Technology and Secondary English Education

by

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Abstract

U.B.C. as well as many secondary schools in Vancouver have invested in the potential of technology. Research reveals, however, that even when there is sufficient access, far too many English teachers are not effectively using technology as a learning &/ or teaching resource. Perhaps this is because they are not equipped with the necessary skills to effectively use technology in the classroom. This three month study explores how three English teachers at an urban secondary school in Vancouver are presently experiencing the use of technology in their classrooms. Qualitative methods were used to generate, analyze and report data. Data collection included formal and informal discussions, interviews, extensive field notes and the observation of classes. This study discloses the factors which have most significantly facilitated and inhibited the implementation of technology in these teachers' teaching contexts. This research also provides an account of these teachers' perspectives of how the B.Ed. program at U.B.C. can equip pre-service teachers for the challenges and potential of integrating technology into secondary English classrooms.

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The End of a Journey...

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, Maria and Kimon Vratulis, who are two of the most extraordinary people I know. Thank-you for always filling my world with endless treasured memories. Your support, guidance and humor have made the completion of this thesis possible.

Thank-you with all my heart

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Thank-you to the staff and students involved in this study. Your time, energy and good humor made my time at your school unforgettable.

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I would also like to thank John Willinsky for taking the time to sit on my committee at the final stage of my thesis.

Chapter One:

I begin the journey of this narrative inquiry in a place as a child in my grade 5 classroom. My teacher, appropriately called Ms. Grey, asked me to rise from my seat and recite a poem from the previous day. I was unable to remember the words despite the fact that I had rehearsed them so may times before; I chose to pass. This pass earned me a detention for the first two weeks of school. I was in grade 5.

The most powerful lessons I have learned have been taught to me through story. Stories I have shared; stories I have heard and stories I have lived. The echo of my father's voice still rings in my ears as I remember tales we were told growing up. (My favorite tale involved an animated kangaroo who discovers his purpose through the trials and tribulations of life.) Over the years, I have exchanged stories with my family, friends, colleagues and students in order to relive experiences, elicit clarity, reflect, instruct, entertain or just connect with others. Since first communication, narratives have been used to help define who we are and from where we have emerged. Narratives have also played an integral role in shaping what the future may hold. Nowadays life is no different. Stories told and heard by children and adults are a necessary means by which to explore and learn from everyday life.

Beginning this thesis I found myself overwhelmed by how to best convey what I wished to express. I spent extensive periods of time deliberating about where my voice and the voices of my participants would fit into the grand scheme of this narrative inquiry. My intent was to tell the story of three high school English teachers; my focus was to explore how their past and present experiences have influenced their vision of using technology within their teaching contexts. Yet each of the participating teachers was so much more than just their past and present; they were all the moments in between. Their lives were not clearly composed of identifiable stages to be mapped out on a linear scale; who they were was in a constant state of flux as they were emerging from an ever changing context. They continued to redefine who they are, constantly moving back and forth between past and present even as I conducted my research at their school. It is during one of these many moments that I will attempt to

arrest time, and provide a still caption of who these teachers are as well as from where they have emerged.

I digress into a metaphor of emerging technology...

Over the past 50 years there has been a revolution in our midst. It has inundated our lives and proliferated so quickly, so quietly, that the beginnings of its invasion were hardly even noticed. Now in our wisdom we can identify the stages of its emergence: T.V., videos, computers... Yet when did these devices become the subject of such debate? Some believe that somewhere between then and now these emerging technologies took over; they stole the lives of our students, seeped into our educational context and became prominent catalysts for educational reform. All of this, in less than half a century.

I use the metaphor of a revolution because I believe it appropriately epitomizes how many teachers feel. Emerging technologies are soldiers and teachers are being attacked and accused; their territory taken over; their voices becoming lost within the process and confusion of change. What these teachers don't realize, however, is that these soldiers come in peace. Furthermore, they are not soldiers at all, but puppets who have come to have their strings passed over to any who are willing to try. As educators and researchers, it is now up to us to jump forth and boldly take hold of the strings.

Within this unraveling narrative...

It has been my experience that a subtle tension exists between English teachers and technology; perhaps this emerging anxiety is because English teachers are being asked to change, but little guidance is being given as to why, how, when, where, or even into what (Blanchard, 1999). As a senior and junior English teacher of several years, I too have found myself caught between this tension of whether or not to use technology. When I first began teaching I defined myself through my loyalty to pen and

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paper. I somehow felt that technology was divorced from the kind of teaching/ learning I valued in the classroom. Computers and I also had a questionable past which discouraged me from making more substantial efforts to incorporate technology into my classroom practice.

My metamorphosis began once I started to listen to students' suggestions that technology be encouraged as an optional resource. Feeling entirely out of my element, I tentatively allowed my students to take me on a journey which significantly changed my perception of the place of technology in schools. Over the course of the year I was enlightened with an array of possibilities which technology could provide. I could hardly believe such devices were at my disposal from the beginning. As a teacher, I have always valued creative ways of teaching & learning. Thus, I became reflective of why I had always been so resistant to using technology in my classroom. I decided to pursue my thesis as an exploration of what might impact teachers' visions of the place of technology in schools.

From conversations with other teachers as well as my observations, it seems that far too many English teachers are neglecting to reflect upon why and how they use technology in the classroom. The rigor and questioning which have traditionally gone into the selection and application of their resources has desperately been lacking when it comes to technology. This is not because these teachers have become indifferent to their choice of resources or to their use of class time. Instead, I believe it is because a knee-jerk reaction has begun. Teachers are responding to an inundation of subtle messages in schools and the district to appear modern, up to date and techno-literate. The assumption is that technology will miraculously improve teaching and increase student motivation. What is oftentimes overlooked, however, is that the potential of technology is entirely dependent upon the teacher knowing how to use it effectively (Clifford & Friesen, 2001; Gunderson & Anderson, 1999; Liang & Johnson, 1999).

Many English teachers with whom I have worked, have admitted to using technology simply because of the possibility that it might motivate their students. Students spend endless hours before computer screens E-mailing each other, talking in chat rooms, using I.C.Q., surfing the Net or just playing video games. Teachers may

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feel inclined to use technology because it is a tool students already enjoy. Technology has become a part of adolescent culture and identity; students are entertained and feel comfortable with technology which is probably why they have embraced it in so many areas of their lives. Yet is that enough of a reason to use technology as a primary & / or secondary resource in the classroom? Teachers who use technology merely because it is entertaining and comfortable for students are, in my opinion, not using technology to the best of its potential. Their motives, at best, are questionable.

The conundrum begins: how are teachers supposed to effectively use a resource with·which they have minimal or no experience? English teachers' experiences are primarily with books, pen and paper. In 1987, the B.C. Ministry of Education Advisory Committee on Education Technology mandated that "computer technology should be integrated into all areas of the curriculum at all grade levels" (Gunderson & Anderson, 1999, p. 6). Therefore, English teachers had to start making an effort to incorporate technology into their teaching practice. The expectation is still that an effort be made. Yet minimal guidance is being provided for teachers in how to use technology in relevant and significant ways (Gunderson & Anderson, 1999; Hartschuh, 1999). Training must be provided so that English teachers can benefit from the potential of technology without jeopardizing the standard which has traditionally been a part of their classes. The appropriate support is also necessary in order to translate what is learned about using technology into actual teaching practice. After all, technology may be the reality of the modern day classroom, but how it is used has still been left primarily up to us.

A Brief Overview

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to capture the narrative voice of the three participating teachers in order to explore how their past experiences have impacted their vision of the place of technology in schools.

Rationale:

During the past few years teachers have been confronted with the challenging task of incorporating the use of technology into classroom practice. Schools are inundated with computers; yet the absence of appropriate instruction for developing the skills of teachers to use technology continues (Kallick & Wilson, 2001; Provenzo, Brett, and McCloskey, 1999). Dewey (1934), Giroux (1988) and Fullan (2001) propose that translating innovation into practice requires a committed belief by teachers that change is necessary and possible. Research also suggests that using technology involves adopting a "constructivist view of
learning" (Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999) which may involve change for many teachers.
Those who teach according to traditional methods may find the transition of adopting a student-centered model particularly difficult. Bruner (1986, 1990) and Dewey (1934) propose that all successful transition involves basing the root of change in past experience. This is why Forcier (1999) believes that teachers must develop a "working knowledge" of technology before attempting to incorporate technology into their classroom practice.

Research Questions:

1) How do three secondary English teachers tell the story of their professional growth?

2) How do these teachers currently use technology in their classrooms?

3) How do these teachers translate their beliefs and perspectives of using technology into classroom practice?

4) Where have these teachers heard about and obtained their most useful resources?

5) How do these teachers believe using technology might influence classroom culture?

6) From these teachers' perspectives, how can pre-service teachers be introduced to using technology?

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Brief Overview:

This thesis is divided into five chapters as follows: chapter one is composed of my introduction which includes 6 questions which have guided my research. Chapter two is my review of the literature; in this section I explore constructivist teaching as a model of teaching embraced by the three participating teachers. This chapter also provides a brief summary of how technology might be impacting education; particular attention is given to the effect of technology on secondary English teaching contexts. The chapter ends with my introduction to narrative as a form of inquiry within an educational context. Chapter three is the methodology chapter; the focus of this chapter is to explore my reasons for choosing narrative as a form of inquiry, as well as the processes of data collection and analysis used. Chapter four is composed of the narrative voice of each of the teachers as well as my interpretation of what is being expressed. Chapter five brings us to the end of the journey;
this chapter is spent exploring my impressions of how to begin answering the initial six questions introduced in chapter one. A final moment of reflection has been added which brings forth other questions, observations and considerations which have remained with me throughout this journey.

Chapter Two:

> *Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is a collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in this same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling the stories of the experiences that make up people's lives, both individual and social. Simply stated, as we wrote in the Prologue: narrative inquiry is stories lived and told.*
>
> (Clandinin, & Connelly, 2000, p. 20)

Explored in this chapter is the theoretical framework for the teaching methodology of the three participating teachers. From observations, discussions, their accounts and the interviews conducted at the school, I am convinced that their philosophy of teaching falls within a constructivist frame. Providing an overview of the constructivist model will help highlight the decision making process which drives these teachers' classes. The dilemma of technology integration into secondary school classrooms is also explored; particular attention is given to how technology might influence secondary English teaching / learning contexts. Also addressed in this thesis is the structure of narrative as a means of inquiry for educational research. My rationale for using narrative for this particular study as well as how narrative data was analyzed and constructed are all outlined in chapter three. This review of the literature provides a theoretical framework in which my thesis will be placed.

The necessity for this narrative inquiry stems from the following reality: there are relatively few narratives which have been written by English teachers exploring the possibilities of technology. There is actually limited literature available which specifically deals with the use and integration of technology into secondary English classrooms. This gap in the literature necessitates that this narrative be continued by other secondary English teachers who are concerned with the direction and impact technology may be having on their daily teaching pedagogy and their students' learning.

Constructivist Model:

My focus on constructivist teaching at the beginning of this chapter stems from my

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belief that the participating teachers serve as an example of the constructivist model as defined by many researchers (Gagnon Jr., & Collay, 2001; Henderson, 1996; Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999; Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lamber, Gardner, Szabo, 2002; Marlowe & Page, 1998). Exploring what is characteristic of this model will help elucidate how constructivist teaching has enabled these participants to use technology without compromising the standard of teaching / learning already in place in their classrooms.

Constructivist teaching encourages students to learn in social environments where discussion, reflection, engagement and critical thinking are the goal (Henderson, 1996). An underlying principle of constructivism is that learning is an active process; students cannot just be the passive recipients of knowledge because learning will only emerge from what they have actively experienced. Therefore constructivists assume that constructing knowledge is contingent upon meaningful and relevant activity (Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999). Some teachers may equate how much their students are learning with the amount of information their students are able to recall; the constructivist model would suggest, however, that this is not learning in the sense of meaning making; it is learning void of context and will soon be forgotten. Consider the difference between citing a statistic about how many teenagers have died from lung cancer this year and taking students to a clinic where young people struggle with lung cancer. I am sure that the experiences and interactions students would have at the clinic would have a far greater impact on them than being told a statistic. At the clinic there would be increased potential for active, relevant inquiry. Another example might be how we learn to conduct ourselves socially. We do not memorize rules and laws from a hardcopy book. We negotiate "personal and socially accepted meanings" (Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999, preface) by interacting with others in our environment. Blanchard, 1999; Bruce, 1999; Hendersen, 1996; Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999; Maddux, Johnson, & Willis, 2001; Papert, 1993; Roblyer, 2003 would suggest that a similar philosophy must be applied to education when integrating technology into classroom practice. A constructivist model is encouraged because it creates the appropriate conditions for using technology in relevant ways. The challenge, however, is that a constructivist approach divorces

classroom teaching from a more traditional model where learning is teacher-directed. The constructivist teacher, in contrast to a traditional model, plays the role of facilitator (Henderson, 1996). "The teacher must help facilitate students' emerging understandings - not promote his or her own" (Henderson, 1996, p. 9). Thus, if technology is used, it must be a tool students learn *with* not *from* (Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999).

The label of constructivism is relatively new in regards to how it might apply to educational technology. However, Jonassen, Peck & Wilson (1999) draw from Vygotsky in suggesting that constructivism has always been a part of our lives. We construct meaning by interacting with the world around us. Since the time we are born we desperately try to create meaning in a world which initially makes very little sense. Bruner (1990) refers to this process as "meaning making." Previous experiences guide us into interpreting and appropriately reacting to what is new; according to Bruner, this is the most natural way to learn. Each of us approaches new phenomena from a different perspective; a perspective which has developed from an infinite number of personal experiences (Bruner, 1990).

Consider a two year old child who discovers hot water for the first time. Just moments earlier their association with water may have been that of play. However, if hot water spills on their hand, their perception of their surroundings and themselves changes. They realize (know) that some water is hot; hot water hurts and they are not invincible. Although this example is based on the primal learning of a young child, constructivist learning assumes a similar pattern. We learn from discovering and experiencing in relevant and meaningful ways. Constructivism is a "way of understanding the learning phenomenon" and learning is about "meaningful, intentional activity" (Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999, preface). What we know is contingent upon what we have learned and what we have learned is guided by our experiences. Therefore, schools must provide environments and circumstances which cater to meaningful experience if the intent is that students learn (Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999; Marlowe & Page, 1998).

The context of a situation is also what creates the potential for "meaning making" (Bruner, 1990). When a new phenomenon is encountered, we begin to construct knowledge; not only do we internalize and process information about the phenomenon,

but we internalize and process information about the phenomenon's context. This processing of context is what creates our unique perspective of the experience (Brown, Collins, and Duguid 1989; Lave and Wenger 1991). Without an understanding of context, we would not make appropriate sense of the new phenomenon. Let us consider the following scenario: a student walks up to another student in class and says, "meet you after school." A teacher who hears the comment will need to process and reflect upon what was said. (This is an immediate part of the comprehension process.) In order to determine how to act appropriately, they will rely on their understanding of the context. A teacher who knows the two students are friends might not be concerned. If the two students have a history of violence, concerns may be raised; understanding the context is what elucidates meaning.

> *Constructivist environments engage learners in knowledge construction through collaborative activities that embed learning in a meaningful context and through reflection on what has been learned through reflection with others.*

(Jonassen et al, 1995, p.13)

We rely on socially negotiating the meanings of new phenomena in order to establish a relatively uniform way of understanding our surroundings. Creating 'shared meanings' is what allows us to communicate effectively (Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999). However, people still hold personal understandings and perceptions of 'shared meanings.' For instance, two people may both be able to identify a school according to its form and function, but the connotations of school for each individual may differ significantly. We may also read about others' lives in a narrative text, and agree upon main events and circumstances. However, what we learn from reading the text will be subject to our own interpretation.

In order for meaning making to begin, there must be a reason for inquiry. Students will become engaged in tasks if they are intrinsically motivated to learn. This motivation must stem from genuine interest; there must be a quest, question or dilemma which the student feels motivated to solve; something which peaks the students' curiosity (Duffy and Cunningham, 1996; Kohn, 1999; Maturana and Varela, 1992). Students who

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view their beliefs and perspectives as integral to the lesson are far more inclined to engage in the process of meaning making (Gagnon & Collay, 2001; Marlowe & Page, 1998).

According to Schon (1987), students will internalize what they have learned if reflection and representation are encouraged. This representation does not have to be written; it may be visual or oral. This process develops authentic & usable knowledge in students; authentic learning has not taken place if what was learned cannot be applied to new circumstances and / or situations (Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999; Pea, 1986). Jonassen, Peck & Wilson (1999) also delineate constructivism as meaning making which is shared with others; for instance, conversation is an opportunity for meaning making. Sharing ideas is an ideal occasion for learning because by nature people are social creatures and learn most naturally through interaction. Thus, students who are given ample opportunity to learn in collaborative, interactive and social environments are far more inclined to engage in the learning process (Duffy and Cunningham 1996; Jonassen, Peck & Wilson,1999).

A common criticism of constructivist methods is that the value of meaning making rests solely in the process of creating meaning. However, Savery and Duffy (1995) would purport that merely constructing knowledge is not enough; the viability of knowledge is how the validity of meaning making is determined. Jonassen, Peck & Wilson (1999) also suggest that constructivist teaching involves meaning making which is intentional, continuous and conducive to conscious reflection. Thus, only when technology is used in a way which promotes critical and creative thinking does it serve as a valuable device from which students can construct knowledge and continue to learn.

Technology:

Far too many teachers use technology as a quick fix (Riedl, 1995; Roblyer, 2003) instead of as a resource which can legitimately facilitate their students' learning. Teachers feel a subtle pressure to use technology, yet may not be investing the time or energy into reflecting upon how to use technology most effectively (Riedl, 1995; McCallister,

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2002). Riedl 1995; Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999 and Roblyer, 2003 suggest that technology does not necessarily improve education. The tool is no more or less effective than the teacher in the classroom (Liang & Johnson, 1999). If teachers are using technology to replace their classroom teaching, there is a problem. In order for the "technological revolution" to move in a direction which facilitates student learning, traditional approaches to teaching need to be reconsidered. For instance, technology should no longer be used just for traditional drill exercises in the classroom (Clifford & Friesen, 2001). Clifford & Friesen (2001) delineate how, far too often, technology is still being used in schools:

> Computer labs become just like most other classrooms. Rows of machines, often facing the teacher in the front of the room... Teachers thought about applications and software in the same way they thought about worksheets, textbooks, tests and course delivery.... It is difficult for most of us to understand that while computers can be used to do old and familiar things at the speed of light, they shouldn't be used that way... Expertise and confidence gathered around relatively few people in schools. (The onsite "techie" or a district specialist). On the one hand technology was dismissed as trivial. Playing games... On the other hand, technology was offered as a new savior... Teachers became increasingly out of touch with how their students actually use computers in their lives outside of school... In short, it has become very difficult for most of us to see what is in front of us, and to decide what to do with it."

> (Clifford & Friesen, 2001, p. 33-34)

Technology is not meant to replace teachers, but to engage students in critical and creative ways of thinking (Blanchard, 1999; Jonassen, Peck & Wilson,1999). This is why in order to effectively incorporate technology into classroom practice, some teachers may find that a fundamental change in teaching methodology is necessary. Yet change will not occur if "teachers concerned with literacy instruction and achievement just slink around the edges of these new ideas and practices, uncertain of their roles" (Blanchard, 1999, p. 2). Teachers must learn how to dive in, get wet and have faith that they will not drown. They must become well versed in how to use technology in ways which facilitate autonomous learning; yet the necessary conditions must be in place in order for such changes to occur. For instance, embracing a constructivist model as described above provides the appropriate conditions for effectively incorporating technology into the

classroom (Jonassen, Peck and Wilson, 1999). "Technology fosters and supports a constructivist approach to learning when used as a tool in the process of meaning making and supportive inquiry" (Merkley, Schmidt, & Allen, 2001, pp. 221). After all, it is not the resource but how the resource is used which impacts student / teacher learning (Blachard, 1999; Barrell, 2001; Riedl, 1995;).

Technology in the form of computers is now a reality in most secondary schools in B.C. (Gunderson & Anderson, 1999). In 1987, the Ministry of Education Advisory Committee on Education Technology decided that technology be "integrated into all grade levels" (Gunderson & Anderson, 1999, p. 6).

> *The B.C. Government and the Ministry of Education are committed to sustaining the use of technology to support the needs of students for modern and relevant learning tools in our public schools. This means providing new equipment, links to services such as the Internet, and the training and support needed to utilize technology most effectively.The government of British Columbia is confident that our public school system will deliver the technology and skills that students need to succeed in the information economy.*

(Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1995, p. 14)

This illustrates how teachers are being encouraged to use technology as a teaching / learning resource. The reality which has developed, however, is not necessarily one of effective use (Ely & Plomp, 1996; Hill & Ford, 2000; Tchudi, 2000). Teachers need to refocus on what they hope to accomplish in the classroom and consider how technology might help achieve that goal. After all, the choice to use technology should not stem merely from the fact that it is there. Technology should not be driving the curriculum or the choices we make in our classrooms (Owen, 2001). For instance, English teachers should still be focused on literature and written composition. "Unless you make sure that each technology-based project has specific reading, writing, or critical thinking and analysis content, technology, even though it is "fun," is a waste of your students' time" (Bjorklund, 2000).

Barrell (2001) might suggest that the problem stems from teachers not being adequately trained in how to use technology. Incorporating technology into routine teaching pedagogy has been ignored by many teachers because of the frustrations,

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time and energy presently regarded as inherent to using technology as a primary and/ or secondary resource (Barrell, 2001). For instance, "teachers & students must have access to the technology to be able to determine its potential" (Gunderson & Anderson, 1991, p. 2).

Many teachers are also hesitant to use technology because they believe it divorces students from learning in an interactive and social environment. Blanchard (1999) notes that these fears are not necessarily unfounded. In 1998, Sleek found that Internet use increased isolation amongst students. This is a huge concern for teachers as many teachers envision students' time at school as necessary because of the possibilities for them to interact with their peers. However, others such as Doherty & Mayer (2003) believe that interacting with students through E-mail contributes to "positive and productive student-teacher relationships" (Doherty & Mayer, 2003, p. 592). Perhaps it depends on how, why and when technology is being used.

As Willinsky suggests in the foreword to *Technology, Teaching & Learning* (2001), "the principal issue in integrating technology into the classroom may well be perspective" (Willinsky, 2001, p. 13). In order for any sort of integration process to be successful, part of what needs to be reshaped is teachers' attitudes towards technology. Teachers must be motivated to learn about technology, but they must also be genuinely interested in integrating technology into their teaching pedagogy. From my experience it seems that the teachers who are resistant to using technology are rarely the ones who are aware of the potential of technology. It has certainly been my experience that teachers who already have a working knowledge of technology are far more inclined to embrace educational technology than teachers who still consider technology to be a foreign entity. Perhaps this is because those who have experience using technology feel competent using technology in their classroom. Research suggests that this notion of personal competence does actually impact the amount of energy teachers are willing to invest in learning about technology (Eisele & Eisele, 1990). If teachers view themselves as competent they are far more inclined to invest time and energy into overcoming obstacles which will inevitably emerge from using technology. As technology becomes familiar, the use of technology as an educational

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resource becomes easier and less intimidating. Thus, it will inevitably be used more often. Or at the very least, with less stress.

English Teachers and Technology:

Relatively minimal research has been conducted regarding the use of technology in secondary English classrooms. While efforts have been made to reveal the potential & / or limitations of certain types of software &/ or hardware (Eisele & Eisele, 1990; Ely & Plomp, 1996), not enough research has focused on how the introduction of technology might reshape our present teaching contexts. For instance, how does technology influence literacy, impact student achievement, classroom culture & / or dynamics? What changes are necessary at the classroom, school and district level if English teachers are going to effectively use technology? What does it mean to "effectively" use technology? How does using technology impact student / teacher relations? Are we entirely convinced that using technology is more effective than traditional resources? Why? Far too few of these questions have been answered considering the blind faith with which many of us have accepted the emergence of technology into our schools.

Traditionally, the English classroom has been a place where literacy is encouraged and taught. Literacy, however, is not just the ability to read and write. For some such as Tchudi (2000) "literacy" has become synonymous with "competence;" those who are literate are able to communicate in the literacy's of their society. Tchudi refers to Paolo Freire in, *Education for Critical Consciousness*, by stating the following:

> *Seeing one's world clearly and understanding it well enough to shape one's concepts into words... Literacy, at best, involves a way of encountering life, life that is rich in language, empowered by language, empowered in language.*

(Tchudi, 2000, p. 36).

While developing literacy in students has always been a challenging endeavor, the introduction of technology into schools has created even more issues for consideration. In his article "Whither the Book," David Reinking (1999) explores how emerging technologies have presented a challenge to our traditional vision of how to define

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literacy. He draws from the works of Bolter (1991), Landow (1992), and Lanham (1993) when he states that "the printed book as a concept and as an artifact has for centuries been not only an icon of literacy but an icon for our literate culture" (Reinking, 1999, p.101). Thus, literacy is not an issue which only concerns students and teachers. It involves everyone as well as our most sacred values and beliefs.

In the English classroom, books are the way in which literacy has always been taught. "As an artifact, the book is the material representation of the passions and emotions shared by those who care deeply about how literacy can transform and enrich human experience" (Reinking, 1999, p. 101). With the introduction of technology, however, the very foundation of our classrooms is being questioned. The possibility that literacy is no longer just about books may be difficult for many English teachers to accept. However, they must move forward and at least become part of the discussion on how technology might be creating new literacy's in the classroom. Otherwise they risk becoming subject to the decisions of others who are not professionally immersed in the field of literacy education.

Technology has also impacted the long tradition of how students read and "construct meaning" from texts (Patterson, 2000, p. 74). The tradition of learning to read from books is no longer the case for many students. They may have been introduced to books growing up, but their primary means of entertainment (& escape) has been techno-texts. (Techno-texts are referring to any text students read on a computer screen). This is difficult to accept for those of us who were raised with books; we have developed a sentimental attachment to the experience of curling up in an armchair with a great mystery novel or magazine. It is only natural that some students might prefer reading electronic texts than books; electronic texts are the modern day 'book' with which many students have been raised. Thus, English teachers should continue to teach students traditional ways of constructing knowledge from texts, but they should also invite and encourage new conventions of reading and writing in the classroom (Patterson, 2000).

In 1996, the Standards for the English Language Arts (National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association) stated that "technological

communications in the broad definition of *text*" had become part of the standard of "language and processing skills that all students should be able to apply as a result of ongoing K-12 instruction" (Merkley, Schmidt & Allen, 2001, p. 220). Part of the initiative to introduce technology into the Language Arts curriculum is actively guide English teachers into considering technology more seriously as a potential resource. English teachers are not being dictated to regarding how or when to use technology, but it is mandated that they at least make the effort and try.

Merkley, Schmidt & Allen (2001) purport that such initiatives are well founded because technology does play an integral role in student learning. However, the authors of this article also draw from others (Behrmann, 1988; Collins, 1991; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000; Sheingold & Hadley, 1990) in suggesting that English teachers must use technology in ways which promote active learning, student inquiry, interpretation and prolonged student engagement. In this sense technology should not be jeopardizing but enhancing learning standards which are already valued and promoted in schools. In the article "To What Extent Should English Teachers Embrace Technology," Lara Hill states "too many English teachers are just not aware of the ways in which computers and technology can improve our ability to teach" (Hill & Ford, 2000, p. 22). A lack of awareness about the potential of technology as well as how to use technology in ways which promote high standards and critical thinking is making if difficult for English teachers to make informed choices about how or even if to use technology.

For some English teachers, the possibilities of technology may seem daunting because effectively using technology does not cater to teacher-directed lessons and learning. "You are no longer the sole dispenser of knowledge" (Bjorklund, 2000, p.42). As has already been noted earlier on in this thesis, to use technology in ways which facilitate student learning involves stepping away from traditional models of teaching. For secondary English teachers, the case is no different. Owen (2001) and Marr (2000) acknowledge that students learn most effectively when they are actively involved in the learning process; this means that they need to be making choices and decisions about their learning. Students need to become self-directed learners "focusing on individually and socially constructed meaning" (Merkley, Schmidt & Allen, 2001, p. 220). Thus,

English teachers should not avoid using technology just because of a reluctance to adjust their teaching methodology. Nor should they force the use of technology into their traditional teaching practices. Perhaps an appropriate medium would be for English teachers to only use technology when it is the most appropriate resource to meet their students' needs (Bjorklund, 2000).

In November's edition (2000) of the *English Journal*, "Technology & the English Classroom," Virginia Monseau draws attention to the techno-gap between English teachers and their students. Students have been brought up in a world of technology. Unlike many of their teachers, "they approach these inventions fearlessly, confident that they can master their use and eager to conquer the challenges they present" (Monseau, 2000, p. 15). From the perspective of an English teacher, this is the nature of engagement and comfort we have been trying to inspire in students for years. Perhaps this is where the crux of the problem begins. For as long as punlic education has existed, English teachers have been the assumed experts in literacy. Now with emerging technologies, their domain is being shaken. Emerging techno-literacies are far more a part of their students' culture than our own. A change in the apparent "control" of literacy has begun, and this may cause tension and discomfort.

However, as Virginia Monseau (2000) illustrates there is much more at stake than just the issue of staying in control. Consider the following quote taken from her article, "From the Editor," "well meaning people are wiring grants and using state funds to bring technology into our schools, but what are we going to do with it once it gets there?" (Monseau, 2000, p. 15) There is a developing imbalance between the blind acceptance that technology is the answer to problems in our schools, and our ability to test and reflect upon the most appropriate ways to use technology in the classroom. In his article, "The Technophobe Seeks Common Denominators," Tchudi (2000) stresses the importance that English teachers play a role in guiding the place and role of technology in schools. English teachers have acquired knowledge over the years which can help us make informed and reflective decisions about how to best incorporate technology (and emerging literacy's) into secondary English classrooms. Tchudi explains:

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I also believe that English language arts teachers are in a particularly high vantage point to comment on these issues and to suggest directions for the teaching profession... As quaint and old fashioned as it might sound, it's your neighborhood English teacher, the person whose title conjures up images of dying media like " books," who is in the best position to create smart and educated users of the media.

(Tchudi, 2000, p. 33)

Regardless of the integration of technology, the interactions students and teachers should be having with texts (old or new) have remained the same (Tchudi, 2000). Teachers are concerned with how students will respond to the content of the texts they have read, what in the text/ medium has guided that response, and where the text / rhetorical artifact fits into "our" culture (Tchudi, 2000, p. 31). Therefore, despite the introduction of technology into our classrooms, our job as English teachers has remained relatively the same. Our task is still to promote thinking as defined by "perceiving, analyzing and reflection, framing ideas into words. The new media may change the technology, but they do not change the mission" (Tchudi, 2000, p. 36).

