LOST IN BEING: (RE)SITUATING SELF IN TEACHER EDUCATION

by

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Abstract

An important dimension of becoming a teacher is the development of a teacher identity. The research literature suggests that teacher candidates progress through three specific identities—pre-teaching, fictive and lived. While this framework provides a structure with which to consider identity development, it does not address the ways in which transitions between these identities impact teacher candidates. Drawing on Dwayne Huebner’s (1969) concept of being-in-the-world as discourse this study explores being in teacher education through the narratives of three teacher candidates (including the author’s). Using existential themes of language, wonder, and temporality the study reveals that being-as-teacher candidate is dynamic, fragmented, and limited in possibility. Implications for teacher education are discussed.
Preface

This thesis is an original intellectual product of the author, Robyn Leuty. The narratives of teacher candidates that are analyzed in Chapters 6–8 have been taken from interviews that were conducted for “Understanding Inquiry in Teacher Education,” a study with the University of British Columbia’s Centre for the Study of Teacher Education (CSTE) in 2011–2012 undertaken by Dr. Anne Phelan, Dr. Anthony Clarke, and Ms. Robyn Leuty. All processes and methods associated with conducting these interviews were approved by the University of British Columbia’s Behavioural Research Ethics Board [certificate #H12-00510]. As a co-investigator on this study I shared responsibility for data collection and analysis.
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Dedication

In loving memory of Sarah

Thank you for reminding me of the unpredictable brevity of our existence
and encouraging me to revel in the beauty of the present
and embrace the unknown mystery of the future.
Chapter 1: a prologue

_Self_
…the single irreducible element underlying human existence. The only facet of the human experience unique to the individual. An eternal strangeness recognized through language as we encounter the other.

_Language_
…bridges meaning in the space between self and other, each projecting potentiality for becoming through words. Words that echo whispers of a being-in-the-world. In an acknowledgement of the other, we carefully place another existence alongside our own exploring difference. We meet ourselves in a dialectic exchange between self and other becoming exposed, hanging suspended from our spoken words.

_Conversation_
…more than an interplay between words. More than a back and forth of listening ears and speaking mouths, instead a dance between recognition and ignorance of self and other. A continual (re)construction of understandings as we reach out, reveling in the mystery of our aloneness.

_Encounters_
…situate being in a state of contradiction, recognizing the existence of self while simultaneously demanding its ignorance to simultaneously acknowledge the other. We transcend our own solitude, as the other is transformed from object to be known, into subject to be experienced.

_Other_
…encountered in conversation through language. As we listen, interpret and speak, a rhythmic exchange emerges that interrupts hardened modes of knowing and opens up the potential to (re)construct new meaning. Together the conversing self and conversing other create space for new possibilities of being.

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1 This field note was written in September 2012, at the beginning of this research. This field note captures initial thoughts on existential themes of being.
Chapter 2: the unfolding of my research story

*Learning to teach meant learning about oneself and, for many, it meant learning how to become someone else.*

(Dennis Sumara & Rebecca Luce-Kapler, 1996, p. 79)

Dwayne Huebner (1993) stated that “learning is a trivial way of speaking of the journey of the self” (p. 405). This research study explores being-in-the-world\(^2\) of teacher education: it was an extraordinary journey and it is the story of how this journey began that I am using to introduce this thesis. The chapters that follow outline the unfolding of my research story and how it came to be as such.

As a graduate student I encountered a history of education that disrupted my understanding of what it means to teach and be teacher\(^3\). It was a course on curriculum theory that introduced me to the multitude of different theories that have contributed to shaping educational curriculum and the ways in which teachers teach. It was during that course that I began to question my understanding of education. I was overwhelmed by the vast array of ways

\(^2\) The use of hyphens addresses a phenomenological positioning of the individual within the social and physical contexts, rather than as something different from, or outside the world. Consistent with Dwayne Huebner’s conceptualization of being-in-the-world, hyphens are used throughout this thesis (i.e. being-as-teacher) to overcome the separation between *being* and the world that is imposed by written language.

\(^3\) Articles are not used to introduce ‘teacher’ or ‘student’ as a way of overcome the positioning of an identity as separate from an individual’s being-in-the-world that is imposed by written language.
of knowing as teacher. I started to wonder, what was the right way? Was there a right way? What was my way? Learning about the history of curriculum as a field of study opened up possibilities for teaching and being-as-teacher. Education became multi-dimensional. It was no longer fixed to a particular time and place but rather, it was an entity that was in a continuous state of evolution living and breathing alongside its teachers and students. Education was no longer confined to images of a teacher situated in a classroom within a school. Instead, education was an interaction between the unfolding self of the teacher, and the unfolding selves of the students. I realized that education had a story and it was not being told in teacher education programs. Why? Is education’s history only accessible at certain stages of becoming teacher? By not knowing the historical background of education, are teacher candidates developing particular kinds of teacher identities?

I began to realize the importance of historical knowledge in the process of becoming teacher. For me, it was not about the chronological sequencing of curriculum theories as they emerge in time. Rather it was about becoming aware of my own temporality, as teacher within education. It was my own temporality that interrupted what I thought it meant to teach and be teacher. This is where my inquiry began. Prompted by the historicity of education, I became interested in the process of becoming teacher and being-as-teacher candidate. I turned to my experiences in teacher education to situate myself within this inquiry.

As teacher candidate I developed a perception of education as a large, immovable institution – the school – that provides the architecture within which teachers teach and students learn. Learning about education’s history forced me to reconsider my understanding of education and my role within it. Teacher education was a whirlwind of pedagogical approaches and as teacher candidate, there was no opportunity to engage with and explore education as anything other than the organizational infrastructure of schooling. As a result, I developed a two-dimensional understanding of education that was focused primarily on a future state of being-
as-teacher. I was not at all concerned with broader implications, or the historical, social, and political situatedness of teaching and being-as-teacher.

Revisiting course assignments from my teacher education experience portrayed such a superficial understanding of education. I remembered understanding the dialectical nature of the relationship between education and society. I remembered recognizing various threads of continuity and change that weave through education, reflecting the rise and fall of various societal and economic influences. Despite this superficial understanding, I recall being fixated on becoming teacher and nothing else. I wanted desperately to move beyond the undefined space between student and teacher, I wanted to be teacher. As teacher candidate my understanding of education focused only on myself as teacher, not the larger institution of education. For me, the role of teacher was restricted to the four walls of a classroom.

An exploration of the language used in these course assignments guided my interpretations of what it meant for me as teacher candidate, to teach and be teacher.

My philosophy of education is centred around [a] purpose of education that educates the whole individual through a variety of experiences and teaching approaches, and provides students with an optimal learning environment, enabling student success.... This means introducing students to a diversity of experiences which embrace learning in all cognitive, physical, and affective domains, enabling students to be successful, literate citizens who are aware of the world around them, capable of critical and imaginative thought, as well as to integrate and apply knowledge in different situations to prompt positive global change. (Robyn Leuty, 2009)

This was a teaching philosophy developed in teacher education. This philosophy centred on the teacher I wanted to become with no mention of myself as teacher candidate, concerned only with the future learning and wellbeing of the students in my imagined classroom. I was focused

4 Taken from an assignment on personal philosophies of education, submitted for course in teacher education, November 2008 (Appendix A:2).
on how I could create an engaging and dynamic learning environment for my students, which is an accurate reflection of the knowledge, competencies, and experiences of teacher education. Reading these words now as teacher, I can see that they express ambitious aims for becoming teacher, but I struggle to find the relevancy of these words in the lived experience of being-as-teacher. These words hold no meaning for me as teacher, now in the present.

As teacher candidate, I remember being overwhelmed by the classroom. I was preoccupied with achieving curriculum-prescribed learning outcomes and maintaining order, rather than exposing students to a diversity of experiential learning opportunities that would inspire positive global change. Perhaps this is why this teaching philosophy is centred largely on the teacher and the strategies that can be applied in the classroom. I did not have the capacity to consider more than the aspects of the classroom that were within my control: myself. In contrast, my experiences as teacher have informed a current teaching philosophy that is concerned more with the student and encourages engagement with self and others in the classroom, promoting learning through experimentation. Intrigued by the temporal dissonance between teaching philosophies of past and present, I continued to explore course assignments submitted during my experience in teacher education in the hopes of finding further insights into what it meant to teach and be teacher.

I arrived at the realization that I was still immersed in the process of becoming teacher. The interruption prompted by my encounter with educational history challenged my identity as teacher which caused me to redefine my understanding of being-as-teacher. Although my experiences as teacher have contributed to enhancing the depth and complexity of my perceptions of education, it was my encounter with education's history during my experience as graduate student that provoked thought beyond teacher, beyond myself as the individual at the front of a classroom. Learning about the historical situatedness of education led me to consider being-as-teacher beyond the students, the pedagogies and the lesson plans. This sparked a series of questions about the process of becoming teacher and the development of an identity.
as teacher. What is the process of becoming teacher? How is it experienced? What contributes to the development of such an identity?

This fascination with becoming teacher followed me into my work as a graduate research assistant. I was invited to act as a co-investigator on a study exploring teacher candidates’ understanding of inquiry in teacher education. Assisting with conducting and transcribing interviews with teacher candidates, I listened to their stories of teacher education.

“I want to be a non-traditional physical education teacher.”

“…how am I going to finish my unit?”

“…but, I need to pass this program.”

“…we had so much going on with unit planning.”

“…when you have your own classroom…”

“I feel like I could use it in an interview.”

“I need to get a job next year.”

“What does this have to do with teaching?”

As teacher candidates responded to interview questions that probed experiences with, and understandings of inquiry, past histories were explored and understandings of being-as-student and being-as-teacher were questioned. It became apparent that the teacher candidates in this study were preoccupied with a future state of being-as-teacher, rather than the process of becoming teacher in the context of the teacher education program. Teacher candidates spoke
from a place that considered new knowledge and experiences from a position of who I will become, as opposed to who I am. These stories articulated a concern for temporality as teacher candidates negotiated themes of being and becoming in teacher education. It was this recurring notion of temporality in experiences as graduate student and as teacher candidate that drew me to the writings of Dwayne Huebner.
reflective dissonance (field note)\(^5\)

“The process by which one becomes educated occurs in these learning environments provided by the public education system; however, the actual process occurs more intimately between the teacher and the learner.

The process of education shifts to an interplay between student and teacher. This relationship becomes situated within larger contexts.

I wonder what prompted this transition in thought.

I believe this process is a reciprocal process in which both contributing parties—the teacher and the learner—are host to an expert body of knowledge.

Knowledge is situated as the force that unites student and teacher. Each an expert. Each holding knowledge different from the other. Each responsible for contributing to the (re)construction of that knowledge.

This teaching and learning process involves the sharing or refining of this knowledge between both individuals through the right levels of involvement, engagement, and quality of interactions which occur in the classroom.” \(^6\)

Did I ever consider what I was learning from my students? What did my students share with me? What did I share with them? Was it just knowledge?\(^7\)

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\(^5\) I make use of field notes throughout this thesis at the start of each chapter to situate my voice in the research. Field notes are written as an exchange of voices between a past being-as-teacher candidate and present being-as-graduate student.

\(^6\) Taken from assignment on personal philosophies of education, submitted for a course in teacher education, October 2008 (Appendix A: 1).

\(^7\) Written as a response to a reading assignment, August 2012.
Chapter 3: how these stories are told

To tell ‘your story or my story’ without challenging either language ‘that unwittingly writes us’, or the self as singular, unified, chronological, and coherent, is to maintain the status quo to reinscribe already known situations and identities as fixed, immutable, locked into normalized and thus often exclusionary conceptions of what and who are possible.

(Janet Miller, 2005, p. 54)

I first read Dwayne Huebner in a graduate class on curriculum theory. “Curriculum as Concern for Man’s Temporality” was not an easy read, however Dwayne Huebner’s notion of time as emergent and arising only out of man’s existence in the world, resonated strongly with me. In this essay, Huebner (1967) speaks of being-in-the-world with others by way of language, temporality and wonder. According to Huebner (1968) language is the foundation of thought which allows us to articulate our being-in-the-world, disclosing “[a] being there in a given situation” (p. 147). Huebner’s conception of being-in-the-world builds off of Martin Heidegger’s notion of a totality of being that is comprised of being-already-in, being-alongside and ahead-of-itself-already-being-in (Heidegger, as cited in Huebner, 1967). Heidegger’s notion of being in the present as being-alongside is a continual interaction of already-being in the past with ahead-of-itself-already-being-in in the future. As humans, we are temporal beings that are in the world by way of interactions between a past and future.

Huebner also speaks of being-in-the-world as engagement with the world from a position of wonder. He refers to this wonder as a spark that encourages us to seek out that which is new and strange in the world and explore such unknown not with fear, but with curiosity (Huebner, 1959). Huebner (1959) identifies wonder as a “form of participating with time and being of the
other” (p. 7) and it is the repressive requirements of education that have placed limitations on our capacity for wonderment, locking us up in a self-contained prison of what is known. I was drawn to this framework of being, as it prompted reflection on my being-in-the-world and how it is implicated by language, temporality and wonder.

I consider myself to be an achiever and I have spent most of my life striving towards perfection, attempting to fulfil unrealistic expectations that I place on myself. With every step calculated, each stage of becoming on a trajectory towards a carefully scripted future state of being, I have been on a quest to become. Somewhere along that journey I had forgotten to be. The essence of myself had escaped me, taken over by an inexplicable desire to succeed that was ignorant of the present. Dwayne Huebner’s notion of being-in-the-world reminded me of my own temporality in the world and the dangers associated with neglecting the present.

I thought back to the voices of the teacher candidates I listened to in my experience as graduate research assistant. I wondered about their stories of teacher education: how do teacher candidates experience being in teacher education? This is the question that drives this research. Finding meaning and relevance in Dwayne Huebner’s conceptualization of being-in-the-world with others by way of language, wonder and temporality, I use this theoretical framework to explore being in teacher education. In the chapters and sections that follow, I attend to and attempt to understand the language chosen by teacher candidates to tell their stories of teacher education. I hope to illustrate multiple possibilities for being-as-teacher candidate and to use those illustrations to inform teacher education practices.
a thought stirs (field note)

“The process of educating the future leaders of tomorrow

A never ending process.

is a large and daunting task.

I remember being overwhelmed. Teaching had become
something more, something bigger than myself as teacher.

This is a complex task, which is frequently under a microscope,

Much of what I knew about teaching as a profession came from
the media, the good, the bad and the ugly. I didn’t understand
much of it and yet, I knew I wanted to be a teacher. I wanted to
make a difference. I wanted to show students the world in new
ways. I wanted to influence. The strength of my experiences as
a coach, as a leader, and as a facilitator drove me to teacher
education.

as perspectives, theories and meanings of what it means to be
an educated individual are continually evolving. As meanings
and pedagogies evolve, so does the structure and framework of
public education which directly impacts the role of the teacher
within this process of educating students.”

A thought stirred here on the paper, but it dies where it was
born, on a quiet page covered in ink. Lying indistinguishable
amongst others because there was no time to explore what
lay beyond the door, nobody to guide me.

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8 Taken from assignment on influential forces on education, submitted for teacher education course,
December 2008 (Appendix A:3).

9 Written as a response to a reading assignment, September 2012.
Chapter 4: making sense of the stories

*Human life is a journey with a narrative structure that is best expressed in story form.*

(Dwayne Huebner, 1987, p. 382)

In Dwayne Huebner’s (1967) conceptualization of being, language is the medium through which the individual makes sense of self, other, and encounters within the world. According to Martin Heidegger (1969), language should be seen as more than simply in the world within which one lives, but instead as living within it and speaking through the individual. Language becomes a window through which we can peer into the ways that we are in the world. An analysis of language is critical in unlocking deeper meanings of self; without it we see only one story which lies on the surface, telling us what is already known.

This study engages in hermeneutic-phenomenology as a methodological approach to search for meaning in the lived experiences of teacher candidates. This methodology allows for the simultaneous acknowledgement of being-in-the-world, alongside the language that discloses such being. In this study, it is the language used by teacher candidates to tell stories of teacher education that I use to interpret being in teacher education. Huebner (1974) considers interpretation to be a “hermeneutical art” (p. 185) that bridges self and other and provides unity across past, present, and future. Interpretation involves engaging with the past, to make sense of the present and project a potential for being in the future. Consistent with this framework of hermeneutic-phenomenology, as researcher I engage in an interpretation of my own being-as-teacher candidate in the past. As I interpret the lived experiences of others, I also position my experiences as sources for interpreting being in teacher education.

Interpretative activity is more than experience, William Pinar and Douglas McKnight (1995) identify it as particular and felt. There are significant particularities of emotions and
encounters at play in the movement of understanding something that is other, that is strange. As teacher candidates explore the strangeness in what it means to teach and be teacher, I attend to the particularities of this process of becoming teacher. Particularities that are felt and exposed through language and reveal a being-as-teacher candidate. I dig beneath layers of language to illuminate shadows that hide amongst the words, exploring different ways of being-as-teacher candidate. I listen to words that tell a story of self and other in teacher education because it is the words that “let the life world shine through them” (Troeger, as cited in Pinar, 1988 p. 112).

4.1 the stories

The stories of teacher education that are shared in this thesis are based on interviews conducted with approximately 15 teacher candidates for an interpretive study entitled “Understanding Inquiry” in Teacher Education” in April and May of 2012. The purpose of the study was to explore how do teacher candidates experience and understand inquiry, knowledge and teaching as a result of their involvement in an inquiry-oriented course. Two types of data were collected: face-to-face interviews and documents. The face-to-face interviews ranged from 60 to 90 minutes in length and were conducted towards the end, or at completion of practicum placements within the teacher education program. The documents included copies of the course outline, teacher candidates’ inquiry proposals and completed projects, and a series of entrance/exit slips written as part of the course process. The participants that were interviewed for the study were teacher candidates enrolled in an elementary teacher education program in Canada. There were no selection criteria for volunteering in this study, other than teacher candidates self-selecting to participate in an interview.

