves as well.

Then also seeing other people adapting it in ways that suited the needs of their classrooms and their learners” (interview).

For TCL in situ coursework

impacted how I planned everything ... We talked about how making sure every kid had a chance to participate was a really big thing. We talked about this [inclusion] in other courses, of course, but literacy really cemented it—how can every kid participate, and how can every kid demonstrate their learning? (interview)

Witnessing and observing inclusive practices not only reinforced the theory-to-practice connections, it also deeply influenced teacher candidates’ attitudes and beliefs about what it means to truly engage in inclusion in practice. In his reflective analysis, TCM described how his attitudes and beliefs were reinforced through witnessing inclusive practices in situ:

I believe that every one of my students deserves to feel successful and grow from where they are. I also believe (and have seen in every classroom I’ve visited) that a group of students is never homogeneous in what they know and what they can do.

Teacher candidates also clarified how they had transformed their image of the child as a learner. TCB explained her conception of learners:

Every kid is capable, you just need to give them the right encouragement and never assume that they can’t do something. He needs to be given an opportunity. What is important [is] to motivate each student by understanding that each learner’s abilities are limitless, not fixed. (reflective analysis)

TCM, in his reflective analysis, discussed not only the capacity and potential of all children as learners, but also that he feels agency to create the conditions required for them all to meet with success:

Children, all learners, actually, are colorful and varied, and each one brings a different set of strengths and stretches. And the teaching strategies and approaches I choose must reflect that. So I will work with and adapt frameworks that offer choice, easy access with a high ceiling, and diverse modalities to engage in and express learning.

There exists a consensus in the literature that taking up inclusion in teacher education coursework has a positive impact on teacher candidates’ theoretical knowledge as well as on their attitudes toward inclusion (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009; Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014). However, the same research concludes that teacher candidates do not feel prepared to teach in inclusive classrooms. Interestingly, our data suggests that experiencing inclusive practices while embedded in classrooms as part of their teacher preparation literacy coursework had not only developed teacher candidates’ belief in inclusion, but also proved instructive in building their practical knowledge for what this looked like in practice and in fostering their sense of agency.

Equity-Oriented Pedagogy

We found that 9 of 15 teacher candidates reported developing and integrating aspects of equity-oriented pedagogy. It was heartening to see what teacher candidates identified as important and what they drew into their pedagogical stance. In his interview TCM shared:

Everyone's voice is valuable, everyone's voice has something to bring that is missing from the other or that complements the other.... I hope that by helping my students develop agency and their sense of self, by treating them as valued and respected citizens with a voice worth hearing, it will emancipate them somewhat toward making a positive change in their world. (interview)

We spent two classes exploring critical literacy. One week teacher candidates learned about this pedagogy and the next week co-planned and co-taught a critical literacy lesson in the literacy mentor's classroom. In his reflective analysis TCC wrote:

Critical literacy allows students to dive into a topic. They linger with the concepts and bounce their thoughts off of each other in productive discussion. Each student is accountable to the other. Their course of discussion and inquiry is not suggested by the teacher, but arises instead—organically, from students' own minds, from their sense of self and the world around them. This is personalized, meaningful learning. Each student has a voice—a perspective that informs how they see themselves and the world. Critical literacy gives each student the respect, time and space to use, test, and adopt that voice.

Teacher candidates also felt more able to question taken-for-granted assumptions, a central tenant when teaching for equity (Giroux, 1992; Nieto, 2003). TCB saw the practice of critical literacy as an opportunity to seek out non-dominant perspectives and structural oppression. In her interview, she said, "I think it's easy to fall into a situation where you just see what's going on rather than thinking beyond that and moving forward ... How can we challenge what we're doing?" A central element of social justice pedagogy is reflexivity, becoming aware of and taking action regarding your own biases and privilege. TCMIC found that the literacy courses enabled him to reconsider his positionality in relation to Indigenous content. In his interview he explained,

There's not a lot of Aboriginal teachers, and there's not a lot of people who really feel comfortable engaging in that kind of material ... something that I've thought about lots with my colleagues, and I've seen also the fear that a lot of teachers have. How do I, you, as a white person ... engage in this material authentically?