Merkley, Schmidt & Allen (2001) emphasize how technology can have a positive impact on student learning in secondary English classrooms. However, time must be allotted during class so that students can be guided into using technology in ways which support "critical thinking and reasoning" (Merkley, Schmidt & Allen, 2001, p. 221). English teachers can take time constructing assignments which cater to "validating the work and the individual by allowing for more choice and catering to unique interests in a way that does not compromise the curriculum" (Richards, 2000, p. 40). Perhaps over time students will start applying what they learn about using technology at school to their use of technology at home. Students can work on assignments in groups or on their own with the teacher serving as a guide. This will hopefully encourage students to become more autonomous in their learning (Richards, 2000). Perhaps over time students will start applying what they learn about using technology at school to their use of technology at home. Once this standard of working with technology is in place it will become an ideal tool for interaction; students can publish their work online, receive feedback from their peers or teacher regarding written assignments; class chat rooms can even be developed so that students can share their work and/ or discuss ideas. Technology

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becomes the medium for interaction, communication and reflective thinking (Bruce, 1999; Jonassen, Peck & Wilson, 1999; Papert, 1993).

Another consideration which Virginia Monseau points out is that for most English teachers, learning and teaching new forms of literacy is a lot of work. The case becomes especially poignant when we consider how long English teachers have taught without the assistance of technology. Substantial changes in what & how they teach is going to involve more work in an already taxing agenda. This is why more research in the specific context of English teaching / learning is necessary; English teachers have a right to know how incorporating technology into their teaching pedagogy will benefit their teaching and their students' learning. Otherwise, why would they change tried and true methods of teaching which have worked for so long?

Consideration must also be given to the fact that technology is unpredictable and time consuming; for many English teachers technology has become synonymous with "a waste of class time"; each lesson becomes a game of Russian Roulette; there is usually only a "fifty-fifty chance" that the technology you prepared "so painstakingly prior to class" will actually work (Tchudi, 2000, p. 30). For many English teachers, these are not acceptable odds. As Bjorklund (2000) points out, time is also an issue because English teachers need to prepare themselves to use new equipment, check out software &/ or explore potential sites on the Internet. Even designing new lesson plans in ways which can use the best of what is new without compromising what has worked in the past takes time, both in and out of the classroom (Bjorklund, 2000). Yet the awareness presides amongst English teachers that our job is not just to teach students the difference between a subordinate clause and a dangling modifier. Students must become literate in the world in which they live, and that world is largely driven by technology. "Computers and technology permeate our culture" at every turn, and in failing to prepare students for that culture, we are guilty of "malpractice" (Tenore, 1999, p. 27).

In "To What Extent Should English Teachers Embrace Technology" (2000), Lara Hill, a beginning teacher at Rancocas Valley Regional High School, outlines why secondary English teachers should consider incorporating technology into their teaching

context. Her opinion is that technology provides an ideal opportunity for students to tap into their creative outlet. Through sound recording programs, image manipulation and paint and draw programs, language arts students can explore the potential of their creativity by expressing their ideas in a form other than just the printed word. She also believes that computers shy away from "linear modes of thinking" (Hill & Ford, 2000, p. 22). Technology does not bound students to the linear format of a traditional essay; students can develop, support and organize their ideas on paper while attaching to their essay links or sound clips composed of dialogue from interviews. Such additions add "greater clarity" and "complexity" (Hill & Ford, 2000, p. 22) to the research they are conducting. After all, technology in an English classroom should not mean forsaking traditional goals of reading and writing. What must be considered is how traditional goals might be broadened and enhanced through the use of technology (Dreher, 2000, p. 69).

Research suggests that technology may help motivate students because it so easily allows for lessons to be adapted to students' interests and needs. "It is true that students learn better when they enjoy what they are doing" (Richards, 2000, p. 39). Part of students' comfort with technology (especially E-mail) is that it allows them to write in a 'dialect' they have created; they are the experts in this "highly social" language (Blase, 2000, p. 27 & 47); it is exciting for them to use written expression with which they are already familiar, especially in an English classroom which has traditionally been based on more formal means of written expression.

> *We wanted them to value the energy and voice inherent in E-mail, but we also wanted them to work toward building a community, to come together for a shared purpose, and to respect the boundaries and possibilities of intellectual pursuit... We wanted them to be themselves, but we wanted them to blend their social talk with school talk... E-mail offered something we hadn't quite anticipated - personality... This "space" had indeed become a living classroom.*

(Blase, 2000, p. 49)

Evaluating students who are working at different levels also becomes easier because technology caters to kinds of assessment which evaluate both higher-order

(multitasking) and lower-order (knowledge and comprehension) thinking skills. Access to endless sources of information through the Internet is advantageous to an English class because of the potential for time efficient exploratory research. Yet the potential of E-mail, real-time chat, messaging, discussion boards and list-serves to connect students to other people and their ideas may be the true selling point for English teachers (Richards, 2000) . Encouraging students to use E-mail & threaded discussions in an English classroom is an ideal way of introducing &/ or extending discussions which could not take place in class; students can learn from each other by discussing and connecting with others from around the world (Richards, 2000). In such a scenario, the potential for learning moves beyond the confines of the classroom and into students' everyday life.

As with all uses of technology, however, there must be guidelines; e-mail, chat rooms, list serves and the Internet must be used in "rigorous and engaging" ways (Blase, 2000, p. 47). Technology is also not meant to replace one-on-one interaction; these technologies are merely meant as an extension to what couldn't take place in the classroom. "E-mail and threaded discussions (should be used) as a conduit rather than an impediment to conversation... In each case e-mail and threaded discussions are employed as tools to enrich and extend the time spent in class discussions" (Richards, 2000, p. 39). Support networks amongst students should also be encouraged; students can provide feedback to each other on assignments, revisions or projects. Being able to send essays or assignments to friends, tutors, or teachers at a moment's notice is also an advantage to students and teachers (Sipe, 2000). Finally, administrative tasks such as grading and keeping parents informed can be done far more quickly and efficiently through the use of technology (Hill & Ford, 2000).

Some veteran teachers have legitimate concerns about the changes technology tends to inspire. While some such teachers are "luddites," others are techno-literate but still hesitant about the use of technology in secondary English classrooms. In this same article entitled "To What Extent Should English Teachers Embrace Technology", Kim Ford, a veteran teacher at Cypress Junior High School responds to Hill's advocacy for technology in the classroom. Her concerns begin with Hill's notion of creativity and advanced thinking.

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It seems to me that clip art is replacing student art. Where students once created art, they now find and clip and copy and print... Is manipulation (of images)the same thing as imagination? Are we reaching outside of the box, or are we simply providing a different box?

(Hill & Ford, 2000, p. 24)

Ford is drawing the distinction between using what exists in a different way and actually creating something new. Creativity and imagination must emerge from within the student as a unique form of expression. Manipulating images on a screen does not cater to this process. Students are limited by the 'art' or 'images' which already exist; in other words, there is only room for movement, not dance.

In terms of advanced thinking skills, Ford's experience has also been that students spend inordinate amounts of time exploring how technology actually works. Her middle schoolers spend endless hours with word art, yet minimal time on the word portion of the program. Bright colors and aesthetically pleasing words become the focus, not the meaning of the words being used or their purpose. "I worry that we will have a lot of brightly colored dullness if word art is more important than the art of words" (Hill & Ford, 2000, p. 25). Tchudi (2000) would agree that teachers need to become well versed in how to use technology in ways which promote new and exciting ways of thinking. As English teachers we should not just be duplicating "the content of old media in the new form" (Tchudi, 2000, p. 32). Using technology to simply create more quickly what we once created by hand is an absolute waste of what technology is able to do. "It becomes clear to me that this man is doing the right thing with technology: He's using it to accomplish something original, something that could or would never be done without it. So score one for technology" (Tchudi, 2000, p. 31).

Some teachers believe that technology is by no means the key to motivating students about literature and writing (Hill & Ford, 2000; McCallister, 2002). "Simply because we don't use computers doesn't mean we can't bring literature and writing to life... Good teachers have always augmented the textbook and classroom learning, and they've done it in interesting and creative ways" (Hill & Ford, 2000, p. 25). Teachers who make efforts to find text materials which are of interest and relevance to students will be just as able to engage students in the learning process as teachers who use

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technology. Assuming that students are going to be more motivated by technology than books is misleading because so much depends on how and why either resource is being used. Ford also cautions that students who enjoy working with technology are not necessarily becoming more engaged with learning; perhaps they are only interested in the resource. Yet, the focus should not be the resource but the content or skills for which that resource was intended. In response to Hill's claim that technology is ideal for authentic assessment, Ford purports that there must always be a balance. Regardless of the tool, assessment takes time when it is done properly; there will also always be a need for different types of assessment, such as essays, short quizzes, oral presentations and journals. At best technology is a from of assessment which might be used some of the time. In short, technology should do no more than provide "another tool" (Hill & Ford, 2000, p. 25).

While it is certainly true that technology has made infinite amounts of "stuff" more accessible, this alone does not convince Ford that technology is the answer to successful learning in the classroom. More information does not ensure that students know how to discern what information is valuable; students must be taught how to evaluate and properly use the resources they find on the Net. English teachers have always encouraged students to be critical of what they read and hear, to discern which texts are valuable, legitimate, and worthy of including in assignments such as a research paper. Now with the Net, English teachers have been provided with an ideal opportunity to reacquaint students with the basics. "Helping students learn to navigate and evaluate the staggering amount of information on the Web may actually prove a blessing for English teachers" (Gardner, Benham Newell, 1999, p. 40). Students must be guided in how to evaluate what they find on the Net; the Web also opens up ideal opportunities to talk about author/ reader relationships, the accuracy of information found in written texts, the objectivity of how texts are written and the currency (of the information) and coverage of certain texts; students can explore a wide variety of sources in order to determine which are most credible and why (Gardner, Benham & Newell,1999). As with everything else, the solution seems to rest in maintaining a balance; for instance, in regards to the traditional paper, students should be encouraged to "balance the number and type of

resources - electronic and hard copy - in our (their) assignment" (Gardner, Benham, Newell,1999 p. 42) .

The downside to the speed and accessibility of so much information on the Net is that plagiarism has become a serious issue in secondary English classrooms. Students can easily access essays online; they can cut and paste others' ideas together in a heartbeat. Yet if measures are taken and students learn how to appropriately use what they find on the Net, perhaps concerns of plagiarism will no longer be an issue.

Ford does identify herself as a proponent of E-mail. However, she also cautions us with the dangers inherent to encouraging students to use E-mail and chat rooms when they can never be certain with whom they are communicating. Finally, Ford echoes the voice of Hill in acknowledging the benefit of technology for administrative tasks such as grading and keeping parents informed.

English teachers should consider the possibilities of technology in the classroom; however they must be cautious and resist becoming subject to the pendulum swing; embracing technology does not mean forgetting why and what English teachers are supposed to teach; the focus needs to remain on literacy, language and learning; teachers must brace themselves and not be too easily seduced by the "bells and whistles" of technology. Caution, reflection and rigor must go into our decisions when determining how and if to use technology. Only then do we increase our chances of using technology effectively in secondary English classrooms. Conscious steps need to be taken by English teachers to insure that appropriate learning goals are being established even while students are pursuing their own "paths of inquiry" (Owen, 2001, p. 112).

Student Teachers:

The use of technology has already become a reality in most secondary school classrooms in B.C. Therefore student teachers must be guided in how to use technology effectively if they are to become informed and successful teachers (Merkley, Schmidt, Allen, 2001). In English classrooms such training is especially pertinent

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because of the focus on language and literacy. Computers provide endless opportunities to access information on any topic imaginable. Managing to effectively surf Web waters while discerning which sites are of value is a daunting task which requires specific skills which must be learned. Sipe (2000) suggests that targeting teacher training programs will ensure that student teachers are appropriately trained and able to guide students through a similar process.

Technology must become a more prominent part of student teachers' introduction to teaching. Pre-service programs, however, often underestimate the amount of funding, time and energy needed to appropriately prepare student teachers to use technology effectively (Sipe, 2000). Technology cannot just be presented as an optional tool with minimal guidance in how to use that tool. Roblyer & Erlanger (1998) draw together key threads in the literature which suggest that the following are necessary for an effective teacher training program: hands-on training where the focus is on integrating technology into student teachers' specific subject area. Training over time, modeling (Handler, 1992; Wetzel, 1993), mentoring and coaching programs (Benson, 1997) and encouraging pre-service teachers to learn by interacting and sharing with their colleagues (Oliver, 1994) would all be pertinent to the success of the program. Post-training assistance would also ensure that student teachers have been provided with ample opportunity to practice what they have learned.

The problem, however, does not just preside in teacher training programs. Vast amounts of money, time and energy are being spent in districts to provide opportunities for teachers to learn how to use technology (Ely & Plomp. 1996). Yet the Pro-D days and workshop opportunities provided are far from adequate (Riedl, 1995; Melmed, 1996). These opportunities to learn more about the potential of technology rarely provide an approach to technology which is transferable to classroom practice (Ely & Plomp, 1996); this renders the Pro-D days and workshops of minimal use to teachers (Melmed, 1996) who are making efforts to learn about the potential of technology. Teachers need support in their schools for when they try to translate what they have learned into classroom practice. Long-term feedback from people who are already well versed in how to use technology in specific content areas is also necessary. For

instance, English teachers could work with other teachers &/ or researchers who were already well versed in how to effectively use technology within the context of an English class. Otherwise the struggle of translating what is learned into actual classroom practice might become so daunting that teachers no longer make an effort (Darling-Hammond 1993; Joyce & Showers, 1988).

Narrative:

Human beings tell and listen to stories. We use narrative to communicate and understand people and events. We think and dream in narrative. Narrative has been described as a basic mode of thought and as a way of organizing knowledge.

(Conle, 2000, p. 50)

Teachers &/ or researchers cannot use narratives to produce clear cut solutions; nor can teachers use narrative texts to present their experiences as absolute truths about teaching or education. They can, however, retell their past and present experiences and encourage interpretation, reflection and discussion. Carter (1993) cautions that narrative cannot be manipulated into something it is not; narrative is not intended to create sweeping generalizations derived from cases observed; the subjective nature of narrative and the possibility of "multiple realities" (Bruner, 1990) has raised concerns for some researchers (Denzin & Lincoln,1994; Fenstermaicher, 1994; Phillips, 1994); I believe that such critics misunderstand the nature and purpose of narrative. Those immersed in the field of narrative inquiry understand that the possibility of multiple perspectives does not render qualitative research as fictional; all it does is account for the complexity of the human condition. The capacity of narrative to elucidate multiple meanings of the written word make it ideal for educational research: an image, a visual, a motion picture created through the use of language, allowing the narrative to cater to the needs of the reader (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994; Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997; Ochs & Capps, 2001).

In any given narrative what is learned will depend on how the text is interpreted by the reader. Each reader will approach the narrative from a different place of knowing. In the case of the narratives composed in this thesis, the following is true: personal

experiences as well as the experiences of the participating teachers will be interpreted and reinterpreted and meanings will be constructed and reconstructed. This interactive engagement with the text is where the meaning of each narrative will emerge. This meaning will be reflective of the personal context and experiences of the reader (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; 2000).

Stories are the way we communicate and interact with the world; stories help shape our identity and are a part of our everyday life (Bruner, 1996, p. xiv) and dreams (Conle, 2000). Children and adults use narrative as a way of understanding new phenomena. A person's ability to communicate with others and to react appropriately to new situations depends on their capacity to bring forth lived narratives (Mandler, 1984). These lived narratives are how we make sense of new experiences (Mandler, 1984; Bruner, 1986; 1987; 1990). Narrative is nothing less than a "basic mode of thought" and a way of "organizing knowledge" (Bruner, 1986).

> *I believe that the ways of telling and the ways of conceptualizing that go with them become so habitual that they finally become recipes for structuring experience itself, for laying down routes into memory, for not only guiding the life narrative up to the present, but directing it into the future. I have argued that life as lived is inseparable from life as told - or more bluntly, a life is not "how it was" but how it is interpreted and reinterpreted, told and retold...*
>
> (Bruner, 1987, p. 31)

Schank (1986) would suggest that our personal experiences are understood and expressed in narrative form. Story is a means of conversation and meaning making amongst people (Schank, 1986). When in the midst of something new we rely on stories we already know, stories about previous experiences in similar situations. Recalling already existing stories helps guide the decisions we make as we try and understand the new phenomena. This is why learning something new within an already existing context tends to allow for learning which is easier and more meaningful. Consider again the way in which children learn; children are told stories in order to learn the basic values and concepts necessary for their social and moral survival. Stories told cater to the child's perspective and context, otherwise children would not understand the meaning of the story. Telling stories in context is how we learn in life, and Schank (1986)

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suggests it is how we should learn in school.

Bruner purports that there is something essentially "universal" in the dynamic of narrative. "The self-told life narrative is, by all accounts, ancient and universal. People everywhere can tell you some intelligible account of their lives" (Bruner, 1987, p. 16). Bruner claims that narrative is the only effective means of studying experience because experience is composed of narrative; not using narrative to explore experience defies the nature of experience. To further this thought, life is an accumulation of infinite numbers of experiences; each experience is composed of endless moments; each moment an emerging narrative just waiting to be shared. Therefore, the only way to represent and explore life (as defined by experience) is through narrative. "We seem to have no other way of describing 'lived time' save in the form of a narrative" (Bruner, 1987, p. 12). Clandinin and Connelly (1994) draw from Dewey's philosophy that "the study of education is the study of life" (Dewey, 1934, p. xxiv). "In effect, stories are the closest we can come to experience as we and others tell of our experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1994, p.415). The meaning of narrative lies embedded within the connection of stories as well as what is implied just beyond the written word. The contextual nature of narrative is what allows it to so naturally capture human experience (Bruner, 1990; Clandinin & Connelly, 1994).

Narrative was once just considered a rhetorical device. Although powerful, minimal thought was given to how narratives could be used as a 'transformative power' in education. As "the boundaries" of quantitative research became clear, a growing need for research which captured social, situational and cultural aspects of life emerged (Bruner, 1986, 1987, 1990; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 2000). A need to capture "contextual detail" as a representation of meaning became a focus of qualitative research (Fenstermaicher, 1994).

Many believe that human behavior (in context) is not explorable through quantitative research (Gregon & Gregon, 1986; Singer & Salovey, 1993). Once equated primarily with storytelling, Elbaz (1983); Carter (1993); Connelly and Clandinin (2000) redefined narrative as a means of exploring and better understanding our educational landscape (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000). Bruner (1990) placed significant emphasis on narrative as

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the means through which human behavior could be explored; narrative allowed for interpretation and experience in context.

This narrative inquiry has most significantly been influenced by the works of Clandinin & Connelly (1994, 2000). In their text, *Narrative Inquiry,* they purport the importance of conducting research in a way which is able to capture human experience in action; research involving human experience must include narrative because experience is most appropriately defined through narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). "Experiences are the stories people live. People live stories, and in the telling of them reaffirm them, modify them, and create new ones" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 415). This is why no "correct" interpretation to any story is permanent; stories are always subject to an individual's perception; they exist in a state of flux and change. "Stories reflect the human condition and the human condition is never stagnant... The main claim for the use of narrative in educational research is that humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2).

From where has Connelly & Clandinin's vision of narrative emerged? Much of their work with narrative is derived from the philosophy of Dewey (1934, 1938, 1961). Dewey believed that "there is an intimate and necessary relationship between the processes of actual experience and education" (Dewey, 1938, p. 7). This is not to presume, however, that all experiences are educative. "The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative... An experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience" (Dewey, 1934, p. 25). An educative experience is the type of experience which promotes further experience. It is this type of "educative experience" which needs to be promoted in schools in order for an improved education to emerge.

For Dewey, the only way to study education is by exploring the experiences of those who are already a part of the context of that education. After all "experience is education... (there is) an intimate and necessary relationship between the processes of actual experience and education" (Dewey 1938, p. 7). Clandinin & Connelly also acknowledge that "our imagination has been captured by the idea of studying

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experience rather than using experience as a contextual given for educational discourse. People compose stories about themselves, their past, others' or any situation because stories are the closest representation of the actual experience they had; ultimately telling and learning from these stories is one of the best ways to study and learn from our own and others' experiences" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 414). The telling of an experience is a momentary reliving of the time and place the experience occurred; however, the experience will not be as it was once lived. All that can be attained is a reinterpretation or a retelling of the experience. This retelling will allow us to relive the experience in a new way. Therefore, each experience remains subject to the perspectives of those writing, reading &/ or hearing the narrative; "experiential stories are an attempt to give voice to tacitly held personal knowledge" (Conle, 2000, p. 51).

Dewey emphasizes the importance of retelling and reevaluating experiences through the expression of story so that new perspectives might emerge and be considered. How we view the world is shaped by the experiences we have had as well as our perception of those experiences. Therefore we must be cautious to remain reflective of the type of experiences provided for our students. Connelly and Clandinin support Dewey's voice when they claim that "retelling" and "reevaluation" of stories is what allows for growth and change.

> *Experience in order to be educative must lead out into an expanding world of subject-matter, a subject-matter of facts or information of ideas . This condition is satisfied only as the educator views teaching and learning as a continuous process of reconstruction or experience. This condition in turn can be satisfied only as the educator has a look ahead, and views every present experience as a moving force in influencing what future experiences will be.*
> (Dewey 1938, p. 111)

> *Following Dewey, our principal interest in experience is the growth and transformation in the life stories we, our students, and research participants author. Therefore, difficult as it may be to tell a story, the more difficult but important task in narrative is the retelling of stories that allow for growth and change. We imagine, therefore, that in the construction of narratives of experience, there is a reflexive relationship between living a life story, telling a life story, retelling a life story and reliving a life story.*
> (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 418)

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Secondary English teachers' potential for change within an educational context rests in their ability to reflect upon the experiences of their past and how those experiences have impacted their growth as teachers. As teachers reconstruct stories of their past experiences, we as the reader may apply our own narratives of understanding in order to connect or disconnect our lives to theirs. It is this process of connection which will allow for the educative experience of reading this narrative text. Conle (2000) suggests that as stories are read and heard, personal and already lived narratives are being relived; this occurs from reading and hearing others' narratives. This process allows for growth and change, nothing less than an altered way of viewing schools, education, even the world in which we live.

Chapter Three

Brief Review:

The purpose of this study is to explore what a select group of high school English teachers think about teaching English through the use of technology. Fundamental to such an exploration will be to shed light upon what has impacted their teaching pedagogy most significantly over the years. What has helped them translate theories of using technology into teaching practice? What has been most influential in guiding this transition? From where did they hear about and obtain their most useful resources? How does such research necessitate the exploration of further educational research? This will be especially pertinent to researchers such as myself who aspire to elucidate the following conundrum: teachers need to develop a working knowledge of technology before it can be translated into teaching practice; yet they remain hesitant about using technology because it is not part of their professional or personal past. Dewey puts it best in emphasizing the importance of "believing in the unity of theory and practice" (Dewey, 1934).

Both Bruner (1986,1990) and Dewey (1934) propose that making such a transition possibly involves basing the root of necessary change in the "garden" of previous experience. Each new experience, however, must be of quality lest we rob ourselves and our students of the possibility of educative "growth" (Dewey, 1934). Research also suggests that using technology effectively involves adopting a "constructivist view of learning" (Jonassen, Peck and Wilson, 1999). Teachers who still teach according to a traditional model may find this transition particularly challenging. Change is never an easy process. Giroux (1988) suggests that if teachers are to venture towards the horizon of change certain conditions must be met: teachers must work within an "intellectual" rather than "technical" capacity (25). Much like Dewey and even Fullan (2001), Giroux also realizes that translating theory into practice requires a belief from teachers that change is possible and necessary.

Research Design
Methods:

Qualitative Research:

The intent of this study is to capture the spirit of the experiences of these three secondary English teachers. Qualitative research, as defined by Anderson (1987), is ideal for exploring experience because it is a "research paradigm which emphasizes inductive, interpretive methods applied to the everyday world which is seen as subjective and socially created" (384). Anderson's definition allows for the focus to remain on the iterative process of qualitative research, an essential component to exploring the experiences of others.

Experience cannot be measured on a linear scale or understood without attention to context. Objectively exploring experience is not possible because our understanding of any given experience is constantly reshaped through changing perspectives and the passing of time. Attempting to 'still' an experience for the purpose of measurement is to negate what an experience is: an event which is defined by the moments both before and after its occurrence as well as the lens through which the moment is observed. Reducing an experience to a measurable state strips it of its contextual nature and redefines it as nothing more than one of many in a series of events. This is why, in order to effectively explore experience, a qualitative approach must be used.

Understanding experience means elucidating how others may view that same experience but from their point of view. A method of doing this is to be placed as close to human experience as possible through qualitative research (Erickson, 1986; Spindler, 1982; Walsh, Tonin, & Graue, 1993; Wolcott, 1992). In order to increase the researcher's capacity to appreciate what is being observed, however, a degree of "verstehen" or "understanding" is necessary (Weber, 1949). Weber would suggest that quantitative research lacks the ability to capture " subject meaning" or "action in context" (p.18) leaving qualitative research as the only appropriate alternative.

Why Narrative Inquiry?

Within the spectrum of qualitative research I chose to write a narrative inquiry as

defined by Carter (1993) and Connelly and Clandinin (1990). Connelly and Clandinin support the possibilities of narrative to "capture personal and human dimensions that cannot be quantified into dry facts and numerical data" (p. 49). Narrative within this educational context is far more than just writing and/ or telling a traditional story meant only to convey information and/ or entertain; it is a "way of knowing" (Bruner, 1985) and an effective means of conducting research in the field (Carter,1993). In short, narrative as an approach to research is a means of capturing experience through language without reducing it to mere plot.

The advantage to using narrative as a framework for this inquiry is the necessity to create a text which is accessible to both veteran and novice teachers. Richart (2001) is one of many researchers who believes that narratives "speak the truth of teachers' lives" which makes them "compelling to an audience broader than the teachers who write them" (p.49). Educational narratives are contextual stories and stories placed "in context" are the means through which everyone has at some point learned and taught. Both children and adults use stories to construct personal meaning about the world in which they live; this is why narratives are so accessible and familiar to people of all ages. Teachers in particular use stories to reflect upon their teaching practice, share ideas and define their role within their school context (Carter, 1993).

The necessity to explore the experiences of these teachers through the process of a narrative inquiry also stems from the following belief: education is undergoing radical change and teachers need to become a part of that change. Teaching methodology, strategies, lessons, resources and even classroom culture are all being redefined by the gradual infiltration of technologies in schools. There is almost a silent panic amongst teachers that change is happening and they have not been given a voice. Teachers both for and against technology are wondering where this 'developing road' may lead and how they may become part of the paving process; narrative allows for this opportunity.

Change is in the midst, yet who is making conscious efforts to impact that change? Cuban (1992) would suggest that it is not just scholars who should be the source of change, but practitioners; teachers who are fully immersed in the teaching/ learning

process. Through narratives practitioners can provide their perspectives of what is already working and in need of improvement in schools. The stories and experiences of teachers need to be captured through language so that other teachers can live vicariously through these narratives and reflect upon their own teaching practice. It is this process of reflection which will inspire change and growth in veteran and novice teachers.

Selection of Participants and the School:

From February to April I conducted a narrative inquiry at an urban secondary school in Vancouver. The research conducted was based on the past and present teaching/learning experiences of three English teachers at the school. There are three key reasons why this school was chosen: there is a techno-literatre community of students and teachers already at the school; technology already exists as part of their school culture; there would be three student teachers working with the English department from January 27th to May 9th and the English teachers at this school have made a choice to use technology as a primary and/or secondary resource.

The English teachers selected were ideal because of the rapport they have with their students as well as the respect and reputation they have at their school for being excellent teachers. Each teacher is also unique in their level of computer literacy and their perspective on the place of technology within an educational context.

Overview of Procedures:

As of February I was at the school from 7:30 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. four days per week. This was necessary in order to become immersed within this school's culture and context. The extra time before and after school was to explore the geography of the school and to conduct interviews and discussion sessions. In March and April I was at the school from 7:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. three times per week. Staying longer for the three days during these two months was crucial as formal and informal data needed to be collected from teachers, student teachers, and students. This was not possible during the school day as time was spent observing classes and collecting field notes. Student and teacher informal and formal interviews, audio taped discussions and extensive field

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notes were all used to capture how these three teachers' past experiences had impacted their present day use of technology in the classroom. Taped interviews were also used to gather data from three student teachers experiencing their practicum during this time. Once the research was complete, observations and results were shared with all those involved in order to ask for written and/or oral feedback.

Process of Data Collection:

The primary source of data for this study comes from extensive field notes taken at the school. These field notes are composed of observations of classes, school events, department meetings, semi-structured interviews involving teachers, student-teachers, and the students at the school. The interviews are constructed from open-ended questions motivated by the need to allow those involved to explore areas of personal relevance (Seidman, 1991).

At the beginning of January, this researcher's weeks were spent writing extensive field notes and becoming familiar with each teacher's teaching context. Data was collected from a wide range of areas although more of a focus was given to instructional strategies, classroom management, primary and secondary resources, classroom culture, school culture, teacher and student as well as teacher and colleague relations. These initial categories were used as a framework to at least guide the process of data collection. Essential components to the teaching process are generally divided into these main categories which is also why these "loose" categories provide a logical base from which to start. Field notes were composed primarily of observations although journal entries, anecdotes, questions, personal notes, narratives, links to theory, and/ or reminders for the next day were also recorded.

Organizing Field Notes:

Daily observations were collected throughout the day and stored in a binder. This binder was divided into three key sections; one section per teacher. Each section was divided into the classes I was observing. Sections were clearly labeled and dated (month and date) in order to facilitate easy access later on. Each of the teachers was

assigned a letter: A, B or C, which was recorded on the top right hand corner of each page. This would help ensure that field notes were not misplaced when removed from the binder for future analysis. Each page within each teacher's section was also numbered as an extra measure to ensure that the data remained accessible later on.

Narrative as a Form of Data:

Throughout this research, student, student teacher and teacher narratives have been used as a source of data. For the purpose of this thesis I will only be focusing on choices I made in regards to the interviews with each teacher because that is the data which I have used for the analysis of my results. The ways in which the rest of the data from the interviews will be used is further explored in chapter five.

The first interview was intended to be a narrative interview as defined by Schutze (1977, 1983) and Riemann and Schutze (1987). The intent was to create a mini biography of each teacher in order to place them within a context that others could understand. Each teacher was asked to respond to a 'generative narrative question' (Riemann and Schutze, 1987, p. 353) about stages of development in their lives as teachers. They were encouraged to expound upon parts of their narration which delineated a moment of change or transformation.

Although each interview lasted from 2-3 hours, it was not possible for these teachers to elaborate upon each and every circumstance of their experience as teachers over the years. All narrative interviews are limited by "constraints of condensing and the constraint of detailing" (Flick,1995). Each narrative must eventually come to a close even though there are an infinite number of moments, circumstances, decisions, memories or details which have been momentarily bypassed in order to move the story along. This selective process of narrating is what allows the narration to remain comprehensive, manageable and accessible. The intent is merely to ensure that a beginning, middle and end have been constructed by the interviewer. As Hermanns (1991, p.183) explains:

> First the initial situation is outlined ("'how everything started"), then the events relevant to the narrative are selected from the whole host of experiences and presented as a coherent progression of events ("how things developed"), and finally the situation at the end of the development presented ("what became").