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10 Inquiry in this study was defined as being-in-the-world from a position of questioning that prompts interpretive engagement in educational ideas and practices (Cochran-Smith et al., 2009).
As a co-investigator with the study I shared responsibility for conducting and transcribing interviews. Conducting the interviews enabled me to learn about each teacher candidate. I learned about past histories as they unfolded in unique expressions of self as teacher candidates (re)storied their experiences in teacher education. The analysis of these interviews revealed complex narratives of being in teacher education. It is these narratives that I use to interpret being-as-teacher candidate. Even though these narratives have been derived from a context other than that of this thesis, the language used reflects the unique particularities in which each teacher candidate makes sense of the world of teacher education. Positioning language as a “universal medium in which understanding occurs” (Gadamer, 1998, p.389) is aligned with the hermeneutic-phenomenology framework within which this research is situated.

4.2 the voices

Of the 15 elementary teacher candidates that were interviewed for the study “Understanding Inquiry in Teacher Education”, there were two teacher candidates that shared stories of teacher education that resonated most strongly with me: Karen and Emily. The narratives from these two teacher candidates highlight the irreducibility of self that underlies the foundation of the experience in teacher education. The two teacher candidates tell stories with strong voices that echo from transcribed pages and promise deeper meaning to be explored. The voices are captured in their uniqueness throughout this thesis through the use of textual cues (italicization and indentation) that distinguish my voice, from the voices of teacher candidates.

F. Michael Clandinin and D. Jean Connelly (1990) place an importance on situating research within a specific context of time and place and consider this critical in creating the experiential quality of any narrative. The temporal, cultural, and social situatedness of each narrative is imperative in contributing depth and accuracy to interpretations of being-as-teacher candidate. In this section I present the biographies of Karen and Emily that have been created
from information disclosed during the interview and include direct quotations from their narratives which are identified in italicized font. These biographies provide insight into, and give shape to the voice behind the story. The names of the two teacher candidates have been altered to ensure anonymity.

Karen

Karen considers herself “unlike many of the other students” in teacher education because she is not in the program to “get [her] own classroom.” For Karen the program is a “stepping stone, as opposed to the end.” She does not fit the “this is your class and you are the teacher and this is what you are going to do with your life” mentality that she perceives many of the other teacher candidates to have. According to Karen, her teacher candidate colleagues are focused only on one outcome: getting a teaching position. Karen’s interests lie in exploring possibilities in art therapy through art education.

Karen comes to teacher education with a degree in fine arts and design, with a focus on gender studies, art theory, and philosophy. Karen identifies her particular background as a barrier to her experience as teacher candidate and is not able to connect with herself because of the restrictions that both teacher education and the public school system place on her. In her interview Karen speaks often of invisibility, as woman and as teacher candidate. She articulates tensions with a gendered identity of teacher and a practicum experience that embodies gendered differences in what it meant to teach and be teacher. Karen explores different identities in teacher education, unsure of who she is to become as teacher.

I have chosen to interpret Karen’s being-as-teacher candidate because her narrative reflects a particular positioning in the world that resembles my own. The thoughts and inquiries that thread through her story of teacher education are similarly threaded through my story as graduate student. I find myself compelled to explore Karen’s narrative because even though it
contrasts my own experience as teacher candidate, it is a familiar reflection of my experience as a graduate student.

Emily

As a Kinesiology graduate Emily was exposed to an undergraduate experience that was primarily application based. Emily self-identifies as a “very detail oriented and straightforward person” who wants to be a “practical teacher.” Emily is future oriented, intently focused on passing her practicum, getting an interview, obtaining her own classroom, and developing her teaching practice only after the practicum is over. In her interview, Emily talks about an undergraduate experience in Physical Education that was as all “application, you learn how to teach PE and then you try it out.” Emily comes to the teacher education program with a wealth of experience working in day camps, after school care programs and coaching; however, she regards her background in Physical Education as the source of challenges she faces with understanding certain facets of a teacher identity, such as the notion of inquiry. Emily highlights struggles with thinking about the practice of teaching and not being able to “experience it [inquiry], or see it [inquiry]” in a classroom. This dichotomy between the thought and practice of teaching is a theme that surfaces frequently throughout Emily’s narrative.

I also have a bachelor’s degree in Kinesiology, and like Emily, spent most of my undergraduate experience in laboratories, coaching environments or community placements. I came into teacher education with a lot of lesson planning, teaching, and coaching experience and recall finding course work tedious. I remember experiencing the most transformational learning on my practicum, as I engaged with peers and colleagues in new educational settings. I have chosen to explore Emily’s narrative of teacher education because it resonates strongly with my own experiences as teacher candidate. As a teacher candidate, I shared with Emily similar areas of frustration and struggled with the multitude of expectations of teacher candidates in teacher education.
It is important to note that these stories only depict a snapshot of being-as-teacher candidates and should not be considered a reflection of the entirety of the experience in teacher education. Stories do not exist in a vacuum and are continually being deconstructed and reconstructed over time (Chase, 2005; Mischler 2004). As stories are retold, they are re-storied to embody different remembered realities. The stories of teacher education used in this study capture only memories of particular moments and places. In the interviews, teacher candidate remember their experiences in teacher education and it is the language used to remember these experiences that guide my interpretations.

As I make meaning of being-as-teacher candidate from each narrative questions are generated that go beyond the scope of this research, questions of being, of becoming and of developing a teacher identity. Hans-Georg Gadamer (1960) identifies that questioning as researcher “opens up possibilities of meaning, and thus what is meaningful passes into one’s own thinking on the subject” (p.375). These questions are an important aspect of the interpretation process, as hermeneutic-phenomenology seeks to explore meaning that arises from the interaction between reader and text. Consistent with the methodological framework of this study, I include these questions as they arise, capturing an internal dialogue as I interpret being-as-teacher candidate.

Dwayne Huebner (1963) considered conversation as leading “nowhere in particular; yet always lead[ing] to closer ties between those conversing and greater realization of who each person is and can become” (p.47). By sharing teacher candidates’ stories of teacher education, by asking my own questions and interpreting the lived experiences of others, I begin to make sense of my own story as teacher candidate (van Manen, 1994). During the process of interpretation, I find myself leaning on my own experience as teacher candidate, interpreting insights gained from conducting the interviews, and attending to particular choices of language used by teacher candidates, including my own. I catch myself (re)visiting forgotten memories of a past being in teacher education. I use past histories of being-as-teacher candidate to situate
myself within this research. Through the process of engaging with personal narratives I create what Janet Miller (2005) identifies as “new modes of speaking and writing [of] existing ways of being” (p.54). The field notes that are positioned at the start of each chapter throughout this thesis capture an exploration of old understandings of what it means to teach and be teacher and engage in a construction of new interpretations. I question a past being-as-teacher candidate that is reflected through the language used in course assignments (Appendix A: 1 – 3), opening up hardened modes of knowing and creating multiple possibilities for being in teacher education. In addition to analyzing the specific sequencing of language that evokes a particular meaning, I also attend to the voices and actions of teacher candidates that are remembered from my interactions with them during the interview process. I kept detailed notes that denoted intonations and changes in behaviour that I frequently use to supplement my interpretations of being. Acknowledging these aspects that influence my understandings is important, given that this research is based on my interpretations of the spoken and written word of others.

This research does not seek one true being-as-teacher candidate or arrive at a set of recommendations for teacher education curriculum to be implemented. Rather this research aims to explore possibilities for being-as-teacher candidate, engaging in a conversation of teacher education and consider how being-as-teacher candidate is implicated by themes of language, wonder, and temporality.

4.3 the composition of these stories

This thesis is organized around themes of language, wonder, and temporality that Dwayne Huebner (1967) identifies as characteristics associated with being-in-the-world. For the purposes of this research each theme is untangled from the other and discussed in isolation as it is reflected in each narrative. However the existential manifestations of these themes are forever intertwined, each infinitely bound to and influenced by the other.
The themes provide entry points into the language of each teacher candidate’s narrative, offering a consistent framework for interpretation. Each chapter unfolds as an analysis of the language chosen by both Karen and Emily as it embodies themes of wonder and temporality in stories of teacher education. The language reveals subtle patterns that run through both narratives. These patterns are presented in each chapter as sub-themes of language, wonder, and temporality. The teacher candidates’ narratives are also discussed separately within each sub-theme of every chapter, establishing a rhythmic dialogue between voices. This allows a gradual relationship to be built between the teacher candidate, the story, the speaker, and the listener over the course of this thesis.
who am I? (field note)

“Where does this all place the role of the teacher?”

It all comes down to this.

This question comes at the end of an assignment and reading it now I reflect upon a former self attempting to find convergence between a multitude of new thoughts and experiences.

I remember asking myself “So what am I supposed to do with all of this?”

How do I initiate educational change?

How do I move with society’s constantly shifting expectations of educators?

Is this who I want to become?

Who do I want to become?

I am silent.

This question remains unanswered because I am still unsure.

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11 Taken from an assignment on influential forces on education, submitted for a course in teacher education, December 2008 (Appendix A:3).

12 Written as a response to a reading assignment, December 2012.
Chapter 5: Language

And so one cannot separate that which is inextricably bound up in every action or thought. One must attend closely to words, to their meaning and subtle transformations.

(William Pinar & Douglas McKnight, 1995, p. 184)

Language unites the self with other through encounters, and as meaning is shared through conversation our own strangeness is realized. Through words we enter into the experiences of the other, engage with different forms of knowing, and recognize our own unique who-ness. Dwayne Huebner (1968) considered language as

the medium within which [man] lives, grows and projects his possibilities for being…. Language sustains man, opens up possibilities for being-in-the-world, comforts him, preserves truth, and provides the platform to jump momentarily beyond himself. Language also hides man from his world and from himself. As it opens up some possibilities it covers others. (p. 145)

As much as language can open up doors to possibility, it can also become our most dangerous possession. At times language can slip from our consciousness and we run the risk of falling into someone else’s language (Heidegger, as cited in Huebner, 1977). Language is often seen only as a tool, an instrument at our disposal to manipulate, becoming a service rather than a medium for expressing being. In education language has the potential to become a business, a way to transfer knowledge and communicate with teachers, and to students, about teaching and learning. Language as a thing within the world closes possibility and instead encourages thoughtless pursuit down paths laid by others (Huebner, 1968). In the world of teacher education teacher candidates are born into a language of learning objectives, classroom techniques, and curricular guidelines. Without appropriate engagement with the historical and political situatedness of the language in teacher education it can become
normalized, imprisoning teacher candidates in only one possibility of teaching. Teacher
candidates are expected to adopt such language and service it within the business of education.

But do they know the significance of the language? Are we equipping teacher candidates with a
language that they can use to make sense of their world? Luce Irigaray (2002) considers that
"saying no longer speaks, it repeats the said in a new situation, where meaning gets lost" (p.
17). Are we asking teacher candidates to say, or to speak?

In this study language is the foundation for interpreting being-as-teacher candidate. This
chapter looks specifically at language and how it reflects relationships with self and other within
stories of teacher education.

5.1 **language as a relationship with self**

Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1973) affirmed that language was a “reverberation of my
relations with myself and others” (p. 20). Similarly Huebner (1968) recognized language to be “a
relationship between the person and his world” (p. 145). Language is the medium through which
individuals transform “explorations, encounters, and discoveries of self and other” (Huebner,
1968, p. 54). This section discusses language used by teacher candidates as it reflects a
relationship with self, including sub-themes of self-identity, teacher identity, the space between
student and teacher, and being that is interrupted that thread through both narratives.

5.1.1 **the teacher identity**

Entering into teacher education, every teacher candidate has a preconceived notion of
what it means to teach and be teacher that has been formed and solidified over time through
experiences of teaching and being-as-student (Hammerness et.al., 2005; Wubbels, 1992).
These may be aspirations for becoming teacher or they may be what Deborah Britzman (1991)
refers to as ‘cultural myths’ (as cited in Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996). Cultural myths of
teaching are associated with a pre-teaching identity that is found to be one of three stages in
developing an identity as teacher. Dennis Sumara and Rebecca Luce-Kapler (1996) outline three specific identities that teacher candidates progress through in the process of becoming teacher; pre-teaching, fictive, and lived. Karen and Emily’s preconceptions of teaching exert power over their experiences in teacher education. Tensions arise for both teacher candidates as these preconceptions encounter an identity as teacher that is different from their own and wrapped in years of history and tradition. For both Karen and Emily a pressure to adopt and conform to a teacher identity that is embodied within teacher education curriculum, language, and experiences is felt and articulated. Expectations of an imposing teaching identity weigh down on each teacher candidate, as they lose sight of who they are in exchange for who they are expected to become. This subsection explores the dissonance between identities of self and identities of teacher that are expressed through the language of their narratives.

Karen: I want to teach, but I don’t know if I want to be teacher

Karen’s language suggests the presence of a normative teaching identity in teacher education that manifests as a self-sacrificing individual situated in a formal classroom environment.

“Just in terms of some of the articles and the notions of the process of teaching, how it does become normative and there is um, very little room for-for certain areas to be discussed or, I guess there was other ideas as a female I was still internalizing, some of the problems of the system where it uh, is still a very much a progression…It’s just when you read some of these things and gain some of these ideas and where, self-sacrificing and different ideas come into play it, uh…ya. It became a difficult process at some points for me…. Some of this that was coming out was becoming as I internalized it, a little bit disheartening or difficult, or emotional I suppose.”

In her narrative Karen speaks of experiences learning about different philosophies and theories as an undergraduate student in arts, specifically highlighting Michel Foucault’s philosophy on
knowledge and power. Karen’s experiences in a previous degree program position her in a place where she is able to identify the possible existence of a teacher normative. It seems as though for Karen, this realization is emotionally disheartening. Additionally, Karen is not in teacher education to specifically obtain a teaching position upon graduating, but rather she is seeking to explore alternative possibilities in being-as-teacher. Karen’s perception of a normative teacher identity restricts possibilities for becoming which may be the source of her difficulty. The fragment below reveals that for Karen, this perceived teacher normative is associated with negative connotations that embody characteristics that are self-sacrificial and are tied explicitly to a female gender.

Karen positions herself as different from her peers in relation to this perceived normative of what it means to be teacher, and consequently being-as-teacher candidate in teacher education.

“It’s hard because I’m…unlike many of the students, thinking of this as a stepping stone as opposed to the end [of] this is your class and you are the teacher and this is what you are going to do with your life.”

Karen perceives her peers, as well as teacher education to be focused on obtaining a formal teaching position. Because this is not Karen’s goal, her narrative conveys a sense of alienation from the program and her peers. Karen’s pursuit of teacher education originates out of an interest in art design and art theory, to which she was exposed during her undergraduate degree program. She is interested in exploring possibilities in art therapy through education.

Throughout her narrative Karen expresses feelings of isolation as she finds herself confined to a teaching identity that she does not want to assume: it would be like being in a “chicken coop”.
“And that again for me brings up that idea of, you know in my mind I’m not exactly in this to get a class right away. I am not in that space, I am not… because that feeling of that chicken coop and not being who I am in that situation is very detrimental to me. And just because of my personal experiences and beliefs…it’s just, ya.”

Karen wrestles with this perceived normative identity as she pursues a topic for a course assignment that focuses on herself as teacher instead of on students. As a result Karen is left with feelings of guilt and selfishness. For Karen this normative teaching identity neglects the teacher self, reflecting similar themes of a teacher education curriculum that focuses primarily on pedagogical strategies that benefit the student.

“As a normative almost—as a teacher not to be thinking about yourself, you are thinking about what’s going on what your students…. I thought I am being a bit selfish here just saying this is my concern, my immediate feeling and my identity—what does that have to do with teaching?”

For Karen, the selflessness associated with this normative teacher identity contributes to her perception that the development of the teacher self exists separately from the practice of teaching. This perception fragments being-as-teacher into the distinct categories of the development of teacher, the practice of teaching and the thought of teaching. This perception is highlighted in the following fragment:

“I thought you’re gonna teach [a particular course] and you’re gonna do all this stuff that has nothing to do with theory in terms of what you’ve just spent part of four years hashing out and learning about.”
Karen speaks often of being an arts undergraduate student and enjoying in critical thought and discussion of various topics. Karen’s narrative suggests that she still considers these qualities as part of her identity, however she does not perceive them to be embraced the normative teacher identity that manifests in teacher education. The thought of teaching becomes separated from the teacher identity and the practice of teaching. For Karen, it is the clash between her perception of being-as-teacher a perceived normative understanding of teacher that begins to cause tension in being-as-teacher candidate.

“It is very difficult sometimes because you work so hard, particularly in [previous degree institution] to have a voice and you want to be—you don’t want to be this alternate anymore. You want to be able to come out and talk to these things, but it’s sorta strange that I come into the education system and that aspect of that is—is silenced in some sense.”

Karen appears to enter teacher education with an established identity, comfortable with herself and a familiar understanding of her being-in-the-world. However, her narrative conveys feelings of confinement to an identity of teacher that restricts her self-identity and silences a voice that she had developed as an undergraduate student.

**Emily: Wait, whose teacher am I becoming?**

Similar to Karen, Emily battles with tensions between contrasting teacher identities. For Emily it is a lack of clarity around the expectations that are placed on her as teacher candidate that complicates her perception of what it means to be teacher.