In her interview, TCH summed up how equity-oriented pedagogy was realized for her in these in situ literacy courses. She found that she made connections between education, inclusive practice, and social justice:

It just wasn't literacy, it was diversity and community and so many things I value: social justice, critical literacy, bringing it all into one. And challenging those ideas in teaching that are just being brought to the surface, things that I really am a big advocate for.

Across data sources, teacher candidates recognized how they were learning about and taking up pedagogies to also develop a critical stance in their learners. In the rationale for her unit plan TCB wrote:

We are not just teaching students to read the world; we are giving learners both the knowledge and confidence to critically think and analyze the world. I want to provide opportunities for learners to think critically about the world and discuss critical issues surrounding social justice for deeper engagement and learning.

At the end of the second course, in his reflective analysis TCC explained:

When students come up with their own essential questions, and linger with these questions, compiling and reflecting on their thoughts as a class, students thereby deconstruct narratives and assumptions by which they may live their lives. [Critical literacy] is a concise and effective strategy to engage students in their social and discursive environments.

Similarly, in his reflective analysis TCMIC recognized:

It is important that students become multi-literate and learn to read the word to be able to read the world and write the world. It is not enough for students to learn about or to learn through language. Students must be able to use language to critique and integrate new knowledge into their schema. Critical and cultural literacy are central to curriculum. In order to create meaningful change in the world schools must empower individuals to make informed, conscious decisions about the important issues facing our society.

One highlight from the data was how teacher candidates took up equity-oriented pedagogies in their unit plans and end-of-course reflective analysis. Teacher candidates recognized critical literacy as transformational pedagogy, positioning learners as change agents. In her unit rationale TCA wrote:

I can allow students to read and write about what they are interested in as well as things that are relevant to their personal lives, which will allow them to make deeper and more meaningful connections. I can also use the items we read and write about to expand their thinking, incorporating current events and social issues in a way which will allow students to explore them at a safe distance, such as in a children's book encouraging them to take action on the ways it impacts their lives.

TCH specifically focused on empowering her students:

When children can make meaningful connections from texts to real life, they'll start to think critically about the issue.... It is important to me that the children I am teaching can see themselves as leaders and agents of change. I am learning that this can take place through critical literacy. (reflective analysis)

Teacher candidates highlighted culturally responsive teaching as a lens through which they could make a difference in the lives of their students. TCB wrote:

In learning communities, diversity and differences are celebrated and through culturally responsive teaching are incorporated into the curriculum of the class. This creates a sense of celebration that each and every one of the students are learning and developing at their own pace and their own unique knowledge. (unit rationale)

Last, TCNIN opined:

When we stop competing with others and work on building community we will inevitably break down barriers including cultural, political, and social. This means that in the end we are building a stronger and more collaborative citizenship that can make the world a better place for humanity. (reflective analysis)

This in situ approach seems to have successfully addressed calls to move beyond disrupting prospective teachers' beliefs to influencing the development of equity-oriented pedagogy. Kozleski and Waitoller (2010) and Xu (2001) similarly have found that teacher candidates' contextually situated learning in schools, supported by skilled facilitators, can have an impact on their equity-oriented learning. Data here suggest that the teacher candidates' lived experiences within the literacies courses, mediated by readings and

discussions with peers, mentors, and instructors, influenced the development of teacher candidates' equity-oriented beliefs, understandings, and practices.