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A narrative interview seemed most appropriate for an introductory interview because the intent was not to create a list of facts or events about each teacher's life. Instead, exploring what impacted their decision to tell their life's journey a particular way was of interest. These teachers needed a venue where they could talk freely about their journeys and experiences, while remaining cognizant that their narratives were being used for an educational purpose.

Most narrative interviews require minimal contributions on behalf of the researcher; the interviewee's voice must be the primary voice. While the interviewee's voice is certainly the primary voice throughout this first interview, at times my voice also emerges in the form of discussion or answering questions with each of the teachers. As much as possible I wanted these teachers to feel comfortable to talk about their past educational experiences as stages in their lives, but it was integral to the success of the interviews that each teacher explore areas of relevance to them. Developing a comfort zone and a framework from which to build were also guides to how this initial interview was conducted. As a result, even though my intent was to conduct a narrative interview, there are parts of the interview which took on a more episodic tone. However, by the end of the interview these teacher's past experiences were framed within a general narrative which at times evolved like a plot from a text.

The second interview was intended to be an episodic interview (Flick, 1995). Unlike the first interview, an overarching question was not used. Instead a series of open-ended questions was provided which would encourage the interviewee to explore personal experiences in regards to specific questions. This could be done through mini-narratives or elaborate description; either way the experience or situation did not need to link back to the general narrative of the interviewee's life. Flick (1996) suggests that there are certain assumptions guiding an episodic interview. For instance, interviewees may view their past as a collection of "narrative episodes." Unlike in the narrative interview, their past is not constructed as a series of events which progress in a linear fashion, connected by contexts and circumstances. Instead their past is connected through concepts, not events, and it is the connection of these concepts which creates the narrative. In short, knowledge of the experience stems from better understanding

changing contexts within the narrative. For instance, the following questions were used as a starting point for the first interview: "Have there been stages that you can identify which have impacted your growth as a teacher?" "Could you recount an experience where you have used technology in the past few months?" "Could you tell me about your first encounter with technology?" The interviewee is being asked to explore particular experiences in response to specific questions.

This researcher's concern with using this form of interview is that the success of the interview depends on the interviewee's ability to draw from their past in order to divulge experiences in response to guiding questions. The three teachers were well suited to this type of interview because all three lead very rich lives and were comfortable retelling their experiences through narrative. This researcher also chose an episodic interview so as to "exploit the advantage" (Flick, p. 111) of both the narrative and the semi-structured interview. The narrative structure allowed for the interviewee to explore experiences in the form of mini-narratives rich in detail and context. (Even though the interviewee is not restricted by experiences which fit into the construct of a narrative. Routines, habit and perspective could also be explored.) The list of questions which is characteristic of the semi-structured interview caters to the interview being far less one-sided. The researcher can become involved in a dialogue with the interviewee during the interview and redirect the interview in order to continually address the predetermined areas of focus. In many respects, this allows for the retelling of experiences to be more accurate because the focus is the context of the experience and not the narrative structure. Using both a narrative interview and an episodic interview with semi-structured questions allows for more than one source of data collection. This is part of the process of triangulation; a measure of increasing the validity of qualitative results.

The decision to conduct narrative and episodic interviews (with semi-structured questions) stems from the purpose of the study. Both interviews develop from the personal perspective of the interviewee. Some may question the legitimacy of the interviews because interviewees may be retelling experiences in a way which more easily caters to a narrative form. Reflections, memories, or even the interviewee's self perception may cast a particular light upon the stories which are told. All that must be

considered is that "in the retrospective narrative of experiences, events in the life history (whether actions or natural phenomena) are reported on principle in the way they were experienced by the narrator as actor" (Schutze, 1976, p. 197). In short the value of narration is its ability to better capture experience in context, and experience when considered in retrospect is always about perception. Understanding the process and logic of these perceptions is what then leads to knowledge.

Data Analysis:

Field notes were coded each day. At the end of each week these notes were reread and re-coded as new ideas emerged. By the second month of data collection this researcher began to develop a numerical base in order to determine the frequency of recurring patterns. Patterns which came up most frequently became a separate category and were analyzed under closer scrutiny. At stages throughout the study, these categories and their numerical bases were re-coded and evaluated in order to clarify and validate the process of the developing results.

Data analysis was based on an inductive process. I began by observing, recording and constantly rereading the data which allowed for connections to be made between observations as they emerged. This continuous reading of the data developed a solid sense of what was already included and missing from field notes. Eventually, data needed to be broken down even further into "frames of analysis" (Tesch, 1990) which meant making decisions about what seemed most relevant keeping the purpose of the study in mind. As mentioned earlier, part of what continued to determine areas of significance was the frequency with which certain patterns emerged. The interviews conducted throughout the course of the study were also analyzed in a similar fashion. Initial categories and even the development of "frames analysis" in this study was not meant to dictate results; they were meant as a boundary in order to realistically and effectively create "domains" for future analysis.

Developing domains, as delineated by Spradley (1979) was the next step to my data analysis. "Any symbolic category that includes other categories is a domain" (p.100). Each category is then composed of a number of domains which could then be

even further analyzed. As the data collection and analysis developed, the need to continuously reread the data continued. As domains became more firmly established, I reread data in order to identify incidences which could negate the logic of my emerging domains. Incidences which did not accurately fit into existing domains were either entitled as a new domain, or used as a tool to refine existing domains. The intent at this point was to search for existing themes across domains in order to develop a heightened understanding of how the data being collected in the study was related.

Trustworthiness:

Palys (1997) and Miles (1984) would suggest that it is wise to ask for feedback throughout the course of the study in order to determine if the categories and themes being identified are true to the participants' experiences. This is another means of increasing the validity of results in qualitative research. Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman suggest that participants are usually the most legitimate experts on how representative results are of who they are and of their experiences. This is why informal feedback was provided while at the school as I clarified emerging themes and continually asked for teachers' opinions. In addition to this, I asked for both written and oral feedback after an initial draft was composed. This was necessary to ensure that this researcher does not misunderstand or forget about any suggestions or revisions participating teachers may have felt were necessary. Discussion with each of the teachers was also an important part of ensuring that I am aware of how to use their feedback to improve upon the accuracy of my results. Once corrections and adjustments were made, teachers were once again given the opportunity to provide both oral and written feedback. This feedback is necessary in order to ensure that experiences which have been integral to the growth of these teachers has not been neglected. Feedback from teachers will also allow me to identify additional factors which may have effected the final results. For instance, inaccurate assumptions about students in a particular class or issues of school or classroom context could affect results. In this respect, receiving feedback has helped increase the validity (as defined by Palys, 1997) of my research.

Triangulation:

Triangulation is a method used to enhance the validity and reliability of qualitative research. "(It) refers to the injunction to check pieces of information against at least one other independent source before regarding them as credible" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 7) This significantly increases the possibility that results are not just due to "chance or circumstance." Furthermore, putting such rigor into the process of data collection "enhances the accuracy of interpretation" (Denzin, 1978). Using triangulation is especially pertinent in narrative inquiry if the resulting narrative is not intended to be a fictional piece. "Loosely formed narratives" may be constructed, but the purpose would be different than the intent of this narrative. Providing an accurate caption of these teacher's perspectives and contexts is the focus. While they may be the authority of their experiences in the past, other forms and sources of data may help broaden these researchers' perspectives of who they are today.

For the three months that I was at the school, I collected data from a variety of sources. During the day extensive field notes were composed of daily observations, routines, classroom contexts, department and staff meetings as well as student/ teacher, student/peer and teacher/teacher relations. Not only were these field notes composed of endless hours of observing these teachers teach, but of anecdotes, notes on conversations I had with students, their teachers, other teachers on staff as well as administrators at the school. As much as possible was recorded during these three months, even in regards to the physical geography and positioning of computers and the library in the school. Therefore, these field notes were compiled from a variety of sources.

Data was also collected through two lengthy taped interviews with each participating teacher at the school. (Each interview lasted from 3-9 hours). Two different structures of interviews (narrative and episodic) were used to minimize the limitations of using just one approach. There was also a lot of data collected through field notes and interviews (students, student teachers and computer applications teachers) which has not been analyzed or used in this study. Although not officially a part of triangulation, it may be of value to note that this additional data (field notes and interviews) collected at the school

seems to support my observations and 'findings.'

In need of a voice:

Finding an appropriate voice for this narrative inquiry was a challenging task. Initially chapter four, the chapter which is supposed to capture the spirit of these teacher's experiences and their present day perspectives of technology, was written in an academic voice. Categories which had emerged from my analysis were each placed within a theoretical frame. From there, I attempted to manipulate each teacher's narrative into theoretical contexts. For instance, Hannah's classes were no longer about her teaching context or her personal growth. Instead, individual interactions and incidences were placed within constructivist theories by D. Jonassen, K. Peck & B. Wilson (1999). As I continued to write, theory took over and by the final draft each teacher's voice had become lost. I was left with a detached account of existing theories which emerged from the categories I had devised. In order to achieve this end the entire purpose of my analysis had been lost. Reading through the first forty pages of my initial draft, I realized that what I had written was diametrically opposed to what I had initially intended to create. This was not a narrative; the only voice which emerged from the pages was an academic voice of assumed academic authority. I was writing as though theory should dominate these teachers' narratives - a fundamental flaw.

My next attempt was to write from each teacher's perspective. I used our interviews to structure the narrative; the narratives held the spirit of each teacher's voice; I still used existing categories as a frame for the narrative, but the narrative was primarily composed of quotes. Eventually, everything was structured and the narratives were written. Again, there was something missing. Their voices were now void of context. The narrative left gaps which raised questions which had to be answered.

Once again I started to read and reread the categories and notes which had emerged from my data; another voice came. I stepped away from the united voices of these teachers and started to write about what I had seen, experienced, observed &/or heard about during my time of data collection. Still using the same categories as a frame, I attempted to capture the spirit of each teacher's perspective through narrative. I wrote a

story using the data I had collected from where these teachers begun to where they are today. Eventually, I had outlined their changing contexts and growth over time while remaining true to each teacher's unique perspective. Having completed another draft of chapter four, I was still not at ease. Once again, their voices had become absent. I read through the narrative composed of these three teachers' lives, but this time I heard my own voice echo back; there was a clear voice speaking throughout the narrative, but the voice was my own. This was not my intent. Although no longer starting from scratch, I struggled with finding a balance between when it was appropriate for my voice to intervene. I also didn't wish to merely link quotes into a narrative structure void of context; I realized that my voice must just be present for clarification, context and/or reflection. However the purpose was to have these teachers' voices dominate the narrative; finally in this last draft, I am satisfied that this is what I have done.

When the Master governs, the people
are hardly aware that he exists.
Next best is a leader who is loved.
Next, one who is feared.
The worst is one who is despised.

If you don't trust the people,
you make them untrustworthy.

The Master doesn't talk, he acts.
When his work is done,
the people say, "Amazing:
we did it, all by ourselves!"

- Lau-tzu, Tao Te Ching

Abby's growth as a teacher is defined more by times of transition than stages of growth. Capturing how time has impacted her teaching as opposed to categorizing her growth into isolated stages is my approach to writing this section. Exploring Abby's background, experience, methodology, approach to technology and impression of pre-service teachers will help shed light upon how conscious choice can impact daily pedagogy.

Anecdote # 1:

A: *I also had a grade 7 teacher. That was when I knew that I wanted to be a teacher. There was a cloakroom in grade 7 and she was Ms. Endrejat, she had very high standards, but she was also firm, fair and kind. She was very genuine. She was very British.*

She was my grade 7 teacher so she taught everything except I think Science and Math. She was an Art teacher so her room was in the Art room. We had a substitute teacher one day when she was ill. The substitute teacher came back to visit one day. We all thought she was really cool. So when the substitute left I ran down the hall to talk to her. When I came back I got a detention. She said, "No. That was not acceptable." It was actually inappropriate and you didn't want to disappoint people like Ms. Endrejat. So I kind of got that if you say you are going to give a kid a detention, you give it to them. Just because you like a kid doesn't mean that you don't hold them accountable.

Anyhow, I remember being in her cloakroom. I don't know how close this was to the other experience, but I remember it was like a rush of warm epiphany that I really liked school. It was really bizarre. (I thought) how can I stay here forever? I know, I can be a teacher and then I would never have to leave. I was just in the cloakroom

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hanging up my coat or getting something. I still know where that cloakroom... I could probably just walk in there. I just remember thinking, wow, this is what happiness feels like. There are very few of those moments but when you totally crystalize that happiness, that is what it felt like. I decided to be a teacher so I would never have to leave.

I loved that teacher so much. She was awesome.

V: *So you wanted to be that teacher?*

A: *Well, I was the type of kid who wouldn't leave a list for Santa Claus because if he knows if I was naughty or nice, he knows what I want. I was always thinking a little too far ahead of myself. I don't know if it was that I wanted to be her or if it was just that I wanted to be in a place that was that good. I guess through steps she made it that good. I have taught kids who had her in her last year or so of teaching before she retired and went to Queen Mary. In my first few years at (the school where I still teach) I taught the last students she taught and they just loved her too. They would always say things to me that she would say. "Ding a ling" or just quirky expressions that she would use in order to say, "O.K. that was kind of dense," but without actually putting you down. She was this real English type person but she wasn't stuffy English. She was an Art teacher. But she had very very high standards. You did NOT break stride in her class. And we all respected her to death. You were so lucky if you were in her class. I am sure that she has had an impact on me, otherwise I would not remember I was in the cloakroom.*

In some ways I think, oh god, I have been a teacher since I was 12.

This memory of Ms. Endrejat's class has served as a catalyst for how Abby shapes her present day teaching context. From this experience Abby learned that rules, routine, structure and discipline should not be compromised just because a teacher has a positive rapport with a student. Students must be held accountable, and they need to belong to a place which is "so good." This memory illustrates the impact a positive educational experiences can have on our youth.

Background:

Abby's learning curve when she first started teaching was remarkably steep. Her first job in the small town of Keremeos (1988) was to teach Literature 12, English 12 and Communications 12 in addition to Journalism 12 and Creative Writing 12. In these latter two the annual was taught. She taught these classes in the computer lab which had state of the art Mac equipment. After two years, she resigned her position in order to move

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back to Vancouver where she obtained a contract teaching theater and English at a secondary school where she is still presently teaching. Abby now teaches junior and senior English, has six preps, teaches two classes during the same block and has forty more students than ever before. Despite all of this she remains dedicated to her job and reflective of her teaching.

When Abby first arrived at the school where she now teaches, her relationship with her students was far more collegial. Students seemed to seek her counsel or help on personal matters. Abby felt she knew too much about her students' personal lives and found it difficult to disconnect and focus on her job. In order to prevent that from happening again, Abby now has firmly established boundaries and remains emotionally detached from the daily trauma of her students' lives. As a result she has become a better teacher. Her students are now much more clear as to what and how her role as their teacher is defined.

A: *There is a greater division now. When you first get into teaching you tend to become too friendly with the kids. This may be because when I first started I taught theater. So I actually became friends with some people who were not in my class. I was there for them in (the production of) plays. But there wasn't really a student / teacher relationship. I was only about 5 years older than them back then anyway. So there is now a much greater division between my role as teacher and mentor. I was also a counselor when I first started which probably made a difference. My first two years of teaching I was a counselor and an English teacher. Then I went to (this school) and started teaching theater and English. Now I am strictly English.*

Even if I were not their English teacher, I would no longer want that young teacher thing again. The line is much more clearly defined than when most teachers start teaching or if they are teaching extra curricular. They (students) would be in here after class spilling their guts out about their boyfriends and that is just not necessary. There is a much clearer delineation. I am the teacher and I don't want to become emotionally involved with them. That is unfortunate but we shuffle it along. I know all sorts of stuff about students now which years ago would have worried me, racked me, I would have been trying to step in and solve things. I have compartmentalized my function now and I think it makes me a better teacher.

This is not to suggest that Abby no longer cares about her students; she cares deeply but realizes that playing the role of their teacher best facilitates their learning and growth. After all, at some point Abby has experienced being every version of her students: at the point of barely passing, pleading for extra time to finish an assignment and

questioning a disappointing mark of 95%. Abby remembers her experiences as a student and remains understanding of her students' daily trials and tribulations. Although she is no longer involved in their personal lives, she is still notorious for being compassionate and kind. Despite her reputation for being a demanding teacher with high expectations, students know that Abby is flexible and understanding. All she asks is that they be honest, trustworthy and make a genuine effort to do their best in her class. Students for the most part adore Abby and thoroughly enjoy her quirky sense of humor and persistent metaphors; they also respect her tremendously. They know that Abby is fair and will be honest with them about their work. In an interview with one of Abby's senior students, the following was mentioned: "She never lets you hand in anything but the best. I am normally an A student and didn't work that hard on the last assignment. She gave me 83%, a B. Her comment was that she knew I could do better. That's a great teacher. Needless to say, that's the last time I slacked off." Abby is a gymnast walking a delicate tight rope where being firm and maintaining high standards is constantly in balance with her flexibility and understanding. The rapport Abby has with her students renders her class an enjoyable place to be. Students are energized, enthused and partake in animated discussion because they are genuinely content and feel fortunate to have her as a teacher.

Anecdote # 2:

A: *There was this one time when Ms. Macintosh was away and we had to do an assignment in Lit. We handed the assignment in and it was marked by an outside marker. It came back and I had done poorly. It just was not how I would normally do. We were standing in the classroom where Irene now teaches. We were standing there and she said she wanted to talk to me. Everyone else had left. She said, "Well you know what, it just doesn't seem like you so I will tell you what, let's just pretend it never happened. I am just not going to count it. It's gone. Don't worry about it. Just work hard for the rest of the term." I just had this overpowering urge to hug her. It was like she was my Mom. I just thought, how incredibly kind.*

Throughout all of my teaching it has stuck with me. I am sure it meant nothing to her. It was probably just one less thing to mark. No big deal. Maybe it was just a homework check, or wasn't worth any marks at all. But for me, I mean this was back in during a time when you did not challenge your teachers. If your teacher said you were a failing grade, then you said, "I'm a failing grade." And she just, well anyway, I just decided at that moment that it was really important to be kind.

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This kindness, care and compassion shown by her Literature 12 teacher has remained with Abby after all these years. This memory has shaped many of the interactions she presently has with her students. Abby believes that being kind sets an example for students about how to be morally correct. School is not just about provincial exams, writing and reading; school is about learning how to treat others and being fair and tolerant in the classroom and in daily life.

A: *I was thinking about the whole kindness thing. I think part of it too has to do with being morally correct because my parents insisted on that. I would never treat somebody as I would not wish to be treated. That is not to say that I don't have my moments. I mean the other day after I had this conversation with a student which was pretty intense. I went into the library because I had a book to return. There was a girl out there who was being a real (doorknob). She was angry that the library wasn't open. She was swearing and everything. I opened the door and I said, "Five after 12, not what the hell" and she yelled "Don't slam the door." I went up one side of her and down the other. It's not to say that because she is behaving inappropriately, I can't behave appropriately. But then again if I saw her in the hall I would be polite because that issue is done. You know what I mean?*

Even today I was going down the hall and I saw this grade 12 student and she was absolutely in tears. She was coming down the hall. I had just come out of the bathroom and she was coming from the office. She started to walk over towards me. She finally came toward me and I put my arm around her shoulder. She was weeping. She finally started to calm down. She was so upset because she had failed something. So I just told her, "Really, it doesn't matter. It will all be O.K. tomorrow. This will pass. You will see. Have you had a chance to see a counselor yet?" I asked her who she wanted to see. She decided on (her counselor). At this point she had calmed down considerably. I went to see (her counselor) to make sure that she (the counselor) would know the girl was coming and what her situation was, what was going on and what I thought the problem was. I didn't need to do that but it was the right thing to do.

What is interesting is that she is not even a student with whom I have a particularly (strong rapport). She is just one of my students. She is not like (some students) who will just come in and visit.

I think it is important for them to see that they need to do the right thing. How are they supposed to get that if we are not (doing the right thing?)

Abby's Role:

As a teacher Abby is demanding of her students. "I have very high expectations. So if you want the easy credit, you best be going somewhere else because it is not me." She structures assignments which she knows her students will find challenging, yet

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trusts that they will succeed by working to their full potential. Assignments are structured, clear criteria are given and the steps to success are thoroughly explained. Students are also given ample opportunity to ask questions both in and out of class. Creative thinking is valued and students are encouraged to pursue their interests as long as they are still meeting the expectations of the assignment. Structure presides, but "freedom within that structure" also exists. Many of the students who struggle with English benefit from the structured assignments because they are provided with clear steps to follow which will lead them to success. Others can use the structure as a frame, a base from which to develop something more creative. Either way her students are given the necessary tools to succeed, but first they must make the conscious choice to learn.

A: *I think I demand that students respect me. Well I don't know if you can demand that but I expect it. I expect that they come in with a certain level of respect for me and my position. But I also know that I need to earn respect beyond the given. I think that I have a good relationship with most kids because I try to validate kids but not everyone is going to like you, and that's O.K. I try and respect them and they have to respect me. But when the buck stops I'm still the teacher. So I will be friendly with them but I think they are pretty clear about the fact that I am the teacher, firm but fair. They know that 10% comes off of their assignments each day. They also know that I would prefer they came in and told me they had a down day rather than lying. I can't stand people who lie to me. I lay out pretty much everything at the beginning of the year. (For instance) what my expectations are of them. I have them sign this kind of contract. It basically acknowledges that they understand, they don't have to agree, but they understand what is expected of them in terms of how they treat others, classroom tone, behavior and what is required in assignments. They are actually quite responsible for making efforts in their own education. Those sorts of things.*

I build the structure but then I am there to facilitate their growth within that structure. I will come around and help you but I am not going to hold your hand. I want to see what you can do. This is a safe place. You can fail here; you can try here; you can fall here, but I am not going to pick you up and move you. That's your job. Does that make sense?

If I know that a child is attending regularly, attempting to make an effort but they can't seem to get it together, well, I will try to help them. Sometimes you can have a kid who is not learning disabled but can't seem to get themselves organized. I have two students who could potentially fail an assignment worth 20% of the term. I had both of them redo and resubmit with a penalty for the 28th. But if I don't have it by the 28th I will quite legitimately fail them. I don't have to do that, but what I want to see is that they have learned something. Maybe I have made it unclear as to how it needed to be done. They didn't take the responsibility grade 12's are supposed to take so I could fail them, but what is the point? I don't know if that answers your question but I am a structuralist. I believe in structure but I believe in freedom within that structure. Flexibility is also important. Sometimes you just need to move off

from the beat.

Abby's emerging relationship with curriculum:

I think you spend the first 3 years thinking that someone is going to figure out that you don't know what you are doing. They are paying me money but are soon going to figure out that I don't really know what the infinitive form of a verse is. You spend all this time stressing that last week you were making no money and this week you are taking home a salary. You think, Oh God, they think I know this all. I think there is about a three year impostor time for teachers. Beyond that you start to realize you are actually one (a teacher). Then you start to settle into your teaching method. But you have to be willing to go through (all that).

When Abby first started teaching, her vision of success was equated with her ability to cover the curriculum; teaching was about preparing her students for their provincial exams. She was unsettled in her approach to teaching and was not entirely convinced of her ability. Her first three years were spent attempting to create an impression that she knew what she was doing; Abby was in survival mode. Through experience and practice Abby gradually learned to multitask. Curriculum no longer meant covering isolated objectives. There were "levels of curricula" she learned to identify. Curriculum had become a lens through which the world could be viewed. As a result she had relaxed and her teaching had become more relevant and meaningful. Her confidence grew and teaching in her classroom had become a comfortable place to be.

A: *It is more of an organic experience for me now whereas before it was much more rigid. Now I just know where I want to go. I have traveled there before so it is easy to stop along the way and make up the time later. This happens when you have traveled the road many many times before. If you have never traveled it, you are looking at the road map, and the road at the same time and crashing into trees as you go.*

I feel that I am much more me when I am teaching now than when I am not. For me it is a liberating experience to be teaching... teaching is a very comfortable place to be. It's not an uncomfortable place to be. Once it is a comfortable place to be then you are much more willing to internalize the structures because you are not fighting the moment all the time.

I think I am still curriculum based. But I am now able to see, through experience, more of the levels of curricula than I was able to at the beginning. I mean at the beginning you are just thinking that you need to get through this. When I first started I was teaching provincially examinable courses. So I kept thinking, I have to get this, I have to get this, and I have to get that. And you don't have the competencies to

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juggle well enough to get the nuance down as well. I don't know if that makes any sense but it is all experiential. So much of it is experiential and making mistakes and then not making them again.

Abby is now also armed with a clearer vision of where each grade should be by the end of the year. This equips her with the knowledge of what to expect of her students and how far to push them. Reflecting back to when she first started teaching, none of these revelations could have really been explained, read about or even taught. More experience with her students and her subject area is why she has become a better teacher. However she has also become a better teacher simply because she continually makes the choice to improve her teaching practice through reflection.

A: *I am a better teacher now because I have been doing it longer. I am also now a better marker. I am nowhere near where I could be because you are always improving. But I know more about what I am doing now. I know my objectives and how to get there. I know what is (garbage) and I know what is not. I also know what to expect from them. I also think I am now a better academic teacher. I am much more able to now develop a critical analysis of literature than when I started. I am far more a "class reading girl" than when I first started. I am now, well, more interested in making them students of English.*

Colleagues:

The colleagues with whom Abby works have inspired her to become a better teacher. Hannah and Irene in particular are teachers she genuinely respects. They have impacted her teaching by providing a reliable and effective support group within the school.

A: *And working with colleagues I respect. I work closely with Hannah and Irene. We are like this witchy unit (inspired by their love of Macbeth). We work together and push each other and motivate each other and inspire each other. It is all very reciprocal I think. We are very critical of our teaching but only for the purpose of improving. We are all very reflective. I don't know if the others mentioned this but awhile back we were part of someone's Ph.D. We got involved in this thing where we met weekly. It was called L.S.G. (Learning Strategies Group). We would come in with what we wanted to do, what projects we had done, and we would share what we had done, what worked and didn't work. We did that for about 4 years. I think that had a huge impact on us. It would be great to do again.*

Technology

Abby's approach to technology is that it is an extremely valuable resource, but only when used appropriately. Technology must be used in ways which promote active learning, and continue to encourage high standards in the classroom.

V: *So in terms of your English class, their major use of technology is the research they do at home and their use of computers to create a final product?*

A: *Yes. Or using it to create power point projects, or if they are building a web site. I have done projects in the past in regular English classes or in English enriched classes, grade 12 English, where they have had to build a power point presentation. This was because I did not want kids who had no artistic ability to be at a disadvantage. It creates a level playing field. Everyone has the same structure, the power point program. Everyone has the same potential to steal and create images. Everybody has the same bullets flying in. Everything is so highly structured that it didn't matter if you had a (student) who is so brilliantly artistic that her art over shines a kid whose ideas are as good but does not have the artistic ability to portray them. That's very beneficial. I have also had kids do a Forbidden City assignment. Never teach that in the ninth grade because they have all done it in grade 6. Anyhow, because all of them had done it before, and there is nothing in the way of books to do in that grade in this school, I did this thing where they had to build a web site. In the web site they had to write an article as though they were a journalist from the novel. They had to incorporate evidence from the book to prove they were there... so my grade 9's had to build web sites. So I have had kids in regular classes do such things.*

V: *Would you first go in and teach them the basics?*

A: *I would teach them the basics but then I would just say, "Start figuring it out and let me know, call me over when you are confused or stuck." Or I will say, "O.K., you sit beside Betty Loo because she knows what she is doing and you can also ask me."*

V: *So you are assuming that your students have a working knowledge of technology?*

A: *Oh yeah, but if I had a kid that was asking, "The button is where? How do I get on the internet again?" Then I would sit with that kid. But most of these kids have computers at home and are building sites at home and are I.C.Q.-ing their butts off. They are all about their computers. If they are at home typing my homework they also have their I.C.Q. window open and anytime there is a ding, they are leaving Othello and they are writing on the internet. I am not stupid. I know they do that.*

Journalism 12:

Journalism 12 is run at the same time as Abby's Creative Writing 12 class. Often

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running between two spaces in the school, she is caught between the tension of allowing the class to be autonomous and self-directed, while providing them with enough structure that learning may occur. This class is unique in that it is comprised of only five students. They range in ability and all enjoy that their class is taught with technology as a primary resource. This class is student driven. Abby outlines what they must achieve, how they will be evaluated and steps they can take to improve. She facilitates the learning process through mini-lessons and consistent feedback, but she does not play the role of supervisor.

A: *It is much more student driven. I tell them what to do and I give them the freedom to do it. But they have to be self motivated. They elected to be there, they are supposed to want to be there. It actually functions more like a club than it does a class. There is no provincial exam and the necessary skill sets are kink of like what they are doing right now. The way that it is set up is partly because it is split. When it was a class all by itself I did things slightly differently. But I don't quite know how to be in two rooms at the same time. I don't think I am giving them as many parameters (as my other classes). (This is because) it is supposed to be a student run paper. To a large extent they choose what they are going to write about. But I will come in on certain days and say, "We need a story on this, or that story needs to be redone."*

Abby has chosen to run Journalism 12 in the computer lab because part of the purpose of the class is publication. This class functions as an online school newspaper; students are responsible for a certain number of articles. They are supposed to spend time in class and at home writing and researching their topic. Articles are written and published; students who read the articles are encouraged to respond. An ongoing discussion is constantly beginning and ending with these authors and their audience; I can only imagine that such a dialogue would not be possible if these articles were published in a traditional school newspaper.

The Writing Process:

A: *They should not be editing off of the computer. They have been told that they should print their work out in order to edit. People should not edit their work on the computer screen. Statistically, research shows that you miss things when you don't print it out. You should not even be relying on spell check. You should be printing it out and doing it by hand, making corrections, then retyping. There should still be that process. If it were an English class I would not want them working strictly on their*

computers unless they happened to be learning disabled. It is only appropriate for such students because they may have output problems. But I think you draft in a far more organic way when you write by hand. You can not write in the text of <u>Othello</u> if you are doing it on a computer screen or from a web site on the computer. You can't even take cryptic notes. I am not anti pen and paper but I do think seeing final drafts typed up creates a lot of pride in a lot of kids. It is cleaner. Some of their writing is so terrible. Back in the day when I went to school we were not allowed to have pens until we could prove that we could write. It seems that we were not even allowed to have pens until we had mastered a certain level of cursive writing in the 3rd. grade using pens that we dipped in ink. Remember those?

My handwriting is atrocious but I am nearly 40 years old and it is because I am writing in a hurry like all adults. But if I wanted to, I could slow it down and actually write properly. Whereas there are a lot of kids who can't cursively write. Or it (their writing) is all in caps. Or they can just print. So I think for some of them they need a combination. I let them go to the computer lab and write stuff up and put it in an E-mail account. They can then print it out or send it to me at home. They can then get help from me and work on it some more, make changes, then send it home again. Then they can always make changes again and send it back to the school.