“I don’t think that was what was expected of us and even to this point, I don’t know what was expected of us.”
“I had no idea what I was doing. I felt like I was taking a stab in the dark, hoping I was doing the right thing.”

Emily’s narrative portrays her as an individual with an achieving personality, propelled by a perpetual drive to succeed. She wants to be a successful teacher candidate in order to become a successful teacher. The consequence of such an orientation is an ongoing confrontation between internal and external expectations of herself, which leave Emily with an experience she describes as “stressful” and “all over the place.” Emily’s story of frustration unravels in her narrative as she tries to meet others’ expectations of her, as well as her own performance expectations in the context of a particular assignment:

“Like I would really think something in my head, but I would be scared to write it because I was told, you are not really supposed to have answers you are supposed to have more questions. So maybe that was my own personal fear, but um, I did have an opinion one way or the other, but I felt like I wasn't authentically allowed to say that in my paper because in inquiry you aren't supposed to have an answer.”

This fragment alludes to the presence of a fear of potential failure that holds Emily back from speaking authentically. Her desire to be successful overpowers her need for understanding and seeking clarity, so she creates a voice to mask her own in order to successfully respond to a particular course assignment

This particular assignment is for a seminar course that introduces the notion of inquiry to encourage teacher candidates to engage in the practice of teacher inquiry. A component of this course is the completion of an inquiry-based research project. For Emily, the introduction of inquiry complicates her understanding of what it means to be teacher. It adds depth to being-as-teacher that requires not simply the practice of teaching, but the thought of teaching. Contrasting Emily’s initial conceptualization of being-as-teacher, she shies away from experimenting with inquiry because it is a facet of a teacher identity that she is not familiar with.
In her narrative Emily expresses feelings of vulnerability as she describes encountering other interpretations of what it means to teach and be teacher that are different from her own.

“I just felt that I didn’t have that mental capacity to be that intellectual ... So I definitely think some people enjoyed the process because that’s who they are and they are very intellectual, but that isn’t me.”

Emily attributes her lack of understanding of inquiry to a deficiency in intellectual capacity. The fragment above highlights feelings of self-doubt and inefficacy as Emily fails to integrate the practice of inquiry into her developing identity as teacher. For Emily the teacher identity represented in teacher education is one that incorporates inquiry, contrasting her own perception of teachers and teaching.

According to Emily, the expectations of the inquiry project were unclear, and feeling the pressure of tight timelines, she had a frustrating and confusing experience with this project. Her narrative suggests that a strong association has developed between inquiry and the negative experience completing this project, rather than with the organic process of inquiring into the practice of teaching.

“I can say that the research aspect of it was really helpful. But that’s where my concern is maybe, that it really ended up being a research paper. I don’t know why we called it inquiry. I don’t really think it was teacher inquiry, I was going to a journal and reading...so I guess I would say that in general what I came out with was, um, that I did a research paper. I didn’t do teacher inquiry.”

Emily speaks of her experiences with inquiry using a language that speaks of a relationship to self that is emergent and undergoing transition. Encounters with the otherness of being-as-teacher and teaching in teacher education make Emily question her experiences and
she is forced to (re)build her understanding of what it means to be teacher. For example, as Emily tries to understand the notion of inquiry her understanding of teacher and by extension her future being begin to shift.

“I think that naturally as teachers you are inquiring every day because you’re constantly asking yourself what—you’re doing this, what’s your purpose, you’re constantly asking yourself questions but you’re also inquiring into your own practice because you’re noticing that, ok this didn’t work when I did this kind of lesson. Ok let me think about why it didn’t work, what factors might’ve affected it, why might it not have worked for specific children…. Yes, I think I understand it [inquiry] more than I think I do…”

Over the course of Emily’s narrative her thinking of inquiry transitions from “inquiry as intellectual,” through “I am not intellectual, therefore I am not an inquirer” to “teaching is constantly inquiring into your own practice” and finally arriving at a point in her thinking where “I think I understand it more than I think I do.” Emily uses self-histories and experiences as teacher to make sense of and embrace an understanding of what it means to be teacher that was initially perceived to be strange.

In both narratives, language reveals a relationship with self that is complicated by contrasting perceptions of an identity as teacher. In addition, both narratives articulate feelings of vulnerability as identities of self are revisited, (de)(re)constructed through encounters with others and engagement in critical reflection.

5.1.2 no longer a student, but not yet a teacher

Teacher education is a period of incredible change. Identities are broken down, reconfigured, and built back up. Not yet a teacher and no longer a student, teacher candidates are caught in a place between identities, residing in an in between space. As teacher candidates rush to become teacher, being-as-teacher candidate, the in between being, is often
neglected. In teacher education teacher candidates are required to constantly navigate between identities of being and becoming. The narratives of Karen and Emily highlight the challenges experienced as they attempt to make sense of becoming teacher.

**Karen: Oh great, an identity crisis**

Teacher candidates enter into teacher education with over a decade of experience as learners in schools, as well as an established sense of who they are. What is problematic for Karen is that her self-identity conflicts with her perception of a teacher identity that arises out of her experiences in teacher education. Karen uses language such as *gendered, silenced, lost, cautious, disconnect* and *internalizing* in reference to her being-as-teacher candidate. Each word holds meaning as to how her sense of identity is implicated by various experiences in teacher education. Words like *silenced, lost, cautious* and *disconnect* capture an uncertain being-as-teacher candidate. This is a contrast from Karen’s references to her being-as-undergraduate student, where she uses words such as *voice, comfortable* and *enjoyable* to articulate experiences of her past. The contrast in language that Karen uses to describe being of the past and present begins to outline the unexpected shift taking place in Karen’s identity.

“*during this program I am going wow…so now I am going through an identity crisis.*”

For Karen experiencing vulnerability in her being-as-teacher candidate is a surprise that transforms into a crisis, as facets of her identity are challenged by a normative teacher identity. Gender is one of the facets that Karen associates most strongly with her identity:

“*As a 30-year-old woman during this program…*”

“*…the only female intermediate teacher in my school…*”
“As a female writer…”

These are statements that suggest a self-identity that is strongly associated with gender, as female. However as Karen progresses through university coursework at the university, literature exposes a teacher identity that is clearly implicated by gender and her language changes.

“…underappreciated particularly by women…”

“…feminized version of teaching…”

“I don’t want to compare myself to a mother, a nurse, and a disciplinarian…”

Karen describes her initial exposure to ideas of a feminized teaching identity as disheartening and disturbing as her identity, as female becomes implicated by negative stereotypes of a gendered teacher. A conflicting dichotomy emerges between a self-identity and a future identity as teacher. Karen expresses anxiety around stepping into an identity as teacher that is implicated by her gender, not wanting to become a teacher that sacrifices herself for students, is underappreciated and valued differently according to gender.

“a little bit in the way of-of how much is expected and…usually um, underappreciated particularly by women within the education system, where for often it can be more praise and well, less self-sacrificing for men within the system. So that’s what was coming to a different light to me that I had never had thought about before and that was hard.”

Karen tells a story of challenge as she struggles to grasp a sense of identity as teacher candidate, which for her becomes an emotional and difficult battle between competing ideals of who she is to become. The tension between the two identities is apparent as Karen continually
contrasts the two throughout her narrative, speaking about the impact of feeling her voice silenced. Does teacher education curriculum provide the opportunity for the development of a teacher identity that allows for unique expressions of individuality acknowledging personal histories, perceptions, and experiences? Or are we educating teacher candidates to become teachers with static and standardized teacher identities?

*Emily: That's not the teacher I want to be*

A history of working in day camps and after school care programs has contributed to Emily’s aspiration to become an elementary school teacher. Emily came into teacher education with a solidified idea of the teacher she wanted to become. Her experiences working with children are powerful forces in shaping her understanding of teaching and what it means to be teacher. Emily’s own perception of being-as-teacher resists interruption as she experiences teacher education. This preservation of past histories, keeping old understandings secure, might be a coping mechanism she has developed as a way of dealing with encounters that threaten her identity. Aversion to exploration and possible fear of the unknown are found throughout her narrative and are discussed in further detail in Chapter 7.

Emily has lots of experience in teacher-related roles. The strength of these initial experiences as teacher, coupled with an undergraduate experience in Kinesiology, creates a reliance on experience as a learning strategy. Emily identifies herself using language like *structure, hands-on, detail oriented, and straightforward*, and she often articulates a need for clarity and structure in teacher education.

“I think for someone like me I needed more structure, so I needed them to have some sort of structure for me to understand what I was supposed to do”

“It[university course in teacher education] was way too open-ended.”
“So maybe they could make it a little more hands on in the future and less lecture-based, that would be more useful to us.”

“You need that guidance as a new teacher.”

“But when you’re coming in as a brand new teacher, you need that.”

Being-as-learner in an educational environment that is different than that of a previous degree seems to have an impact on Emily’s experience as teacher candidate. In addition, she is learning new approaches to teaching, such as inquiry which requires thinking about the practice of teaching. This is an unfamiliar concept for Emily who, as a Kinesiology undergraduate has learned primarily in an environment that emphasizes application of knowledge and practical experimentation.

“There was a lot of desperation in trying to figure out what you’re doing. You already have so much bombarded at you and then this is thrown at you and you’ve given three weeks to do something you’ve never done before? It just didn’t work.”

Teacher candidates have a multitude of previous experiences prior to entering into teacher education, many of which will be drastically different to those experiences in teacher education. How can teacher education support teacher candidates through these periods of transition as they become teachers? Comparatively looking at Karen and Emily’s narratives, it is apparent that previous degree programs and learning in a particular discipline influences how and what teacher candidates learn in teacher education.

For Emily becoming teacher requires a need to know, to have answers and strategies to assist her with a future being-as-teacher that exists only in a classroom. Controversy around the prioritization of the thought versus the practice of teaching in teacher education curriculum...
continues, but for many teacher candidates including Emily, becoming teacher means surviving the practicum placement. This survival, for Emily is perceived to be dependent on classroom management techniques, facilitation strategies, forms of assessment, and pre-made unit plans. As practicum placements approach, teacher candidates attend only to what is needed for surviving a classroom. What do I need to make it through a lesson? A unit? The need for tangible strategies, practical experiences, and successful teaching pedagogies dominates as teacher candidates prepare for the life as teacher. However I cannot help but wonder, what about educational theory? Critical thought? Inquiring into teaching practices? The thought of teaching gets left behind as teacher education rushes to ensure that teacher candidates are prepared in their practice of teaching. How do we open up this practical identity of teacher to expose teacher candidates to the wonder and possibilities of teaching?

The process of becoming is not linear. It does not follow a common pathway, but instead twists and turns along the way. There is an element of uncertainty in becoming teacher. What type of teacher will I be? Will I be a good teacher? Will students like me? These are common questions of becoming that are asked frequently by teacher candidates (Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996). Why would teacher candidates like Emily, who have had positive experiences as teacher and student change their perception of the teacher they want to become? In the process of becoming there are certain levels of vulnerability felt as one explores possibilities of what could be. Teacher candidates need to be willing to let go of what is known to be true about themselves, in the hopes of becoming something greater. In this process of becoming teacher, old renditions of what it means to teach and be teacher are (de)constructed as teacher candidates encounter new knowledge of and experiences as teacher. Teacher education acts as an interruption of a teacher candidate’s history of learning as student, to facilitate a consideration of learning as teacher.
5.1.3 being-as-interrupted

In both narratives dichotomies emerge through being-as-teacher candidate that exist in separate places in time. Being-as-teacher candidate appears to be constantly interrupted by the variety of places, language, and identities that teacher candidates experience in teacher education.

Karen: Bringing me in

The impact of negotiating the terrain between identities is revealed in expressions of confusion and frustration in the narratives of both Karen and Emily. Grappling with her own perception of a teacher identity, Karen describes a separation of self in order to navigate her way through teacher education.

“...my previous knowledge, bringing it into this program it-it was sort of in my mind going, you know this idea of teaching and the feminized version of teaching and these binaries that are involved, is this going to...can I forget about this stuff for a while and focus on school and get it done, as much as I love these hard topics and inquiry.”

Karen considers her experiences from being-as-undergraduate student in arts as separate from her teacher education experiences. Karen responds to a question in her interview that asks about the opportunities in teacher education to explore areas of interest in theory and art with “I feel I have to keep it on the side a bit.” The notion of “on the side” suggests that teacher education is suppressing meaningful aspects of Karen’s identity. This separation of self is found throughout Karen’s narrative, in which she makes frequent reference to bringing herself into her teacher education experiences.

“...to speak as myself and bring in more of my background.”
Karen articulates a continuous need to integrate herself into teacher education, meaning that it is not happening organically. Karen is not seeing herself reflected in the program; she positions herself in a place outside teacher education, expressing a constant need to bring herself back in. Karen speaks of trying to connect multiple dimensions of her teacher education experience—gender, practicum experience, and identity—and getting lost as she tries to make sense of it. She identifies a particular university seminar that focuses on the thought and practice of inquiry as the only place that enables her to speak as herself and allows her to bring herself into teacher education. She struggles with trying to integrate herself into the program, into an identity of teacher and amongst her peers.

Karen cannot ignore her past experiences as an undergraduate student and it is not a realistic expectation for her to do so. However, in not having the opportunity to create connections between past and present, Karen divides her experiences, keeping them separate and creating temporal fragments of herself. Phelan et al. (2006) claim that, "it is impossible and ethically undesirable for the teacher candidate to put the past behind them. However, their sense of belatedness can be potentially paralyzing if there is no possibility for newness” (p. 162).

It is important for Karen to build unity in her past experiences, but her dependency on her past acts as a barrier to her exploring the newness of an identity as teacher. She articulates feeling restricted within the parameters of a perceived normative teacher identity that manifests for her in teacher education, as well as in her practicum school. How can Karen explore what it means to teach if she cannot escape the confines of a teacher identity that is imposed upon her?
Emily: Teacher education, with a side of identity

For Emily it is competing expectations of her being-as-teacher candidate that is the source of anxiety in teacher education. Emily is constantly negotiating her sense of self in order to satisfy various expectations that are placed upon her. For example, in her narrative Emily frequently references changing course in an assignment to satisfy instructor feedback. She is constantly fighting between her perception of a voice that is expected of her as teacher candidate and a voice as teacher that she wants to become.

“And then I ended up going with something that Joanne [instructor] basically made up for me.”

“I think I was just creating questions just to meet that requirement, I wasn’t really going to do anything with those questions, it was just to have questions.”

Teacher candidates struggle to understand concepts and successfully demonstrate their application under the weight of a staggering list of criteria, balancing between the thought and practice of being-as-teacher. Emily buckles under the pressure and develops a falsified identity that surfaces in order to successfully complete teacher education and become certified as teacher. This fake identity as teacher candidate allows her to bypass understanding and perform what is needed to be successful, even though she may not understand or see the value that something may provide to her developing teacher identity. In her narrative Emily refers to this process as “hoop jumping.”

“You haven’t given us any guidelines but then you are telling me I have to re-write it, so it felt kinda…fake, you know?”
“you know they wanted us to come out of it with questions, so in that sense I have to admit I was a little bit false.”

“it wasn't something that I was really inquiring into and so for that reason, it kinda felt a little bit fake in the process. And it kinda felt like jumping through a hoop.”

Contributing to this fragmentation of being-as-teacher candidate is a lack of consistency across the diverse environments of teacher education, each requiring teacher candidates to quickly adjust as both student and teacher.

“I've been speaking about the frustration of not really knowing what's expected of you—but then you go to the other spectrum where you're being lectured all day and you know you feel like you're back in your undergrad. And it's frustrating because these are the things we're taught not to do as teachers and yet we're experiencing it so it's a bit frustrating. So you definitely saw that misalignment.”

“[Inquiry] instructors were very much more hands-on, like they had us discussing and talking. Non-inquiry instructors were definitely lecture style, you felt you were back in your undergrad. There was definitely a huge difference.”

Emily highlights the differences between style of instruction, course curriculum, and expectations of teacher candidates. For Emily, transitioning into and out of the various expectations of teacher candidates on practicum, in courses, as teacher, and as student results in disjointed feelings and tensions as her being is pulled in multiple directions.

The teacher candidate narratives highlight contrasts between developing teacher identities and established self-identities. The effects are distressing. Melanie Schoffner (2008) found one of three main affective concerns of teacher candidates is personal impact. This study supports this finding. Teacher candidates’ narratives expose a language that reveals a relationship with self that is clouded with uncertainty, vulnerability, and fragmentation. Exposure
to new modes of knowing as teacher causes teacher candidates to question their own understanding of what it means to be teacher. I cannot help but wonder if teacher education programs are underestimating the impact of becoming teacher and the plethora of different expectations that impinge upon being-as-teacher candidate. Do teacher education programs provide teacher candidates with the space to reflect upon and explore their developing identity as teacher?

5.2 language as a relationship with other

In addition to providing insight into teacher candidates’ relationships with self, Dwayne Huebner (1968) considers that “we are in the world with others by way of language” (p. 144), situating language as the medium through which self encounters other. Therefore by attending to the language of these narratives, insights can be gleaned about relationships that teacher candidates have with others. As part of teacher education, teacher candidates engage with various communities and a diverse range of peers, teachers, and teacher educators. This provides infinite opportunity for interaction and conversation. Emily and Karen’s narratives reveal insights into the types of encounters between self and other teacher candidates that arise out of and between different spaces of teaching. For the purposes of this section, the term “other” refers specifically to the teacher candidates, teachers, and teacher educators that are part of the various communities within teacher education.