Discussion

Recent scholarship in teacher preparation reaffirms the importance of providing novice teachers with “experiences of teaching” (Allsopp, DeMarie, Alvarez-McHatton, & Doone, 2006; Berry & Loughran, 2002; Zeichner, 2010). This focus on practice can interrupt previous teacher education approaches that have focused on the transmission of specialized theoretical knowledge about teaching and learning but have not done as much to prepare teacher candidates to enact practice (Peercy & Troyan, 2017; Rolheiser et al., 2011). Despite a body of literature that focuses on the work of teacher educators, little is actually known about how they navigate the growing demands to make practice more central to the work of teacher education (Burton & Pace, 2009; Peercy & Troyan, 2017). This case study reflects our efforts as teacher educators to engage in developing new epistemological and practical ways of nurturing diversity-positive language arts teachers. We collaboratively (re)structured our language and literacy courses to be taught in local elementary schools. Capitalizing on the potential of case study methodology, our goal was to interrupt teacher candidates' assumptions about what constitutes literacy and how knowledge is produced (Grant & Agosto, 2008; Moll, 2014). We hoped that working with diverse learners in situ would support teacher candidates' development of equity-oriented practices along with increasing their socio-cultural awareness (Banks et al., 2005; Giroux, 1992; Nieto, 2003). Here we discuss when and how teacher candidates integrated theory with practice through in situ learning experiences embedded in elementary classrooms.

Exploring the Symbiotic Relationship Between Theory and Practice

Across the teacher education literature, there is evidence that teacher candidates' beliefs can and do indeed shift to take on a more inclusive stance (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2002; Stard & Prusak, 2005). However, researchers have suggested that teacher candidates struggle to realize this stance and to render workable, equity-oriented practices from their understanding of theory (Banks et al., 2005; Campbell & Dunleavy, 2016; Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond, 2002). This study illustrates how in situ courses can take up diversity and inclusion in ways that allow teacher candidates to develop a pedagogical stance and practice in tandem.

As theory and research suggest, if teacher candidates are expected to teach in ways that differ from what they experienced as students, then it is incumbent upon teacher educators to provide opportunities for them to learn first-hand what this looks like in settings that differ from their prior experience. Taylor and Sobel (2003) described such in situ experiences as offering teacher candidates a “living laboratory” (p. 256) in which theory reveals itself through practice with children in diverse, inclusive, and real-life, unpredictable settings. Of note in this study, teacher candidates described how their conceptions of teaching, learning, and literacy were disrupted as they experienced and reflected upon intersections between theory and practice. Their learning did not stop there. They were introduced to and had to plan for and teach in diverse classrooms using

pedagogical approaches that helped them to clarify and articulate their inclusive philosophical stance. All 15 teacher candidates interviewed offered illustrative examples of practices such as writing workshop, literacy centres and stations, culturally responsive teaching, and critical literacy as practical pedagogies they embraced and enacted in cycles of action and reflection. Several noted that these practices were not familiar to or endorsed by the teacher(s) they worked with during practicum. Yet, because they read about, planned, and micro-taught using these approaches in their in situ language and literacy methods courses, many felt ownership of them and confident that they would seek out and use these approaches in their future practice. Teacher candidates were able to articulate how direct instruction (often cited as a key element of instruction for diverse literacy learners) is meaningfully embedded within these approaches (e.g., guided reading offered while other students participate in literacy centres and stations, mini-lessons within writing workshop, gradual release of responsibility of skill development during read-alouds, and shared reading using culturally relevant texts).

In this project teacher candidates co-planned and co-taught in our 11 literacy mentors' classrooms, which offered them contextualized problems of practice to respond to and later deconstruct (Gelfuso, Parker, & Dennis, 2015; Grossman et al., 2009). While the settings themselves did not reduce complexity, the teacher candidates were coached by a mentor and taught in small teaching teams. The intensity of these first experiences both impacted teacher candidates' thinking and offered them opportunities to succeed in challenging situations. In many cases, "failure" preceded success. For example, in the first-year language and literacy course TCVAN worked with a small group of intermediate students to implement literacy stations and found her classroom management techniques actually increased students' challenging behaviour. She shared that this shook her confidence; however, by the second-year language arts course she sought opportunities to work with students with complex life histories and tailored instructional activities to access their funds of knowledge within writing workshop. She subsequently planned a literacy centre around one minority student's passions that allowed him to mentor other students. Such examples illustrate how the integrated nature of the in situ courses built teacher candidates' understanding of equity-oriented pedagogy and their appreciation of the need for such pedagogy, while also enhancing their sense of agency and self-efficacy.