I think they (the journalism class) do all of their editing on the screen. They never print out their work or create a copy on paper. I think that's a detriment. They would be much better off printing it out. I mean anyone who writes for the Internet, that I've read about, suggests that. The instructions for writing on the Internet are, do not edit yourself on screen. Print it out. So I am assuming that's true. You see kids make those errors all the time. The same kind of error when you press your spell check and forget to check which 'too' you meant to use. All you are doing is 'tooling it' you are not reading it. I think people are also used to skimming through a screen, not taking the time.

Abby emphasizes the importance of editing on paper. Students are so accustomed to E-mail and chat rooms that when they write on the computer their work is inundated with colloquial expressions and 'informal spoken languages'. Informal language is not the issue, transforming that language into academic discourse for the purpose of school is when problems emerge. During many of the classes I was observing, students develop and edit some of their ideas on paper. Those who used pen and paper would take their time to reflect, jot down notes and reshape their ideas. Almost instinctively their written language became more formal. When those same students did not use pen and paper and immediately started typing on their computer, their thoughts were scattered and random. The standard of their academic writing also disappeared as students reverted back to a written version of spoken English. They wrote quickly, phonetically and spent far less time editing their work. This did not just happen once or twice; it was a

consistent trend throughout my three months of observations of this class. After discussing what I had observed with the class, they suggested that students who use pen and paper are more cautious and meticulous about their work. Those who don't engage in any of the writing process on paper believe that the computer is capable of doing the work for them.

What was intriguing about these students is that their editing was also affected by whether or not they were engaged in the process of writing on the computer or by hand. When Abby asked them to edit and they had their screens open, they relied entirely on spell check and grammar check. They no longer read through their work with a critical eye because the expectation was that the computer would go through the process for them. They were "tooling," not reading through their work. Students who edited by hand were far more thorough because each paragraph they wrote was read, not skimmed. Even when spell check and grammar check were used, they printed their work out to edit and revise more than once.

Initiatives in Technology:

Abby is online at least three hours a day updating her Web page, exploring links which could work as a support network for her students, researching information or just discovering sites of personal interest. She became particularly intrigued by the Internet after a workshop provided by the board which gave teachers an opportunity to scan sites and discern which ones were valuable. Abby attended as a representative of the English department at her school. After that she attended a workshop on Web design. However, how she really became computer literate was by taking the initiative to try what she had learned on her own. For instance, after the Web design presentation she explored what she could do on a free Web site server. Just attending a workshop on technology was not enough. She was making conscious efforts to translate what she had learned into daily teaching pedagogy. She had made the choice that technology was a useful resource for her students, yet realized that personal initiative had to be taken in order to continue learning about the potential of technology.

There was also a time when Abby used her laptop in the classroom as a personal

resource. She had access to infinite amounts of information at her fingertips; however, part of the limitation of the laptop was that eventually everything became outdated.

A: *Well and I used to have a laptop which I kept in my classroom. I would pull it out during silent reading and I would do stuff with it. I ended up giving it away because I had a friend who needed it much more than I did. Besides, by the end what I wanted to use it for required much more memory and speed than the laptop I had could provide. It was running 95 and I am now running millennium. Although, I am now toying with the idea of getting another one. Another laptop.*

V: *And is that supported by the school at all?*

A: *Periodically the school board allows you to purchase something at a deal . But for the most part people who have laptops have purchased them. There may be one that is in the school but I would bet that at this point it is so antiquated that no one would even borrow it. Perhaps it is O.K. for word processing but anything else would probably not work.*

When I had a laptop I would use it to go in and search Internet sites for information. I would do that while students were doing something else, or I would go check something if a kid had a question. It just made it (information) right at my fingertips instead of having to go to the library or logging on.

Web Page:

Abby's determination to create a Web site to help facilitate her students' learning is a prime example of how she uses technology as a resource in her classroom. Her goal became to develop a functional, useful Web site for her students; she went through the appropriate measures to achieve that goal which shows initiative. Once again she was making conscious efforts to translate what she had learned from a workshop into working classroom practice.

A: *At the beginning of the year I updated it (my Web site) pretty religiously, at least for the first term. I just couldn't stay on top of it all. So I am just learning to balance what goes up there. For instance key assignments as opposed to this is what we did in class today.*

I went and bought it (the software) all myself. So it is the kind of thing where I consider it my accountability. If I want to provide this (technology) for the kids then I have to suck it up somewhere. We all know in the real world what that means. My budget. Schools aren't giving you that. So I got state of the art stuff. It is still not exactly the way I want it, but it is working O.K. But the point is that it took me 2 years to get that Web site to look the way it does because I am teaching. I am not a Web designer. I have to go through everything on my own. Like I said today in class, I

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had to spend an inordinate amount of time checking out sites and locating what would be useful for me and then getting it all together, hooked up and built and stuff. It didn't happen overnight. It is a huge learning curve thing. It just kills me that they don't go there more often because it would save them a lot of time.

When I first started learning how to build Web pages I chose not to use a program. I learned how to do HTML code because I figured that if I learned how to do that, I could do the other. But that is when you become aware of how it is just a machine. It is so evident that it is a machine because if there is a period in the wrong place, a capital in the wrong place, a space wrong, it just goes, WHAT? Beg your pardon? And it won't help you. Whereas your teacher will say, you have this space there, or whatever, but computers are simply going to respond to what you give it and nothing will work if you are slightly off.

Computers just don't care if they (students) go to sleep on their desk.

V: Why have you chosen to use Web pages with your creative writing class?

A: Well, it keeps the classes parallel. We have a split class. It gives them another skill in the class, more competence. They mostly do it themselves but they let me know if they get stuck. It is not that hard on the free sites. A small monkey with a little bit of a brain and a clicking finger could probably upload something. Then they get all excited about it after awhile and do it more and more. But they should also be publishing their work for the purpose of being read.

This is the first year, first term that I made them do it (Web pages). They have to have their work up there. Last term I didn't insist because they had New Shoots. This third term they will have to put everything up again. I will probably give them bonus marks if they put second term up too. They are all very excited now about their journals though. Someone wrote a book. Parents call and say how excited and impressed they are about what is going on, and how great their work is. That is all great. But if they had it on line they would have a portfolio of their work. They might not appreciate it now but they will have gotten something out of it. They could ask their aunt to look at it. It would be fun.

I did also have 5 grade 12 students write in their journal and E-mail it to me (special circumstances). That was interesting.

V: Did you find that the quality was any different?

A: A little bit. Somewhat. I would really have to take a closer look... the ones I would be really interested in looking at are the 2 E.S.L. students because in theory they could put their work through a grammar or spell check and get a better handle of it.

Last year Abby spent endless hours of her own time as well as hundreds of dollars of her own money creating a Web page which would be of use to her, her students and their parents. Her Web page is a fantastic resource of incredible links, all of which have

been carefully selected and screened. Students can find resources to help them with their reading and writing; parents can access resources to aid in their child's learning. Key assignments are also posted for students who are away, who lost their original handout or for parents who want copies of the assignments and criteria. Her Web site is not flashy, but it is accessible, informative and an extremely valuable and practical resource.

E-mail:

Abby is also an avid E-mail user. E-mail is not only the means through which she communicates with friends and colleagues, but with students and parents. During our second interview Abby mentioned that over the weekend she had received over twenty-six E-mails from students. (Some students were away and an assignment was due). Although this may appear taxing, she insists that the extra time it takes to answer the students' E-mails is worth it. Students know that she checks her E-mail at least once a day so there is no reason not to contact her if they are going to be away, would like feedback on their work or are bewildered by an assignment. Student autonomy is encouraged and chances of student success are increased.

Such a convenient means of communication also allows parents to remain proactive in their child's progress without having to come all the way down to the school. This is less threatening to the student, the parent stays informed, and Abby can save time and energy by answering the E-mail when it is most convenient for her. Although sometimes students E-mail all at once, parents usually do not. Given the many benefits, spending a few extra moments to answer a few E-mails hardly seems unjustified.

V: *Do you communicate with parents through E-mail very often?*

A: *Sometimes. It happens especially before report cards. Last report cards, there were maybe 6 parents that e-mailed me and I responded. After that I knew that I would have to deal with a couple of parents but that was it. So these people respond and sometimes you do have to to be a little curt. With one parent I finally had to say, "Listen, report cards are coming out." They (parents) sometimes want their term end marks four weeks before the term even closes.*

To be honest those kinds of parents will exist. But I also prefer it on E-mail because then I have a written record of how I responded. I mean I have been known to carbon copy (the principal) with responses to parents especially with grade 12

students. That is exceedingly useful to me because there is no interruption from a parent. There is no opportunity for them to strong arm me. I am sitting in front of my computer and citing documentation. I am laying it out. It is like the ultimate interim. It is also dated and time stamped for me and that is terribly useful.

The permanence of written communication makes it easy to document and date messages. This ensures that if students, parents or Abby are having difficulties, nothing is misrepresented. Carbon copied messages also provide a record of interactions so that another party can provide an additional, perhaps more objective, point of view. Retaining records of messages sent back and forth is especially pertinent when dealing with senior students. Abby can keep records of a detailed interim sent home indicating students' marks, missing assignments and suggestions of how to improve. Quick progress reports can be sent to parents &/or students which is especially useful for students who might be at risk of failing. If there is any confusion at the end of the year, E-mails can be reviewed. This helps ensure that ample opportunity has been given to the student throughout the year.

E-mail also allows for communication without interruption. Abby does not want her classes disturbed while she is teaching, nor does she want to be caught off guard. Time to reflect upon what is said as well as how to respond makes corresponding with parents and students through E-mail a meaningful process.

Student Teachers:

Abby does not believe that teaching is something which can be taught. Effective or even improved teaching comes from experience, practice, making and learning from mistakes accompanied with an intention to improve. Techniques, strategies and skills may equip student teachers with a basis from which to start. However, there is no assurance that the skills of an effective, experienced teacher will be acquired. Student teachers must approach their time in the B.Ed. program as the beginning of a journey. Deciding where they want to go and how they wish to get there becomes the challenge along the way.

A: *(Learning to teach) is like that old chess game. I know when I first started teaching I could just think about the next move. Now I am thinking about my next move, their*

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next move, whether or not we are playing another game instead... I am now basically super super multitasking and I don't know how you learn to do that. You internalize that ability through practice. But I don't know.

I do think they should teach methodology (in the B.Ed. program). You need to know the rules of the game before you go out and try and get good at it. Just to use a little chess analogy again, if you were never taught the rules of chess, well how much fun would that be. You could throw your King all over the board and it would be O.K. Knowing the rules is different than knowing innately where all of the best positions are on the board, like if you should move your rook to another position. That's from practice and trial and error and from messing up a lot and having your Queen kicked.

Abby considers a student teacher she once had:

A: She did a good job. It was not completely natural for her but she was fine. But things like... we were handing out the texts and we were going through the process. "O.K. we are going to number them then collect them back. We are going to hand them out but not let them keep them. We also need to figure out what to test and is #1 sitting beside #3 and does it matter if the answers are the same. So you are worried about plagiarism with nothing to go on. And you have to make sure they all have paper for the class essay because you have just said that they can't write on the test paper. But she would forget the paper or something. She had to walk up to me in the lesson and say, "I feel like an idiot but I forgot the paper." And that was like the time she came to class and there was nothing for her on the overhead. There was no roll. All I said was, make sure you have all your supplies and I put a little happy face on her daily evaluation. This was mostly because it was the second time. But those are the types of things you need to figure out. She didn't have the float factor. Having the knowledge of the job also means solving those kinds of problems in a split second. They (student teachers) have to learn to plan for every contingency.

What I find interesting is that what I used to get from a lesson plan from her was exceedingly brief. What I used to have to do is outline the questions I would ask, the anticipated answers I would get, the ones that would lead me astray or bring me back to focus. They were humorous. But what I would get is this lesson that would look like 5 minutes of this, 5 minutes of that, more like what a veteran teacher would do. The problem is that I don't think that is what they can do. I don't know what they are being taught in lesson planning but I sometimes feel like they come to us and we are supposed to teach them how to lesson plan. (This has been the third year in a row). I am not sure if that is what the modus operandus is out there, but that is what it feels like.

Then you see them get stuck up in front of the room . You see, because I would encourage this student teacher to engage the class in discussion about the literature. She would come up to me near the end of the class, which is fine, and she would say, "You just need to know that I'm on fire." I would then sit there going, "No no you are doing O.K." And she goes, "No, no, no, I'm dying. I feel like I am running against the wall, backing up and running up against it again and again. Oh my god. This is so hard. So hard." So when students say something and she totally feels like she doesn't know what to do, it is a problem. She wouldn't expect certain questions so she'd get lost. That is when (I think) had she spent the time and thought, "O.K., what happens when they come up with the most obscure example? What do you do?"

V: But doesn't that have to do more with not knowing the material well enough?

A: Part of it has to do with not knowing the material well enough, but part of it is also not knowing what you are really doing. A lot of it is also just playing dress up.

Well to my student teacher's credit, when a student brought up something she hadn't mentioned, and she answered the question, and the student asked her where that was in the text, she was able to say, "Oh that's on pages 16 & 17." She didn't have her book open, she just had a few notes on a piece of paper that she had prepared. I think she knew it but English was not her major. It was her minor. So considering it was her minor, she did really well. But I also think I am trying to be much more relaxed. In the past, I have tried to get student teachers to work as hard as I do, and apparently that is psychotic. Why would they? So I am thinking part of it is experiential, are they getting the rapport down, are they getting the comfort down, are they developing a persona of themselves as a teacher? If all that is O.K. then the rest will come. My concern is if they are getting a reasonable foundation.

I am not going to make (any student teacher) a teacher during their practicum. I am just not.

So I am just thinking about student teachers ... well I just don't know how to teach people how to teach. So I think it is really hilarious to be given a student teacher to teach, to teach because I don't know. I think you can suggest strategies to contain the room but you cannot teach someone to be a teacher. That's what I think.

V: But don't you think that working with veteran teachers allows them at least a frame from which to start working?

A: Sure it does. All I am saying is that if they are not going to be a teacher, all the modeling in the world is not going to help them. It is like if a kid is never ever going to be able to do the long jump. It does not matter how long that kid hangs out with an Olympic long jumper. It is irrelevant. It will give them a clear idea of what they can't do. I mean, how many times have we had student teachers that you think, "Oh dear God, the money is not good enough that you want to be doing this if you are not any better at it than this. I mean if it is going to be this painful honey, get out. Really. Honestly. It is too hard a job if you don't love it and embrace it. Otherwise it is just too emotionally demanding, I think." It is not their fault, it's like making me a nuclear physicist. It doesn't matter how many of them I hang around with, it is not happening.

B.Ed.

What Abby believes is lacking in B.Ed. programs at the moment is training for student teachers in how to effectively and appropriately use technology. Providing this knowledge base will ensure that more informed choices are made once student teachers are officially teachers. If not equipped with the appropriate skills, they may avoid technology altogether from fear of appearing incompetent. Or they may use technology just to entertain their students because that may be all they know how to do.

Regardless, technology will not be approached in a way which is informed. The manner in which technology is used may not facilitate student learning.

A: *It is like this workshop I went to. One of the things which was so frustrating about the English workshop I took (my student teacher) to for the last Pro-D day was that they didn't hand me a list of Web sites and leave me alone to figure it out. Maybe that is just my learning style, but why not? Put together a bunch of student teachers, put them in a room and say, "O.K., here are some good educational sites. You have an hour. Let me know if you need anything. I'll be here. After the hour let's talk about what you found." You don't need to take them (student teachers) to the side and talk to them in a baby voice. But you do need to provide them with direction. That is something which needs to be done. Then you need to figure out what to do with what you find. But that's a whole different story. That's my two cents.*

V: *Perhaps that's why some student teachers complain that they can't use what they are learning ...*

A: *The problem with the B.Ed. program is that they need to have people teaching in the program who know about computers. I mean they have people teaching out there who were teaching before computers even existed. I don't know who is teaching out there but I am sure that (U.B.C. professor), god bless his heart, is still out there doing something. He is a lovely lovely man. The sweetest man you could ever meet. And I don't know, maybe he is Mr. techno-geek now. I wouldn't know. I couldn't imagine it. He is probably still talking to his students about ways to engage students in grammar or something. Some puzzles and games and ways to make it interesting. Who knows? But he would probably be hard pressed to go into a computer lab and teach a lesson. And it is not his fault. It is just not the car he drives.*

I mean most of those guys haven't even been in a classroom forever. And if they were, there weren't really computers then. And if there were (computers), they were those itty bitty little things.

They can't teach the classes because they just aren't qualified. But why aren't they getting people who are qualified in technology to teach out there? Take our (computer applications) guy and throw him out there for three months and have him teach a class then come back. I mean, big shock that they can't do it. Why should they? Student teachers won't be able to either, unless they happen to already know how anyway.

V: *Doesn't it sometimes seem that what determines if you use technology is if you already know how?*

A: *Yeah, but I don't know if there is any easy answer. I don't know how they can change that.*

Technology is just a tool. In any other context new tools are unequivocally presented with instructions. So why would any B.Ed. program do any less for their student

teachers? A violinist would never just pass his / her violin to a new student and ask them to play. Even if the student had a vague idea of how to hold the violin, guidance would be provided in how to best position the hand, balance the bow across the strings and create the delicate sound of vibrato. Steps would be taken and time would be provided to practice and explore. Only then would the student be asked to play the first anticipated note of "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star." Similarly, it is not enough that student teachers know how to turn on a computer or send a friend an E-mail. They must be well versed in the basics of technology, how to engage their students in relevant and critical tasks and how to adapt what they have learned about using technology to their students' lives.

In order for any of this to happen, however, qualified English teachers must become a part of the B.Ed. program at U.B.C. These teachers need to have recently taught in a high school and they must be well versed in how to use technology in secondary English classrooms. Such teachers will have a realistic understanding of the reality of present day student and teaching contexts.

Particular attention must be given to student teachers' capacity to navigate the Net. Learning about sites which are specifically set up for teachers is particularly useful. For instance, sites which help determine if student work is plagiarized are extremely useful in an English classroom. Student teachers must also learn how to adapt educational tools which they find on the Net. Otherwise they just locate sites, print out materials and develop lessons according to an already provided 'recipe.' Learning how to adapt those 'recipes' to the needs of their students will improve their teaching. Even ensuring that student teachers know how to cut and paste information into E-mails, (control, C, control, V) and open more than one window will provide them with basic, necessary skills. The point is to create in student teachers a base from which they can build. At least then they can make an informed choice about if or how they may want to use technology, once they are in a school.

Student teachers & Technology:

A: *They (student teachers) also need to have a knowledge base so that they can stay a step ahead of the kids. To have people come who only know how to turn on a*

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computer or just to send E-mail is not enough. They need to have some sense of how to navigate the Internet. How to search the Internet for material. I mean it blows some people's minds that you can type a word into Google and find a plagiarized essay. That sort of thing. Or even how to locate Web sites which are specifically set up for teachers. It is silly not to give them that access, or at least to provide them with the ability to get there and show them how to surf the Internet, go to a site and adapt what they have found to their needs or the needs of their students. Learning how to adapt from a site is really important, instead of just using what you find as is. Sometimes they just don't have a clue. Some of them, anyway. They also need to develop the skill of searching the Net and being able to differentiate between what is valuable and not.

I think it would be very useful for student teachers. I think student teachers should be required to take some courses which focus on the Internet and what is available to students on the Internet, how to build their own Web sites on the Internet, and how to maintain contact with students via that medium. But to just say, "Wow, isn't it great we have this plethora of knowledge."Go kids (meaning the students). Let me know what you find" is not of use. Unless you (the teacher) have an idea of how to navigate that labyrinth they will bring anything back that they want, and you will have no way to verify. You need to at least have the appearance that you are equal if not one step ahead of them. They need to know that you know how to enter the information and locate their plagiarized paper. Do you know what I mean?

They should DEFINITELY teach student teachers (and veteran teachers) how to use it (technology). They need to teach teachers how to do something; how to teach in a computer lab, how to do whatever.

I know that (my present day student teacher) went all gung ho after our last Pro-D day. She went home and put together a Web site where she would be able to post assignments. It is like a plug in kind of format. She didn't need an HTML code or anything like that. It is designed to be simple, down and dirty. It is for teachers. She went to a site which is like a daybook for teachers, on line, and kids can check it. Knowing that's available is useful because it gets rid of all kinds of dead time in your class when students have excuses because they didn't send the assignment in. It forces kids to be more accountable because there is literally no reason why they couldn't have gotten it to you.

I think technology can make kids more accountable. Like any tool, though, it doesn't make your life faster until such a time as you have mastery over the beast.

But student teachers should know something about the Internet because the kids know so much about it. And if they don't know tons about it they need to know 50%, at least how to present a task to a class so that the kids can then take over. Because the kids know tons.

Student teachers may have students in their class who are computer literate. Appearing competent before these students is critical. Students know how to pop screens up in order to appear as though they are working even though they are just

playing games. Student teachers must develop a knowledge base of what students may be doing so that they can decide the extent to which it matters to them. If student teachers know what to look for, then students may become more inclined to stay on track.

Although at times it appears that all adolescents are computer literate, this is not the case. Anything new must be taught to all students because they are not all arriving with the same competency base. Developing a comfort level for using technology is difficult for some teachers, but students are forgiving because they accept that many teachers have only recently been introduced to technology. However students who are in the minority because they are not techno-literate may be hesitant to ask questions, especially in front of their peers. In such cases the students' learning may be jeopardized; they cannot rely on their teacher because the teachers' knowledge is limited and asking a classmate may be embarrassing. For such students, their options are very limited. Abby has worked with students for whom technology was never an option. Their families chose not to own a computer so they have never been on the Net. Abby is convinced that preventing children from becoming part of a techno-literate world is depriving that child of necessary life skills for future success.

Obstacles:

Classroom Culture:

A: *I was just thinking about how I am taking kids in (to the computer lab). I am taking G block in again tomorrow and I am working up a lesson right now where I will be taking in my English 12 kids. I am doing a poetry thing. Anyhow, I think it has to do with the way I teach. I teach in a very intimate way. I am very much about connecting with my students. Make eye contact, tell a joke, give a tap on the back or have a laugh. I don't do that when I work with computers. I spend the whole time trouble shooting. So I am not teaching as much; I am facilitating. You know what I mean? Periodically you sit down with a kid and you go through stuff, but while you do that other kids are doing who knows what. So in order to make sure they are all on task, you are not being the same as in the classroom. Unless off course you just say, "O.K., you know what you have to do and if you choose to (mess) it up, oh well."*

V: *So actually the way you teach changes substantially when you are using computers?*

A: Oh yes. Absolutely it does. Well you have seen me teach both ways and I think I teach completely differently.

One of the reasons I wouldn't want to just teach with computers is because of that. It has been offered to me several times, because I teach writing classes. The logic is, why don't you just teach in a lab. But I don't want this thing on the desk. I don't want it in-between me and the person (student) and I don't want the person (student) hiding behind their computer to avoid me. I don't really want that. Still when you go to the lab, I mean, it has been great this week, everything works. But you are just as likely to walk in and the system will be down, computers will crash or you won't be able to access Netscape. Then your whole lesson is (messed up) and you have no way to recover it because everything is sitting in cyberspace. So it is just so machine problematic. The machine owns you. You are not the master of the lesson. The computer is the master of the lesson and you are just opening the door.

Right. I just think it needs to be treated like a tool because that is what it is. It is a tool. The kids think it goes to sleep and needs a pet name. They think it does more than it really does. It is JUST a tool. Like a pen, but it does more things. Do you know what I mean?

I think part of the difficulty is that with computers no one is right in their (students') face. They (students) are not directly accountable to another person. Computers are handy, even if they are doing worksheet material because if they get stuck, they can query it for assistance. You can't do that on a regular worksheet. If they get stuck, they are stuck. So in that sense it does make my job easier because I don't have to go to every single kids and say, "O.K. well maybe you should try putting an 'N' there. So in that way I think it makes them more self sufficient, but I don't think you can just throw kids at computers and say, "O.K., I am expendable now. I just don't think it works that way.

Using technology in the classroom radically changes the spirit of teaching and learning. With a box of a computer before each student, classroom dynamics change. There is a lack of intimacy in the classroom; everyone is isolated. Students become introverted as they hide behind their computer box. Communicating with students in a personal and intimate way becomes challenging because Abby spends all of her time trouble shooting. She no longer plays the role of the teacher; she is a facilitator and disciplinarian as she desperately tries to keep students on task. Computers allow for more autonomy, yet computers may also create the sense of less accountability; a volatile situation may be the result. However, this is far more likely to occur if computers are used inappropriately, for instance, to replace the teacher.

Anecdote # 3:

A: It's funny because I remember when these grade 12's were in grade 8 we piloted a program with computers. It was for Math. Students would do their Math but they would work at their own pace. It was all about computers. Well I was covering a class one day, who knows why, and I talked to the kids and asked them if they liked it. They did not like it. They hated being left with a computer as their teacher. In their minds that was not a good use of technology. In my mind it is an abhorred use of technology. They were really mad. They didn't feel like they were learning anything. They didn't really feel like anyone cared and these were the smart kids. That's when I decided that I would never teach in a computer lab. I have done it already.
Mind you the teacher was suppose do be around. They were supposed to facilitate. But kids were all working at their own pace, so you can't teach the entire class. Some kids were on chapter three others were done. Kids in such a program are not supposed to be held back . But you can't teach them all so you have to pretty much leave them to their own devices, I gather. I think they felt like, "Why am I in the class? Why don't I just stay at home and do this?"

Unlike computers, teachers don't just spit out formulas they (students) have to copy down... computers also just don't care if students fall asleep on their desks.

Unreliable:

A: It (technology) is not dependable sometimes. It is getting the time that the lab will be available, getting the system up and running, getting the kids to do what they are actually supposed to be doing with the system. We were in the lab the other day and my writing kids were supposed to be working on an assignment. Four out of the five of them could do it but one of them had an account in Hot mail. They just couldn't load Hot mail. So even though the system was working and functioning, she still lost lots of time because of that. If Shaw is down, so does your lesson. It is the loss of time and you can't do anything about it. You can't just pull magic tricks out of your pocket because you don't have anything with you.

It doesn't always work. It is a 50/50 crap shoot. Student errors, no passwords. Kids need passwords for access, half the time kids have forgotten them. You tell them they must have a CD ready and functioning passwords. Even if it is part of their outline, it won't happen. But the biggest problem is making it work. It is like having books that have been glued shut.

Technology is notorious for being unreliable. Students can be brought to the school lab and perhaps everything will work. However, it is just as likely that computers will crash or students won't be able to access Netscape. Teachers have no control over if or how the technology in their school is going to work. "The machine owns you. You are no longer the Master of the lesson. The computer is the master of the lesson and you are hoping to open the door."

Teaching students to navigate the Net:

V: Right, you were talking about how students sometimes equate technology with entertainment?

A: I think they sometimes think it makes it (learning) easier. It probably does (make learning easier) because technology is such a comfort zone for them. They control it. It gives them a sense of autonomy over what they are doing. However, it is more than that. It is a tool and you have to know how you are using the tool. It is the exact same thing as sticking your child in front of a video and then saying, "But isn't he cooperative?" You know, it doesn't mean he is getting something out of it and it certainly doesn't mean that it (watching the video) is educating him.

If computers have the potential to create so much chaos, then why bother? From a logistical point of view, incorporating technology into the class at some point throughout the year is now an I.R.P. requirement. However, this is by no means a convincing reason to use technology; perhaps the potential for technology to make our jobs easier is a greater incentive. When Abby's students are in the school lab, they are temporarily provided with an efficient means of accessing extra help. Typically, if a student is having difficulty completing a worksheet they tend to wait in the classroom until Abby has a chance to help. This is problematic because there are far too many students in every class. Using a computer, students can just query for assistance and receive immediate feedback. However this does not mean in any way that the teacher is expendable. Computers can only be used as tools to help achieve specific goals; they cannot replace teachers. Another reason to use technology might simply be because students enjoy the resource. The perceptions with which students approach a task significantly impacts their ability to succeed. Students using technology have an increased sense of control and autonomy; lessons usually cater more to exploratory research which students enjoy. If students are approaching lessons with a positive attitude simply because technology is being used, perhaps it is worth considering.

Sometimes the most challenging part of using computers is convincing students that they are really going to learn. Students are so accustomed to equating computers with entertainment that they are ill acquainted with how to use computers for educational

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purposes. For instance a surprising number of students find it difficult to "navigate the tool." Students type words into google and immediately give up assuming that their topic doesn't exist. Abby is of the opinion that everything she could ever wish to find is on the Internet; the trick is knowing the right questions to ask. Computer are just machines and only do what they are told. So in order to learn how to navigate the Net more effectively, students need to become more proficient in how to ask the right questions.

Teachers must remember that just because a student enjoys the tool, it does not mean that the student is not learning. Furthermore, the culprit is not the tool but what a teacher chooses to do with that tool. Abby uses the example of a video. A parent may put their child in front of a video and remark how wonderfully cooperative their child is being. Just because the child is engaged in the video and not running around in the house doesn't mean that the child is learning. All that may be happening is that the parent has temporarily found a baby-sitter. Does this make the tool corruptive? No. It means that the parent is making poor choices as to how and why the tool is being used.

Abby is constantly taking initiative, learning more and trying what she has learned in her classroom. She is not concerned with maintaining the appearance of an expert although students generally consider her computer literate. Recently, as she was browsing the Net she found a site from which she aspired to create a lesson for her grade 11 class. The assignment exemplifies the manner in which computers can be used to meet specific objectives, while allowing students their autonomy to explore.

A: I don't know. As I learn more about what I can do, I try whatever I can. Like with this poetry lesson I am creating. I found this when I was searching the Internet. There is a site which is actually linked to my site and it has sample essays. There are even essays on how to write about poetry. I think it would be valuable to explore this... I am sure they have not bothered to go find it because it is all through a link, through a link, through a link. And once you get there you need to decide if you even care enough to look it up.

Anyhow, there is a Robert Frost poem and there is a sample student essay so that they can see how you can write about that (poem). There is also a wonderful article about how responding to poetry is about more than just your feelings... So I can say to students, "So here is a Robert Frost poem"... which I wasn't initially intending to do. But then why not because Robert Frost is really accessible. I could give it to

them and create a little worksheet of focus for them and then say to them, "O.K., we are going to go off and I am going to ask you to write a thesis statement and an introductory paragraph." And in point form they will write what they would use to prove it (their opinions). Then they could go look at the essay. I could have them try it themselves then take a look at one that is already done. I will have them pre-do-it, try it, and then go show them what else could have been done. I am not totally sure as of yet what I am going to do with it, but something like that.

Anyhow, it will at least be useful in practicing how to write a very short academic response. The length of the essay is about the same length as what they will have to write for their provincial exam. It is a real short essay. Really short. Three paragraphs or something.