5.2.1 teaching dichotomies

Both Karen and Emily articulate emergent dichotomies between the university classroom and the school classroom. These dichotomies seem to originate primarily out of personal perceptions of what it means to be teacher, which contrast with a reality of teaching that is dictated by different educational environments.
Karen: The university and the Classroom

In Karen’s narrative a dichotomy takes shape as she transitions from being-as-teacher candidate in a university classroom amongst peers to being-as-teacher candidate in an elementary classroom at her practicum school.

“You can’t exactly talk about social justice issues when you are getting into your practicum, it doesn’t work the same way right?”

Karen feels pressure to suppress her desire to discuss topics such as gender and social justice while on practicum, topics discussed at great length in her teacher education courses. Social and ecological justice and diversity is one of the key strands of the teacher education curriculum, teacher candidates have ample opportunity within the university to think about and discuss educational issues and theory in this area. However Karen’s narrative suggests that this aspect of teaching is silenced on practicum, which generates the question of whether the curriculum of teacher education coincides with the reality of being-as-teacher candidate in the classroom.

This highlights conflicting expectations of how a teacher candidate thinks and behaves in the university versus in the practicum classroom. Karen comes to articulate an identity as teacher candidate on practicum that is a “super human, invisible, present person all at the same time.” Her narrative conveys tensions felt between expectations placed on teacher candidates of a certain level of performance while sustaining a degree of continuity, as they are practising in a classroom that does not actually belong to them.

As Karen interacts with others within the environment of her practicum placement she experiences an identity as teacher candidate in the practicum classroom that is different from the one fostered through the university’s teacher education program. Not only does Karen
struggle to negotiate a sense of self within a perceived teacher identity, but now she also has to reconstruct her understanding of what it means to be teacher as she encounters the reality of practising teaching in a classroom environment. For Karen there is a substantial disconnect between these two learning environments.

Frustrated with the transition from university to classroom and having experienced the reality of the classroom, Karen references the ideals for education that are projected at the university as “magical.”

“I just think, “wow, where is this magical place? Where is this school? I want to go there.”

For Karen the dichotomy between university and classroom is what becomes disruptive to her being-as-teacher candidate.

“There is still something missing…. It’s so different and the work is very different.”

This disruption between perception and reality causes confusion for Karen around her sense of identity as teacher, causing displacement and creating a fragmented experience.

“I felt that there was a huge disconnect with my own personal feelings, ideas of education, of possibilities for change, or being able to have more obvious social justice cues and ideas brought into the school.”

In an attempt to revolutionize education and what it means to teach, does teacher education create unrealistic teacher identities?
Karen’s narrative speaks to a silencing at the beginning of her three-week practicum, when she perceives others’ aversion to discussing issues such as social justice and gender. Her narrative suggests a fear of others’ reactions to such discourse, and her assumption that only those with backgrounds and experiences similar to hers will engage. Karen attributes this silencing in others to a need to conform to a perception of professionalism as teacher.

“For professionalism and for a lot of interviewing that is happening constantly, and so many people are in these positions because they are going “I need to get a job next year, I need to know these people.”

Karen’s perception is concerning because it suggests that teacher candidates in their quest to seek employment consider a professionalism as teacher that is silenced, embracing a being-as-teacher that appeals to someone else’s notion of what it means to be teacher. This may be a result of a future-focused orientation to teacher education.

As teacher education encourages teacher candidates to project forward to a future being-as-teacher, teacher candidates become consumed with securing employment post-graduation. This implicates a present being-as-teacher candidate because teacher candidates begin to attend only to that of the present that will benefit or impact their future successes as teacher. What surfaces in Karen’s narrative is a fear that presents itself as dichotomies between university and school, a fear that may be born out of what is perceived to be different and unknown in others.
"I want to be a practical teacher and I felt like that it was all so impractical writing these papers."

Emily’s narrative also presents an emergent dichotomy between experiences in a university classroom versus a school classroom. Emily identifies a teacher identity that is embodied within the university teacher education program that places an emphasis on activities she considers impractical to becoming teacher. For Emily these activities consist of writing papers, conducting research and, by extension, the practice of inquiry. This dichotomy seems to develop out of personal perceptions of a teacher identity and Emily’s unwillingness to embrace different notions of being-as-teacher. Emily’s perception of teaching guides her belief that it is structured experiences and concrete strategies that are needed in developing an identity as teacher.

“But when you’re coming in as a brand new teacher, you need that. You need to learn some strategies about classroom management and all these—cooperation strategies, or group work strategies…. You need that guidance as a new teacher. You need someone to teach you to go through and learn how to write a unit plan.”

Emily’s perception of teacher, as well as her reliance on experience, dictates her interactions with others and the various environments within teacher education. Emily remains focused on the experiential aspects of teacher education, expressing a need to know tangible pedagogical strategies that she considers essential in surviving her classroom experiences during practicum. These are not uncommon concerns among teacher candidates (Daniels et.al., 2011); however a predominating focus on the practice of teaching neglects thinking about that
practice as teacher and how it impacts being-as-teacher candidate. It is this thought of the practice of teaching that proves to be the challenging for Emily.

“It was frustrating because we talked so much about it[inquiry] and I think so many of us were keen on trying it[inquiry], but we had never seen it [inquiry].”

“We need to get a practical experience of it [inquiry]. We need to get out to a school that practises inquiry.”

Emily’s narrative presents a reliance on the experiential practice, in order to understand. A dichotomy emerges between the ability to engage in the practice of teaching and the thought of teaching. Emily articulates an opinion that inquiry should only be introduced at the graduate level. This suggests that there are stages to becoming a teacher which is consistent with Dennis Sumara and Rebecca Luce-Kapler’s (1996) idea of a “three identity formulation” of becoming teacher. However this conceptualization of identity development as teacher does not extend to stages of becoming that reach beyond teacher education. Emily alludes to the fact that there is a particular degree of readiness required prior to engaging with notions of teaching and being-as-teacher, such as inquiry which may not be established until pursuit of graduate education at a Masters level. For example, Emily alludes to the need to experience teaching before engaging in inquiry:

“Ya I just don’t know if it [inquiry] should really be such a big part of a Bachelor of Education, possibly a Master of Education. That’s where I see it fit better. When I’ve got some experience teaching generally, then I want to see how I can change things.”
This dichotomy between the thought and practice of teaching appear to become linked to specific stages of becoming teacher, which is challenging for Emily because the university introduces the notion of inquiry and initial stages of becoming in teacher education. Emily describes the challenge she experiences when she talks about having to attend weekly school-based, university-run seminars during her practicum. These seminars take her out of the school classroom and reunite her with her university cohort of teacher candidates to discuss a variety of educational topics. Emily expresses a challenge in thinking about the practice of teaching, remaining focused only on what she is able to see, experience or practice in the classroom.

“But we are just on our practicum, this is our first experience and we’re just trying to keep everything together. So to put teacher inquiry on top of that is just crazy.”

“I just found that in the midst of your practicum, it’s really hard to be pulled out for a full hour and a half every Wednesday. Like it doesn’t seem like a lot in the beginning, but when you’re in your 100% it almost causes more stress.”

The strength of Emily’s perception that the thought of teaching is unimportant to her in this stage of becoming teacher does not allow her to focus on anything other than developing her practice of teaching.

5.2.2 the spaces of teaching

The space of teaching is a theme within the subsection on language as it reflects relationships to other that is exclusive to Karen’s narrative. I have included this theme in the conversation about language because it reveals being in teacher education that appears fragmented by the different teaching spaces. Throughout Karen’s narrative there are frequent references to “realms” which highlight a physicality to Karen’s experience that is comprised of various spaces that Karen can enter into and get out of.
“And in my realm…”

“…perhaps this isn’t the realm for that.”

“some students chose to really talk about the realm of teaching…”

“…bringing identity, bringing gender, bringing the realm of teaching together…”

“…and bring that into the realm of inquiry.”

There seem to be realms for different facets of being-as-teacher candidate: a realm for discussing educational issues and theoretical perspectives; a realm of practising teaching; a realm of inquiry; and, of course, a personal realm in which Karen can express herself. This separation of Karen’s being-as-teacher candidate in teacher education creates distance between herself and the world of teacher education, positioning Karen elsewhere with the ability to enter and exit each realm. The identification of a personal realm also enables Karen to maintain her self-identity, separate from the development of other identities as they pertain to the different realms. This desire to separate herself from the world of teacher education may be a coping strategy as Karen resists a perceived normative teacher identity.

“I’m not exactly in this to get a class right away. I am not in that space, I am not.”

In addition to realms, Karen also speaks of a lack of space within the teacher education curriculum that complements her conceptualization of teacher education as occupying various spaces. This is a lack of space for engaging with peers in critical discourse. According to Karen,
the only space in teacher education that provides such an opportunity is the seminar course that introduces the notion of inquiry.

“it [inquiry] provides a space because there really is very little space in [the university] and as well as education.”

For Karen this space offers a familiar learning environment and enables her to (re)connect with a sense of self that for the most part seems to be silenced in teacher education.

“…and you find that place where you can just sort of express and be yourself. And just go with it.”

Karen continues with her description of this place using language that resonates from being-as-undergraduate student in arts, integrating art techniques and language. Perhaps Karen’s experience in this seminar, which affords an engagement with this aspect of her self-identity, is a critical point in Karen’s experience as teacher candidate. Karen’s depiction of teacher education as constituting transition between various realms situates Karen outside teacher education, rather than within it. This is a powerful indicator of how Karen experiences being-as-teacher candidate.

5.2.3 the others

Emily’s language, like Karen’s, reveals a theme that is unique to her narrative: an influential role of other on her teacher education experience. Throughout her narrative, Emily’s language portrays a strong sense of belonging to a small subset of peers in a university cohort of teacher candidates with whom she experiences teacher education. These peers are
individuals that Emily perceives to share thoughts, feelings and experiences similar to her own. As Emily describes teacher education experiences, her language positions herself alongside her peers, and she speaks from a collective perspective rather than apart from them as an individual. Emily uses words such as “we” and “us” to describe her thoughts, emotions, and reactions, referring to herself and her teacher candidate peers. This suggests strength in the connection between Emily and this peer group. However, despite Emily’s affiliation with this collection of teacher candidates, she identifies an underlying general tension that exists within the university cohort:

_“They’re very opinionated and vocal with leadership skills and that sort of thing. But you kind of see these clashes and this power struggle between people in the classroom.”_

Emily attributes this dynamic to experiencing the intense and condensed nature of a one-year teacher education program with the same group of individuals. In a program that certifies individuals as professionals upon graduation, the process of becoming transforms into a race to obtain employment. This cultivates feelings of competition amongst teacher candidates, as many will be competing for similar positions. This competitiveness permeates Emily’s relationships with others, influencing her being in teacher education.

Emily’s language is laden in tension when she speaks of interactions with other teacher candidates in her university cohort. This tension seems to originate from her perception that teacher candidates are different by way of their background experiences, personalities, and understanding of what it means to teach and be teacher. Tones of vulnerability and self-doubt echo from Emily’s narrative as she speaks about a particular group of teacher candidates.
“There are some people that are so philosophical and so intellectual…. I felt a bit intimidated by them in the presentation because when they were coming around and asking me questions, I was a bit worried that I wouldn’t know the answer.”

“Like for me, some classes I didn’t say anything in class—I couldn’t say anything because there was always four people that were always dominating the conversation.”

As Emily encounters strangeness in others she collides with ways of knowing that are different from her own. Similar to Karen, this creates feelings of uncertainty that cause Emily to question her own understandings. Dwayne Huebner (1985) considers tension that arises between self and other as an invitation to engage with new possibilities for being and becoming. However, that invitation cannot be recognized if the other is seen only as a mirrored extension of self. Considering this perspective, the tension that Emily feels as she encounters otherness can be seen as a reaction to her self-identity being threatened because Emily sees this otherness as a reflection of what she is not, rather than what she can be. Huebner (1985) claims that such otherness must be encountered in order for new possibilities to be opened up.

Emily’s experiences prior to teacher education seem to exert strong influences over the establishment of her self-identity and perception of what it means to be teacher. Huebner (1985) identifies an encountering of strangeness in others that requires a “giving up of part of what we are [meaning] that past memories may now seem inappropriate, dreams of the future may be altered, or that forms of present life have been transformed” (p. 364). As teacher candidates encounter others in teacher education, there is a need to pause and consider new possibilities that redefine being to become other than what is. Only then does the future open itself up to possibility (Huebner, 1967). Is teacher education providing enough time for such pause to make sense of a present that questions a past that already was, and a future that might never be?
an imposing experience (*field note*)

“*My experience with the BC Science 9 curriculum has guided me towards my current philosophy of education.*”\(^{13}\)

**Experience dictates perspectives.**

What works in the classroom takes over and the beginning teacher becomes victim to tradition and history, mutating into a replica of teachers past.

*The seeing eyes silence the wandering mind, closing the door on possibility.*\(^{14}\)

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\(^{13}\) Taken from an assignment on personal philosophies of education, submitted for a course in teacher, December 2008 (Appendix A:3).

\(^{14}\) Written as a response to a reading assignment, February 2013.
Chapter 6: a capacity for wonder

Wonder is a form of participating with the time and being of the other. We are free only to the extent that we maintain and develop our capacity for wonder.

(Dwayne Huebner, 1959, p. 6)

Education seeks to uncover knowledge to better understand the world however, in an attempt to educate, formalized schooling has dampened the curiosity with which one approaches the unknowns of the world. Prescribed learning outcomes and curriculum standards dominate classrooms, requiring that students learn specific content knowledge which leaves little room to explore other aspects of being-in-the-world. Education is organized into disciplines (Physical Education, Social Studies, and English) that provide students with knowledge related to a particular subject area, expecting that knowledge is then learned and applied in the world. This is instead of exploring the world, developing curiosities and then seeking knowledge in response. There is not a lot of space, or time within educational curriculum to wonder and explore. Students are expected to know, creating an uncertainty around that which is unknown.

Dwayne Huebner associates wonder to things other than feelings of doubt, curiosity and inquiry. Instead he considers wonder to be the sense of mystery with which one encounters phenomena in the world, associated with synonyms such as astonishment, surprise, fascination and awe (Huebner, 1959). He claims that wonder is an encountering of the world as subject existing alongside others, rather than as object. This orientation to the world situates the individual into the present, embracing the unknowns of what will be in exchange for what is.

In teacher education teacher candidates rush to become teachers and in the process:

We lock ourselves in a prison made up of that which we have abstracted from the past. We have turned in upon ourselves. We are self enclosed. We are blinded by our
knowledge and by our own being, which instead of liberating us, confines us to our past or to our needs, abstractions, and concepts. (Huebner, 1967, p. 6)

Huebner (1993) considers an end to education when the world is no longer situated in strangeness, as there is no sense of wonderment remaining with which to approach the other. For teacher candidates teacher identity is other. It is an identity unfamiliar and shiny in its newness. This newness should be explored with a childlike curiosity in order to maximize possibilities for becoming. Considering Huebner’s (1993) conceptualization of being it is expected that strangeness in teaching and being-as-teacher lingers beyond graduation, prompting further exploration of what it means to teach. When teaching is no longer strange that is when the process of becoming is at an end. The narratives of teacher candidates in this study reveal an underlying expectation that they will graduate as teacher, with an identity that is no longer strange but comfortable and familiar.

6.1 the strangeness of teaching

It is difficult to approach teacher education with a sense of wonder when perceptions of being-as-teacher are rigidly fixed in understanding. The narratives in this study suggest strong pre-existing notions of what it means to teach prior to entering into teacher education, notions that inhibit exploration beyond what is perceived as reality. Lionel Trilling (1974) stated that

if you set yourself to shaping a self, a life, you limit yourself to that self and that life. You preclude any other kind of selfhood remaining available to you. You close out options, other possibilities that might have been yours. (p.66)

Both Karen and Emily speak of being-as-teacher candidate that is restricted in a sense of wonderment. It is perceptions of what it means to be teacher that act as a barrier to exploring possibilities for teaching. And for both teacher candidates, there is an element of fear and hesitation towards the unknowns of teaching rather than curiosity and wonder.

In the quest to know, it is forgotten that knowledge is “a relationship with something [that] was, at one time, strange” (Huebner, 1985, p. 366). The unknown will always be strange at first,
however it is the exploration of the unknown that explores possibilities for being and foster a capacity for wonder. Dwayne Huebner (1959) points to the rarity of an opportunity for students, even at the doctoral level, to seek out “newness and strangeness, going down dark paths alone and without fear” (p. 1), therefore it is not surprising that teacher candidates encounter the strangeness of teaching with apprehension.

**Karen: Restrictive Perceptions**

The teacher identity that Karen perceives is reinforced by the literature and experiences of teacher education. Throughout her narrative Karen goes to great lengths to express that she does not want to embrace this portrayal of teacher and it is Karen’s failure to see beyond this identity that restricts her from seeing possibilities for becoming a teacher. There is however, a point in Karen’s narrative where this perception of an identity as teacher is interrupted.

“*because when you’re in the program, you are like ‘ok, you’re in [this university course] and you’re learning how to teach and read, and phonics and this is ok, great and this is relevant’ and I’m like ‘theories of teaching’—what? Where? Really?’*

Karen articulates surprise and shock when her understanding of what it means to teach and be teacher is opened up, realizing that being-as-teacher can embrace aspects of her identity as woman, as artist and as theorist. This interruption unveils a potential for becoming that is more appealing to Karen, moving her away from the confinement of her own perceptions. After this interruption, Karen’s narrative presents a notable shift that prompts a spark of curiosity and creates space for wonder.