Teacher candidates received recursive opportunities in two courses over two years to develop complex theory–practice understandings through cycles of action and reflection with children in diverse classrooms. Timperley (2013) noted that

knowledge about teaching cannot be separated from its enactment: teachers do not learn new things and then how to implement them. Rather, they develop their professional knowledge through a mix of theory, practice, and finding out how students respond. (p. 13)

The continuity between the two courses and the iterative nature of returning to classrooms for practical experiences cumulatively expanded upon and reinforced their foundational understandings.

In their study on social justice in teacher preparation Taylor and Sobel (2003) discovered that teacher candidates called for more demonstration and modelling within real-world, diverse classrooms and schools, in order to deepen connections between

theory and practice that support inclusion and diversity. As a result of spending an abundance of time in situ, the teacher candidates in our study found their experiences in classrooms challenging, particularly the expectation that they co-plan and co-teach throughout the first semester of their program. Interestingly, they also reported that it was these very experiences that helped them embrace diversity and concepts such as responsive teaching and emergent curriculum.

Blurring the Roles of University and Practice Settings in Teacher Education

Cochran-Smith et al. (2015) noted that many teacher education studies focus “on ways to help teacher candidates learn to interpret classroom life in rich, accurate, and complex ways, often by learning to analyze the data of practice” (p. 117). In this study, teacher candidates’ language arts and literacy classroom experiences became shared resources that informed ongoing iterative discussion and learning throughout the duration of their coursework (Campbell & Dunleavy, 2016; Schnellert, Fisher, & Sanford, 2018). Many referred to the opportunity to learn in the 11 mentors’ classrooms as critically important to offering images of what equity-oriented beliefs look like in practice, especially when they were able to link specific pedagogical practices to experiences with groups of children they worked with in situ.

There is an increasing consensus about the need to reconceptualize and mobilize the social, cultural, and linguistic practices of diverse communities and families and children as pedagogical resources for learning and teaching (Ball, 2009; Moll, 2010). Timperley (2013) argued that in order for teacher candidates to be socio-culturally aware and linguistically responsive to young people from communities different from their own, there must be opportunities for deeper engagement with at least some of those communities within teacher preparation programs “to make the transition from self as normal to self as cultural, and to recognize the cultural diversity of those they interact with and teach” (p. 22).

Banks et al. (2005) stated that the aspects of diversity that teacher candidates must understand and be able to work with include culture, racial and ethnic origins, language, economic status, and learning exceptionalities. All of these factors and their interactions are necessary for prospective teachers to be able to first theorize and eventually enact a pedagogy of equity (Banks, 1993; Grossman et al., 2009). We found that partnering with classroom teachers who take up practices aligned with those discussed within the readings in our language and literacy courses reinforced and extended teacher candidates’ engagement with and understanding of practices that welcome and build on diverse students’ funds of knowledge. Yet, we see a need and potential for language and literacy courses to better consider learning exceptionalities from a critical disability studies perspective, as many of the teacher candidates interviewed still struggled to realize cognitively diverse learners’ funds of knowledge.

Most striking in this study was that theory was no longer the exclusive purview of the university, and practice was no longer framed as belonging to the field. Similar to Campbell and Dunleavy (2016) we found that:

the division of labor in the activity system shifted from a university-based hegemony to a more democratic division of labor between university knowledge and partner teacher knowledge. (p. 66)

Together faculty, in-service, and pre-service teachers deconstructed what had previously been considered neutral, standardized practices (Moss et al., 2006; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2016). We linked readings and concepts to problems of practice that emerged within the classrooms. Teacher candidates collaboratively created responsive learning sequences that were designed around the strengths and the cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge, as well as around the needs of the learners within the literacy mentors' classrooms.