V: And would they do that at home?

A: No, I would take them all into the lab and load them up and walk them through it. Just to say, take a look at this. Then I could also talk to them, teach them from that essay on the screen in front of the class. I haven't done that before. Perhaps that would even bring back the intimacy, I don't know.

Pro-D Day

A: For the most part I find them (Pro-D days) useless. But things that have to do with hands on time to learn the skills for the Internet and Web design and computers, that's useful. It's interesting but I don't find I take it (information from Pro-D days) back and incorporate it. It's ministry stuff, ministry documents. Here's a lesson plan for grade 9 English. Who uses those? You know? I mean I have a hard time taking other people's stuff. Well except for things like the Barry Bennett stuff which is about critical thinking. That's fine because that is not telling me what the lesson will be. It is telling me what the vehicle will be. It is not even telling me what to put in the vehicle. Those are fine. Those are very useful. Things where you are told, you do this and then that, then you ask these questions, then you send them off with this essay. No. Not useful.

It is too much of a recipe. It makes a lot of assumptions about the classroom and about me as a teacher and a person... I don't want to be told what to do. I want to be given other ways to do what I am already doing, but to do it better.

V: So have you found ones with technology to be useful?

A: Technology and/ or critical thinking, yes. But not technology when people just explain. I went to one last month and the whole thing was, "This is what I have my kids doing. They are doing a photo thing on the web where they are keeping a travel log and they pretend they are a writer keeping a journal. Or they must pretend they are going on a holiday etc." I don't want that. I want them (students) focused on the writing. I am a very literature based English teacher. And I think that is what Hannah, Irene and I have in common. It's all about the literature. It's not just about their feelings. I think it is important for them to have an emotional reaction to the piece, but it is not enough. That is actually what I am touching on in my poetry unit right now. Have an emotional reaction, talk about and think about why it is important to you. Now we are obliged to think about what Yeats was trying to say and how he did it

using diction, syntax, repetition and structure because you are studying literature and not you. And so, that's a bit different because sometimes you go to these workshops and they are all very touchy, feely and let the kids just hang out. And to me that is useless. I would be better off having the time to work with colleagues on lateral progressions.

V: *So that is something that you would think would be more useful?*

A: *Perhaps for beginning teachers it is more useful to go to the other kind of workshop... it would be more useful to have time to go to one of those other things that drives me crazy. I used to go to all the B.C.T.A. things. Actually they used to always be up at U.B.C. I was actually president of the B.C.T.A. on campus so it is not like I am anti all that stuff. I was president for about 8 years and it was always the same people showing up to present the same information but in a different package. I didn't need to know it. I wanted to know something else which wasn't being taught. A lot of it had to do with time, and working with more of a mentor type person which is not what they are doing at workshops. It was much more useful to hook up at the computer lab at this school, with computer teachers, and be given a half day where they could stand behind us so that if we had a problem we could call them over. A day to be a student. It was much more useful for me to be a student than to be told to perform something or to sit around and hypothesize or go "Ooh isn't that a pretty project." Maybe I'm just cynical...*

I really do believe that we need more time with technology, more release time, as teachers. We need more time to go and learn how to do this stuff because it opens up a world of resources for you and it really diminishes your need to go to other things. If you can get there on line, plus you are learning the skills, you are just double dipping. Then more relevant things can be done in workshops.

For Abby it seems ludicrous that Pro-D days often involve giving out packages of lesson plans taken from the Net. Materials given at Pro-D workshops are only useful when they do not dictate what should be taught; they should only provide an alternative 'vehicle' with which to teach.

Such workshops are not always valuable for Abby as many seem more appropriate for beginning teachers. Perhaps the workshops offered on Pro-D days need to cater more to what teachers need at different times in their career. For instance, beginning teachers may find it extremely useful to attend Pro-D days where 'recipes' are provided. Otherwise for someone like Abby who has attended endless variety packs of the same workshop, they are for the most part meaningless to her daily pedagogy.

What is significantly needed in terms of Pro-D for teachers is more release time to explore the potential of technology. Teachers should not be attending workshops in

order to access materials from the Net. Learning to do this on their own is easy. Instead, allowing for time when departments can work together, exchange ideas and share strategies in how to successfully use technology would be much more useful. If computer technicians or even just those who are more computer savvy could be given release time to work with individual departments, the effect would be remarkable.

It is not so much what is poured into the student, but what is planted that really counts.

- Anonymous

Hannah

This portion of my thesis is based on two interviews conducted one month apart with Hannah. The focus is to explore how her past experiences as a teacher and learner have helped shape the decisions she makes in her present day teaching context. This section has been divided into the following categories: background, experience, methodology, technology and student teachers. Each category will contribute to better understanding what has influenced Hannah's growth as a teacher as well as her present day use of technology at her school.

Background:

The introduction to this chapter begins with Hannah and the school in which she works. Hannah is a veteran teacher of over 20 years. She began her journey towards an educational landscape by completing her diploma in both counseling psychology and English. Initially hired as a counselor in Vancouver, she remained intent upon finding an English position.

> *I was hired in Vancouver as a counselor. I couldn't get a job as an English teacher. I would apply every year to be an English teacher and I wouldn't even get a response. I wouldn't even get a letter saying they received my application. Then I had a friend who was a counselor and who knew I had training as a counselor. I had left counseling to get into English before when I was in Langley. At that point I had three small children and was commuting to Langley every day. So I chose to get back into counseling and then was able to get back into English after about four years of counseling. It took awhile to get back in... and then when I got back in I went part time... I have been part time now for over 10 years.*

In 1988 she was awarded a part-time English position at a West side school in Vancouver. In addition to teaching four Blocks of English, Hannah is fully immersed in co-ordinating the Mini Arts school which monopolizes countless hours of her time. The

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generosity of her spirit and her dedication to her job are recognized by students, parents, staff and administration. Hannah outlines her involvement in the school in the following quote:

> My jobs have included organizing student activities, running the student council, putting together department events, running our department meetings and attending teacher meetings. Right now I am in the process of putting together the CAPP conference which is a two day conference. My job is to find speakers and invite them. I also have an event tonight because we are starting the application process... We had a parent night last week for the regular students and then tonight we have a parent night where we are going to be speaking to (prospective Byng Arts) parents from all over the place.

> There are all sorts of little things with that (the job of co-ordinator). For example the event tonight, I have to contact people, there is an art display which is being set up. (A student) who you met, the little one in the front of the class is performing as people come in. I had to organize volunteers, and talk to them about their duties and then I am also going to be speaking to the parents tonight. Ah, if I can put two words together by that time. (chuckle)

> And then after this we will start to accept and go through applications. We also have to set up an audition day. This is actually the time of year, coming up, which is very, very busy. It's apparently the busiest time of year.

> My training is also in counseling psychology. I've got my diploma in counseling psych. As well as in English. That's why I do a lot of work with the kids when they have problems. I sort of put myself in the position of a counselor.

A brief introduction to Hannah's teaching context

Mini Arts:

> I don't know if you are familiar with the Fort Langley fine arts school. It's a whole school, kindergarten to 12, which is a fine arts school. A lot of them are (the senior level students) planning to pursue other careers along side, as well as or instead of fine arts careers. They need to be in a regular stream so that they have access to all of the electives. If you look at (other Vancouver schools) at the senior level the students are integrated into the regular school. (Depending on who their teacher is, and what teachers they have on staff in the mini). Those students are integrated for a lot of their academics.

> These students (in Mini Arts) are really willing to discuss and they have lots of positive energy. I really enjoy teaching them. They are not all top students but there is a lot of really good energy in the classroom.

Primarily Hannah teaches in the Mini Arts program. Mini Arts functions as a mini school. Entrance into Mini Arts involves applications and auditions; this ensures that requirements are not entirely based on grades. A strength in Music or the Arts, a positive attitude, good work ethic and the ability to work in collaborative and cooperative environments are all part of the standard of this program. This helps create the sense of community and positive class culture which is characteristic of Mini Arts classes. Although there is a general understanding amongst teachers and the student body that grades must be maintained at a minimum of a C+ average, what is mandatory is that the students' periodic work habits evaluation does not fall below satisfactory. The emphasis becomes the effort and the process, not just achieving and maintaining a high grade. In short, the students in Hannah's Mini Arts classes are generally positive, well-rounded students who enjoy school and are academically inclined.

Literature 12:

In addition to her Mini Arts students, Hannah teaches Literature 12. Unlike many schools, there is no screening or application process which means that all students are eligible. Despite the daunting curriculum the class has always attracted both stronger and weaker students. E.S.L. students, gifted writers, practically illiterate students as well as those who are passionate about literature are just a few of the extremes Hannah may have in her class in any given year. This year her class is composed of a highly animated group of students who bring forth a positive energy. Although there are some "reluctant readers" (Lit. 12 student) and others who "breathe literature by choice," (Lit. 12 student) all of her students feel fortunate to have "such a knowledgeable and gifted teacher" (Literature 12 student).

> *Well, it's not necessarily my choice. It is just the way things have always been here. I don't mind it at all but I know that some schools really discourage students who are weak from taking Lit. I have actually had debates with students who have wanted to be in my class, who I didn't think belonged. I remember, this girl was wandering through my class and she wanted to enroll. She wasn't attending school and was failing everything and I said, "No, I don't think it is the right class for you." She just stood there and argued with me. She was wonderful! I said to her at the end of the year, "I am so glad you won that argument because I loved having you in my class."*

I just have kids every year that are interesting, but I have a lot of strong students too. Yup, they pass but they struggle. I had one E.S.L. student who at the end of every class would come up to me and say,"I didn't understand anything we did today. Could I come in and see you?" Nearly one hour after every class was spent with her. It was exhausting. It was too much.

Stages of Experience

Stage # 1: Survival

Hannah spent her initial stage as a teacher in survival mode. She made bold efforts to maintain the disposition of a "real teacher" despite the nagging feeling that she was ill prepared. Having only been in the classroom during three 2-week practicums over the course of four years, she struggled with considerations of why anyone would want to pay her to "pretend to teach." After one month of being a T.O.C., she was offered an elementary school position as a full-time grade 3/ 4/ 5 teacher. It was at this elementary school that she met the two teachers who would ineradicably change her vision of teaching. In regards to these two teachers Hannah had the following to say:

I had two teachers who took me under their wing. I would say they were master teachers; they taught me some very basic principles about teaching which have been invaluable. I still use what they taught me. Their voices still speak to me.

One was very theatrical and she could turn the classroom into a story. Every class of hers was dramatic. There was something going on. The kids were riveted by her.

What I learned from her was that you have to be able to make a fool of yourself in front of students. You have to be willing to be vulnerable. Not in the sense that you have to tell them all sorts of personal information about yourself, but you have to be willing to become a fictional character.

The other one which was really important to me was that if a student needed me at the end of the year I had not done my job. If a student left my classroom and said, "How am I going to survive in English next year without you?," that would mean that I had failed because my job is to teach the students that they can do it on their own and give them the confidence that they can work on their own and not feel that they have to be with a certain teacher ... she did a really good job of drilling that into me. "Students need to be independent of you by the end of the year."

A time of transition...

Hannah's initiation into teaching was facilitated by the process of learning how to

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overcome the introductory "survival mode." Feelings of uncertainty about what, how and who she was teaching had inundated her daily teaching context. Looking around she witnessed other more experienced teachers casually walking down hallways, making lunch dates, talking about their day and engaging with students. She questioned if a sense of confidence for being a teacher in the school would ever emerge. How did teachers move past the stage of never feeling a day ahead of their marking or lesson plans?

The only way to journey past this initial stage of discomfort is to embrace it fully, learn to prioritize and develop a clear purpose in the classroom. Now that I watch Hannah in her veteran years of teaching, I am not convinced that she is any less overwhelmed. The piles of marking remain in her briefcase to take home for the weekend; the endless hours of in school involvement have not subsided and the standard which she has set for herself as a teacher has designated her a "forever learner." What has changed, however, is her heightened awareness of why and how she chooses to teach. What now defines her as an "amazing teacher" by her students is not how quickly and efficiently she is able to complete her marking. Nor is it how capable she is of "appearing to know" before her students or colleagues. Instead, her stature stems from how she inspires students to think by engaging them in lessons regarding literature and life. Her focus is to teach what she loves, emphasizing process, learning and perpetual engagement. This "veteran approach" to teaching allows for a manageable perspective on other areas of being an English teacher which can, legitimately, become taxing.

Hannah was fortunate that she had two teachers early on who were able to help her past this initial stage of survival. Working with these "master teachers" who not only modeled effective teaching but who were willing to engage in pedagogical discussions was invaluable. It gave her a framework in which to place herself as a guide for her growth as a teacher. These teachers did not dictate who she should be; they modeled their teaching and Hannah made personal decisions according to what worked within her goals and developing pedagogy. Hannah internalized the principles by which they taught, not the rules these 'master teachers' followed; this enabled her to apply and adopt what she learned to other teaching contexts.

Stage # 2:   Establishing & Maintaining Boundaries

Hannah's second stage emerged at a West side secondary school in Vancouver where she took a position to work as a special education teacher. At that time in her career students were just three to four years younger than her. The challenge was to establish a boundary between her and her students which would allow for an effective student/ teacher relationship. Remaining approachable and accessible were key, yet students could not be confused as to her role in their lives. With the voice of her former mentor ringing in her ears, she did not want her students to see her as a friend; she was their teacher. Achieving such a goal, however, was a constant juggling act.

> *Now 5 or 6 years after they have graduated, when they have come back to see me, they don't need to call me (by my last name), especially if we are in a class together at UBC. I have been in classes up at UBC with a few of my former students and they still keep calling me (by my last name). I tell them, "You don't have to do that anymore." The boundary is important. I don't think you draw the line (boundary), though, by having students call you by a certain name. I don't think it would matter if I had students call me by my first name or by my last name. You just establish that distance in other ways but it is really hard to define them. So that is what I had to do when I came to high school.*

> *I think you just need to be aware that there is an important boundary to establish between you and your students. It is not a boundary which is meant to make you less approachable, it is just to give the students a sense of safety. They need to know who you are and what your role in their lives is, that you are there to help them learn. Because actually, that is your function as a teacher. No matter how friendly you are, you have to remember that is your role.*

Sometimes teachers, especially novice teachers, are confused about their role in students' lives. They wish for students' approval so they play the role of their friend. Students stop by, teachers hang out and initially the teacher is accepted. However this acceptance comes at a high price. If students confuse rapport with friendship their learning may be jeopardized. Boundaries must be established early on so that learning may occur.

> *I'll give you an example of a time when it (becoming a student's friend) hasn't worked. A student teacher came in and would spend the first 5 or 10 minutes of class*

*chatting in a very informal way. (I think that is way too long to do that, by the way). "How was your weekend? What did you do?"... that sort of thing. I think this teacher's aim was to build rapport in some way. But then the teacher would shift from that to "Now I want you to work!" and there ended up being huge conflicts because the students wouldn't shift. She lost total control of the classroom and was very very angry and had some really nasty confrontations with students. It was all because the students couldn't tell where the boundary was. I think you will find that if you are in a situation and you want to move from bantering to serious work, and you are having trouble making that transition, you have boundary problems. I don't know an easy way to fix those (problems) except that you do. When I say you have to become this fictional character, I mean you have to be someone the students talk **about**, but maybe not **to**, all the time.*

Students who believe that their teacher is their friend may also view their grade as contingent upon that relationship. Evaluations and grades may become personal. Students feel less that they are earning their grade and more that the teacher is 'bestowing' the grade upon them. This changes the students' role from active participant to passive recipient, a change which is not conducive to effective learning. The student becomes further removed from the responsibility of producing the expected results which allows the teacher to become both judge and jury in the students' mind. Dissuading students from feeling responsible for the grades they receive is entirely counterproductive to guiding students into becoming pro-active, independent and autonomous learners. "As student teachers (young teachers) it is really easy to create those dependencies in students because we are concerned with being liked and being their friend." (Hannah)

Stage # 3:   Relevance in an educational setting

It was not until well after her first teaching position that Hannah felt more comfortable wearing the robe of a teacher. She had already taught at a West side secondary school and had returned to school in order to pursue and complete her diploma as a counselor. She had an improved understanding of her role as a teacher as well as how to establish boundaries between her and her students. She was now ready to reacquaint herself with adolescents, teaching and an entirely new school context. She accepted a position to coordinate a family life education program for grade 11's at a secondary school in

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North Vancouver. The class was based on sex and family relationship education. The program was only for two weeks but students had to come every day. For the most part students adored the class because it was relevant to their lives. They were intrigued by discussions of gender relations, power struggles and personal identity. It was at this stage that Hannah awakened to the possibility that teaching had enormous potential. Realizing that effective teaching emanates from relevant learning, her perspective had once again changed. This positive experience in North Vancouver had reshaped her vision of teaching adolescents. High school students had become "interesting" and "it was so much fun to engage with them in a relevant way." In short, educating had become meaningful. Teaching this course in North Vancouver served as a significant catalyst to shaping the teacher Hannah would become. In addition to everything else, she now had a firmer grasp on how bringing relevance to a lesson could impact how and what her students learned.

Stage # 4: Am I prepared to teach English?

Hannah's journey toward her present day teaching context emerged after her experience at the school in North Vancouver. A few years later, she was offered a job teaching secondary English and was "terrified" of not knowing enough information. She had completed a major in English yet was unsure of if she had read enough books or studied enough literature. Teaching English seemed a daunting task.

> *I didn't feel I had enough 'English teacher' training and I didn't feel like I knew the curriculum well enough. I didn't think I would be able to teach the curriculum and then I realized that the curriculum is not something you teach, it is something you use to teach... I started picking stories I really enjoyed. I would convey my excitement to the kids. It worked.*

Once Hannah became immersed within her newly found English position, she realized that teaching English was no different than teaching any other course. "I could make it as relevant as I wanted." She took her previous teaching experiences and what

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she had learned and applied it to her secondary English classes. Her philosophy of education and her teaching methodology had changed.

> I realized that curriculum was just a vehicle. It was not an end in itself. And that is an important stage. It is only the instrument which is used to teach students how to think. It is not what you teach them. I think if what you are teaching is curriculum, you are missing something. If you are teaching people how to think and you are using curriculum to help people learn how to think critically then you are giving them something which is more generic and is going to help them in many ways, it is more meaningful for them and certainly more engaging. And that is where I really fell in love with teaching... The curriculum is the instrument you use to teach students how to think.

> Curriculum is the instrument, not the end. So for example in the discussion we had the other day when Martha said, "I looked up "Godless" (that word) in the dictionary to see if it made sense in context and it had many different meanings." (The student) also looked up "mistress" to see what it meant during the renaissance to see if it meant something different back then, or to see if it had more than one meaning. It opened up a great class discussion. Then Samantha, with her investigation (of <u>King Lear</u>) which lead her to <u>Dante, and Seven Deadly Sins</u> and so... (that sort of investigation) is what I want to teach them to do.

In Hannah's classes, curriculum plays an important role yet it is rarely the focus of a lesson. It is a vehicle that transports students to a determined place which cannot be discovered without creativity and reflection. Students must be able to articulate self composed thoughts along the journey in order to ensure that they are being reflective of why and to where they are traveling.

Hannah's approach to grammar is an ideal example of how she uses curriculum as a "means" and "not an end." (Brandt, 1996) Her purpose for teaching grammar is not to force students to memorize the difference between a subordinate clause and dangling modifier. Instead grammar is an exploration of how to liberate a stifled voice. Understanding grammar allows students to articulate what they think and feel by developing their control over language. Once students realize Hannah's reasons for focusing on grammar, purpose and relevance are more easily established and students become far more willing to partake in the adventure.

So how is this done? Hannah has used worksheets in order to determine if students understand the basics. To ensure that students have a genuine understanding, however, grammar is dealt with on an individual basis. Talking with students about their use of

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grammar and providing helpful feedback on assignments brings clarity to how grammar may be <u>manipulated</u> in order to better convey a message. Students learn that even a minor change in punctuation can radically alter the meaning of a sentence. Hannah also picks common errors from her students' work and uses that as a basis for mini-lessons. Students then use what they have learned from the grammar lesson to make improvements to their work. Arbitrary rules are not being memorized; instead students learn about grammar through the exploration of their own writing. Identifying how various authors &/or poets manipulate grammar in order to create a desired effect is also a possibility.

Even in a class like Literature 12 which is dense with facts which need to be memorized and curriculum which must be covered, the focus remains on how to inspire students to think about literature in relevant and significant ways. Many of Hannah's literature 12 students aspire to attend university &/or college. So the class is also structured to develop in her students the necessary skills for post-secondary success. According to Hannah, students must be able to cope with new academic challenges and develop confidence in their ability to learn. Communicating opinions on literary works through critical questions, analysis, discussion & writing is also integral to their post-secondary success. Students must become autonomous, independent learners and thinkers. It is this vision of her students after high school as "functional beings" and "successful students" which guides the choices she makes in the classroom. Curriculum is only used as a vehicle to inspire students to think about literature. Memorizing what is designated by the curriculum is sometimes a stepping stone, but what is valued in Hannah's class is comprehension and application.

Technology

Hannah's use of technology reflects her philosophy that it is not necessarily the resource but what is done with that resource which provides students with the opportunity to learn. Learning must be authentic, reflective and an ongoing process. Teachers who become well versed in the potential of technology are more adept in

identifying when it is the most appropriate resource for the task at hand.

Hannah's first introduction to technology began with her job in Langley. She worked on a staff of like-minded teachers who were all enthusiastic and dedicated to their jobs. That was her "most fertile learning period." Many of her fondest memories of her 10 year stay in Langley stem from the vast amounts she learned about teaching. For the most part staff worked together at this school and supported each other; learning was an ongoing process.

Hannah became hooked on technology at this school. She attended workshops as well as Pro-D days which were all geared towards creating a techno literate community of teachers. In unison with district support the school built a curricular lab which teachers accessed during school hours. Hannah created a weekly newspaper assignment when she taught *Romeo and Juliet;* she used the publishing program in the lab to provide students with authentically formatted articles. However, in order to do all this she had to reintroduce herself to being a student in her classroom. She made the effort and spent the time learning the basics so that she could use technology as a resource with her students. Realizing the potential of technology is what initially sparked her interest to learn more.

> *I think funding is definitely an issue. If there was enough money to support technology in the way it needs to be supported, then it would be really useful. It is ironic because I just remembered that when I transferred from Langley to here I had actually become hooked on technology.*

> *I was learning MTS (mission terminal system). I don't know if you know what that is but it was the precursor to the Internet. I got really hooked on that. Then a technology teacher started teaching all this stuff about computers. By the next year I was teaching English and Computer Applications 8... by the year that I transferred here I had ended up with 3 computer science 11 classes. I was so gung ho! When I first came to (this school) and was counseling I actually had the computer person from P.W., who managed their curricular lab, phone me. He said, "Well, do you want to come over and manage the lab?" I really wanted to, but then I had already said yes to this job and felt really guilty resigning right away.*

Hannah was fortunate not to be entirely alone in her venture. Every morning she went to the computer application teacher's room to learn something new or ask

questions. Hannah would then apply what she learned to each of her classes. She had became a learner alongside her students in respect to the technology they would be using. This was an ideal learning situation: she always knew where to contact the computer applications teacher and he was usually available. This full-time support allowed her to easily explore areas of technology which she felt could facilitate her students' learning without having to contend with computer problems on her own. Before Hannah left the school she taught a computer applications course which covered the basics such as how to use a word processor and databases. The support and accessibility of computers in her school was impacting her conscious effort to become literate in how to incorporate technology into her daily teaching pedagogy.

Reflecting back to that time, Hannah suggests that her step back from using technology as a primary resource was due to "increased frustrations" once she left the school. She went from being entirely enthusiastic about the potential of technology to being far more cautious and reflective of when and where it was used. Now a teacher at a secondary school in Vancouver, her vision of where technology fits within her daily teaching pedagogy has changed.

V: *Do you think teachers have a responsibility to teach students how to use technology effectively?*

H: *I think there are places where it can come up in the classroom, but I hesitate to take responsibility for everything a student does. I do think parents have a huge responsibility to make sure that their kids are not on computers all the time, or going places they should not go. But at the same time... who knows.*

I know that my experience at UBC and again with Sean who is a computer whiz has been really great. She showed us how to access information off the computer. That was really useful information and it is something that teachers could teach students. (For instance) helping them differentiate between a useful site and one that is not going to have reliable information: as an English teacher I think I could do that.

So I'll use technology, it is valuable, but I am also aware that a lot of our students have access to computers outside of the classroom. They also probably know more about computers than I do. If I were teaching and had to choose between books and computers I would pick books. But at the same time I use the Internet for assignments and it has been quite interesting. I did an assignment with students where I introduce students to an author. For example, I would put together a computer scavenger hunt. (I actually stole this idea from a teacher at UBC). I do use the scavenger hunt for particular authors; students can find facsimiles of drafts on line, and all sorts of interesting facts about the author as a person, author, etc. You have to

go through and do a little research yourself but it's worth it. Now, I have also used it (the lab), and will NEVER use it again, for word processing. That's because our network keeps going down. It has become just one nightmare after another. We will get to the end of the period, or 20 min. into the assignment and they will go to save and it (the computers) won't save anything. Or we'll go in there and I've set aside the period for work but they can't log on because the system is down. I find those types of things really frustrating. So I don't know if I would use it for word processing unless I knew it would be reliable. Then I think it could be a really useful tool, but if it is not reliable it can be a problem. Abby and Irene have done power point presentations which is a great idea BUT they have had lots of problems too. Students try to put on (their presentations) and there are glitches, and then people are just sitting around waiting. Time is slipping by. Those kinds of things I would like to see solved before I really embrace technology.

Initially Hannah had attempted to recreate the manner in which she had previously used computers. However, using computers for classroom or group word processing assignments and power point presentations no longer seemed productive. As is the complaint of so many teachers, complications with the resource began to far outweigh the benefits. Too much precious time was lost desperately trying to do 'damage control' without there being the appropriate support. A solution Hannah suggests would be to have computers in the classroom so that if they didn't work teachers could just adapt and carry on with the lesson.

Yes, I do use technology. When I think about this, there are ways which are more successful than others. I did try using them for classroom or group word processing assignments, but it is not a good way to use them. Files get lost, computers crash, so it becomes a nightmare. Kids would spend an hour working on something, they (kids) would save and their work but it would just get lost in cyberspace. Students couldn't retrieve their work.

It's more, for me, a matter of how much time I have wasted with computers that don't work. With plans that don't work out. And I lose track of students' assignments and then they have to redo them. Then you know they have to come in late because they (the student) has to redo everything. It just goes on and on.

Even after such early tribulations, Hannah did not entirely abandon her use of technology. Instead she now reflects with greater clarity as to how she can retain the benefits of technology without having to contend with the inherent and unpredictable problems of a computer lab. She now only uses technology to support specific predetermined goals; goals which cannot be achieved as effectively with another

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resource.

*H: I have accessed unit plans for Shakespeare, for example. And I rarely
use them but I do tailor them to my own teaching style and stuff. So I do often check
it (the Internet) out to see what's around.*

*V: Do you often give assignments working on the assumption that they can access a
computer at home?*

*H: Oh yes... Well for research assignments, definitely. We do have a curricular lab in the
school so even if they don't have a computer at home they should be able to go in
at lunch or after school to do some research. I have my grade 8's take a learning
styles inventory. It is one you can take on the computer and it tells you exactly how
you can study for exams and stuff.*

V: Did you do that this year?

*H: Yes, I did that this year and I found a university site (last summer when I was
teaching summer school for 2 weeks) it (the course that I was teaching) was a essay
writing program for students, most of whom did not even speak English. I did not
know how I was supposed to teach essay writing to students who were just learning
how to speak. So what I did was I showed them where they could get help on the
computer, where they could get tutorial programs for essay writing. I started with
OWL , (are you familiar with OWL?) and then I found this wonderful site which had
links to nearly every decent university in North America. There was some really
interesting stuff on their sites which could really be useful to students. I would use it
(technology) for students to learn how to access material for learning styles, materials,
reviews.*

Her Literature 12 students used technology when she taught *To a Louse* by
Robbie Burns. Students were asked to paraphrase as much of the poem as possible
working in groups or on their own. While many of the words are in an archaic form of
English, the poem is written in an old Scottish dialect which makes certain words difficult
to decipher. Students could look the more challenging words up on their computer at
home through Scots online. For students who had trouble with the basics of the text,
using their computer as a resource was extremely advantageous. The assignment was
optional, but students who needed the additional help could use their computer as a
resource.

When Kathy taught *Who Has Seen the Wind* by W.O. Mitchell, students conducted
a scavenger hunt. Hannah took her students to the lab, gave them the author's name as
their subject and asked them to explore and then share what they uncovered. Students

were able to access original manuscripts online as well as the editing process of his writing. Such discoveries lead to valuable discussion about the author and the intricate process of writing. Regardless of the subject, conducting such a scavenger hunt allows students the freedom to explore and discover connections to the subject which are of personal interest and relevance. Students are engaged which is why learning is far more likely to occur.

In this last scenario, Hannah's students are not engaged just because they are working on a computer; their motivation stems from the authenticity of the assignment; they have been encouraged to think critically, make decisions and pursue areas of personal interest in relation to the subject. It is the thought which has gone into how her students will use the resource which has created the successful lesson. As with other resources which Hannah uses, the potential of technology as a resource depends on why and how it is used.

Resources:

Hannah has a rich venue of resources at her disposal because she has always made conscious efforts to embrace the role of learner in her classroom. Both with and without technology, she broadens her scope by remaining intrinsically motivated to find resources to enrich her students' learning.

V: *From where do you obtain your most valuable resources?*

H: *Well it is partly from my own resources because I have taken a lot of courses so I have been exposed to a lot of stuff. So for my Lit 12 course, for example, if I want to bring in a 16th century female poet, I know where to go. And I do use the Internet a lot because a lot of the stuff from the Internet you can download and you are not violating copyright.*

V: *So in terms of finding your most useful resources, you will use stuff you have learned about on your own, read about, heard about, but you will also use the Internet to find information, copies, ideas for your class? How often do you use the Internet to find resources for your students?*

H: *A lot. I use it a lot. To check things out, well, either to check things out or to look for material, I would say about 2 or 3 times a week. Sometimes I just browse the Net to*

see if I can find new and updated information, or new lesson ideas that I can alter to use in class. You know, the Net is great because it is so easy; everything is there online.

E-mail:

Hannah also uses technology as a means of communicating with students, their parents and occasionally, other teachers.

V: And do you use E-mail a lot to communicate with other teachers?

H: Sometimes. Although we talk more than E-mail. Although we do E-mail for our book club sometimes. There are teachers from other schools in this book club so for example, one of them was teaching Lear for the first time and wanted some ideas so she E-mailed everybody. And we did talk about, at this poetry workshop I was at, where we all said that we would really like to do this more. Well, we put together an E-mail list of our names. But I haven't heard from anybody and I haven't had the time to do anything about it.