“*it really threw me, to shift my idea to now I know all of this, but I want to learn so much more.*"
Karen’s initial perception of an identity as teacher was rigid and inflexible. Her insistence on clinging to that perception prevented her from imagining possibilities in teaching. For Karen being-as-teacher is strange, however, rather than exploring it with a sense of curiosity she resists exploration. Karen’s notion of what it means to teach and be teacher restricts her to specific pedagogies taught at the university, certain characteristics read about in the literature and lived experiences in the classroom. Karen is not able to imagine possibilities beyond her initial experiences in teacher education. Her perception of what it means to be teacher is hardened and unchanging which contributes to the surprise she expresses as she experiences subtle shifts in this perception. After this interruption, a whisper of wonder begins to ripple through her narrative, as Karen articulates a desire to learn more about different perspectives on teaching and being-as-teacher.

“But, um, I am 30 years old and I am going into this program and I am going ‘ok, what is it that is speaking to me in terms of my identity now that hasn’t really changed. As a 30 year old woman during this program I am going ‘wow, so now I am going through an identity crisis.”

Karen speaks to an understanding of her self-identity that “hasn’t really changed” and has been built and constructed over time, solidified by experience. However despite an initial resistance, Karen is able to arrive at a place in her understanding of what it means to teach and be teacher that is different than when she entered into teacher education. It appears that engaging in conversation through the interview process facilitates this arrival.

Humans are temporal beings, tied to an existence that is determined not by a fixed environment but by participation in an emerging universe. Identity can be considered as a continually evolving perception of self. If we consider ourselves to be always in a state of becoming, rather than completed beings then we are more receptive to possibility. At the end of her narrative, Karen reveals an uncertainty and lack of comfort with what it means to be teacher.
This suggests an underlying pressure on Karen to adopt a teacher identity, graduating with an established sense of being-as-teacher.

“It’s becoming a teacher that just seems still very different and foreign to me, which is maybe a bad thing. I feel I shouldn’t say that.”

The strangeness in being-as-teacher that Karen expresses in her narrative should be embraced as a success in becoming, rather than a failure because it allows for further exploration of becoming.

**Emily: An Unexplored Practice**

Emily too resists exploring the strangeness of teaching, infringing upon her capacity for wonder. Specifically, Emily resists exploring inquiry as it pertains to her developing an identity as teacher. Emily considers being-as-teacher as made up of a discrete set of experiences that are to be had and skills that are to be practiced. Those experiences and skills that are outside of Emily’s perception of what it means to teach and be teacher reside in areas of the unknown that Emily is not willing to explore.

Dwayne Huebner (1985) identifies trust, patience and conversation as key components to successfully exploring the unknown. These components provide assurance that one will not become lost. As Emily’s narrative progresses, it is apparent that there is no degree of trust towards other ways of knowing to teach and being-as-teacher which may stem from a lack of understanding. For example, Emily’s experiences with inquiry are wrought with confusion and frustration that emerge from a perceived irrelevancy to Emily’s future being-as-teacher and an absence of clarity.
“But I think—I don’t think I really know what inquiry is and that might just be me personally.”

“I don’t know why we called it inquiry. I don’t really think it was teacher inquiry.”

“Teacher inquiry is using your kids. So we used papers. So really it wasn’t teacher inquiry what we did, it doesn’t match up. So I don’t think I ever did teacher inquiry, I did research.”

The open ended nature of inquiry leaves Emily confused in her understanding of the concept. Emily presents herself as an individual who needs structure which is reflected in her narrative as she articulates a continuous desire for clarification, to affirm that her understanding of inquiry is correct. Emily’s confusion facilitates a distrust of experiences with inquiry, which contributes to her resistance to experimenting with inquiry in the classroom. It seems that her confusion arises from not understanding inquiry according to an explicit set of criteria that the university course uses to define inquiry.

“…we almost boxed it into, teacher inquiry is THIS, when really it was happening but we just didn’t know.”

In her narrative Emily articulates an understanding of what it means to be teacher that embraces inquiry and yet, she struggles to grasp the concept as it is introduced at the university.

Emily’s narrative suggests that being-as-teacher candidate focuses on a future being-as-teacher. For Emily, she needs to be able to see the relevancy in what she is learning to her as teacher to be able to engage with the thought and practice of new concepts that challenge what
it means for her to teach and be teacher. Emily’s desire for clarity around how being-as-teacher will be enhanced echoes Dwayne Huebner’s (1959) sentiments that educators are becoming dependent upon the technicalities of teaching which undervalues and deprioritizes the role of imagination and wonder in education. As an emphasis is placed on defining outcomes of educational processes “the future is no longer a field of imagined possibilities” (Huebner, 1996, p. 436). This desire to know is not detrimental to being-as-teacher, however at what point do educators need to be willing to let go of explicitly defining and predicting changes in the behaviour of students? A reliance on experience ties teachers to fixed environments, becoming attached “through our habit patterns, our knowledge, our functional behaviours and attitude” (Huebner, 1959, p. 6).

Patience is another critical aspect to exploring the unknowns of teaching identified by Huebner (1985). The language in Emily’s narrative emanates from an underlying pressure to be a successful teacher candidate, to get it right, to pass and to become teacher. This coupled with a twelve month time period within which to achieve success places an inordinate amount of strain on her ability to explore the strangeness of teaching. There is a sense of urgency resonating from her narrative as Emily describes her experiences in teacher education. Below are a series of fragments taken from Emily’s narrative that are placed in chronological order to demonstrate the increasing anxiety felt as Emily races to become teacher.

“…you’re worried about how am I going to finish my unit if I am always missing this block every week.”

“…because after the long practicum you’re just so tired and there are so many other things.”

“…and because it was such a short span of time, it was a really stressful time.”
“...but I need to pass this program, so what of this do I actually need to change to actually pass the program.”

“I had no idea what I was doing. I felt like I was taking a stab in the dark, hoping I was doing the right thing.”

I think that part of Emily’s frustration is derived from an understanding of teacher that has been hardened after years of observing teacher as student that is being brought into question. Emily is positioned to believe that she already knows what being-as-teacher looks like and yet encounters in teacher education challenge this understanding. As teacher education introduces different conceptualizations of teaching which provoke around what it means to be teacher, Emily’s perceptions of teacher become increasingly more complex which causes her anxiety around her developing an identity as teacher.

6.2 an obsession with experience

Dwayne Huebner (1959) states that “the capacity for wonder seems to have eluded us. It is either underdeveloped or suppressed” (p. 5). Reasons for this elusion may be diverse, however Martin Buber (1937) identifies an over-emphasis on experience that results in the development of an “I-It” relationship as the root cause of humanity’s dwindling capacity for wonder. For Karen, her experiences in teacher education contradict each other, dampening that spark of wonderment. For Emily, it is a dependency on the lived experience that acts as a barrier to unhinging the potential for becoming. Experiences are lived realities and thus, powerful influencers on being that dictate our relationships with self, other and the world. However a reliance on experience to learn and to understand restricts a capacity for wonder and an exploration of the unknown.
Karen: An Extinguished Spark

In a previous section, the interruption of Karen’s perception of a normative teacher identity is discussed. This interruption opens possibilities for becoming and allows Karen to begin to see a future being-as-teacher that integrates her self-identity as woman and as artist. Karen speaks to a specific seminar course within the teacher education program as a place for this type of interruption to occur through conversation.

“Again having this kind of inquiry opportunity made me have more of a chance with Joanne [instructor], to speak as myself and bring in more of my background so that helped. But, that opportunity was really only within this class and which makes this class so important to have that chance.”

Despite having this place to engage in conversation around what it means to teach and be teacher which contributes to Karen establishing a stronger sense of being-as-teacher, Karen describes beginning her three week practicum and experiencing vulnerability as teacher candidate in the classroom. The identity as teacher that is fostered in the university classroom is challenged by the realities of the classroom. Karen speaks to the impact of this dichotomy on her being-as-teacher during her practicum.

“Ya, it is a little disheartening in that sense, because I had it. I had a good spark coming into the program and you know, again, the first week of practicum something happened. It switched off a little bit …”

For Karen the practice of teaching in an elementary classroom places restrictions on her conceptualization of being-as-teacher, leaving her thinking that her understanding of what it means to teach and be teacher do not fit into what is perceived to be an educational reality.
“...ideas I had maybe are not most applicable to the real world of teaching, or the real world in general, air quotes.”

Karen develops a perception of a “real world of teaching” that reinforces her perception of a particular teacher identity that is normative. This an example of the power that the lived experience has over thought and wonderment. The dissonance felt by Karen between the university and the classroom makes me wonder if teacher education is misleading teacher candidates to develop particular identities as teacher. How can teacher education encourage teacher candidates to imagine and explore possibilities in teaching that are supported in the classroom?

**Emily: Experiential Learning**

Martin Buber’s (1937) conceptualization of the “I-It” relationship considers an existence in the world with objects that are placed out in front, to be analyzed, predicted and controlled. This is different than the “I-Thou” relationship that is in the world with subjects that exist independently alongside each other. The “I-It” relationship encourages the individual to be selective of the present, abstracting only that which is considered to be important to the betterment of a future state. Emily’s narrative presents a similar being-in-the-world that relies on the manipulation of experiences to understand and prepare for a future being-as-teacher.

“So, um, and because we’ve never experienced it, or seen it, then that is where the huge gap lay.”

“So I think if it’s something they would like to see happening in our practicums, we need to get a practical experience of it. We need to get out to a school that practices inquiry.”

“But again because like I said, I haven’t seen it in action, it’s really hard to understand it.”
“I felt prepared, but not from [the university]. Experience was what prepared me and maybe that’s the key to it, it really is experience that gets you prepared for the practicum and the classroom.”

These segments demonstrate Emily’s reliance on experience to facilitate understanding.

Another example that highlights Emily’s dependency on experience is captured in Emily’s narrative as she speaks about being introduced to the concept of inquiry. Emily articulates feelings of frustration as she tries to understand the notion of inquiry and demonstrate her understanding through the completion of the inquiry project for a university course. Emily struggles with this project, her perception of expectations are unclear and imposing deadlines create feelings of pressure and anxiety around a timely completion. However rather than seeking clarity, Emily articulates an aversion to integrating inquiry into her teaching practice, claiming that she is not capable of understanding the concept. Interestingly, Emily clearly articulates an understanding of inquiry in her narrative.

“I think that naturally as teachers you are inquiring every day because you’re constantly asking yourself what—why you’re doing this, what’s your purpose, you’re constantly asking yourself questions but you’re also inquiring into your own practice because you’re noticing that, ok this didn’t work when I did this kind of lesson. Ok let me think about why it didn’t work, what factors might’ve affected it, why might it not have worked for specific children and so I think as teachers I think you’re naturally inquiring all the time.”

Emily’s initial experiences in the classroom as teacher are informing her understanding of what it means to teach and be teacher. Emily’s understanding of being-as-teacher is shifting as she gains experience as teacher during her practicum placement and is able to explore this identity. Despite Emily’s initial aversion to inquiry, she arrives at a place of beginning to imagine teaching as a form of inquiry. Emily’s constant need for clarity dominates her initial experiences in teacher education, which diminish the possibility for imagination and wonder. However, after
her practicum her understanding of being-as-teacher is opened up and possibilities for teaching are wondered. Her experiences as teacher on practicum assist in establishing this capacity to wonder. Emily’s reliance on experience to understand positions the practicum as a space for her to establish her practice of teaching, become familiar with an identity as teacher and begin to wonder about possibilities for teaching.

In addition to a reliance on experience to facilitate understanding, Emily also alludes to experience as a factor in her becoming teacher that will enable her to integrate new ways of knowing as teacher.

“When I’ve got some experience teaching generally then, I want to see how I can change things.”

Are teacher candidates ready to wonder about the unknowns of teaching and imagine the possibilities beyond what is imprisoned by a known teacher identity? If teacher education does not cultivate a capacity for wonder, then the asking mouth shall close, the wondering eye will shut leading “to the hardening of the responsible heart” (Huebner, 1959, p. 12). I am overwhelmed with questions that are prompted by this exploration of wonderment in being-as-teacher candidate.
a timely unknown (*field note*)

“Despite being exposed to a variety of philosophical perspectives on education,

*Teacher education is governed by a temporality that exposes teacher candidates to a host of new environments, communities, experiences and identities. What it means to teach and be teacher seemed endless in possibility.*

my initial philosophy of the educated individual remain, for the most part unchanged.”

And yet, like my peers I clung to familiarity and comfort. Uncertain about the vast unknowns of teaching, I remember just needing something to grab hold of. Something strong.”

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15 Taken from assignment on personal philosophies of education, submitted for a course in teacher education, December 2008 (Appendix A:3).

16 Written as a response to a reading assignment, February 2013.
Chapter 7: temporality

The self is in permanent mutation, that it is not one’s own, that is always in movement, in a trance, astray, and that it goes out towards you. That is the free self. Our time is afraid of losing, and afraid of losing itself.

(Helen Cixous & Chris Miller, 1993, p. 203)

Dwayne Huebner (1967) considers educational activity as generally oriented towards the future. The educator looks perpetually forward to learning outcomes and objectives in an attempt to predict the future behaviours of students. This preoccupation with a future being of students precipitates in the educator’s neglect of his or her own temporality, failing to connect threads of continuity that unite significant moments of a past and future. This preoccupation with the future is echoed in the teacher candidates’ narratives in this study. Both Karen and Emily seek to define a future being-as-teacher rather than explore being-as-teacher candidate in the present.

In “Curriculum as Concern for Man’s Temporality,” Huebner (1967) postulates that humans are temporal beings, meaning that their existence is not determined by an “occupation of space, but by [a] participation in an emerging universe, the meaning of which is shown by the relationship between duration and succession” (p. 134). He goes on to describe human life as “not futural; nor is it past, but, rather, a present made up of a past and future brought into the moment” (p. 137). Teacher candidates’ concern for the future is not what is problematic, but rather it is the thought and practice of teaching from a futural positioning as teacher that excludes the thought and practice of teaching in the present as teacher candidate. Considering the thought and practice of teaching from a present being-as-teacher candidate situates the self
in a position of becoming, from an identity as teacher that is still developing, rather than from an already established being-as-teacher. This allows for exploration of possibilities and growth in the process of becoming teacher.

Time transpires out of our being within it. Our temporality is an emergent characteristic of our existence and the narratives of the teacher candidates reveal that being-in-the-world of teacher education is concerned with such temporality. This concern is reflected in the language used, but these narratives also exude rhythms of change as teacher candidates progress through teacher education and encounter new knowledge and experiences that prompt a relearning of one's history of teaching and learning (Britzman, 1998). This chapter highlights the temporal complexity teacher candidates have to navigate throughout teacher education.

Huebner (1974) defines temporality in terms of three interrelated concepts: memory, community and interpretation, each adding complexity to the process of becoming. Memory and community will be discussed separately in this chapter, as they reflect temporality in being-as-teacher candidate in teacher education.

7.1 memory

Memory is the presence of the past that manifests as traditions, artifacts and personal histories (Huebner, 1974). Memory acts as a bridge between past and present, accessed at any point as aspects of our own temporality of being-in-the-world. Memory of the self as teacher candidate has already been discussed in Chapter 6 through language as both teacher candidates use memory of self to make sense of a present being in teacher education. Karen and Emily similarly express an unwillingness to let go of the comfort and familiarity that this memory of self affords them as teacher candidate.

The collective memory is a memory which exists within a community of individuals and varies by community as it differs by the physical, societal and historical contexts within which it is situated. Collective memory stores “the traditions, memories and intentions of our
predecessors [that] are embodied in the public world and taken for granted” (Huebner, 1974, p. 185). A collective memory of teaching and being-as-teacher surfaces in Karen’s and Emily’s narratives as they experience university and practicum environments, each holding different collective memories of what it means to teach and be teacher. The presence of these collective memories exerts both subtle and not-so-subtle influences on being in teacher education. This chapter focuses largely on how these various memories of the individual and of the collective are accessed and the implications they have for being-as-teacher candidate.

**Karen: Collective remnants**

Karen’s narrative is scattered with remnants of individual memories of self that float in and out of her experience in teacher education. Karen’s already-being-as-undergraduate student is referenced often in her narrative as she makes sense of her experience in teacher education.

“It [inquiry] is a little bit like if you were at arts school and you are just hating print media, and you’re sick of photography and you finally pick up a paint brush and you are like “wow” and you find that place where you can just sort of express and be yourself. And you just go with it and then the reaction, is—is you know it’s ok, but it was more for not a therapeutic sense, but something that I could grapple on to as a way of dealing with things.”

This individual memory is easily accessible for Karen, and her narrative depicts multiple instances in which she brings these memories of self into the present to facilitate understanding. What is concerning is that this continual remembering is not integrated into Karen’s present being-as-teacher candidate, instead it is kept isolated or “on the side” and preserved in Karen’s memory of the past.
Karen’s narrative is also heavily influenced by a collective memory of teacher that is stored within teacher education. In teacher education teacher candidates are thrown into embodied memories of teacher candidates before them, and Karen feels an underlying pressure that she too is to inherit a collective memory of an identity as teacher. For Karen this is a dangerous memory. Karen’s narrative portrays experiences in teacher education where she is exposed to traditions, implicit expectations and memories deeply seeded in societal and political history of what it means to teach and be teacher. Experiences engaging with her peers,

“You know they have this very idealistic way of thinking ‘I am going to get this and then get my own classroom and everything’s going to be great.’”

reading educational literature,

“as I read more, and reflected more it did become more of a—a, not depressing, but definitely disheartening experience.”

and interacting with the environment of her practicum school. Through these experiences Karen develops a perception of a normative teacher identity that was discussed in Chapter 6. This is a teacher identity held within the collective memory of the people and places within education, which manifests, for Karen, in this particular form. The collective memory of teacher threatens Karen’s self-identity and the identity she is developing as teacher. Tensions arise between these individual and collective memories of what it means to be teacher. Karen clings to a memory of self that is familiar, averse to embracing a memory of teacher belonging to others. Teacher candidates are required to negotiate these tensions between past and present as they experience encounters in teacher education that cause them to question their understanding
and redefine a future being-as-teacher. However, it becomes increasingly challenging to do so if they are not provided with the opportunity to understand where, how, and why these tensions have arisen.