In this model, we and the mentor teachers worked with teacher candidates to explore teaching in practice contexts (Allsopp, DeMarie, Alvarez-McHatton, & Doone, 2006; Gelfuso et al., 2015). The teacher candidates were able to “effectively draw on the classroom teachers’ knowledge in significant ways” (Campbell & Dunleavy, 2016, p. 66). In fact, for many of the teacher candidates it was working with teachers in their classrooms that catalyzed socio-cultural awareness and understandings. Concepts such as inclusion and culturally responsive teaching held little meaning until in situ coursework exposed the structures and practices that privilege dominant communities and ways of knowing. Together, teacher candidates and teachers acted on their shared reflections, readings, and ideas introduced by the instructors to identify gaps between theory and practice in mentors’ classrooms. The opportunity allowed pre-service and in-service educators to recraft learning experiences to be more open-ended, choice-based, and welcoming of child, family, and cultural artifacts and linguistic resources; in doing so, it blurred the lines between expert and novice and instead positioned all as theorizers and critical pedagogues. This was not without tension. Teacher candidates would sometimes report their concern about a mentor teachers’ practice, mentor teachers would sometimes frame teacher candidates as challenging, and instructors often worried about the direction mentors gave teacher candidates when co-planning and co-teaching. Redirecting teacher candidates, mentors, and ourselves is a work in progress. However, the equity-oriented inquiry stance the literature recommends taking up with diverse children and families (Moje, 2008; Moll, 2014; Nieto & McDonough, 2011; Rodriguez, 2013) has proven to be fruitful when applied to our interactions with adults. Shifting deficit thinking such as the application of “standardized” expectations regarding student learning and teaching practice is ongoing work for all educators—regardless of role or stage of career.

The literacy mentors were selected because they embraced equity-oriented practices found in theoretical resources. However, teacher candidates reported that mentor teachers’ disposition to learn with the teacher candidates outweighed the presence of a refined, equity-oriented practice. In many cases the teacher candidates felt empowered when mentors invited them to co-construct and co-introduce new practices—or new aspects of practices—discussed in class and/or based on course readings. The language and literacy courses were intentionally designed around collaborative structures to foster and develop community among the teacher candidates (Darling-Hammond, 2002; Trent & Lim, 2010). Much of their time was spent debriefing, planning, and micro-teaching collaboratively in small groups. The design created conditions for teacher candidates to collectively construct understandings based on their shared experiences (Kozleski &

Waitoller, 2010; Zeichner, 2010). Most of this study's participants highlighted how the learning communities with their peers and literacy mentors contributed to how they envision themselves as members of a greater collective of professionals learning with and from each other.

Korthagen et al. (2006) suggested that learning to construct and analyze practice experiences with peers in a teacher education program lays a foundation for peer learning as an ongoing, expected component of professional and career development. It is incumbent upon teacher educators to provide structured experiences and scaffolds that move teacher candidates beyond the sharing of practice toward analysis and critique as ways to encourage learning that attends to how educators reinforce and/or disrupt historically and situationally oppressive structures and practices (Ball, 2009; Moll, 2014; Wells, 2007). The work of Darling-Hammond and Bransford in 2005 reminds us that since learning to work effectively within professional learning communities is key to changing school cultures, teacher preparation programs must support their candidates to "learn how to work on improvement of practice as members of such collaborative communities" (p. 5).

Self-Efficacy and Agency within Equity-Oriented Teacher Education

A final aspect of this study is how it reveals that reconceptualizing just two methods courses within a teacher education program as in situ and diversity-oriented empowered teacher candidates as change agents. Ball (2009) wrote:

We must increase teachers' knowledge of theory and best practices and their knowledge of students' cultural practices and values. In addition, we must assist teachers in replacing their feelings of insecurity, discomfort, and inadequacy with feelings of agency, advocacy, and efficacy. (p. 46)

Many of the participating teacher candidates developed their capacity as reflexive educators, and many identified a shift in understanding related to seeking and valuing non-dominant funds of knowledge as part of equity-oriented practice. Also, regardless of the degree of praxis, all felt increased confidence as inclusive educators prepared to plan, teach, and advocate for their diverse learners.