As with most teachers at the school Hannah gives out her E-mail address at the beginning of the year. Students can E-mail her with questions if they are having trouble with their work. They can also contact her ahead of time if they are going to be absent. Parents can quickly ask questions about assignments, due dates, the progress of their son/ daughter or how they can help their child improve. All of this can be done in a momentary exchange where both parties are partaking in the discussion at a time which is convenient. This prevents parents from having to come all the way down to the school for a meeting if the question is relatively quick. In this sense E-mail opens up channels of communication even further between teachers, learners and parents.

Hannah's use of E-mail encourages students to become more independent and pro-active in their learning. E-mail facilitates this growth because it provides students with ample opportunity to ask for help, clarify, or even notify their teacher if difficulties arise. Many of Hannah's students mentioned in discussion that it was hard to come up with excuses when homework wasn't done. As one grade 8 boy states, " What am I supposed to do, say I didn't get it? Yeah, well we both know I could've E-mailed her for help." E-mail has allowed Hannah to become more accessible to her students and their parents. Students are encouraged to be autonomous in their learning and parents are given the opportunity to become even more involved in their child's education.

> *It comes in flux. I would say that when there is an assignment due, that is when I get a flood of questions on E-mail. Normally, if there is not an assignment due I will rarely hear from kids. Although I do , I have heard several times from students who are sick. They will E-mail me to let me know that they are sick or their parents will E-mail me to let me know. And I have actually had really good communication with parents through E-mail because if they have a concern about something, and actually this is more often as my role as Byng Arts coordinator, they can sit down, compose, plan the conversation out and then send it to me. I can then read it, and am given time to think about what they have said.*

Hannah encountered difficulties with one of her grade 8 classes because she mentioned they could E-mail assignments to her in the case of an emergency. If it was sent to her on the day it was due she would accept it and not deduct marks. The only condition was that they bring a hard copy the next day for her to actually collect. Within a short period of time far too many students were "forgetting" their work at home claiming an emergency. Their response? "I'll E-mail it to you tonight." Hannah would then be responsible for checking over 20 assignments in order to verify that they were done. Each one would have to be downloaded because assignments were often sent as attachments. This took forever. After a short period of time she stopped the trend and no longer permitted students to send her assignments through E-mail.

Presently Hannah holds a firm belief that students within most educational contexts should not be allowed to E-mail assignments to their teachers/ professors. Her reasons are not based on the amount of time and energy it takes to download attachments; instead her reasons are as follows:

> *I don't agree with the E-mail assignments they have now. Just the idea that you E-mail in an assignment doesn't seem right. One of the things which seems to have happened with E-mail is that the line has been blurred between the written and the spoken word. And they are starting to use writing as a form of chatting and speaking. I really don't want them E-mailing me conversations. I want them to understand that it is a different form of communication. So, I do blame E-mail for a lot of the sloppiness I see in student work so I am not enthusiastic about them using E-mail for assignments... but I do encourage them to use it to ask me questions about assignments and that sort of thing.*

As with any other resource, E-mail must be used with care. Teachers need to be aware of the consequences of their choices especially when it may so significantly effect how and what students learn.

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Hannah is concerned that students have blurred the line between spoken and written English. They have become so accustomed to writing informally that it becomes increasingly problematic when they need to write according to conventional rules. Students once used pen and paper to brainstorm ideas and outline their thoughts before beginning to write. Now they go straight to the computer and sometimes begin without undergoing an appropriate "process of preparation." They also edit their work on their computers which makes tracking the writing process more challenging. Writing and editing on the computer caters to a much quicker process; the result is sometimes sloppy work. Students need to take time with their work, to print out hard copies in order to edit on paper, put in corrections and continue the process until they are done. Printing out copies and reviewing and editing their work from an analytical perspective is also far more effective than editing their work as a series of isolated parts on a computer screen. Relying less on the computer's ability to edit their work will also benefit students because using grammar and spell check does not make their work flawless, nor does it teach them to analyze their own work. Thus, grammar and spell check are no replacement for manual editing. This is why when Hannah's students are working on essays, she always requests that they edit on paper and hand in all drafts with their final copy. In her class not just the product but the process of writing is valued.

V: Do you often have them hand in work which is not typed?

H: I don't expect them to use computers. I mean, I have very few students who don't hand work in from the computer, but I do have a few students who hand write. I know people I was in school with who think much better by hand and they like to write, they don't like to use the computer, so I don't have a good enough reason to say no to that.

It is really hard if you want to see the writing process. It is so much harder if students are working on their computers because they want to edit as they go. It is just a lot easier for them. Quite often with assignments, like in my last Lit. class, they had to do a line by line analysis of a poem. They had to go through paraphrasing, looking up words, do research on allusions etc. finding out what the original story was, for instance, and they had to take notes and start working from there. Only then could they start to develop a thesis and start writing. I ask to see everything because I have also had problems with plagiarism. I may not be able to catch every single problem but if the students have had to go to the effort to do all of that work, going through a line by line and all the rest, well even if they are plagiarizing, they have had to do so much work it doesn't matter. Especially because they have to edit on the

page and in their notes. It just isn't worth it. They are probably learning something anyway, even if they are working backwards from the line by line they copied. They will end up learning something in the process.

Teaching with technology may change the classroom environment. Students are easily distracted by what they can access at their fingertips. Technology also caters more to individual investigations than to group work, so students inevitably disconnect. Hannah believes that technology may change the teaching/learning process because the environment becomes far less interactive. Students interact with their computers but not with their peers or the teacher. Computers tamper with the delicate tension of discussion in the classroom which inspires engagement and critical thinking. So while technology does have a place in the school, something intimate which is integral to teaching in an English classroom is lost when technology is used; learning becomes depersonalized. Students are also already isolated and on computers so much that their time in school should promote interaction and involvement.

V: So should technology not have a place in school?

H: I think it could have a place in school, but it can't replace classroom teaching or interaction with students. School is kind of a gathering place where people come together and talk to each other. With too many computers it becomes a temptation, communication can break down because you have a screen in front of you...

It (technology) has a place but I would hate to see a classroom that was centered on technology. If you watch people sit at a computer, it is a little bit like when you walk into a casino. People don't speak to each other. They don't smile. I went to a casino in Penticton and I was astonished by people who were sitting around, not speaking to each other. Part of what happens in my classroom, in an English classroom particularly is that we talk, we discuss things. I don't know if I would want to have people with lab tops in my classroom because I think it would shut down that kind of communication to a great extent... everything becomes depersonalized, I think.

V: Would you say that it is a valuable resource to have for students, at home?

H: Absolutely. But I don't know if I would ever want to have computers in the classroom because whenever I go by rooms that have computers I see children playing solitaire. I think it would just be too much of a distraction if computers were in the classroom. Too much temptation. Besides, I know that a lot of our students are on their computer from the time they go home until the time they go to bed at night. I don't know that they need more time in the classroom.

In classes where technology is central, absentee rates are also much higher. Students don't view computers as a valuable way to learn, not if the computer replaces the teacher. Perhaps this is because students do not consider computers a serious learning tool. "Classes taught by computers make the class an unimportant place to be" (Senior Student). In comparison to other resources, students approach computers in a far more "playful" manner. So if teachers are going to use technology they must be clear that it serves a legitimate purpose which students also recognize. Otherwise minimal learning will take place and students may not even attend.

Hannah recognizes the importance of providing funds for technology in schools. However the money should go towards supporting and educating teachers in how to use technology in ways which are valuable. Otherwise expensive equipment and programs are collecting dust in libraries and computer labs because very few teachers are skilled enough to use them. Teachers may result in just using computers for word processing or drill exercises. Such a traditional, teacher directed methodology hardly seems appropriate for effective computer use. If the point is just to have the students complete worksheets on fancy equipment, what is the point?

Concerns about using technology:

In the following dialogue Hannah outlines how a computer Math class was run several years back. The results of implementing this program in the school embody many of Hannah's concerns about using technology inappropriately in school.

> *We were piloting a computer-based Math curriculum. I can't remember what the grade level was (I don't think they still run this program at all), but what ended up happening was that students were working with material where they could work through a problem (at their own pace). When they worked through a problem they could access the right answer to check it and see if it was right. The teacher basically disappeared out of the picture for most classes. Now it did depend on the teacher, how direct the teacher was, but what was happening was that students just stopped focusing on Math. What they found they could do was that they could go straight to the answer and then kind of look at what they had done and look at the answer and figure, "Oh I got it wrong. Or, oh I got it right." But they weren't really learning. There was none of that spirit of inquiry that you might expect to be there. It just wasn't there with these young adolescent kids. They just wanted to play on the computer; they*

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did not want to use it as a serious learning tool. So maybe if you can teach them that it is a serious learning tool... you would really have to work on that, because for them, for most of their lives it has been a source of entertainment and pleasure. What was happening in these classrooms was that the teacher was setting the programs up and the kids appeared to be working. They would put the double screen thing up that you were talking about earlier and they would play games. Parents were up in arms by the end of the year because the students did very poorly on exams.

So I don't know. You would have to be able to deal with that whole issue that this is a serious learning tool and they don't always approach the computer in that way. They tend to be more playful. But if you think of the process of teaching and learning as being the focus and not the product, then you can't justify spending money or something like that. When I first came into English I learned that curriculum was just an instrument to teach people to think. Well, that is what I am talking about. If you are getting students to do that kind of worksheet work on the computer then perhaps the lesson is taking on more importance than it should. First of all, there is no opportunity to really learn and play with ideas because it is "bird shoot," where the curriculum is everything and the process of learning becomes secondary.

Hannah as a student learner:

Hannah now lives in a stage where she intends to stay until she retires; she is a teacher/ learner. Since 1992 she has taken courses as a means of keeping herself alert, involved and engaged in her students' learning. Up to date she has completed the equivalent of four plus years of credits at he university level, one year of English during her undergraduate degree, and 2 years of a Masters in English literature. She has taken classes in classical studies and is presently learning how to speak and read Latin. This venture has enabled her to teach Literature 12 in new and innovative ways.

I do want to spend my time with Latin for awhile and ancient literature. It's still literature but it is literature that has had a huge effect on how we tell stories in English or just on narrative I guess... then I will see what I will do next.

Hannah reads ancient texts in Latin to her students as a means of introducing a poem or a script. Her students sit riveted as they hear her slowly enunciate each word with passion and care. Discussions begin about the origins of words, the connotations of sound both in English and Latin and how a nuance has been gained or lost through translation. Always encouraging her students to ask as many questions as possible, discussions begin. Hannah places what they are studying within a historical frame,

constantly drawing comparisons between modern and ancient worlds. Her purpose is to reshape the way her students view literature, her students feel "she changes the way we view the world."

Hannah identifies this stage in her life as "really important professional development" because "it puts me in the position of being a student."

> I am now also a student as well as a teacher and actually have been since 1992. I have done the equivalent of about 4 plus years of credits at university in English. I did 1 year of undergraduate English, 2 years of a masters in literature and now I am on to classical studies. I think that pretty well summarizes it. I think, though, that this is really important professional development because it puts me in the position of being a student. Knowing some of the anxieties that students feel and their concerns about assignments and criteria and all that stuff helps me as a teacher. It is a good reminder to me as a teacher of what it is like to live the life of a student.

> Oh there was one more think I wanted to say. You know how you were saying before that you would become nervous when you had to do oral presentations, when I was doing my Masters I had to do a lot of oral presentations. Now, I am used to standing up in front of the class all the time and that is no problem. Other students would then just assume that this (oral presentations) would be so easy for me because I was normally in front of a class. Yet I didn't realize how nervous I would be speaking in front of my peers as opposed to in front of younger people. I was so nervous. This also made me aware of how students may feel when they have to get up there and talk in front of the class. I mean the dynamic is entirely different.

Being a student allows her to reacquaint herself with everyday student anxieties. For instance, reliving an experience where receiving a high grade depends on fulfilling someone else's criteria can be frustrating. Nearly all students have experienced the dreaded moment when lots of hard work has been returned with a disappointing grade or a negative comment. This is not to suggest that all students work for the grade; however, most students do equate the grades they receive with the value of their work. Some students are unsuccessful in teachers' classes because they have trouble guessing at teachers' criteria. As a student Hannah has become more aware of the legitimacy of these sorts of concerns.

> I think that is a really important idea. I know I do model essays for my students, especially when they are fist learning how to write essays. This way they can see what I expect of them. It is really important. Like I remember my daughter, and I won't name any teachers' names, but she came home with a Lit. 12 assignment which was to be no more than 700 words max. The teacher had said that anything

over 700 words, well it would not be read. And the question was one of the ones that you see circulated in textbooks and Lit. readings and lesson materials. I think he had just pulled it out of one of those "materials" and just given it to them. It was a useful topic, something like, "Take three poets from the romantic period and compare and contrast them or their approach to poetry" or something like that. My daughter was trying to write this in 700 words and I kept telling her, "You can't write that in 700 words. You can't even write about 1 poet in 700 words and deal with them adequately." She did get a good mark on it and she did not go beyond 700 words, but the criticism was all focused on things like, "A failure to develop your ideas fully." I thought, "If you had sat down yourself and tried to write this in 700 words, you would have discovered that it was an impossible question!"

How students are evaluated is not even the only issue. Teachers sometimes forget how traumatic it may be to try and write a brilliant poem or essay in 45 minutes, or to be forced to read personal works in front of the class. How well would teachers contend in such circumstances? Surely, at the very least, they would not be inspired or engaged. Fully immersed within this stage of being a student/ learner Hannah has the following to say:

I do try to be clear in my instructions, and I understand that questions about marks are not always because students are obsessed about grades. Students really want to be clear about where they are going and why. It gives them a sense of safety. Give clear instructions and think ahead to what you are really looking for in an assignment. Lots of times teachers will set up, well even criteria based learning/ assessment, but they have not really thought about why they are giving the students the assignment. What is it you really want them to learn? I mean, I have been in situations in university where my professors have given me assignments but they really haven't been clear about what they wanted until after the presentation or paper. That is really frustrating. That sort of thing has changed my attitude towards that kind of student questioning about assignments. I think you need to give them relevant goals and make them feel confident that they know what they are doing. Actually, that is one way I have changed. It (being a student) makes me think more about what kinds of assignments I give. Even when I think about things like... in my Lit. 12 class, they get an in-class essay on everything we have covered. I hate in-class essays. I have to write them (as a student) so what being a student has taught me about that is that as a teacher what I am really looking for is a very specific kind of knowledge. That is how they will score points. Students score points for very basic principles, they need to show me what they know, but writing style isn't the ultimate test. I mean, they must become competent and know how to write but what I am really focusing on in an in-class assignment is point score (on their knowledge). I had to get to that by actually writing some in class essays where I spent all my time working on perfecting my composition, but not really saying enough. My mark suffered because of it. After talking to my prof. I realized that. So it (being a student) helps me in that way. That is just one example, but it makes me think about what it is I am evaluating, what it is like for the students, what they may or may not like. If they don't like in class essays, I need to be able to tell them why it is I want them to do it. Why, if they don't like it, do

I believe it is worthwhile. To say to them, "Oh because you have an exam at the end of the year and you will have to write one" is not a good enough reason. I am now more aware of those kinds of reflections/ conversations.

The spirit of Hannah's teaching stems from translating what she has learned from being a student into her every day teaching pedagogy. She has become more aware of the assignments she gives and the criteria by which she evaluates. For instance learning how to write an class essays has better equipped her with how to aid her students through a similar process. After all, effective teaching stems from 'teaching from experience.' Students also have tremendous respect for Hannah because she is a student. In the words

of one of her senior Literature 12 students, "she has been there, not 100 years ago but the way it is today. She knows what it is like to be a student."

Student Teachers:

Hannah has been fortunate in the student teachers she has had. A trend she has noticed, however, is that they could benefit from spending more time thinking about what they actually want their students' to learn. Far too often they arrive ready to teach with the "varied lesson plan." Students are busy but minimal reflection has gone into the purpose of the lesson. Building activities around a relevant purpose will bring significance to what students are being asked to do.

I often see student teachers come in and they have the 'varied lesson plan.' A little of this, a little of that and they are not really thoughtful about why they are doing what they are doing. They have a lot of "stuff" but if is not connected in any way. It doesn't seem to move them forward in the lesson; it just keeps students busy. It (to understand the "why" of a lesson) is just such a simple idea but such an important one. If you are starting off, understanding this principle is very important. Afterwards you can always build on what you know, and make things more interesting. That's when the variety comes in. You should always know why you are doing what you are doing (in class); that should be their (student teachers') guiding principle. But I really don't think much emphasis is put on that in B.Ed. programs.

In a general sense, I think what you (student teachers) need to do is determine what your students know coming into it (a lesson). If you are dealing with technology, what's the knowledge base of most of your students? It is probably better than yours or mine to begin with. So just like when you are teaching anything else ask the

basic questions: what do you expect that they know? Once you have figured out where they are, you want to figure out where you want them to go. You will probably do this unit by unit, hour by hour. What information would you like them to go out of the room with which they didn't have coming in? Or what skill or whatever. How will they be changed by this hour they have spent? How will you get them to that point? When they (student teachers) are using technology, they need to go through that same process as with any other teaching decisions. What do I want students to get out of using this resource? Why am I even using this resource? Otherwise, students are just kept busy... I guess that's the same with technology. Student teachers think they have to use it, so they do. But they don't really know how. So they just use it to entertain the kids. That bugs me. Just know what you are doing and why you are doing it. That's so important.

Hannah stresses the necessity of taking the time and providing the resources to teach pre-service teachers how to use technology. The focus, however, should be on determining what is motivating their choice to use technology. If engaging students in a lesson is the only reason, it is a questionable motive. It doesn't matter if teachers are using textbooks, worksheets or computers as long as they have a legitimate reason if a student asks "why?"

Preparing student teachers:

Student teachers begin their B.Ed. program expecting guidance and direction in how to prepare for teaching. Perhaps part of that process of preparation needs to be a united emphases amongst faculty that students become more reflective of the purpose of their job; the primary role of a teacher is not to entertain or keep students busy; it is to teach. Student teachers need to become far more reflective not only of what and how to teach, but of how to acquire the most appropriate resources for the learning they hope will occur.

V: Do you think that teaching can be taught?

H: I think there are certain things you can certainly teach student teachers, but who knows how they (the student teacher) may develop after that. Someone who may not be a natural teacher may end up doing a pretty good job of teaching as long as they are thinking and learning about what works in the classroom and why they are doing what they are doing. It is totally possible to train someone in that respect although, they may never be that legendary kind of teachers kids remember. You never really know how people will develop.

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V: So you do believe that teaching can be learned?

H: I think there are a lot of things which can be learned, yes.

V: I guess a conscious effort would have to be made.

H: The key is that you have to have someone who sees learning as an ongoing process. There is no end point. Not ever. NEVER! It just doesn't stop. As long as you understand that ... that is one of the things I always try to emphasize with my student teachers and with my students too. I say, "You know, I don't really care where you are in September, it's about where you end up." (Well, that's not exactly true, but anyhow). What I care about is have you moved from where you are. As long as you continue to progress, well, that's what is important. That is the same with student teachers. The same principle applies.

V: So would it be beneficial to include 'training in how to use technology' in a B.Ed. program?

H: I think that would be REALLY useful, very valuable. I think the focus should be on: "What is motivating you? Why are you choosing to use the Internet? Is it because you are hoping that this is going to be your way of engaging your students? If that is

the only reason for you to use the Internet, well, it is a questionable motive. It may not be a totally bad idea but there has to be a better reason than that. If you, for instance, could work on them with not only where it is useful but to have them think through, "Why am I doing this in the first place? How is this going to be more useful than something else? Why is it necessary?" That is the kind of thinking that would make it (a class with technology) useful.

You need to always think about why you are doing what you are doing. Kids will always say to you, "Why?" I will say to my kids at the beginning of the year, "you should always be able to ask the question, "Why are we doing this?" I really believe that I should be able to give them a decent answer. If I can't, I haven't thought this through. Now, with technology the temptation is to use it because you know the kids are not going to ask you that question. They just love sitting in front of a computer, but that is not a good enough reason to be putting them in front of a computer.

I think with technology or anything it is a basic principle (to know why you are using it to teach). If our kids know more about technology than we do, which is probably most likely the case, then you really have to think carefully about how you are going to use technology in a way which is still going to be useful for them.

Pro-D:

For many teachers, Pro-D is most valuable when teachers are provided an opportunity to observe, interact, share and discuss issues of personal relevance with other teachers; there are far too few opportunities to do this which is unfortunate. Such

learning sessions are oftentimes invaluable to teachers' growth as professionals.

V: *So what has influenced your teaching the most has been personal development and the classes you have taken on your own?*

H: *And working with my fellow teachers because we discuss and they share stuff with me. We did have a group at (our school), the learning strategies group, which was huge for my personal development. Her (our leader's) name was (Sharon) and she was doing her Ph.D. ... she was coordinating our group and that was really good. That kind of thing has been great.*

The most useful ProD has always been when you are talking to others who are teaching and who have the same dedication as you.

I went recently to a workshop on poetry given by Roy Miki, from Simon Fraser, and by the end of the workshop all of the teachers were just saying, "Why don't we have opportunities to just sit around and talk about how we teach poetry, what works and what doesn't." The professional development that we have doesn't allow us, or give us the freedom to do that most of the time. Yet that is actually the most useful ProD.

Pro-D is not always entirely productive. We need ProD which is productive.

V: *So am I correct in assuming that 'practical' Pro-D days are more useful to your daily teaching?*

H: *The best Pro-D I have ever had has always involved, well the Simon Fraser one I talked about with the student teachers, and the Learning Strategies Group that we were a part of and had running for several years... and my courses and any opportunity I get to sit down and talk about my subject with other live teachers. That i s the best... this has been great Pro-D too, by the way...*

At (D.W. Poppy) I was also working with a really great group of people. I became involved in a peer supervision program. Our administration what super . The school had a partnership with Simon Fraser which is why it worked. They brought (something UBC should consider doing) a whole group of student teachers into our school. We had about 8 in the school. Teachers who had the student teachers were the ones who would be involved with peer supervision. During the practicum teachers could periodically take a period off their supervision of their student teacher and go and observe their partner. (We were all assigned partners and you could go and observe your partner,then they would come and observe you.) It worked so well. It really made me think a lot more about my teaching practice, why I was doing what I was doing and how. That definitely came from observing the other teachers. This (program) also involved the Simon Fraser professors, and eventually someone from the Langley school board who would come and present all the latest educational research. How much time, for instance, do you leave between asking a question and expecting an answer with students. You know, that kind of stuff. That sort of thing is useful.

We had a person from the district come out and work with us, eventually. But usually the people from Simon Fraser were working with us, along side us with the student teachers. They would work with us the whole way through. We would have these little workshops. It was a wonderful program.

V: That is so great that you were able to use the time to observe other teachers.

H: You could only really do it about once a week (to use that time to go observe your partner). Your partner always identified what they wanted you to observe and comment on. Actually, that was also the practice with student teachers. This is actually how Simon Fraser had their student teacher program work: students had to identify what they wanted their teacher to observe for. (Someone could be concerned with classroom management or level of questioning, (for instance). If a student teacher has been told that she was not covering the whole room, then she might say, "O.K., I would like you to watch me for that." We (the teachers) were all working within the same system. When we were observing each other we would identify what we would like our partner to watch us for.

V: I never knew Simon Fraser did that?

H: They never did it more than once or twice. They must have had some extra funding that year. I don't know what it was, but they had professors in our school with us and I think that was the only year it happened.

V: So part of the practicum was that student teachers had to attend the provided workshops with their teachers?

H: Right. We were all getting the same information. It was really good because we were learning the same stuff that the student teachers were learning about. Conferencing, and about observation, and about what works in the classroom. It was really practical stuff.

Student teachers don't know what they are looking at, first of all. They need to learn more about what they are observing, learning.

V: As a teacher and a professional it seems unfortunate that we don't have more opportunity for that because you can't really read about it (how to teach) in a textbook.

H: Right, you have to watch it. And actually that is one of the reasons I don't mind having student teachers because I also learn a lot from them. I now realize that in teaching, if you let yourself get to that stage where you think you have learned it and mastered it, well that is when you start to experience a decline. It really troubles me when I see student teachers who think that within such a short period of time, they feel that they have got it nailed. As soon as you think that way, you stop learning, and as soon as you stop learning your job becomes less interesting, and you are not as good of a teacher. I mean, teaching can become very uninteresting if you do not stimulate yourself. I learned all of that when I was in Langley. I have really fond memories of that time and the way we worked together and the support we had. I was there for a huge chunk of my time.

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?

- Lewis Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Irene:

Irene's vision of technology has been significantly shaped by her dedication for maintaining an academic standard of reading and writing in her classroom. Although a hesitant user, she makes attempts to implement technology when it is the most appropriate resource to meet her students' needs. Her experiences, teaching methodology, use of technology and perspective of student teachers will provide novice and veteran teachers a framework from which to reflect and build upon their own professional growth and teaching context.

Background...

Irene's initiation into teaching began with her first job as a French teacher. She taught F.S.L., junior language arts, French immersion and eventually English. The focus of our interviews are on her stages of development as an English teacher over the past 10 years at the school where she is presently teaching. Her previous experience as a French teacher allowed Irene to begin her journey as an English teacher with an already established sense of who she was as a teacher as well as what she hoped to accomplish with her students. She helps clarify from where she has emerged as a teacher in the following quote:

V: Has your role changed since you first started teaching?

I: You already know I used to be a French teacher. I moved from teaching F.S.l. and junior high language arts to teaching French immersion to teaching English. But over the last 10 years there have been stages, and perhaps that would be useful to talk about... I now have a mentorship role with student teachers and with professional development. I have developed into a senior English teacher at this point.

You build up a repertoire so that you don't feel as frazzled. You have a plan. You have back up material. There is a support group in the school that you can depend on, and you have a reputation so you don't have to lay groundwork all the time... you develop that comfort level but you also need to maintain enthusiasm for your subject area and for your teaching. That would be key.

V: So the marking, daily things like lesson planning, organization, is it still a hassle?

I: Oh certainly. But it is much better. Your coping skills become better and you realize what is important. I am also quite a different person now. I started to teach English at the senior level after a long time of not doing that. So it was quite different. I was also teaching 7 blocks and I found it extremely hectic. I would focus on my marking and try desperately to stay on top of things. Now I am still in that situation, but I don't worry about it as much. It is important to be able to live. I am not sure how much the kids have changed, but I know them better now because I tend to know their siblings. Once you have been in the community you tend to know their families. So there is immediately more rapport because you are part of their world already. You are not somebody who is trying to come in from the outside. You are someone who is already part of the school community. Somebody's sibling will have had you before. You are already a known quantity. As for the students... I think there are still a few students who act up, who smoke in someone's yard, or throw garbage around. A few can effect the reputation of a school. There are kids who don't behave very well, but they are not a huge portion. For the most part, students here are... great.

I also think primarily of the subject now. I don't necessarily think about the curriculum but I do think about the literature. The writing. I think in terms of making them (the students) enthusiastic about literature, how we talk about literature, having fun with it. I also think in terms of what the kids will need from it (my class) in the end. Most of my students are university bound so I want to prepare them to be functional at a university level.

Mini school classes and the AP classes are usually university bound, so that's half of the kids I teach already. For the other classes it may be half and half... Well it could be that the number is changing. I think that the majority used to go but now the entry standards are getting really high. Now there are a lot who think they are going.

Therefore, the endless marking, lesson planning and all of the other time consuming jobs which are inherent to teaching still linger on, but Irene's coping skills have improved. Priorities have changed; marking no longer consumes all of her time. A plan for her classes is in place, she is no longer trying to reinvent the wheel and a refined understanding of her purpose in the classroom has emerged.

Colleagues:

Irene's relationship with Abby and Hannah has also had a significant influence on her growth as a teacher. They consult and bounce ideas off each other and generally work as a support system for each other in the school. Working with these teachers has empowered Irene into feeling she is part of a family. The three of them have been involved in an ongoing discussion which has lasted for years, a discussion which encourages constant reflection. Working with colleagues Irene considers friends also

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promotes a community of trust; it is no longer "just a job."

Part of the result of this friendship is that Irene has become far more "intense" about her teaching. She cares a lot more about what, why and whom she is teaching. Her colleagues are inspiring, dedicated, well respected, and knowledgeable and constantly trying to improve upon their teaching practice. Becoming a part of this 'collective reflective process' brings additional meaning and spirit to her job. This inspiration to remain dedicated, however, is not only abetted by her colleagues but by the nature of her students.

I: *I guess that (development) has to do with the people that I work with. Abby and Hannah in particular. We consult each other and we do rub ideas off of each other... It isn't even so much working with them (Abby and Hannah) as it is talking with them and being part of an ongoing discussion, being part of that group and just being friends. If fact, this school is much more of a close family now. It is a community to which I belong now. It is not just a job. When I first started teaching, I was really frazzled because everything was so new. I was teaching 7 blocks of grade 10/ 11/12 and there was a lot of prep. and a lot of marking, and that is what I focused on. So I didn't look at building relationships, although that ended up happening, thankfully.*

I am now much more intense about my teaching. It matters to me more now. I think that it has mattered more to me each year to do a good job, to be happy with what I do and that I am actually teaching something worthwhile...

V: *What do you think helped create that?*

I: *That intensity? I think the students have helped create that. The type of students that they are. They have high expectations. They are able to perform and you don't want to disappoint them.*

What happened was I began to get a number of enriched classes. So the level changed. So my expectations became higher and so did theirs. The class that you are observing is not an enriched class but I still think that the expectations are higher than they would have been 10, maybe even five years ago. I think it is partly the kind of class, the kind of kids I am getting now.

V: *So you do think your relationship with your students has influenced the way you teach.*

I: *The interaction with students definitely leads you in a certain direction. But I also think a work ethic has taken hold of me. I do not allow myself to go beneath the standard I have set for myself and I don't think I was like that in the beginning...*

And also, to be quite honest with you, I have had to reduce my load to six blocks, otherwise I wouldn't be able to maintain the same standard because the demands of

the job are so high. When you are teaching 7 blocks, it seems to be an impossibility. I mean, yes there is an increased comfort level, but the load is still too much for an English teacher. I am sure you probably know that. Your (own personal) life becomes very narrow.

Irene's Students:

Irene's students primarily come from professional families where teachers and education are valued. Most of these students are university or college bound and have high expectations; they count on their teachers to develop in them the necessary skills for post-secondary success. Working with such students has encouraged Irene to set high standards for her classroom; students arrive at class already armed with an opinion of what they hope to achieve. This achievement is not just defined through grades; they want experiences in their senior English class which are relevant and meaningful. They wish to take something with them on their post-secondary travels which will arm them with the security that they are ready, prepared and able. This expectation which students bring to the classroom has contributed to Irene's growing dedication to her job.

Teaching Methodology

Throughout our discussions Irene continually identified herself as a traditional teacher. This is influenced by her conviction that in the classroom she is the authority. At times her lessons are teacher directed and she has used worksheets and checked if students have memorized literary devices and narrative forms. Yet does this define her as a traditional teacher? Not exactly. For the most part Irene falls under the constructivist frame. Her role is not just to impart knowledge, but to have students belong to an academic environment which values critical thinking and the process learning.