Dwayne Huebner (1974) considers schooling to be a place where the collective memory of a teacher community is imposed upon students. The school does not provide students with an opportunity to interpret these collective memories and as a result, students “seldom feel that they participate in a public world, that they have rights to criticize it, to articulate their intentions and memories in response to it, or to reform it” (p. 197). Similarly for Karen, it seems that teacher education projects its memories and traditions onto teacher candidates, offering little opportunity to engage with this collective memory to ask why this is valuable to being-as-teacher. What do I value in being-as-teacher?

Karen’s narrative speaks of a resistance to this collective memory when she enters her practicum school, which also holds its own collective memory of what it means to be teacher. Her narrative depicts a practicum experience in which Karen transitions between one collective memory and another, unsure of where she belongs and which teacher identity she is supposed to assume. This is a combative experience for Karen, as she fights to maintain her self-identity. Dwayne Huebner (1974) considers this misalignment between individual and collective memories as problematic:

If that ready-made world and communal traditions that accompany it do not fit him, that is, if they do not mesh with his memories and intentions…then either he is alienated from his own memories and intentions…or he must withdraw in one way or another from the presence of that formed world. (p. 195)

This is seen in Karen’s narrative. She positions herself as separate from her peers, expressing feelings of difference consistently throughout her narrative. Huebner (1974) believes that this continual tension between individual and collective memory can result in

the awareness that the public world is made and that he is a misfit, rather than with the awareness that the public world is always in the process of being reworked and that he has a right to rework it. (p. 195)
This echoes sentiments from Karen’s narrative in which she continually questions her belonging in a world of teacher education that is focused on a future of becoming teacher in a formal classroom.

A concern with collective memories that Huebner (1974) contemplates is one of accessibility. Who should have access to this collective wealth so that the memories and traditions are not forgotten? This is interesting because it relates to the notion of historical consciousness that triggered this research. Historical consciousness would expose the richness of the past, informing teacher candidates of a collective memory that exists beneath the surface of teacher education, which would allow teacher candidates to differentiate between the time and place of the present, and that of the past.

History is an essential facet of education that tells a powerful story of who we are as educators, how we got here, and how we fit into the larger picture of society. Historical consciousness has been found to have incredible influences on the understanding of situatedness of self and place (Donovan, 1981; Sexias, 2004; Shafer, 1960). However despite these benefits, educational history remains continually absent from teacher education curriculum (Britzman, 1998; Doll, 1993; Farley, 2010; Huebner, 1967; Pinar, 2004).

**Emily: A predictable future**

Throughout Emily’s narrative she also accesses memories of self from her undergraduate experience, using her past to make sense of a present being-as-teacher candidate. It seems that Emily has a continual desire to compare and contrast the two experiences, rather than consider each in its own uniqueness. In a way this tendency to revisit the past introduces an aspect of reflexivity into being in teacher education. However, this reliance on memories of self also complicates being-as-teacher candidate because teacher education and a previous undergraduate degree experience are incomparable, embodying different expectations, identities, and educational environments.
“So in that way I think I struggled more in my lack of experience writing really. You know, we didn’t write a lot of papers in our undergrad in kinesiology.”

“Ya because I was in an undergrad where it’s application, you learn how to teach PE and then you try it out.”

“Also to be a bit more understanding of where students are at, because of their backgrounds and skill sets. We’re all very different you know?”

Emily’s individual memories help shape and define her being-as-teacher candidate, while at the same time appearing to restrict her ability to explore possibilities as teacher, as were discussed in Chapter 6.

In “Toward A Remaking of Curricular Language,” Dwayne Huebner (1974) identifies that the way people are with each other through speech is a key contributor to establishing the collective memories of institutions. Teacher education has a unique language and way of speaking that influences being-as-teacher candidate. In a world centred on lesson plans and learning objectives that attempt to predict future changes in behaviours of students, it is difficult to situate self of either student or teacher back into the present. Teacher candidates are situated within a program that considers teacher education as ‘preparation’. Positioning teacher education as preparation is problematic because it places importance on a future being-as-teacher, that which is in preparation for. Teacher education states as part of its mission that “the charge of teacher education at a research-intensive university is to prepare teachers for their responsibilities as educators in both local and global contexts” and “is committed to preparing teachers who will be knowledgeable, skilful, flexible, and compassionate members of the profession” (Teacher Education Office, 2013).

By constantly projecting the attention of teacher candidates towards an unknown future, teacher education becomes a linear educational process that turns its back on the individual.
The presence of a collective memory of teacher that is consumed with the future permeates Emily’s being-as-teacher candidate, as everything becomes extracted from the present to enhance being-as-teacher in the future.

“I feel like I could use it [inquiry] in an interview.”

“The other inquiry I found useful was the one with recent graduates from last year who had gotten jobs and they were able to help us.”

“But really how do you expect to do teacher inquiry until you have your own classroom?”

The future becomes something that can be controlled, a thing to be known and predicted. Emily’s abstraction of a present in teacher education attends only to that which she perceives to be useful to her future being-as-teacher. A clear distinction emerges in Emily’s narrative between individual and the world, again echoing characteristics of an “I-It” relationship in which the individual manipulates the world, rather than existing alongside it.

Both Karen and Emily articulate a pressure to conform to this collective memory of teacher. For Karen this collective memory conflicts with individually constructed understandings of what it means to be teacher, which generates confusion around an identity as teacher resulting in the resistance of any identity of teacher. For Emily the power of the collective memory of teacher that manifests during her practicum dominates her perception of what it means to be teacher.

“You need to carry forward your teacher’s structure.”

“You can’t come into a three month practicum and change everything.”
Emily appears eager to maintain a sense of stability and order in the classroom, staying close to the routines and structure already established in her practicum classroom in order to be successful, to survive.

In “Curriculum as Concern for Man’s Temporality,” Huebner (1967) identifies requirements of educational environments that address the temporal existence of humanity. One of these requirements is that an educational environment needs to be responsive, requiring a response to “what aspects of the past can become a horizon of the student’s present so that his future becomes his own potential for being?” (Huebner, 1967, p. 139). This involves providing teacher candidates with the opportunity to engage with a collective memory of teaching that is portrayed in various educational environments and communities. By engaging in this type of opportunity teacher candidates redefine what it means to teach and be teacher in the present and contribute to a reworking of old collective memories, creating new traditions. It is apparent in Karen’s and Emily’s narratives that individual memories are frequently accessed and collective memories are strongly felt, however individual memories are considered separate from their experience in teacher education. A present being-as-teacher candidate is not seen as emergent from a fusion of an already-been-as-student and an ahead-of-itself-already-beeing-as-teacher, but rather as fixated in a particular time and space.

7.2 community

For Dwayne Huebner (1974) community is “a caring collectivity in which individuals share memories and intentions” (p. 185). He outlines that interpersonal encounters through conversation are carriers for change. Communities foster meaningful interactions between self and other which position community at the core of inspiring possibilities for change. The interactions and relationships that are built within a community of teacher candidates seem to
fade into the background of teacher education, as teacher candidates are preoccupied with a becoming of self as teacher (Huebner, 1987).

Karen and Emily are both members of a university cohort of elementary teacher candidates that is defined by the geographical location of their practicum placements, as well as an orientation towards a particular practice of teaching (inquiry, problem-based). Teacher candidates in these cohorts experience the ebbs and flows of teacher education together as members of this community over the twelve-month program. The narratives express temporal changes in this community that impact teacher candidates, drawing attention to the importance of how such a community establishes a climate of understanding, builds relationships, and supports being-as-teacher candidate in teacher education.

That being said, the brief mentions of interactions with other teacher candidates within the cohort highlight a definite impact of this community on being in teacher education. Karen and Emily express vulnerability in this community of teacher candidates at different points in time. According to Huebner (1974) vulnerability can be endured in a community, but time becomes an essential component that allows for the sharing of and listening to each other’s journey. Huebner (1985) briefly outlines a progression in the development of a community that is also reflected in the narratives of teacher candidates as they describe the environment and dynamics within their community cohort of teacher candidates:

The presence and acknowledgement of the strange in our life upsets the desired unity of thought, feeling, and action that we struggle to establish over time. Confronted by something new, forced to give up a part of our self, that unity is disrupted by new thoughts, new feelings, or new actions. Trust, patience and conversation provided by one who cares or loves provides the time, support, and language necessary to bring discordant feelings, thoughts and actions into new unity. (p. 364)

This section explores the influences of community on being-as-teacher candidate.
Karen: Whispers of belonging

Karen’s isolation from her peers is evident in her narrative, especially initially as she situates herself with different intentions and goals for teacher education. Despite Karen’s initial comments that depict a distance separating her from her teacher candidate peers, her narrative addresses a subtle shift in the dynamics felt between self and other in the university cohort. These fragments from Karen’s narrative transition from Karen’s initial place of isolation, through hesitation, and into a place of engagement in dialogue.

“I found it a bit tedious at first, not necessarily reading the article but it was more the discussion wasn’t there yet in the class. It wasn’t starting, it wasn’t—there was more of ‘what are we doing?’ and a lack of cohesiveness.”

“My peers did help me narrow some of my ideas down because that’s where I was getting lost and through editing and the process of editing, discussion, um, there was one other student in my cohort that was particularly…her paper was focused on, more of the statistical aspect of why there’s more primary female teachers than male and really, really honed in on that, which was great. So we were able to share a bit of information. So and it was a very nice way to have, uh, our professors to say, you know, this person’s doing this make sure that you collaborate and talk about it.”

“I think it [inquiry presentations] opened up a lot of conversation…. I think just having different people’s different point of view part of it, made it a harder conversation and quite interestingly enough, it was so fascinating for a lot of male, um, colleagues to say you know, ‘I know I’m going to get a job before many of my female colleagues, you know I know this and I am wondering why’ and it brings up a lot of things for them…and so it did create some interesting, just generalized discussion.”

The tone of Karen’s narrative changes as she describes engaging in conversations with her peers, expressing an appreciation for a presence of diverse perspectives. Karen’s narrative begins to whisper threads of belonging within the communities at the university and at her practicum school.
“I am thinking there is one other student at my school, he has more of an art background as well and so only one. And, uh, he had a philosophy background, philosophy in art. So for him the process might have been more similar to mine and he did his topic around global issues and social justice as well, so it sorta had a bit of a similar idea.”

“I think there is a few people that I could probably speak directly with about certain things, and uh, if I got to the point where I am confident in myself and where I am at in the practicum, I know that if I wanted to sit down and chat there’s people I could directly speak to… And I would know that reading people on that and knowing some of the particular administration’s backgrounds, that they have a different educational background that would maybe pertain to—then I would feel more comfortable.”

Karen’s narrative does not depict many meaningful relationships built within the cohort she is a part of, however where she does speak of interactions with others she tends to engage most comfortably with teacher candidates whom she perceives as sharing similar interests and stories.

**Emily: Threading tension**

For Emily community is more disruptive. Her experiences interacting with her teacher candidate peers are clouded with confusion. She struggles to find an understanding of particular concepts such as inquiry that complicate her encounters with others in the university cohort.

“But I think it was left too open to us and it just led to frustration and it led to negative feelings in our cohort. Our cohort just had this sense of negativity which was really unfortunate and it kinda came to a head at one point and we had to sit down and talk about it and be like, ok, what’s going on? We’re all just really frustrated and don’t understand what we’re doing.”

Emily’s narrative presents an underlying theme of self, which implicates her being-as-teacher candidate as fixated on establishing an identity as teacher and not on building meaningful relationships with others. As a result, there is little mention of such relationships in
her narrative. Emily does speak of interactions with teacher candidates in her narrative, but her interactions are saturated with tensions between self and other.

“There were some people that I felt I was intimidated by.”

“Like for me, some classes I didn’t say anything in class—I couldn’t say anything because there were always four people that were always dominating the conversation.”

Emily perceives a particular group of teacher candidates as different from herself, with notions of what it means to teach and be teacher that are different than her own. For Emily this difference has great power over her being-as-teacher candidate, a power that silences Emily rather than engages her. Emily’s being-as-teacher candidate appears to clash with other forms of being-as-teacher candidate, highlighting a conflict between individual and community. This silence is problematic because according to Huebner (1987), it inhibits community formation and contributes to thinking about education in individualistic, rather than collective ways.

Emily’s intimidation towards this subset of peers seems to be borne out of difference. Emily is encountering different perspectives of what it means to teach and be teacher that threaten the integrity of her own and herein lays the tension felt.

“It [diversity in cohort] caused a lot of challenges in our cohort. Our cohort has been quite tense I would say.”

Dwayne Huebner (1974) considers that this conflict between individual and community does not have to result in fear or tension but rather “could create, instead, an awareness of one’s freedom to participate in public life” (p. 185). Emily perceives this difference to be the
source of immense challenge, arising primarily out of diverse previous degree experiences and thus causing tensions within this community.

“But there’s some people because of their past experiences in their undergrad, they’re very opinionated and, um, a lot of people, you know I’m making generalizations, but you know as teachers we are often opinionated and vocal with leadership skills and that sort of thing. But you kind of see these clashes and this power struggle between people in the classroom.”

The power struggle that Emily identifies within this cohort of teacher candidates may be perceived out of her own preoccupation with a future being-as-teacher and obtaining employment to secure that future. If, like Emily, her peers are also consumed with a future being-as-teacher, then teacher education transforms into a race to become teacher in which teacher candidates are no longer peers but instead competitors. This seems to be the case for Emily, who describes the dynamics felt within this community thus:

“It’s a very competitive group I would say. It gives me anxiety. Just, I feel like people aren’t there to help each other, they’re there to compete. So nobody was into sharing lesson plans, sharing units, like, it was all about yourself. And that’s not who I am at all.”

These shifts in community follow along a temporal rhythm that mirrors the structural and organizational changes of the teacher education program (long practicum, short practicum, semester transitions). These changes require teacher candidates to transition into and out of a multitude of communities, each holding within itself a collective memory of what it means to teach and be teacher. This places an inordinate amount of strain on teacher candidates to navigate not only these transitions, but also the various relationships and interactions with the members of that community as well.
“I would say that we were all so exhausted, so tired and just on, what our science teacher would call cognitive overload. He would just keep telling us we were in cognitive overload. Everyone was just in a stressed positions and it just caused this negativity.”

In a community consisting of individuals of diverse backgrounds and experiences, tension can arise between individuals and community. This tension can create an environment that becomes no longer conducive to learning, or becoming. For Emily, her navigation of other within this community of teacher candidates disrupts the unity of her thinking about teaching and being-as-teacher, as her individual understanding of what it means to teach and be teacher is now one among many. Such tensions between individual and community do not have to generate fear and anxiety. How can teacher education create an environment that fosters learning through difference, rather than conflict? Huebner (1974) calls for trust, patience, and conversation. All of these elements appear to be missing in Emily’s narrative and instead are replaced with competition, intimidation, and silence.

In the narratives of these two teacher candidates it is apparent that being-as-teacher candidate is both concerned with and restricted by temporality. A pre-occupation with a future encourages teacher candidates to fragment the present into what is useful to a future being-as-teacher and forget about aspects of the past that are integral to the development of an identity as teacher. In Dwayne Huebner’s (1967) “Curriculum as Concern for Man’s Temporality,” he calls for an educational environment “where the past as present may be used, interpreted, rethought, and reworked” (p. 197). Such an environment, according to Huebner (1967), should provide opportunity for the student to inquire about the past, react to it, and foster an awareness of the student’s own temporality. The creation of this type of educational environment might help teacher candidates sew back together fragments of their self that are scattered in time.
“In order to survive,

I remember that is where I was at, trying to survive. It was November and I was starting to feel the pressure. All I needed to do was survive.

a teacher must be knowledgeable about the dynamics, politics and issues concerning the public education systems

This thirst for knowledge, to be all knowing, permeates a lot of my reflective thought around teacher education. However does this not set teacher candidates up for failure? How can every situation be anticipated? Every student response predicted?

as these are the driving forces that shape and define the role of the teacher within the classroom.”

External forces shape and define the teacher. The role of the teacher becomes one of conformity, adaptability and powerlessness.

What happened to the teacher?

The teacher has become lost.

17 Taken from assignment on influential forces on education, submitted for a course in teacher education, December 2008 (Appendix A:3).

18 Written as a response to a reading assignment. March 2013.
Chapter 8: what remains

The beginning and end of educational conversation is also a concern for the person—not people in the abstract, not theories about traits, learning styles, cultural background, or how the young people of today differ from those of yesterday. The crux of the educators’ predicament is that talk about the person is infrequent and faint.

(Dwayne Huebner, 1996, p. 269)

The language of each narrative has been analyzed as it pertains to themes of wonder and temporality in order to better understand being-as-teacher candidate in the world of teacher education. I have listened to the voices of teacher candidates and I have interpreted their stories. Their stories provoked a multitude of further questions about being and teacher education as a study of self, in addition to a study of subject. I capture these questions throughout this research, as a way to guide my interpretations and provide shape to my own narrative of being in teacher education. For now I turn back to the title of this thesis, “Lost in Being: (re)situating self in teacher education” to provide a framework for my response to the question that initiated this study: how do teacher candidates experience being in teacher education? This chapter is broken down into two sections, lost in being and (re)situating self in teacher education, that bring this thesis full circle.