In this study, nurturing new teachers' metacognitive capacity played a key role in developing their self-efficacy and agency. Like Gelfuso et al. (2015) we found that coursework in which teacher candidates are members of communities of practice with collaborating teachers can "reconceptualize preservice teachers as thinking agents who act upon ideas and suggestions" referencing theory, research, and practitioner knowledge (p. 12). Teacher candidates reported that collaborative cycles of action and reflection supported them to consider whether and how their plans met their goals, what students needed, and how they might draw on students' funds of knowledge to design responsive pedagogy to increase learning for all students in their care. Timperley (2013) noted that "all teacher education programs promote the idea of lifelong learning but their approaches to learning to practise do not necessarily systematically develop the metacognitive awareness and co-regulated learning skills that are crucial" (p. 19). As illustrated in the findings section of this paper, we found that teacher candidates experienced various collaborative activities as impactful on their learning (e.g., co-

planning, co-teaching, co-debriefing). They reported drawing on one another, the literacy mentors, the course instructors, and theory and research as resources to their planning for diverse groups of learners, recognizing children as curricular informants in the creation of emergent literacy curriculum.

Conclusion

This study examined teacher candidates' experience and learning in literacy methods courses that were redesigned to create culturally responsive and diversity-oriented pre-service professional learning experiences in situ. Our findings suggest that engaging with teacher candidates in situ as co-constructors of literacy pedagogy provided fertile ground for explorations of the diversity of learners in classrooms, pedagogy that welcomes and includes diverse learners, and system-level factors that privilege dominant discourses. They further suggest that offering critically oriented teacher education methods courses in situ and in partnership with school districts can articulate productive sites of tension from which to challenge assumptions, decentre privileged literacies and ways of knowing, and draw from learners' funds of knowledge. As compared to the previous academic experiences of most university students, we found that engaging teacher candidates as active co-constructors of knowledge within diverse classrooms (supported by reflection) inspired and spurred equity-oriented learning for teacher candidates and ourselves as teacher educators.

Taking up diversity and plurality within in situ literacy and language arts courses in a Bachelor of Education program created a discursive space for teacher candidates to question their beliefs and assumptions; recast teaching, learning, and literacy as situated and co-created; and explore what it means to be a scholar practitioner. Further research is needed to examine how this approach impacted the teachers and schools where the courses were situated. Questions that emerge from this research include: What are practising teachers (e.g., literacy mentors) involved in in situ teacher education learning from their experiences with teacher educators and teacher candidates? Do they perceive an impact on their own classroom practice? Does the experience of collaboratively attending to aspects of diversity and inclusion heighten their concern for inequalities their students may face in schools?

We posit that this approach to teacher education has the potential to open up pre- and in-service teachers' praxis-oriented examinations of many aspects of teaching, learning, schooling, and education. Gelfuso et al. (2015) wrote that "high quality teacher education programs must create a space to support the simultaneous construction and understanding of ... theory and practice and their intricate intertwinings" (p. 12). Participation within learning communities created a space in which to explore and live the symbiotic relationship between theory and practice. In such spaces generativity can be realized by welcoming all educators to contribute their perspectives, experiences, and reflections within contextually derived shared experiences. As noted earlier, if teacher candidates' metacognition and learning are developed in contexts that do not interrogate and critique existing practices, inequitable practices may actually be reinforced. In situ teacher education, through a lens of diversity, validates the literacies and lifeworld experiences of all learners. By acknowledging and valuing diversity, educators are better able to enact

and embody inclusion—a central tenet of democracy—not as a theoretical construct to be studied, but as a way to be and live with one another.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