V: So far I haven't seen you conduct the class as though your opinion of the literature is more important than your students'.

I: I certainly hope I don't do that because their ideas are often very good. They will have a germ of an idea which is really great, but then they will just not quite get there because they don't have the confidence, perhaps...

V: So the way you teach now, is that similar to how you were taught?

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I: No, I think high school is much more demanding now. I am certainly more demanding of my students than my teachers were of me. I didn't feel like I learned to write about literature in high school. I learned to do personal responses and I recited poetry. It was a French school and we did a lot of French literature. I did book reports and that kind of thing but I didn't do analytic writing about literature... although it was also quite creative and fun and we did projects. But it was not quite so rigorous. Research essays, for example, we never did lengthy essays.

V: We were talking briefly last time about stages...

I: Right, you are asking me if I have changed? And I would say, yes. A lot. But I certainly never manage to teach the same lessons again. They manage to change all the time. And how I am as a teacher really depends on the class and our rapport. I wouldn't say that I was a nontraditional teacher. I think that I am quite a conventional teacher. I certainly believe that the teacher is in charge of the class and that I know a lot more about literature than they do. They can certainly learn a lot from each other, but they have to learn from me too. So I am traditional in that sense.

Irene is a fountain of knowledge when it comes to her expertise in English Literature. Armed with a Masters degree in comparative literature she has broadened her knowledge base which has enabled her to more effectively teach her classes. Yet from my daily observations of her regular grade 11 class, she does not use her knowledge as an excuse to impose her views upon her students. She uses what she knows as a springboard, a stepping stone and is genuinely interested in her students' ideas and how their ideas can be developed. Her priority is not to "impart knowledge" but to engage students in the lesson and encourage them to pursue their own ideas. Each student's opinion is treated with respect and valued through discussion as long as the student is making a genuine effort. Although by nature her demeanor is rather reserved, she makes an attempt to connect with her students through humor in order to keep them interested and focused.

The manner in which Irene teaches her classes partially depends on her rapport with her students. Each class may require an adjustment in resources, strategies, assignments or even methodology. These are the fine tuning skills which allow veteran teachers to apply what they have learned from past teaching experiences to new circumstances and situations.

Importance of Teacher Knowledge:

One theme which continually emerged from my discussions with Irene is her belief that an English teachers' knowledge base is what liberates that teacher to teach effectively. Innovative strategies and magical lessons are of minimal use on their own. They are tools which are far more effectively used if English teachers are already well versed in literature and writing. In Irene's class the focus shifts from being on strategies and resources to a more pertinent focus of literature, writing, discussion and thought. Irene's belief is that a genuine understanding of the material allows her to be less rigid and more flexible in how and what she chooses to teach. Such a knowledge base permits classroom materials to be more readily applied to students' lives and daily issues.

Irene also knows that her senior students expect to be prepared for university. They must learn to think critically, write effectively and develop skills which will allow them to interpret and analyze literary works. In order to do this Irene believes their English teacher must be scholars, students of literature.

Irene advocates that the solution, if at all possible, is to pursue a masters degree in literature; a Bachelor's degree is not enough. It cannot ensure that adequate emphasis has been placed on developing appropriate skills for academic writing or the analysis of literature.

V: You mentioned that student teachers and teachers in general should do their masters?

I: Yes, absolutely. I really think that it is necessary in order to teach the senior grades. These very bright students know when you are (unsure of the material). They know when you are going through the motions, or when you are not particularly confident or knowledgeable. I think it is key. It could be that when I got my first degree I wasn't a very serious student. It could be that many people get their bachelor degree and are very knowledgeable, but I wasn't. Getting my graduate degree was key to my becoming a good writer and a good reader and to learning how to approach literature.

V: Was that why you pursued your masters?

I: No, I did it for interest. I didn't even intend to go back to teaching when I took the comparative literature degree. I wasn't really sure. I was pretty unfocused at that time. I just knew that I was really interested in literature and language.

Being a student:

Learning how to write effectively through the personal experience of achieving a graduate degree is an aid to English teachers because it allows for a greater understanding of the process of writing. After all, writing cannot be learned just by reading texts. Writing is about process, trial, error, editing, reediting and then starting again. It also takes time and effort to learn how to develop critical opinions of literary works; learning the process of analysis and writing is an enormous feat. Yet the result is that English teachers who partake in the challenge acquire an improved understanding of how to aid students through a similar process. The logic is that teachers can only teach what they know, and knowledge is only internalized through experience. Therefore, teachers must continue to experience learning in order to improve their knowledge base.

I: I am interested in Pro-D but I still have to say that the most useful resources were in graduate school where I began to think about literature like I do now. I became very analytical about literature and I developed my own writing skills. Both those things have remained key to how I am in the classroom and that continues to be a frame of reference for my teaching...

V: So as you grew as a writer, you felt more comfortable in how you could facilitate your students' learning?

I: Oh yes. I think so. It is a difficult thing to develop an expertise as a writer, especially as a writer about literature. It is a very complex thing. I think it is much beyond a bachelor's normally, or a major in something.

Yet it is not just the fact of going to graduate school. It is the fact that the subject is a passion, a passionate interest. I continue to learn about it (my subject) all the time. For instance, I didn't do poetry in graduate school, but I teach poetry and I am happy that I teach it well. It is a matter of pursuing it (what you wish to learn) and knowing how to develop your learning in an area. You just have to have a certain background in order to know how to go about it.

V: So would you say that you were relearning how to be a student as opposed to just developing yourself as a teacher?

I: Right, yes... you realize how frustrating it is to sit there for 80 minutes and not actually learn anything, not take anything away from that experience. Very frustrating.

Her time as a student also serves as a constant reminder of the contingencies of being a student. This perspective is easily forgotten by teachers who have not returned to school since their undergraduate years. When teachers reacquaint themselves with being a student, they become immersed in a process of learning which is intellectually and physically taxing. This can be a humbling experience; however it serves as a fruitful reminder of what our students may be experiencing every time we assign them an essay, project or presentation.

Curriculum:

Teachers who have an extensive knowledge base are also far less bound by curricular mandate. The focus changes from teaching and learning "just to cover the curriculum" to teaching and learning for a relevant reason. What makes this possible is having a firm grasp on the content and purpose of the lesson so as to easily adopt, and adjust the materials according to the needs of the class.

Nearly each student I interviewed at the participating school stated that learning just because it is part of the curriculum is useless. "No real learning takes place" (Grade 12 student). However the problem is not with curriculum, it is with how and why the curriculum is being implemented. In Irene's class, curriculum is used as a "vehicle to educate." It is not the purpose for teaching; it is merely a guideline, a tool from which to build, develop and explore ways of thinking. Irene's use of the curriculum is to expound upon the importance and possibilities of literature, reading and writing. I reintroduce an earlier quote which most appropriately captures this position:

I:	*I think primarily of the subject now. I don't necessarily think about the curriculum, but I do think about the literature. The writing. So I think in terms of making them enthusiastic about literature. So we talk about literature, have fun with it. Also in terms of what the kids will need from it in the end. Most of my students are university bound so I want to prepare them to be functional at a university level.*

Student Teachers:

Irene's primary concern with student teachers does not rest in their ability to teach. For the most part they are well intending perspective teachers who try hard, mean well and are oftentimes very talented. Irene's solicitude abides with their limited knowledge in their subject area as well as the lack of rigor in their training. How are student teachers supposed to teach grammar in relevant ways if they are not sure of the grammar themselves? The standard of lesson becomes diluted, students lose respect for the student teacher and the learning process is tainted. "Students don't respect you if you don't really know what you are talking about and they (students) know because they can pick things up." (Irene)

V: Is there an area in which student teachers can improve?

I: The subject area, for English... See I think ideally they should have a masters degree in English but I know that is not realistic. I don't think it will ever happen but I do think that is how you get the kids respect. They don't respect you if you don't really know what you are talking about and they know because they can pick up on things.

I also think they should be taught to use technology, for sure. But it is not the most important thing. They should have a literature degree, a writing degree. Besides, it is something they can acquire fairly easily. I don't think it (learning about technology) is too difficult.

It is not so much that they don't have the basics, it is that they are not really knowledgeable beyond the basics. They don't even necessarily know grammar that well. There are a number of areas in English, and they don't have a good grasp of them. Not with a bachelor's degree, they really don't. Even if they are intelligent people, you know they could acquire that (the skills), but unless it is of a particular area of interest for them, they probably won't. I think they need to be passionate in their subject area. They need to be gifted in their subject areas. They need to be keen, and love kids and many, many fall beneath that.

I think they should do an Arts degree and do less of a B.Ed. program. They should have expertise in their subject area, true expertise in their subject area. They don't learn much in the B.Ed. program. They really don't. Maybe I am just being a sourpuss, but I think that one year of education courses are plenty. What do they learn?

I don't mean to be so negative about it. It could be that I don't have a lot of experience in the Faculty of Education. I did only one year myself, that's it. I did an Arts degree and then one year of Language Education. It was a bilingual year. But I

too was a teacher already. I had taught language, I had taught French, English also, so certain techniques for me were already developed. I relied on those techniques. They were more useful to me than what was being taught in education. I had some very interesting classes in education, one on moral education, another in education foundations. Both were quite good. I don't know what they do now, but it just seems that it doesn't' really lead them (student teachers) to being better prepared.

Student Teachers / Students & Technology:

Student teachers must also become competent in how to use technology because even computer literate students are sometimes incompetent in using the computer for educational purposes. They spend inordinate amounts of time in front of their computers, yet they need guidance in how to use technology to support their learning in school; it is taxing and confusing for them to sort through a plethora of information. Assistance from capable student teachers could help them acquire the confidence and skills they need to sort through meaningful sites and information. Student teachers must become well trained in how to help students navigate Web waters; student and veteran teachers as well as the students in their classes will all benefit from this skill.

I: Or even to do research. You wonder why they (students) don't just look something up if they are reading a story. They just don't. It's like they don't know how. They don't use technology to look up information about literature unless you specifically ask them. I am sort of astonished as to why they do not access some of their resources... Especially if they are sitting in front of the computer for so many hours... Why not look up Hamlet? It's like they think they need guidance, which might be a bad thing about the way I teach if they think they need guidance and aren't brave enough on their own... Students need to learn how to sort through what is valuable, meaningful and not.

B.Ed. program:

In the B.Ed. program, however, techniques and strategies should also be taught which could better prepare student teachers for their practicum and/ or future teaching. For instance Berry Bennett's cooperative learning strategies could provide an appropriate frame from which many student teachers could build. The suggestion is not

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that a methodology be imposed, only that appropriate tools be provided to increase student teachers' chances of success.

V: Do you think there are strategies or techniques, for example, which could be learned in a B.Ed. program?

I: Oh yes. Yes. Sure I do. But they don't teach them.

V: Like what sorts of things would you...

I: Well I am thinking all of the Barry Bennett stuff. Cooperative learning strategies which students really respond to, but student teachers don't really learn. Or maybe they learn it but can't apply it. What is the point if you can't or don't implement any of it?

There are a number of strategies which are out there that have been developed that work. I don't expect that they (student teachers) arrive as experts in cooperative learning or anything like that. Yet if it is a strategy they have learned, and it works, then why not?

V: So there needs to be a way to translate what is learned into teaching practice? ... by the way, by lack of rigor did you mean the student teachers coming out?

I: Yes. Absolutely. Except that I don't think that it (the problem) is with the student teachers. There is a lack of rigor in the education program. Maybe even a lack of knowledge. It is discouraging because the student teachers are very talented... It would also depend on if you were talking about elementary, or junior high or senior secondary.

V: I would be thinking more senior secondary.

I: If you are thinking that, then you need to be trained in the subject area... The idea of having apprenticeships that are longer than the practicum might be an idea.

B.Ed. & Technology:

Irene's conviction that student teachers must develop an appropriate knowledge base both of strategies and content have impacted her opinion of the place of technology in B.Ed. programs. Irene believes that training with technology may be beneficial, but priority and balance are the issue. The pendulum swing suggests that a movement towards technology might leave content area knowledge by the sidelines. Emphasis in the program must be placed on ensuring that student teachers are well versed in their subject area; once that is established, the potential of technology could be explored. If a balance between content area knowledge and effective teaching

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strategies is maintained, technology could have a valuable place in student teachers'
B.Ed. program. However, how to effectively use technology within an English
classroom context should also be considered. Ways to use technology which promote
active and not passive learning, the prevention of plagiarism and the accessibility of the
Internet to do research are just a few examples of some focus topics.

V: *So should student teachers be 'trained' in how to use technology as an optional resource?*

I: *I do think they should be taught to use technology. But it is not the most important thing. They should also have a literature degree, writing degree...*

It is not that it (technology) doesn't have a place. There are so many things that the B.Ed. program should do that it doesn't do that I don't think the B.Ed. program should spend too much more time on it. People are familiar enough with technology. There are experts in the school. It is something they can acquire and build into their teaching. Sure it is fine if it is built in naturally but I don' think it is something which should be imposed on student teachers. Especially because there are other things which should come first...

It is wrong to make the use of technology the goal when it is not your goal in an English classroom. The goal might be a research project, a presentation, a power point presentation. But even then your goal is actually the speech that they give to the class. The vehicle is not the goal.

V: *Do you think that sometimes when students are asked to use technology the focus becomes more about the bells and whistles?*

I: *It is all in how you approach it. If you approach it as a tool and you make it clear in your criteria for assessment that the kids will be judged on a number of things, and their use of technology is only one of those things, then it will be clear to the students. But you have to make it clear. So I don't know how big an issue that is. Just using technology, well, it is just a tool... so really, why should U.B.C. focus an entire course on it? Important, but not more important than other stuff.*

V: *So no more or less than any other resource which is available.*

I: *That's right. There needs to be perspective. Unless of course they (student teachers) are an info. tech. teacher... So if using that tool will help you reach a particular goal, then great.*

Exploring 'basic technology literacy' in a B.Ed. program must be done in a way
which is authentic. What is learned must be relevant to how and what student teachers
aspire to teach. Approaches to using technology must be practical and possible to use

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in an English classroom. B.Ed. programs must provide a basis from which student teachers can build; once student teachers master the basics they will become more inclined to discover ways of incorporating technology into their teaching practice. They won't be as easily guided by their fear of "things going wrong" which has characterized anti-techno teachers for so long. Student teachers must develop 'intuition' for technology which can only develop through experience and time. "Intuition isn't magic." (Irene) Developing intuition is the result of improved confidence and continual use.

Pro-D:

For Irene, the value of Pro-D usually rests in the speaker presenting and their knowledge of the subject. Speakers who are well versed in their subject area and passionate about what they are presenting usually conduct valuable and memorable workshops. Regardless of the presenter, however, Pro-D has only impacted Irene's teaching to the degree that she has chosen and been able to apply what she has learned. Pro-D days have also been useful when occasion is provided to sit with other English teachers and reflect upon pertinent issues related to teaching. However, there are also times when teachers want to leave with a strategy, skill or resource which they can immediately use in the classroom; the value of a workshop also depends on the teachers' reasons for attending.

I: *For professional development, it isn't so much the selection of the workshop which determines how useful it is. It is after you go that you discover how useful (or not) it was. It depends not so much on the topic but on the speaker and their knowledge of the subject. So I certainly check out the speaker's reputation now before I go to a workshop. It may or may not be useful to have something to take away (from the workshop). Sometimes it is helpful just to expand your mind, hear about possibilities. It depends on if you are interested in thinking about teaching or if you are wanting to go away with a strategy to use in your classroom. I guess I would say that for me professional development has very different purposes. I do think that my own personal enrichment does benefit my students in the end, even though I don't necessarily develop a new strategy because of it (attending Pro-D).*

The best professional development I have had lately has been a Barry Bennett series of workshops on learning strategies. It was an eclectic ensemble of strategies that were very, very practical. He covered an awful lot of territory, but they are hard to maintain unless you practice them all the time, or unless you make a point of it. Or

unless you have a support group. It was useful because it was a reminder that there are great techniques can which help involve all of the students in the classroom. Techniques which have been proven effective in involving students in a lesson. The other workshop I attended which was really useful was with Roy Miki because he is a great poet and communicator, and a great teacher. His ideas about teaching poetry and the kind of reaction he got from people attending the workshop was extraordinary. It was a really beautiful experience. He made me think about poetry again as a student. So I am not sure if I answered your question, but an intelligent speaker who knows his / her stuff and who is actually research-based I find much more useful.

Workshops which only cover the basics are sometimes useful because they serve as a catalyst to remembering long forgotten techniques. For instance, the latest Barry Bennett workshop Irene attended focused on ways to involve students in a lesson. For a teacher who believes that student involvement and a positive rapport are integral to student learning, this was a pleasant reminder. Even with these workshops, however, she has found that her daily pedagogy had not dramatically changed. The difficulty remains in translating what she has learned into an improved teaching pedagogy. In such cases what is critical is not just the value of the workshop, but the intent to try what was learned even if it means breaking away from classroom habit. Simply put, she had to "make a point of it."

Technology:

For teachers who have never identified themselves as techno literate, technology may be more a part of their life than they initially thought.

V: Do you E-mail teachers a lot?

I: No, I don't really E-mail teachers a lot. Just my friends at school. I look at the Net for relevant material. I look at poetry sites. I look at Shakespeare sites. I have a list that I consult. I look to see what is available for students to check out. I will sometimes suggest to students that they look up sites similar to (Coles') notes.

V: How often would you say you use technology in that way?

I: Oh, at least once a week.

V: So you use technology as a secondary resource? r

I: That's right... but I don't really know much about technology.

Irene is not convinced that technology has played a substantial role in her growth as a teacher. She recognizes its potential, however, which is why attempts are made to venture down its foreign terrain. Perhaps if a comfort level is ever established, she will be less hesitant to incorporate technology into her teaching pedagogy. She takes initiatives to use technology, but only when it is the most appropriate resource to facilitate her students' learning.

Technology (Pro-D):

Technology workshops tend to be vague. Many teachers do not even arrive with a sufficient knowledge base to be appropriately aware of their options; they are unsure of what they want to learn. So the workshop becomes a demonstration of what could be done in the classroom only if...

Translating what was learned into actual classroom practice is especially challenging with technology. Different computers may have been used at the workshop than are available at the school. Teachers may write down steps but not really understand the process. Either way, if a teacher is not computer literate they are limited in how they can adapt what they have learned to teaching practice.

Funding is another concern. If programs are being promoted in workshops which the school cannot run because they still carry antiquated machines, or because of limited funding, then the workshop becomes an exploration of a resource which is not even accessible. For Irene what makes more sense is to decide on what she wishes to accomplish in her class, then access the appropriate support within her school to achieve that particular goal. This ensures more authentic, relevant and long-term learning as she explores the potential of technology.

V: Have you gone to any workshops over the past 10 years which have had to do with technology?

I: Yes, I have attended workshops to do with technology. However, the way I have mostly found out about technology has been consulting with people at the school. That is how I learned to use technology. I don't use it very much; I only try things with it. The workshops I have attended have actually been very poor when they have

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had to do with technology. People (the presenters) don't really know what they are doing and they can't really assist you because they too are exploring.

I think if you have a focus already, and you know what you want to do with technology then it is relatively easy to go and get help for that particular goal. So you need to have a goal in mind. You can't just sit there and say, OK let's sit here and think of what we can do with technology. I think that ideas come to you as you teach. If you want to pursue a particular project, you can get help with it.

Classroom Dynamics:

Irene remarks how using technology sometimes changes classroom dynamics:

V: When you have used technology in the classroom, do you think it has changed the way you teach?

I: Yes, it (teaching) is much less directive, less teacher centered, much more student centered, and they (students) have much more control of what they do. That can be a good thing.

V: Do you think there are more classroom management problems with technology?

I: No. I think it opens up potential because kids can work more independently, in pairs, they can get feedback. I think it can be monitored. I don't think it is a bad thing. It is important to use it .

V: When you think of the classes you have right now, what do you feel is most important that they learn?

I: I certainly think about preparing them for university. Especially the grade 12's because I want them to feel prepared for university. That would be a major goal, for sure. I guess I also want them to feel competent in reading and writing. I guess that is skill based, but I want them to have the tools to find out how to understand something, how to deal with it, and how to learn it (something new).

V: Do you think that is a worthwhile change, using technology?

I: I think that it's fine that it exists, and money should be spent on computers. But I don't think that every teacher should have to become a computer expert. I think it can be used everywhere, but I also think that there are many things which the students need to learn which have nothing to do with computers. I would also like to know what is happening at the university end of things. For instance, there is a technology conference on Feb. 29th. (It is) a big all day thing, for regular teachers who are not technology savvy. Apparently there is a presentation by the U.B.C. English department on how they are using technology to teach first year English. I would like to see that. I would be interested in seeing what they do because the professors I have spoken to have various expectations, but they have always emphasized r

reading and writing. The kids have to be able to read, they need to be able to write. They have to be able to trust their instincts and they have to be able to voice an opinion.

Some kids are very bored with discussions about literature in class, that's when technology might really work. Some kids find it (discussion) dead boring. Or, they just have a different method of learning. It does not mean that they could not do it or are not able to participate, it just means that they need a different format, I guess. Maybe it (technology) will provide that format.

The focus in Irene's class remains on maintaining standards of reading and writing while preparing students for academic success. There is a growing concern that students be adequately prepared for university, but she also realizes that technology may be the reality of her students' future. This is why even as a hesitant user she still endeavors to incorporate technology into her class. This speaks volumes about her approach to teaching/learning as she is willing to move beyond her comfort zone for the benefit of her students.

Irene's dedication to maintaining a high standard of teaching/ learning in her classroom does not permit her to use technology just to entertain her students. Lessons must be valuable, relevant and meaningful. If using technology best facilitates her students' learning, she will take measures to acquire the necessary skills. However, technology is not a necessary tool with which her students must learn.

Irene's vision of the complicated dance between teachers and technology is not as a waltz where technology takes the lead. Technology belongs on the dance floor, but should only occupy the spotlight when and if teachers choose it as a partner. Money needs to be spent on technology, but only so that teachers have the option to use it if they choose.

There is significant time and energy being invested at U.B.C. and S.F.U. at the moment promoting the possibility that first year English classes be taught through computer programs such as Web CT. The emphasis of professors with whom Irene has spoken has always been reading and writing. She remains intrigued as to how universities hope to maintain their standards while using technology as a primary resource. She appreciates that technology may provide a variety in format for students

who don't feel comfortable or are bored with class discussions, but using technology must not cause expectations to drop below conventional standards.

Classroom Practice:

Delineating some past and present day lessons in Irene's class will elucidate her use of technology in the classroom. The trend will be that her application of technology is not misplaced. Conscious efforts are made to use technology in ways which promote critical thinking and authentic engagements in her class.

Power Point Presentations:

I: *I did have my grade 10 Byng Arts kids do a power point presentation on To Kill A Mocking Bird. They did their research on computer and they put together a power point thing. They presented to the class a historical aspect of the book which they could talk about. It is a really good project. I did it this year and last year. I have also done poetry on computer, that was two years ago. I asked my grade 12's to look up and make a personal selection of poems that they could comment on. It ended up being fun for them.*

I wouldn't use it all the time, but I do think it is good to include it. I think that the kids get a lot out of doing the project. As long as you don't have too many problems with the computer lab. That is a real pain, and it is a big time waster. When there are problems it really makes me reluctant to use it with the regular kids. I think the (mini school) kids can handle it because they can do so much of the work at home, if they have to. They don't have to depend on the computer lab.

I didn't introduce power point to them. (A computer applications teacher at the school) is a great techie. She introduced them to power point and even gave them a workshop after school one day on how to use power point. She really helped me out. I could do it myself but I am not confident enough.

In the case with the power point presentations, I knew that she (computer applications teacher) would be helping me out, and she did. She was there to actually introduce the kids to power point. That is the only reason I did it. Otherwise I just think there would have been too much wasted time, and way too much prep.

V: *I guess you would have to learn the whole program before going in there?*

I: *Right, but it also depends on your students. Lots of students are capable but in terms of communicating it to other kids it is much better to have a teacher do it. To have her (computer applications teachers) introduce them to power point and to support me and then to have kids who are also experts supporting me was great. It is the only way to do it.*

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V: Do you ever feel uncomfortable with the students knowing more than you in terms of technology?

I: Oh no. They know that they know more than me.

Thinking about it, I guess it doesn't take huge amounts of time to learn how to do a power point presentation. I suppose if I became more comfortable with it then I might make it more of a part of my teaching...

V: One of the things I have found is that sometimes kids equate technology with entertainment.

I: (Computer applications teacher) does take care of that. She gave them an outline to follow which likened it to an essay which will give you a consistent form. Your intention is not to astonish your viewers with every frame. Your intention is to give a talk which is relevant to your topic.

I try to emphasise that with the kids, but they don't always believe that their thoughtsare what matter. Sometimes they believe that it is all in the (glitz of the) power pointpresentation, no matter what you tell them.

Irene's students were taken down to the lab and introduced to the possibilities of power point by Sarah, one of the computer applications teachers at the school. Sarah also provided students with a workshop after school so that they could explore power point further and ask questions if they were having difficulties. This allowed Irene to incorporate technology into her class while alleviating the potential stress of "things going wrong." With Sarah, students could develop a solid knowledge base from which to build. Students could ask questions, and Sarah could deal with crashes or complications without wasting valuable class time. In this sense, Sarah's support is what made using power point possible in Irene's class. Irene intends to continue asking for Sarah's support until a comfort zone is established. Otherwise the potential stress of using power point may extinguish any inkling to explore its possibilities ever again.

In this scenario computers are ideal because students can quickly access infinite amounts of information on their subject. Discerning what is valuable on the Net encourages discussion, compromise and critical decision making. The enjoyment of working with computers also prevents the assignment from becoming a grueling process. Time is spent exploring the Net instead of looking through bookshelves for information. After all, tasks which take an inordinate amount of time are often avoided by

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students. The possibilities for authentic learning are increased because students are able to adapt the assignment to areas of personal interest and relevance. (Although the selection had to be related to historical aspects of the novel, options were plentiful.) Choice always equates increased autonomy, and autonomy is something students value and appreciate. Groups can explore ways of presenting their ideas in a manner which is clear, simple and concise. Power point is ideal for presentations because it encourages students to think about what to emphasize and why. Students are also less inclined to divide the project up into isolated parts because power point presentations are most effective when created as a group; the group must work together on the development of each frame.

Personal Poetry Lesson:

Another lesson using technology involved asking students to compile a personal selection of poems on which they could comment. As in the other scenario technology was not used to replace the teacher. The teacher's role was to help facilitate the students' use of the resource. Students were asked to explore poems of personal interest and to think critically about the selections they had chosen. This is a classic example of how Irene connected the lesson to students' lives without lowering the standard in her class. Students remain engaged, in control of their learning, and Irene is able to broaden their perspectives on poetry through technology. Such a lesson would also work as an effective first step to analysis as students could apply steps of analysis to poems they have already chosen and enjoy.

Provincial Exam Web Site Assignment:

I: *It is really a question of their just visiting a provincial exam web site. They visit the site and look up different exams. They also look at the keys which are on the web site and students' writing samples which are also on the web site. Then they must create their own provincial exam segment on poetry which is what we have been looking at.*

V: Will they then share those with each other?

I: *They hand them in to me. They are not going to share them with each other immediately because we are doing <u>Othello</u> which is a different topic. But at the end of the year, they will be able to write each other's exam segment as part of the review for the final.*

V: *What a wonderful way to use technology.*

I: *Right. I have them do what they need to do to learn, without adding even more work to myself which is important as a senior English teacher. You need to be able to balance out the load a bit. This is such an important strategy for a senior English teacher. Well, it's great because they can actually mark exams like this although it does involve photocopying which is a problem.*

In her present day teaching context Irene is using a provincial exam Web site to assist her grade 12 English class. The project is designed to help her students prepare for their upcoming provincial exam. Using technology in this respect is enjoyable for students, yet the process prepares them for their provincial exams and encourages them to use technology in a way which supports their learning.

While I was at the school I observed Irene's class working on this assignment. Their task was to visit a designated provincial exam Web site and access old exams and answer keys. Discussing the nature and difficulty of questions on the exam as well as the expected answers provided students with a clearer vision of what to expect for their provincial exam. Student writing samples were also available which had already been graded according to the traditional 6 point scoring key. The assignment was to create a provincial exam segment on poetry which could be used for review by students at the end of the year.

When Irene's students were taken down to the lab they were enthused. They were excited to be in a new environment and looked forward to browsing the Net. Reading through examples of essays which had failed, passed or received a top score of 6 and comparing these works to their own writing engaged them in animated discussion. They argued over whether these grades were merited. Working in groups to select poems, students questioned each other's choices and defended poems they preferred. The assignment was to explore the site; interest and relevance motivated the rest. In this same class three boys sat to the side. Attempting to hide their activities from Irene they spent the better part of 20 minutes engaging in everything other than the assignment.

Irene ventured over and gently reminded them to stay on task. She did not reprimand them more severely because learning had to be their choice. After this brief altercation with their teacher, they once again started to explore the designated site, even if only temporarily. Irene does not try and control and monitor everything which happens in the computer lab. If she did, she would be doomed to fail. Just like in any classroom, there will be times when students daydream, are unfocused or distracted. Teachers can only provide students with the most appropriate means through which they can learn. Guidance must also be provided, but after that it is up to them.

A.P.C.D.
(Advanced Placement Class)

V: *So right now are you using technology in the classroom?*

I: *I have purchased a program which will help them (my class) practice for the A.P. exam on CD rom. It is a program which they can individually use and access through the lab. That sort of use of technology is superb because it is all there. I don't have to be good at it. It can be networked. It is in the program.*

A.P.C.D. is a program for my A.P. English Literature class where they access old exams, even advanced placement exams. They are able to take the multiple choice section, and are given immediate feedback about what they got right, or wrong. They get feedback on how they did. They can even do a practice essay. They can do it timed or they can do it with advice. So it is an excellent program which is designed for teachers who are not computer literate. The students can access it themselves, which is great.

It is a support for those students because they can go and work on it on their own and actually do the exam prep. while receiving feedback.

V: *So it is sort of working as a teacher?*

I: *Yes, that's right. It's like another teacher outside of class providing extra materials and feedback.*

V: *Does that also apply for the written component?*

I: *Yes, they can do a guided essay. They can actually work through an essay and they are given pointers as they go. It is fantastic.*

Well, it is also a recent purchase. The kids used it on the last day before the break, but then there was the break. So I haven't used it since then, but I intend to.

I used it once during class time, but what I intend to do is give them (students) an opportunity to use it on Fridays as a kind of preparation outside of class time. It will be a kind of preparation for their A.P. exam. That will be over the next 4 or 5 Fridays. They can prep with me or they can use the lab.