8.1 lost in being

Under the lenses of language, wonder, and temporality, being-as-teacher candidate emerges as dynamic, fragmented, and limited in possibility. These are themes that resonate, not only from Karen and Emily’s narratives, but from my own experiences in teacher education.
The process of engaging with texts written as teacher candidate similarly captured being-as-teacher candidate as dynamic, fragmented and limited in possibility and prompted memories of teacher education that mirror those shared in this research.

8.1.1 dynamic

The narratives of the two teacher candidates portray being-as-teacher candidate as continually changing. It is dynamic. There is constant movement between physical places, identities, and interpretations. Teacher candidates are required to make these transitions with little opportunity for pause, reflection, or thought as to how their being-as-teacher candidate, not as teacher, is influenced by each of these movements. I remember constantly navigating the multitude of relationships and expectations of each university course, each university cohort, and each practicum classroom. The complexities of each transition out of one space and into another challenged my understanding of teacher, leaving me disoriented and desperate for a sense of stability. It is not a surprise that the dynamic nature of teacher education impacts the experiences of teacher candidates; however I want to explicitly highlight the type of movement between physical spaces and identities that is expressed in the narratives of this study.

Karen’s and Emily’s narratives depict movement into and out of various communities, including the university cohort and practicum classrooms. Each community is associated with its own expectations of teacher candidates and its own collective memory of what it means to teach and be teacher. Entering into each new community requires an adjustment period in which teacher candidates establish a sense of belonging, understand expectations of self, and determine how to become an active contributor to this community. Transitioning into, out of, and between these communities can be a source of anxiety for many teacher candidates.

The condensed timeframe of a twelve-month program speeds up the movement between these places and failure to successfully navigate through these transitions is found to be perceived as threatening to a teacher candidate’s already established sense of self. This is
seen in both narratives, as Karen and Emily both express disruption to their self-identity and an identity as teacher. Emily adjusts to these disruptions by attempting to anticipate what will be needed as teacher in the future. In doing so, Emily neglects how her present being-as-teacher candidate is affected by her experiences in teacher education. She attends only to her desired future state of being-as-teacher, focusing on what she perceives her needs to be for becoming teacher. Glynis Breakwell (1986) found this type of anticipation of the future to be a coping strategy in situations where an individual’s identity is challenged.

In contrast, Karen resists moving passively along with the rhythm of teacher education and actively seeks out opportunities to reflect and engage in dialogue around how to integrate her self-identity into an identity as teacher. Karen is constantly attempting to regain unity in her understanding of what it means to teach and be teacher, expressing excitement at participating in an interview that will allow her to discuss her process of becoming.

“Again, that’s why I was so excited about this [interview], just to even talk about it. It’s such a treat to be able to talk about it, whereas again, you kinda have to keep that aside during the practicum.”

The transitions between place and community in turn impact identity as and interpretations of teacher. As teacher candidates enter into new educational environments they reconstruct their sense of self as it interacts with a collective memory of teacher, which in turn affects their understandings of teacher within that place. Identity is implicated by changing social and situational contexts that surround an individual. Dennis Sumara and Rebecca Luce-Kapler (1996) point out an identity is not fixed, but rather “ambiguously located amid the human subject’s perceived and interpreted relations in the world” (p.69). These narratives portray being-as-teacher candidate as dynamically experiencing shifts and changes, which is consistent with Dennis Sumara and Rebecca Luce-Kapler’s (1996) framework of three stages in the development of an identity as teacher. This framework provides a good structure with which to
consider identity development as teacher, however it does not address the challenges expressed by teacher candidates in how they transition between each identity and how their being-as-teacher candidate is impacted. Without the opportunity to re-establish unity in thought and understanding across the diverse experiences in teacher education, teacher candidates run the risk of creating fragmented identities that are bound to various places of teacher education.

8.1.2 fragmented

The narratives portray being-as-teacher candidate that is temporally and spatially fragmented. As previously mentioned, without the proper opportunity to rebuild understanding and make meaning of the multitude of transitions in teacher education, teacher candidates develop identities that are fixated to the communities and collective memories of each place. For both Karen and Emily, this fragmentation is demonstrated as they reflect on feeling confusion entering into the community of teacher candidates within their university cohort, as well as their practicum school. Each teacher candidate seems to develop a separate identity, in order to weave themselves into the fabrics of the community in which they are situated. Spatial fragmentation contributes to the development of distinct interpretations of what it means to teach and be teacher that pertain specifically to place, instead of establishing a being-as-teacher that builds from all experiences in teacher education. In Karen’s narrative a clear dichotomy emerges between being-as-teacher within a university classroom and being-as-teacher in a practicum classroom. She faces a reality in the classroom that places restrictions on her understanding of being-as-teacher. For Karen, being in teacher education becomes fragmented into these different identities that are separated by physical space and time.

Emily’s narrative emphasizes a desire to conform to a tradition and culture of teacher that is established in her practicum classroom by her sponsor teacher. For Emily it is all about what works and for her, what works in the classroom is not what is taught at the university. These two environments present conflicting realities, creating a divide between the thought and
practice of teaching. Emily, who is driven by the future and its promise of becoming certified as
teacher, intentionally creates fragmented identities to accommodate the varying needs of
different environments within which she finds herself. I remember being-as-teacher candidate
like Emily, motivated only by a future being-as-teacher. As a result, my experience in teacher
education was dominated by the criterion that defined success. Each of the spaces of teacher
education such as a university course, or practicum classroom held different criteria for success
which facilitated a continual adjustment of voice, thought and practice of teaching as teacher-
candidate in order to be successful. This included implementing teaching strategies that I was
unfamiliar with, adopting a perspective of teaching that I did not agree with and at times,
speaking from a voice as teacher that I was not comfortable using. My process of becoming
teacher was disjointed, leaving me with a practice of teaching that I was not certain was truly my
own.

Fragmentation also occurs temporally in the narratives. Teacher candidates enter
teacher education with a history, a history of self that is familiar, referenced frequently in the
narratives and exerts powerful forces on experiences in teacher education. Both teacher
candidates return to individual memories of self as a way to make sense of a present in teacher
education. Karen and Emily cling to a sense of self that has been established in a previous
degree program. Being-as-student is what is known and comfortable. When confronted with
strangeness in either other or teaching, the continuity between a projected being-as-teacher, a
present being-as-teacher candidate, and a historical understanding of teacher is interrupted. In
an attempt to reclaim continuity between past and present, Emily and Karen appear to
intentionally isolate their historical already-being, protecting it, which creates being that is
fragmented into a past, present, and future.

Despite the natural pull to the past, teacher candidates are temporally torn as teacher
education exerts an overarching programmatic push forwards to the future which creates
temporal tensions. For example the mission of teacher education at the university is to be
“committed to preparing teachers for their responsibilities as educators in both local and global contexts” (Teacher Education Office, 2013), which naturally guides curriculum forwards to a future being-as-teacher. The impact of such an orientation is reflected throughout both narratives. In Karen’s narrative she defines a normative teacher identity that is tied to a future-based outcome of “getting a classroom.” This future focused orientation is felt both by teacher education curriculum and other teacher candidates. Teacher candidates become preoccupied with predicting an unknown future while trying to hold on to a known past that has already been. In the process of becoming teacher the present is ignored, situating teacher candidates only in the future as teacher. Despite Karen’s expression of need to rebuild her understanding of teaching and being teacher, she articulates “very little space at [the university]” that provides the opportunity to do so. This suggests that perhaps what teacher education need to be, space. Teacher candidates require space to engage in dialogue and work through making sense of a present being-as-teacher candidate. Considering the fragmentation that is occurring in these two teacher candidate narratives, perhaps it is time for teacher education to consider creating space to position being-as-teacher candidate as a fusion of a past as student, present as teacher candidate, and future as teacher.

Dennis Sumara and Rebecca Luce-Kapler (1996) conceptualize identity as a dynamic and unstable perception of self. Glynis Breakwell (1986) sees identity as “a dynamic social product, residing in the psychological processes, which cannot be understood except in relation to its social context and historical perspective” (p. 9). Both perspectives consider identity a continually evolving understanding of self that is deeply rooted in the evolving historical and social situatedness of the individual. The social, historical, and physical constructs within which a teacher candidate experiences teacher education become critical in the process of becoming teacher. These constructs are shown in this study to interrupt a teacher candidate’s understanding of self, teacher and teaching, which may be necessary in initiating thinking about teaching and teacher beyond the pedagogical classroom. However in order to make sense of
these experiences of becoming teacher, there needs to be an opportunity to reflect on being-as-teacher candidate and thread together seemingly disjointed fragments.

8.1.3 **limited in possibility**

Teacher candidates reveal strong preconceptions of what it means to teach and be teacher prior to entering into teacher education. These preconceptions are reinforced through experiences and strengthened over time, placing restrictions on possibilities for being-as-teacher. In both narratives there is a resistance to exploring being-as-teacher. Neither Karen nor Emily is able to explore possibilities beyond what is experienced as the reality of the classroom. Emily is held back by a fear of failure and a need for routine and familiarity. Karen is confined to a normative teacher identity that is reinforced by a collective memory of teacher that is generated through the curriculum, language, and experiences of teacher education. If teacher candidates are restricted to a particular conceptualization of being-as-teacher, how can they ever delve into the unknown possibilities of teaching?

It seems that this resistance stems from two sources. The first is a fear of the unknown. Teacher candidates want to successfully graduate from teacher education and playing with possibilities in the classroom is associated with risk. What if the students do not understand the topic? What if my sponsor teacher does not like the approach? These were the concerns that dictated my practicum experience as teacher candidate. Consumed with how my teaching was perceived by my faculty advisor and coupled with my internal drive to succeed, the degree of risk was too large. I played it safe, implementing teaching routines and behaviours that had been established by my sponsor teacher. I was held back by my own fear of failure and looking back, I regret not taking the opportunity to explore and experiment as teacher during my practicum experience.

The second source is a lack of opportunity and support to engage in this type of exploration. The narratives capture uncertainty in the voices of teacher candidates who
associate not knowing with failure. Karen ends her practicum experience feeling “bad” about being uncomfortable with an identity as teacher. Emily’s confusion around the notion of inquiry facilitates a feeling that she does not have the intellectual capacity to embrace a collective memory of teacher that integrates inquiry. It is this underlying urge to know that challenges both teacher candidates, causing them to believe that because they do not know, they have failed. How can teacher education encourage an exploration of possibilities without fear, while still integrating the reality of the practicum classroom?

8.2 (re)situating self in teacher education

This final section concluding this thesis is short. I have engaged with the narratives. I have listened to the voices of teacher candidates. I have attended to their language, searching for meaning as they express experiences in teacher education that reflect the fragility of being-as-teacher candidate. Their stories have provoked a multitude of questions about being and becoming, prompting me to wonder if education should be considered more as a study of self rather than simply the study of subject. However what remains for me with respect to being in teacher education is a need to acknowledge being-as-teacher candidate that is dynamic, fragmented, and limited in possibility. Teacher candidates need to consider the ever changing and delicate nature of becoming, recognizing that identity as teacher is not something static that can be attained, but rather a continually evolving state of being. Teacher educators need to reflect on curricular opportunities that acknowledge a present being-as-teacher candidate that is a fusion of a past already-being and a future ahead-of-itself-already being. The stories in this study capture the lived experiences of being in teacher education and speak loudly for greater consideration to be given to the self histories of teacher candidates, the dynamic transitions into and out of teaching spaces and the encounters with others in teacher education.

Autobiographies have a tremendous impact on being in teacher education for the teacher candidates in this study. Individual memories influence how a teacher candidate learns.
A previous degree in any discipline has particular methodologies and approaches to teaching and learning which become familiar. Each teacher candidate enters into teacher education with a history of being-as-student which has contributed to how they learn and process information. These self histories are shown to both impede and facilitate learning in teacher education. Emily (Kinesiology) struggles with theoretical discourse and yet, thrives in her practicum placement while Karen (Gender Studies and Art Philosophy) gets energy from critical discussions and thinking about teaching and experiences challenges transitioning into the classroom environment. This study highlights that self histories and previous degrees matter to being in teacher education.

In addition to experiences in a previous degree program, the teacher candidates demonstrate a tendency to frequently revisit past memories of being-as-student to make sense of the present. Despite frequently accessing self histories, teacher candidates do not integrate these histories into their present being-as-teacher candidate, or future being-as-teacher. Instead being-as-teacher candidate is separated into past and present being, each associated with a specific time and place. Parker Palmer (2007) stated that “as we learn more about who we are, we can learn the techniques that reveal rather than conceal the personhood from which good teaching comes” (p. 25). If teacher education hopes to encourage the development of good teaching, then (re)discovering this "personhood" becomes a critical component of teacher education curriculum.

Teacher education programs expose teacher candidates to a condensed curriculum and an array of teaching experiences that move teacher candidates quickly in to and out of various places of teaching, such as university classrooms, cohorts, and practicum schools. To make sense of these transitions requires the creation of space and time that encourages reflection as to how being in the present as teacher candidate is affected. In both of the teacher candidate narratives, these transitions are complicated by diverse expectations of teacher candidates, different collective memories of teacher, and an adjustment to a lived reality of the classroom. In
Karen’s narrative, she mentions that for her the university seminar course that introduces the notion of inquiry provides a space to reflect on and learn about self and the process of becoming teacher; however the sense of identity as teacher that is developed through this space is interrupted upon beginning her practicum placement. Clear dichotomies emerge out of Karen and Emily’s narratives as they enter into their practicum experience. Their identities as teacher that are beginning to develop in a university classroom are not embraced by the lived experience of the practicum classroom. Engaging in reflective dialogue around being-as-teacher with teacher candidates during critical times of transition into, or out of different teaching spaces may allow for a working through tensions that are felt and encourage teacher candidates to connect with the shifts that may be occurring in their perceptions of self, other, and teacher.

Finally, it is apparent in both narratives that Karen and Emily rely on language through conversation to make sense of being in teacher education. Conversation with other teacher candidates allows them to encounter difference, recognizing strangeness in other interpretations of teaching and being-as-teacher that are different from their own. This interrupts individual perceptions and for some teacher candidates causes feelings of uncertainty to surface which gives rise to a resistance of the unknown. For Karen and Emily, this resistance stops further conversation which isolates the self from other and paralyzes exploration of teaching and being-as-teacher.

Conversely, this study also highlights that through the process of interviewing and engaging in conversation with others, teacher candidates become capable of transcending the lived experience to recognize transformations in being-as-teacher candidate in teacher education. Here, conversation is seen to be a powerful vehicle for interrupting meaning, encountering other, and working through the thought of teaching. Greater consideration should be given to the encounters between self and other and the dynamics at play within a community of teacher candidates that contribute to those encounters. How can conversation be used to encourage an exploration of the strangeness of teaching without fear?
Deborah Britzman (2010) reminds us that schooling, in any capacity, is a place where multiple histories of self, other, and the collective come together causing a “confusion of time” (p. 326). The narratives of teacher candidates Karen and Emily reflect such confusion as they navigate collective memories, communities, and identities of teacher education which results in being as dynamic, fragmented, and limited in possibility. This provides insight into how the educational practices of teacher education may be affecting being-as-teacher candidate. How can teacher education work to eliminate, or at the very least ease this confusion and foster a seamless becoming of teacher that intertwines with the unfolding biography of the individual?

As I conclude this thesis with insight gained into how teacher candidates experience being in teacher education, as well as my own being-as-teacher candidate, I am left with more questions than I have answers. However, the overarching question that resonates most strongly is how does teacher education (re)situate being in the present in teacher education? This is the other side of the colon. I have explored being in teacher education as lost, and this is the question that remains. This research ends at the beginning of a deeper conversation around being in teacher education. I would like to build on the initial findings of this study around being-as-teacher candidate to explore more thoroughly the process of becoming teacher as teacher candidate, as well as beyond as being-as-teacher.

This research sent me on an unanticipated whirlwind of (re)learning, (un)knowing, and (de)constructing that now leaves me breathless and invigorated. I leave with a final field note that revisits the existential themes of being that were used to open this journey, themes of self, language, conversation, encounter and other. However my words now reflect a new language that is informed by my encounters with others in teacher education.
Chapter 9: epilogue: a prologue revisited

Self
…the single irreducible element underlying human existence. Ambiguously located in time and space, the self lies in a fragile state of being, as encounters threaten to disrupt its desired unity, the self clings to memory and familiarity.

Language
…has the ability to simultaneously hide and reveal the strangeness that blankets the self and other. Exploring white spaces between words and margins of crowded pages, deeper meanings are uncovered behind words that situate the self in the world.

Conversation
…an engagement between the patient mind and trusting heart of self and other presents a potential for discovery and transformation. A conversation unravels shifting interpretations to (re)construct new meanings, but only if we are willing.

Encounters
…opportunities for possibility. Moments in time that require a transcendence of self to acknowledge the other and explore the endless possibilities for becoming.

Other
…eternally unknown to the self. A shadow of self that remains forever in partial darkness. The other is a reflection of what or who, we are not and it is through this otherness that we discover who it is we want to become.