1. How did EDUC 405/494 impact your view of what education is and how learning happens? (Did your views change? If yes, what caused you to change your views? If no, why didn't they change?)
 2. Were there any specific aspects of these courses that particularly impacted your understanding of teaching and learning? Of literacy teaching and learning? Explain. (What activities enabled and/or constrained your learning?)
 3. How did EDUC 405/494 inform who you are becoming as a teacher (your evolving professional identity)?
 4. How did your experiences in schools as part of this project impact/relate to aspects of theory and research you were introduced to in readings and classes?
 5. What teaching and learning opportunities do the draft BC Curriculum and Competency Profiles afford you as an educator?
 6. What tensions did you experience within the courses? With the draft curriculum? Why? Were you able to resolve these? How?
 7. What aspects of your learning have you been able to take up in your practicum and what has enabled that? (What barriers have you experienced?)
 8. In Education 405 we introduced you to the lenses of autobiography, theory, colleagues and students to inform and deepen your professional identity and practice. Can you speak about how you have experienced one or more of these lenses to support your professional development this year?
 9. Tell me about a time when you engaged in collaborative, inquiry-oriented and/or integrative practice and learning in relation to these courses and/or the draft curriculum.
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Appendix 2: Course Assessments

1. Portfolio and Reflective Analysis

The overarching assessment method for this course is your portfolio. Your portfolio is a place for you to keep your work in the course such as weekly reflections; assignments; readings and related notes; musings; analyses of articles, strategies and experiences (within and beyond EDUC 417); and representations created as part of class activities.

It is a place where teacher-inquirers (and reflective practitioners in many fields) record observations, reflections, questions, ideas, quotes, resources, and the like. Portfolios can take any format and may indeed include both paper-based and electronic components, but must be organized in some way that is useful to you.

At the end of the course you will look across the contents of your portfolio and synthesize what you are learning about your personal and professional practice and identity. This final reflective commentary will be approximately 3 pages in length (double spaced). In it reflect on your key learnings from this term supported with ideas in and across the readings and activities of this course and artifacts/excerpts from your portfolio; discuss how these relate to past and emerging beliefs, practices, and understandings. Due: December 5th.

Questions to be considered in evaluation:

Summary

1. Do you demonstrate understanding of key ideas and approaches?
2. Do you consider relevant, theory-informed ways to address the issues and questions that arose for you over the term?

Significance

3. Do you consider the significances of language arts teaching and learning, approaches explored, your learning, and their relationship to education, your teaching philosophy and your practice?

Overall

4. Does your reflective analysis illustrate and promote critical thoughtfulness and awareness of and openness to theory, research, and diverse learners?

2. Mind Map

- Beginning in orientation, you will create a mind map illustrating big ideas central to Language Arts, connect them to theory and research, and relate teaching practices to them.
- Marking criteria will include:
 - Demonstrates understanding of the ideas central to language arts pedagogy.
 - Identifies significant teaching practices.
 - Attends to reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and representing.

Due: December 2nd

3. Unit Plan

Describe the focus of your unit including what brings you to this unit, your essential question(s), your theoretical framework—the ideas of the “distant teachers” (theorists, researchers, practitioners) that position the ideas in your unit and how you are teaching it, your pedagogical methods, formative and summative assessments, and a tentative plan of action (attach sample lessons) along with a reference list of 5–10 sources cited. Due: to be negotiated as a class.

4. Micro-teaching and Professionalism

You will work within a collaborative inquiry group to analyze approaches, connect them to theory and research, and explore these ideas and practices through co-planning and co-teaching.

All teacher candidates will be divided into groups with a mentor teacher. All groups will work together to support the students in their mentor teacher’s classroom.

Marking criteria will include:

- Planning and teaching demonstrate understanding of the approach,
- Critical analysis of the approach and reflection on its significance to teaching practice, and
- Theory and research are used to highlight potential for method.