19 This field note was written in April 2013, at the end of this research. This field note revisits the existential themes that initiated this journey. This captures a transformation in thought around being-in-the-world that has been informed by encounters with stories of being-as-teacher candidate in teacher education.
References


Appendices

Appendix A  Teacher Education Course Assignments
Course Assignment 1

Written by: Robyn Leuty
Submitted For: Course completion for Teacher Education Program in Canada
Submitted: October 2008

Statement of Philosophy of Education (1)

I believe that the purpose of education is to educate the whole individual through a diverse range of activities giving students the opportunity to experience a plethora of different meaningful experiences in a structured and inclusive learning environment. By educating the whole individual, we are establishing an educated individual who has attained the cognitive, personal and social skills that will enable the individual to be successfully integrated into and contribute to a dynamic society. The public education system focuses on (or should focus on) developing not only the academic skills which exist in the cognitive realm of education, but also the personal and social skills. These personal skills enable the individual to critically think about, question and challenge concepts, hypotheses and phenomena in the natural world around them. These social skills will enable the individual to communicate, interact and establish relationships effectively with other individuals. By educating the whole individual based on the development of each of the cognitive, personal and social realms, the public education system will be able to better enable each individual to achieve his or her full potential and produce a truly educated individual. This educated individual is a global citizen who is knowledgeable in the ways of the natural world however, it is not just the knowledge which makes one educated, it is the attitude and character of that individual which makes him educated. The individual must be willing to share lessons learned and experiences gained, allowing others to benefit, profit and become wiser as a result.

The role of the public education system is not just to develop an educated individual, but to provide the learning spaces in which the process of teaching and learning is facilitated in order to educate. It is the role of the education system to provide these accessible, inclusive and developmentally appropriate learning environments in which every student is cognitively, socially and personally challenged and motivated to achieve some degree of success. The process by which one becomes educated (teaching and learning), occurs in these learning environments provided by the public education system however the actual process occurs more intimately between the teacher and...
the learner. I believe that this process is a reciprocal process in which both contributing parties, the teacher and the learner, are both an expert body of knowledge. This teaching and learning process involves the sharing or refining of this knowledge between both individuals through the right levels of involvement and engagement and the quality of the interactions which occur in the classroom.

My experience with the B.C. Science 9 curriculum has guided me towards my current philosophy of education. I found that the only way students could be motivated, eager and willing to learn the material mandated by the E.R.P. was to find meaningful ways in which the content was connected and applicable to their lives. My physics unit integrated 'hands-on' activities which involved students working collaboratively with a partner on solving problems, enabling the development of social interactions and critical thinking without an overemphasis on the physical textbook content. It is these activities and experiences which develop and educate the whole individual and allow students to understand, integrate and apply their knowledge of the material in scenarios and activities which relate directly to their world. It is important to develop, teach and educate this whole individual as it will be the individual who is personally, socially and cognitively prepared who will succeed in the world, not the individual who is educated cognitively and merely on academic concepts and skills.
Course Assignment 2

Written by: Robyn Leuty
Submitted For: Course completion for Teacher Education Program in Canada.
Submitted: November 2008

Statement of Philosophy of Education (2)

My initial philosophy of education centered around the purpose of education being to educate the whole individual through a variety of experiences, teaching approaches and provide students with an optimal learning environment enabling student success. Despite being exposed to a variety of philosophical perspectives on education, my initial philosophy of the educated individual remain, for the most part unchanged. I still believe that the public education system and its educators have a duty to uphold in developing the whole individual. This means introducing students to a diversity of experiences which embrace learning in all cognitive, physical and affective domains, enabling students to be successful, literate citizens who are aware of the world around them, capable of critical and imaginative thought, have the ability to integrate knowledge across disciplines and apply it to different situations and enable positive social and global change. The importance of the education of the whole individual is reinforced as a prominent theme throughout the philosophical readings, it is simply the methods employed to achieve this goal which differ.

For example, the three approaches presented by Fenstermacher and Solits involve three diverse teaching styles, each exemplifying varying techniques and characteristics to foster the development of different skills within the student. Reflections of each approach state that a particular approach “might be dominant at a given time, while others are recessive” and gaining expertise in each approach will enable the teacher to function in different educational environments (Fenstermacher & Soltis, 2004). This emphasizes the importance of integrating these approaches into a teacher’s repertoire, in order for students to experience different
methods of teaching, different learning environments and different opportunities to learn. Each different learning experience develops a unique set of skills from each of the three domains: 

* cognitive, physical and affective.

The incorporation and practice of the three approaches is essential for a teacher to be flexible and adaptable in responding to a variety of scenarios that can arise within the classroom. However, I believe that the *liberationist* approach and the skills it can develop for students is widely ignored by many teachers. This approach requires knowledge foundations, proper skill development and maturity prior to student engagement and many teachers simply do not have the time or energy to invest in this type of approach. I would expand my philosophy of education to encompass the strengths of this teaching approach as it exposes students to inquiry, analysis, investigation, discussion and problem solving skills which are needed to examine local and global issues existing in today’s society. Through this approach students can be given the opportunity to participate in learning experiences which encourage reason and logical thought to integrate separate bodies of knowledge, question current theories, challenge social realities and create unique hypotheses to solve the limitations, restraints and down falls of the human race. These skills are critical in the development of the *whole* individual and to the students’ successful integration into society, equipping them with the knowledge of social reality and the ability to discuss the issues which exist within it, in hopes to create a better future. The purpose of education should encompass the skills, knowledge and attitudes which enable the individual to interact and engage with the world around them and how can an individual who possess no knowledge of the current state of our society function in it?

Another important consideration to education is taken from the *facilitator* approach from Fenstermacher and Solitis. This approach emphasizes the importance of the educator’s awareness of student diversity within the classroom. Each individual student has a unique needs, background and life experience which pre-disposes them to a specific way of learning. The awareness of these differences can play a large role in addressing issues of
multiculturalism and developing self-awareness within the classroom. Educational philosopher Jane Martin also spoke of the need for awareness in education, however she spoke of an awareness surrounding gender. Although males and females co-exist interdependently, we fail to educate our students in a way that appreciates and respects this simple fact. Males and females play different societal roles, adopt different “traits” and are thought to learn differently, therefore it is critical for teachers to be aware of how they educate male and female students. Educators must be aware, recognize, appreciate and positively highlight these differences, in an aim to develop a gender sensitive education. An education which acknowledges gender differences and educates students by integrating the accomplishments, failures and social evolution of males and females intertwined together and not in isolation. This is an education which is aware of the co-existence of males and females and attempts to educate students in a way which breaks down gender barriers and stereotypes. Thus, my philosophy of education expands further to encompass the importance of education in generating a sense of awareness and appreciation of the diversity amongst students and for educators to teach in a way which is inclusive, accommodating, respectful and individualized towards each student’s needs.
Education: A Dynamic Entity Shaped by Demographics, Budgets and Technology

Education—considered to be one of the top most concern of individuals living in Canada today (Noorani, May 2009). The education of future leaders of tomorrow can change our future, educated individuals can make positive social and global change, if equipped with the right set of skills, knowledge and attitudes. Thus, this seemingly simple task of educating students becomes complex and responsible for shaping the future of our society. Such a daunting task makes it inevitable that the education system and its educators should receive such widespread attention, whether it be positive or negative at all times. The public education system has and will continue to be subject to much debate, criticism and scrutiny. The process of educating the future leaders of tomorrow is a large and daunting task. This is a complex task which is frequently under a microscope, as perspectives, theories and meanings of what it means to be an educated individual is continually evolving. As meanings and pedagogies evolve, so does the structure and framework of public education which, directly impacts the role of the teacher within this process of educating students. The public education system is a dynamic entity which fluctuates, grows and evolves over time, shaped by societal pressures, opinions and changes. This further complicates the vital role of the educator in the convoluted task of educating students. The teacher has to become dynamic and flexible, adapting to these changes in the public education system, in addition to teaching a pre-mandated curriculum, fostering relationships, implementing meaningful learning opportunities, collaborating with colleagues, integrating new pedagogies and most importantly, incorporating the right teaching strategies and techniques which will enable each individual student to reach his or her fullest potential. In
order to survive, a teacher must be knowledgeable about the dynamics, politics and issues concerning the public education system as these are the driving forces that shape and define the role of the teacher within the classroom. There are many influential factors which impact the public education system however, three seem to be the most prominent in shaping today’s education: societal demographics, government funding and technology advancements. The changing landscape of today’s society and the populations of individuals which inhabit it is largely influencing the diversity of our classrooms and how we teach our students. The public education system receives certain monetary funding depending on certain district demographics and compositions which directly impacts the type of programming, specialised teachers and quality of facilities in which the educators teach and students learn. Lastly, the recent generation of students have increasing dependence on online technologies for alternate forms of learning and has created a need and demand for integrating digital medias and other technologies into the classroom. This has powerful influences on the teaching practices, classroom environments, assessment and evaluations employed by teachers, in addition to ultimately shaping the structuring of the curriculum, learning objectives and the entire public education system.

Societal demographics are changing dramatically as recent immigration numbers into a variety of Canadians major urban cities has increased influencing the student diversity of today’s classrooms. Presently, there are millions of people from over 200 cultural and ethnic backgrounds residing in Canadian provinces, cities and communities (Noorani, May 2009). This enhanced diversification of our society changes the composition of student populations within the classroom. Students have varying backgrounds, needs, experiences and learning styles which are exemplified by this increase in immigration. Students from different cultural backgrounds have different needs, strengths and parents with alternate ideals of what it means to be educated. This requires special programming, teaching assistants and communication strategies to introduce these students and their parents to the norms, expectations and structure of Canada’s public educational system. Programming needs to be in place in schools, especially
those situated in urban cities to educate parents on Canadian education, empower students to stand up to bullying against students of different cultural backgrounds and enhance the literacy skills of students with English as a second language. It has been shown through current research that 60% of immigrants have literacy skills below level 3—which is a suitable minimum standard for coping with the demands of everyday life (Anderson, June 2009). Further compounding this lack of literacy skills is the fact that the language spoken at home for many of these students, is not English. In fact 20% of students within the public education system do not speak English at home (Taylor, June 2009). This places a need for ESL programs and teachers to encourage and develop the literacy skills of these students by integrating learning activities and content which highlight these skills. This shows a progressive need for public education to accommodate the needs of these students by hiring more specialized language teachers, restructuring classroom environments to emphasize the use and development of literacy skills and a teacher generated awareness of individual student needs and experiences, in order to create optimal learning environments.

Research has also shown other key findings which provide us with further insight to the diversity amongst students today. Individuals who have been in Canada for less than ten years consider jobs then education to be “top-of-mind” issues in comparison to those born or residing for more than 10 years in Canada, who consider healthcare and then, education to be “top-of-mind” issues (Noorani, May 2009). Another key fact is that immigrants have been predicted to account for 100% of the labour force market growth by 2011, and two thirds of immigrants plan to get further education or training (Noorani, May 2009). Immigrants are making largely influential impacts to our society’s growth and development making it essential that immigrant children receive the best possible education to enable them to become fully integrated into society with the knowledge and skills to initiate positive social change.

It can be seen through rising immigration rates that today’s students are a diverse group requiring specialized attention and programming to meet their needs. This diversity within the
classroom also places a heightened emphasis on the teacher’s awareness of the students because in order to modify and develop appropriate learning opportunities for each student, the teacher needs to have an understanding of the student’s strengths, weaknesses, personal experiences, interests and background. A diverse classroom also calls upon the need for the teacher to incorporate this diversity into all aspects of instruction including an acknowledgement and accommodation of these individual differences and fostering student understanding and respect for this diversity.

Another dominant influential factor driving change in the public education system is government funding for school districts. Currently, public education is fighting with public healthcare for government funding as education receives 41% and healthcare receives 43% of the provincial budgetary spending (Aaron, May 2009). The B.C provincial government spends approximately $5,178.5 million on education with 93% of that going to public schools (Aaron, May 2009). Within that monetary component, a certain dollar value is allocated to each school district depending on a variety of specific characteristics which comprise each school district, its programming, its student composition and surrounding physical environment. Differences between school differences vary in magnitude and quality so it is not a surprise why some districts receive more funding than others. For example, budgets can be found to range from 6.1 to 533 million dollars (Aaron, May 2009). However, the amount of money that a school district receives will inevitable determine the quality and quantity of programming offered, staffing, specialized educational assistants and in essence, the ability to meet provincial and district objectives.

In addition to the average educational concerns of each school district in the system, Ministry of Education and the provincial government impart strong goals on the public education system which include a multitude of programs to be implemented including K-12 literacy plans, early learning programs (StrongStart BC, Early Learning Agency), adult education, community outreach and healthy living strategies. Each of these programs require staffing, facility
supervision, training and development which leads to needing adequate funding for successful implementation. This requires a strict budgeting system to be in place with identified priorities for specialized programming, staffing and facility concerns. Each district is able to manage their own budgetary spending and so, inconsistencies can arise amongst districts as each is so vastly different and thus will establish different priorities to receive maximal funding. In essence, the amount of money each district receives from the provincial government has the power to drive and shape the programs or goals considered to be a top priority for that district.

A closer look at how the government determines the monetary value of funding per district will evidently show just how much the district environment can shape the educational landscape. District funding is largely determined by six broad-based areas: student enrolment, unique student populations, salary differentials, transportation and housing accommodations, geographical factors and funding protection (Aaron, May 2009). District differences range over a wide spectrum however, one of the largest funding determinant is classroom diversity and composition which is connected to immigration rates. Those major urban cities (Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver) which receive higher immigration numbers have school districts consisting of higher populations of students with English as a second language and thus, can receive additional funding from the government. The demographics of the students within a particular district can advocate for more funding to go to that district in order to meet the unique needs of these student populations. Urban city districts tend to receive higher numbers of student immigrants and therefore, would receive more money for specialized programs to meet their needs than rural counterparts. District enrolment numbers of Aboriginal students and students with special needs also affects the budgetary allocations, emphasizing student diversity in districts determined the amount of funding which is received (Aaron, May 2009). District funding is defined by the students and staff who comprise it and therefore, any slight fluctuations within this sensitive balance can mean drastic alterations to program funding, teaching resources and the quality of education in which students receive. For example, the
Saanich school district experienced a decline in enrolment during the 2008-2009 school year which led to a funding reduction of $0.97 million and the area of the budget which received the largest reductions was ‘instructional services’ with a 26.83% reduction (Saanich School District, 2009). This means fewer jobs which leads to larger class sizes, reduced maintenance on buildings, less transportation services, less support for students with special needs, less non-enrolling support including counselling, library support and career programs and ultimately, a reduction in the quality of education for the students in this district (Saanich School District, 2009). Here we can see the huge impact that government funding has on the public education system and the key role that immigration rates and diversity can play in contributing to this impact.

The final driving factor influencing today’s educational system is the dramatic advancement of technology and its impact on how, what and where we learn. Technology has been slowly integrated into the public education system with the *Technology in British Columbia Public Schools: Report and Action Plan* in 1995 which ensured that all students will have access to information technology tools and skills, stressed computer literacy development and stated that teachers will receive proper training to help integrate such technologies and skills into the classroom (Ministry of Education, 1999). Although this plan received limited reviews and little further direction or evaluation it still imposed the initial drive for integrating newer technologies into the structure of the public education system. Since this integration in 1995, social and technical environments are continually changing at a rapid rate as digital, virtual and physical worlds collide forcing educators to restructure classroom environments, curricular content and teaching practices with these new tools for learning. Parents have begun to demand for further integration of these technological tools and skill development into their children’s education. Three quarters of British Columbians (76%) consider the Internet to have a large impact on education and how we learn (Ministry of Education, 1999). Research of modern day learners have shown that learners today are more dependent on online technologies for their learning.
experiences and can engage in multiple ways of knowing (Ministry of Education, 1999). Online and distance education courses have exploded into the education system with increasing enrolment numbers as students register for courses in which they can learn right from the comfort of their own computer. Not only have these courses arisen due to meet the needs of a variety of students, but these online courses are employed to solve difficult timetabling and staffing problems within school districts. These programs have a large impact on the educational system as they require every school facility to offer equal access to these types of technologies for every students, which requires financial support from the government and could possibly take money away from other programs in funding restructuring. They require proper teacher training on how to use, implement and incorporate these into their daily teaching practices.

Although the integration of various learning technologies is appealing for many students and some teachers, it also places a fiscal strain on district budgets assigned by the government, connecting these two education influencing factors. The number one problem with these electronic opportunities is inadequate funding (Ministry of Education, 1999). The funding for these technological learning opportunities and programs such as learnware projects comes from Ministry of Education, which must in turn is supported through provincial government. It was also evident through personal practicum experience that the integration of new technological tools, learning opportunities and online experiences is not overly welcomed from the perspective of practicing classroom teachers. It requires time to learn and practice how to operate the tools, collaboration and brainstorming on effective implementation strategies and the development of new assessment and evaluation methods in order to determine its success. Teachers are already seem to be already overwhelmed with present workloads, as new objectives are striving to be met (literacy, standardized testing, curriculum coverage)there does not seem to be enough time, willingness or desire to integrate these new technologies even though the benefits are evident in student learning. These online courses and learning
opportunities are able to meet students “where they are,” they are able to accommodate certain learning needs and they place the student in direct control of their own learning, however it begs two questions: Where does this place the role of the teacher? How will the integration of these technological advancements shape the future of the public education system?

It can be seen that societal demographics, government funding and technological advancements have and will continue to impact the public education system in big ways. Through this analysis it can also be seen how each of these driving factors can influence each other, as it simultaneously impacts the educational system. For example, the societal demographics of a district determine the amount of funding that is received and the amount of funding in turn determines the ability of the district to provide access to online and digital technologies. This creates an ongoing cycle with these main influential factors feeding into one another, impacting the educational system at a student, school, district and provincial level. It is important for educators to be aware of these driving forces, as they have the distinct ability to shape and change the learning environments of the public education system in dramatic ways.

It is the teacher who has to then adapt and evolve along with this dynamic entity which is the public education system. The public education system is a public which exists to educate the public and meet its needs, therefore it is not surprising that the public, in turn has the power and ability to shape its framework, direction and purpose.

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