V: *Would you know how much the program costs?*

I: *It costs quite a lot. It costs $450 American I believe. (Our principal) approved it. She purchased it.*

V: *How did you discover the program?*

I: *I am the one who found out about it. I was just exploring on the Net and I discovered an introductory program for A.P. and so I started playing with it. Then I found out that I could order it. So I talked to (computer applications teacher) and he mentioned that I should just go ahead and ask (the principal).*

V: *Were you given much help to go through the steps in how to use it in the classroom?*

I: *I went through the steps in the introductory program myself. It is not really for use in the classroom. It is for use by students who are interested in taking the exam. I guess you could use it in the classroom, but I don't see the purpose because it really is set up for the individual student. The program remembers everything. They (students) will enter their ID and the program will remember who they are and what they have done.*

Oh, sure. But really, that sort of technology is great because it is all there. I don't have to be good at it because everything is already in the program.

V: *So you do use technology on your own time?*

I: *Oh yes, definitely.*

Irene went through the introductory steps of this program herself before she decided to order it for her students; it was educational and user friendly which was appealing to her as a teacher. The program is not used during class because it is designed for individual use. This program recognizes I.D. numbers. Thus, students may be easily reminded of what they have done, and where they left off. This will be an invaluable tool for Irene's A.P. class.

The advantage of this program is that it is designed for teachers who are not computer literate. Students are in charge and can access it themselves through their school lab. How often or if it is used will depend on students because it is meant for their preparation and review. In some respects, the program is designed to temporarily

replace the teacher, but only for the purpose of review. Irene is not using it in the classroom because she realizes that she cannot be replaced by a computer; her teaching is not based on a mechanical series of steps determining right or wrong answers; her teaching is about mutual process and exploration. Each of the above assignments illustrates how Irene uses technology without compromising academic standards or her role as a secondary English teacher.

Obstacles:

Despite the advantages of using technology, Irene has also stumbled across obstacles which have rendered her reflective about using technology more often. For instance, "it is a big time waster and extremely frustrating when computers aren't working."

Technology is also unpredictable and unreliable which is even more problematic when the appropriate support is not made available. She is not as concerned with her (mini school) students because they are driven by a higher degree of academic initiative. If anything goes wrong in the lab, they are more autonomous in their learning and will most likely make up the work at home. The regular kids, however, may not take that same initiative. This suggests that while technology may facilitate some students' learning, it may simply distract or jeopardize others.

Computers provide an endless array of distractions. Oftentimes, instead of working on their assignment students will just play card games, video games, check hockey scores, or their E-mail accounts, or they might just chat with friends in a chat room. In order to avoid getting caught students hide existing 'open game' windows behind 'academic camouflage' windows. When teachers walk by they pretend they are working by clicking on an academic window. Just one click of their mouse and they have returned to their window of games. Although this is what I usually observed when I saw classes using computers in the computer lab, Irene's class was slightly different. While at times students would take a moment to chat, discuss, or explore the Net, they were also engaged with the task which was assigned.

Students equate computers with play; this is why some students forget that the

content of the assignment is what is valued, even if they are using technology as part of the project. For instance, when students work on power point presentations, they could easily spend inordinate amounts of time working on sound effects and putting together a presentation which is visually impressive. By the same token, students may not be placing the same effort and rigor on developing the content of the assignment. Irene acknowledges that even if teachers are clear on their criteria and emphasize that the content of the presentation is what matters, "students might just not want to believe them." Students enjoy working with computers so they might choose to only focus on that part of the assignment. However, if it weren't for technology, perhaps those students might not be engaged at all. Teachers who encourage students to use technology for presentations must create clear criteria that students understand; this will increase students' success and keep them focused

on the educational purpose of the assignment.

E-Mail:

Irene is not an avid E-mail user. She does not exchange E-mails with her students because she doesn't feel it fits in with her role as their teacher. As dedicated as she is to her job, she does not want to be responding to an inundation of questions the night before an assignment is due. She also wants her interactions with her students to be personal, one on one, not through a machine. E-mail also caters to an entirely colloquial language with which her students are already familiar. Her intent is that they read and write as much as possible according to conventional grammar, which is diametrically opposed to the conventions of E-mail.

I: *Well for one thing, I don't want E-mail from students. (chuckle) For another, E-mail language is not a language I want to teach them. They know it already. They know each other. It seems to me that my job is different. I am interested in having them read and write according to conventional grammar which is totally different than E-mail.*

V: *So if they are E-mailing you, the way students communicate with you may change?*

I: *Well that isn't really why I haven't done it. Although I do want them to do much more formal writing.*

It just seems that it is more about... I don't want to open that up I guess. Maybe it is a good thing to do, and perhaps I will do it at some point when I am more comfortable with it. But at the moment I don't even have students do that many at home assignments in writing. I have them write everything in class. At times they prepare at home, but then they write in class most often. This is because of huge plagiarism concerns. There are lots of students who have tutors.

V: That's true.

I: Why should it (E-mailing) replace talking? I don't get that. I see them everyday. If they need help, I am here.

Besides, I don't know if they are already clear on the rules of conventional writing. I don't know if that is the fault of E-mail, not necessarily. Most students are quite capable of understanding that you use certain rules when you write E-mail, and you use other rules when you write a formal essay. It is just that they need much more practice in writing the essays, not in E-mailing.

V: So you don't find that students apply the way they write through E-mail and chat lines to academic writing?

I: No more than what they do from their actual speech. They often write the way they speak. E-mail is just one more way of writing the way they speak. I really don't think that E-mail is harmful in that, if anything, it helps them communicate which is fair. It is just that academic writing is different.

Irene does not view communicating with students through E-mail as necessary. E-mail might be useful to ask for help on at home assignments, but very few of her larger assignments are meant to be done at home. (This reduces growing concerns of plagiarism.) Students are encouraged to ask as many questions as possible before, after or in class. Finally Irene states the obvious, "But you see them every day? Why should it replace talking? I don't get that." There is something integral, unique, and dynamic between a student / teacher relationship which builds through conversation, contact and shared understandings. Going to your teacher for help or clarification is intimate, personal. It is part of how relationships between students and their teachers' build, and perhaps, should not be tampered with.

Why?

There really are many answers. As responsible educators, we owe it to ourselves and our students to make thoughtful, not compulsive choices in instruction. Our answer should never be the same as the mountaineer, "Because it's there."

(Richards, 2000, p. 41)

Chapter Five:

In the following pages I thread together the three teachers' voices and my own; the intent is to elucidate my present response to the initial six questions introduced in chapter one. I also take a moment to reflect upon personal considerations which have emerged throughout the writing of this thesis. The words in the following pages are not meant to represent absolute truths; they are my interpretations of what I have heard, seen and read throughout the course of this research. The participating teachers have not been asked to review this section because their words and vision have been captured in chapter four; these pages are an exploration of my voice in response to this study. I am assuming that when others read this narrative, they may draw different conclusions or make links other than those I have presented here. Personal interpretations are not only encouraged, but pertinent to the purpose of this thesis. I can only imagine that other English teachers have struggled with questions of how or if to use technology in their teaching context. As teachers we must remain reflective about the choices we are making, and aspire to always improve upon our teaching practice.

1) How do three secondary English teachers tell the story of their professional growth?

Each of these teachers uses the narrative voice as a means of exploring their personal and professional pasts. Abby approaches the use of technology from a techno-literate perspective; Hannah operates from the vantage point of having taught extensively both with and without technology; Irene, a veteran teacher, makes the effort though she does not consider herself to be techno-literate. Each teacher tells their story from the perspective of who they are today, using anecdotes and reflection as they explore their pasts in connection to their present teaching / learning contexts.

I find it intriguing that even though these teachers are so different, they share a united vision of the place of technology in schools. This vision is guided by their perception of their role as secondary English teachers. Although each teacher has a different level of comfort and experience with technology, they all agree that the purpose of education is not the tool; the goal is to engage students in critical and creative thinking, active learning, and relevant inquiry.

What consistently emerges from each of their narratives is their conscious efforts to continue learning in their personal and professional lives; for these teachers learning is a personal process and not confined to the walls of the classroom. This effort of each of the teachers to move beyond their comfort zones and challenge themselves to continue learning is an extraordinary model for their students. Abby continues to grow as a teacher as she makes the daily decision to learn more about how to effectively use technology in the classroom; Hannah challenges herself by continuing her studies outside of class which compliment her teaching in the classroom; Irene makes conscious efforts to learn more about how to teach literature in new and innovative ways by attending workshops and becoming a master in her subject area; these are just a few examples of how these teachers' growth has emerged from engaging in life-time learning.

2) How do these teachers currently use technology in their English classrooms?

Abby uses technology in ways which promote critical and creative thinking. The manner in which she uses technology changes her role from teacher to facilitator; learning in her class becomes student-centered. Her intent is not to replace her teaching with technology; engaging students in active learning is the primary goal.

Abby is computer literate and makes a concerted effort to incorporate technology into her teaching pedagogy. Technology is a primary resource in her journalism class and a secondary resource in all of her other classes. In her journalism and creative writing classes technology provides an easy and accessible means of making student work public. In her other classes technology provides a support network for students who

need additional help either through Abby's Web page or E-mail. These two devices are also accessed by parents who wish to support their child's learning. Utilizing the potential of technology without jeopardizing the high standard she has already established in her classes is what has shaped her vision of the place of technology in schools. Technology is not used to entertain or reward; the same rigor which goes into the decision making process in other areas of her teaching also applies to her use of technology. In this regard, technology has been advantageous to her teaching practice because it has broadened how and what she is able to teach; as a result her students have become more independent and autonomous in their learning.

Irene has engaged her class in power point presentations and has made conserted efforts to use technology as a secondary resource for her students. She does not identify herself as computer literate, yet will access the Internet and take the time to discern which sites may be of value to her students. Her time with her students is precious. Thus, even if her students are going to be using technology, her presence remains integral to their learning. However, Irene does prefer that a techno-literate teacher be in the lab with her to help students out if problems arise; her concern is that the class not be wasted if the lesson does not go as planned. As with Abby, Irene does not believe that technology can replace teaching. Interacting with students during a lesson helps engage students in the learning process; a teacher is far more able to meet students' educational needs than even the most sophisticated of machines.

Hannah and Abby both share the belief that E-mail opens up lines of communication for parents and students. In contrast, Irene views E-mail as an unnecessary means of distancing students; as much as possible students need to be encouraged to take the initiative to communicate orally with their teachers. For Irene, one-on-one interaction with students is what opens up lines of communication, not technology.

Hannah considers technology to be a valuable resource for her and her students. Accessing the Internet and finding ways in which students can use technology as a support for their learning is worthwhile. She will use technology during class, but only to engage students in autonomous learning. Providing supportive sites and conducting scavenger hunts are only two of the ways she has encouraged her students to use

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technology this year. Although Hannah emphasizes throughout each interview that the potential of technology is remarkable, the frustrations of using technology remain the issue. Her time with her students is not to be wasted, so when troubleshooting becomes the focus, technology is more reluctantly used. Hannah's approach to using technology has changed radically since she first began teaching. Years ago technology was the crux of most of her classes, now technology is used but only when it is the most effective resource for her students' learning.

3) How did these teachers translate their beliefs, perspectives and knowledge of using technology into classroom practice?

Abby remains a student of technology both in and out of the classroom. This allows her the opportunity to explore and internalize the basics and beyond; her working knowledge of technology is what has allowed her to translate what she has learned about technology into classroom practice. Abby's situation is ideal because she is not dependent on others for support. When she chooses to use technology with her students she is able to "trouble shoot" on her own. Using technology for Abby is less stressful than for teachers who are not computer literate; she feels comfortable dealing with problems which may arise and her students are not dependent on another teacher in order to learn if they are working in the lab. Translating what is learned from Pro-D days and on her own into actual classroom practice has stemmed from her intrinsic motivation to incorporate technology into her teaching context; Abby' s challenges herself to work outside of her comfort zone which has significantly contributed to how she uses technology with her students.

Hannah used to be an avid user of technology, but her enthusiasm petered off once she left a school context which provided her with the appropriate support. She did not make a conscious choice to step back from technology; instead her enthusiasm for technology was gradually superseded by her passion for teaching writing and literature. A lack of consistent support and growing frustrations with using technology have all contributed to reshaping her vision of technology in the classroom. Perhaps her stance suggests a diametric opposition between the traditional vision of literature and writing

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and the modern day use of technology in secondary English classrooms. Technology is no longer a focus for Hannah; however it remains a valuable tool with which to explore literature and writing. Hannah still values technology as a potential resource as long as the standard of learning which is characteristic of her classes remains intact.

Irene does not consider herself to be computer literate, yet she still makes an effort to use technology when she feels it will benefit her students. She has had very little experience with technology; her knowledge base has primarily developed from the support she has received from computer applications teachers at the school. Despite the fact that Irene does not feel comfortable with technology, she still takes the initiative to discover ways in which technology might help her students learn.

Irene, Hannah and Abby share a united vision that technology is not why students are in school; students are in school to learn and technology is only one of several means through which such a goal might be accomplished. Technology is misused when it is intended to replace a teacher or pacify students; it should cater to learning which encourages students to think critically and creatively. In short, even though these three teachers represent three different degrees of engagement with technology, they each approach technology with the same rigor and questioning and only consider its potential when it is the most appropriate resource for their students' learning.

My time with these teachers has convinced me that translating what is learned about technology into actual teaching practice requires an authentic understanding of how to apply new ideas to old habits. The appropriate support must be made available to teachers, otherwise lasting change will not be possible. This support does not necessarily translate into more workshops or Pro-D days; there needs to be support provided for when teachers leave the workshop and decide to use technology in their classes. Workshops and presentations on technology can never entirely prepare teachers for how to apply what they they have learned to their unique teaching context. Teachers may become excited about the possibilities of technology, yet are overwhelmed by the learning curve they must embrace if they are to apply what they have learned. Perhaps this is why the potential of technology is rarely realized in secondary English teaching contexts; subtle pressures from districts and schools to use

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technology in unison with a lack of basic knowledge results in technology being used in ways other than what might be considered pedagogically sound. Time and energy is wasted, students are no more than pacified and the teacher becomes frustrated. As a result the possibilities of these teachers using technology again becomes minimal.

Teachers need to explore, exchange ideas, make mistakes and learn more about technology before they determine how or even if to use it in the classroom. Learning more about the possibilities of technology will better equip teachers with how technology might foster their students' needs without compromising academic standards. A working knowledge of technology is necessary so that teachers are making informed decisions. For instance, imagine if English teachers decided to only teach using print resources with which they were already familiar, never venturing past their comfort zone or area of expertise. What if their background was in 16th century Literature? Steven King novels? American poets? Film? Surely, educators would agree that such an approach would limit what the teacher could do in the classroom. Imagine all of the students who would fail to become engaged just because of the teacher's limited knowledge of a more appropriate resources. Regardless of the area of expertise, choosing not to consider resources according to what is most appropriate for the class radically limits what and how learning occurs. Students may be jeopardized from reaching their full potential if teachers are choosing not to use technology simply because they don't know how.

4) Where have these three teachers heard about and obtained their most useful resources?

Abby, Hannah and Irene are skilled in determining how best to achieve the goals they have in mind. How they have developed these skills is by becoming well versed in how to use the resources they have on hand. For instance, the Internet is used to search for materials, lessons, information and to provide learning and support for students and parents. All three teachers (ranging from a few times a day to a few times a week) are accustomed to searching the Net to see if they can find ways to improve upon their teaching practice. They are able to effectively and efficiently browse the Net

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which allows them access to infinite teaching sites. The accessibility of so much practical information at their fingertips is what makes these sites so valuable. Yet these sites are not used to provide 'recipes' for their classes. These teachers have developed the skill to discern and adapt valuable materials according to the unique needs of their students. Therefore, the Internet provides infinite resources which otherwise may not be accessible.

An invaluable resource for these three teachers has also been working with each other; they refer to each other as teachers who care deeply about their profession. The dedication they show to constantly improve upon their teaching practice has designated them life long learners. Consented efforts are made to share what they are doing, exchange ideas and discuss teaching pedagogy in critical ways. They are constantly learning from each others' experiences and can rely on each other for support.

In respect to their use of technology and daily teaching, what has been most valuable is when they have interacted with other teachers &/ or researchers in relevant and authentic ways. Opportunities at the school, Pro-D days or workshops which have provided the time for questioning and exploration have been extremely useful. Being given time to experience technology on their own, with the appropriate support, has also created opportunities for authentic, long-term learning.

5) How does the use of technology influence classroom culture?

One of the issues mentioned by each of the teachers is the way in which technology changes classroom culture. Using technology inevitably changes the way in which teachers teach; lessons become far more student driven and teachers spend their time trouble shooting instead of teaching. A barrier is created between teachers and students, as well as amongst the students themselves. That animated energy which is a part of any well functioning English classroom tends to shut down when computers are introduced. Remaining cognizant of potential changes which may occur when technology is used allows teachers to make the necessary adjustments beforehand; there are many measures teachers can take to counteract the depersonalized dynamic which is sometimes the result of using computers.

6) From these teachers' perspectives, how can pre-service teachers be introduced to using technology?

All three teachers agree that time, energy and funding needs to go into ensuring that student teachers have been appropriately prepared in how to use technology within a secondary English teaching context. Otherwise, they will begin teaching ill-prepared and unsure of how or if they should be using technology in the classroom. Student teachers must also be guided in how to adapt the infinite number of generic lessons they find on the Net according to the needs of their classes.

Learning to identify and utilize valuable sites is extremely useful. One of the ways in which this can be done is to arrange classes where student teachers are put in groups and asked to explore educational sites. As a group they may establish ways of discerning which sites are valuable, share what is discovered with other groups, engage in discussion about what was explored and identify ways in which what was learned might be translated into actual classroom practice. Student teachers must acquire this skill so that they can aid their students through a similar process. After all, even though students spend inordinate amounts of time on their computers, minimal time is spent critically considering how they might use their computers for educational purposes. For the most part students' reasons for being on the computer is 'to play'. Student teachers must learn how to use technology as an effective educational tool so that they can help encourage their students to use technology in a similar way.

Learning how to use technology effectively and appropriately is impacted by teachers' visions of what they hope students will learn in their classes. Student teachers who are unsure of what they hope their students will accomplish in the classroom may be more inclined to use technology as a source of 'busy work' for students. Thus, the purpose of a lesson must be clear before student teachers can determine how or if technology should be used.

Student teachers' time in the B.Ed. program at U.B.C. could provide the opportunity for the kind of hands on assistance necessary to becoming well versed in how to use technology. This support needs to come from computer experts who can help student teachers overcome any problems inherent to using technology, at least until they feel

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more comfortable on their own. Experienced teachers who have recently taught in secondary English classrooms must also be involved; they can ensure that student teachers are being introduced to using technology in ways which are relevant to secondary English contexts. An emphasis on academic standards and critical thinking should be the focus. Student teachers will learn to exploit the potential of technology without losing focus of how to maintain academic standards. Such classes would cater to more authentic learning because student teachers would be using technology according to personal goals, standards and expectations.

Data Collection & Future Research:

The direction of research in a narrative inquiry is never entirely certain until the researcher is fully immersed in the study. This is why during the time that I was at the school, far more data was collected than could possibly be used in completion of an M.A. thesis. My initial concern when I arrived at the school was to collect an appropriate amount of data. I did not wish to preclude information or observations which could further elucidate the experiences of these teachers, and their vision of the place of technology in schools. Over 100 pages of field notes were taken both in and out of class; these field notes were necessary for developing thematic categories which were eventually used as a framework of analysis for the interviews with each teacher. However, my use of this data is not complete. My intention is to continue using this data as a frame of reference for publications in how each teacher has shaped their pedagogy according to a constructivist model; how constructivist teaching has impacted their approach to using technology in the classroom is also of interest. In an age of upcoming technology, such research is necessary because constructivist teaching is particularly conducive to effectively using technology in the classroom (Jonassen, Peck and Wilson, 1999; Marlowe and Page, 1988).

Throughout my stay at the school, extensive interviews were also conducted with the students at the school. The interest and conviction of these students' voices lead me to believe that their vision of technology in schools could not be appropriately

addressed within the scope of this thesis. The value of what was revealed during these interviews needed to be given appropriate attention through separate coding / analysis and publication. These students' interviews elucidate the following issues:

Student Questions:

1) How often do you use technology, if at all?

2) If you use technology, is it usually for personal or academic reasons?

3) How comfortable are you with using technology?

4) Are you using technology in your English class this year? Have you in the past?

5) When you have an assignment, from where do you obtain your most useful resources?

6) How did you learn to use technology? (Elementary or high school teachers, courses outside of school, family friends, on your own, etc.)

7) What challenges do you most often face when using technology either for personal or academic reasons?

8) How might using technology as a resource in an English class help / hinder your learning?

Throughout these interviews, special attention was also given to E.S.L. students. Of particular interest was what has impacted their use of technology both in and out of the classroom, their use of technology at home, and if the manner in which technology is presently being used in school is helping to facilitate their learning. Comparing the ways in which these E.S.L. students use technology to how native speakers use technology is of relevance to future research. Linking these students' visions with already existing teacher perspectives of the place and use of technology in schools will provide novice and veteran teachers, as well as academic scholars, a more rounded perspective on how their classroom choices are impacting their students' learning. Such research will assist in how to translate theories of using technology into classroom practice.

The third type of data collection which also needs separate attention is the perspectives of the two student teachers interviewed at the school. When these student teachers were interviewed, they were in the midst of their practicums. One of the

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student teachers is well versed in the potential of technology and made efforts during her practicum to use technology in ways which could facilitate her students' needs. The other student teacher does not consider herself computer literate beyond the basics, yet notes the emphasis at U.B.C. that student teachers have a working knowledge of technology before entering the program. Through semi-structured interviews, both teachers disclose what has impacted their vision of the place of technology in schools, what they have found most useful during their time at U.B.C., as well as ways in which the B.Ed. program might prepare student teachers to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practice. These student teachers speak with conviction about the necessity to spend more time and energy developing a program which better prepares them in how to use technology in secondary English classrooms. They delineate what they feel would have helped them the most in terms of the material to be covered in classes with technology and how these classes could most purposefully be taught. The experiences and opinions of these student teachers provide a perspective on how the potential of technology and general teaching pedagogy might more effectively be explored during their time in the B.Ed. program. Publishing a document of such data will be useful to prospective student teachers who wish to momentarily capture a glimpse of what to expect during their practicum. (A request of nearly every student teacher with whom I have spoken.) Even during a methodology class, such a publication could provide endless opportunities for valuable discussion. This opportunity for reflection and discussion will better prepare student teachers for the trials, tribulations, successes and adventures of the educational landscape emerging before them.

The data collected during my three month stay at this school was extremely valuable in creating a context in which to conduct my research. As much as possible I attempted to cover all avenues, as developing misguided conceptions of what I was observing at the school was initially disconcerting. However, I could not possibly do justice to all areas of the data collected because of the logistics of writing a masters thesis. So, the results of the additional data will be published later on this year after the completion of this thesis.

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Directions for future research:

This study discloses factors which have impacted these teachers' professional growth over the years; particular attention is given to their vision of the place of technology in schools. The intent is to provide an opportunity for conversation, discussion and reflection about factors which may impact teaching pedagogy and student learning; this thesis is meant as a base from which many other narratives might be written. This narrative must be extended and continued by researchers, academics and professionals working in the field. But what is especially important is that more narratives are written by practitioners who are currently or have recently been teaching English in secondary school classrooms. They must bring an authentic perspective to research about the reality of teaching in a modern day high school. The pertinence for practitioners to continue this narrative within their own frame of reference is crucial as there are a limited number of teachers who have published in this field; at the moment there is a gap in the literature when it comes to teachers who have conducted narrative inquiries with a focus on English education and technology. In the future, further qualitative studies need to be done by secondary English teachers in order to ensure that their voice and perspective is heard; especially given the mass of studies done about education by those who are unfamiliar to recent educational contexts.

The research from this study may also be used to develop opportunities for enhancing the use of technology in the pre-service B.Ed. program for English teachers at U.B.C. Teachers need to become equipped with how to use technology to teach English, especially in areas of reading and writing. This collaborative research conducted between this Vancouver school and U.B.C., involving secondary English teachers at the school, will contribute significantly to supporting the use of technology in English education.

Limitations:

As with all research, there are certain boundaries which are inherent to the use of qualitative research; for instance establishing internal validity and determining if what is

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being observed actually represents the participants' regular behavior must all be considered; participants of this study may also have been subject to reactivity. Advocates of quantitative research are skeptical of the legitimacy of qualitative methods for this reason; there is little proof as to the "truth" of data being collected. This means that nothing can ever be "proven" right or wrong. Although some might even question the 'truth' of quantitative research, quantitative methods have traditionally been equated with truth because there is an illusion of objectivity which emerges from the use of numbers and measurement.

Concerns over the authenticity of data in qualitative research also applies to the researcher's work ethic. The researcher may only be recording data which supports the interests of the study. The analysis and results of the study will inevitably be skewed if the researcher only includes information which supports their initial hypothesis. In this sense, observer bias becomes an issue because the researcher can never be entirely aware of how their bias is affecting data collection and analysis. A bias, in this sense, emerges whenever a phenomenon is being observed in a manner other than in its "true" sense. The dilemma consists of the inability to determine what a true observation may be. All researchers, despite their efforts, will be biased in some respect, which makes it difficult to determine if research is "fact."

In regards to narrative inquiry, there is oftentimes a concern over the distinction between fact and fiction. Moments are described and perspectives are contextualized. Yet, what happens when those moments and perspectives are placed within a narrative context? Is the original context lost for the purpose of aesthetic style? Do real live teachers become fictional characters in a text, their stories used as a base for the mere development of a plot? An entertaining read? The danger exists that the authenticity of the actual experience will become entirely lost within the compelling language of the narrative text.

Another consideration with qualitative research is that, unlike quantitate research, a representative sample is not possible. The purpose of qualitative research is not to create the means by which reproducing results will be possible. Instead, exploring the beliefs, perceptions, and behaviors of participants is the goal. Capturing the essence

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and spirit of a moment will never be an objective, measurable fact, which is why some might question the legitimacy of such an approach.

Reflections:

Throughout this journey I have oftentimes found myself caught within the possibilities of all I have learned from conducting this research. There have been many occasions where what I was observing, reading or discussing has served as a catalyst for further reflection; emerging riddles or personal notes have peaked my interest and guided my inquiry in directions other than those directly related to the findings of this study. Some such reflections are noted below.

Over the past year, I have considered why I have always maintained such loyalty to pen and paper in regards to the writing process. After conducting this research I wonder if English teachers (myself included) tend to equate the writing process with tradition and prestige. There is something both spiritual and permanent in trying to communicate thoughts on paper; the oftentimes grueling process, the endless memos, the crumpling of paper, all contributing to the glory of the final product. It is almost as though the conquest of the writing task is what matters. When students are being encouraged to write in school, they are expected to partake in a particular process; a process which involves thinking, reflection, time and energy. It is this intrinsic engagement with the process which is supposed to inspire improved writing.

I used to believe that technology can far too easily interfere with that process. Everything on the computer caters to processes being quick and efficient. Students' work becomes a series of isolated parts because of the existence of computer screens; the writer becomes detached from what they are writing, perhaps because there is a computer box existing between them and their creation. Regardless, technology holds the potential to create a final product quicker. My cautionary note, however, is that quicker does not always equate better. The most appropriate metaphor which draws this distinction, I believe, is the construction of an instrument. If a machine were to mass produce a number of violins, certainly they would be functional, perhaps even

adequate. However, violins which are crafted by hand and with care are by far superior to those produced for mass production. Of even more importance is that those who have created a violin by pushing the button of a machine will hardly acquire the same appreciation of the instrument as the artist who pursues the process. As with writing, the limitation of technology seems to be that it learns towards a form of writing which caters too readily to the completion of a final product with minimal consideration to the process of 'creation.' At least, this seems to be the temptation amongst students and teachers when they are using technology to 'create.'

I now recognize the remarkable value of using technology as a primary and/ or secondary resource; I have spent time considering how I might address this riddle of how to use technology without jeopardizing what many teachers consider to be the sacred spirit of writing. Technology no longer seems in diametric opposition to that unique process of writing which I value; there is a medium which resides between either side of the pendulum swing where technology and writing may meet; however finding this place is a difficult challenge and depends primarily upon the intentions of the teacher.

What is most pertinent for teachers is that they develop a clear understanding of why they make certain choices in the classroom. It is not that technology or any other resource is the culprit; allowing the use of technology in ways which are irrelevant to active student learning is where, perhaps, problems might emerge. If our focus is to teach and encourage writing, then we must find ways to use technology which fosters the process we have valued for so long. If as teachers we allow the use of a resource to manipulate how and what we teach, inevitably, problems will emerge. Perhaps English teachers who use technology to entirely replace the writing process as conducted with pen and paper are not using technology to the best of its ability. The key is balance. English teachers need to become informed about how to use technology in creative and critical ways. Furthermore, using technology does not necessarily mean letting go of traditional resources which have worked for so long. For instance, reading texts on a computer screen is not the same as reading a book while sprawled over your favorite couch; this is not even to suggest that the two are in competition. The issue is not so much about which one is *better*, but that both exist and are of value to our students even though

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they each cater to a different form and function.

Before conducting this research, I always believed that the residing problem with translating what is learned about technology into classroom practice has been that teachers just don't know enough about technology. I assumed that technophobes were the only teachers who shied away from using technology. Meeting Hannah has been particularly insightful in this respect because her choice to step away from technology did not stem from being a technophobe. She was once an absolute advocate of technology; she made considerable efforts to integrate technology into her teaching practice. Yet when she moved schools, she lost the appropriate support and became more passionate about the teaching of literature, and technology was no longer given as much attention; technology is still integrated into lessons, but only as a secondary resource. Her perception of the accessibility, value and potential of technology is what was guiding her decisions. Thus, teachers must become intrinsically motivated, otherwise all of the knowledge available is not enough to inspire teachers to take the necessary steps to incorporating technology into their classroom practice. The answer may not just be to create a greater "working knowledge" of technology amongst English teachers; the first step must emerge from finding ways to change English teachers' beliefs about the place of technology in schools.

In chapter one, I refer to the beginning of this journey as having stemmed from my personal intention to reveal why I have at times been so hesitant to use technology. I ventured into my masters truly believing that the only reason I have not made more efforts to use technology is because I just didn't know how; I no longer believe that the reasons for my resistance are so simple. It is not just a matter of learning how to use technology; what has played an even greater role is my perceptions of how technology might affect my teaching context. There must be a reason that I have so rarely consulted other more techno-literate teachers at the school in order to seek guidance in how to use technology. In so many other areas of my teaching I have made considerable efforts to pursue new and creative ways of engaging students in learning. Yet learning about technology, an extraordinary resource which most students have already embraced in their personal lives, has not been a very high priority in my teaching. I think, as with

many English teachers, I was just not convinced that technology could be used in significant and meaningful ways. I equated technology with games, and as mentioned earlier, an entirely mechanical approach to learning. I had also convinced myself that using technology meant stripping the classroom of the creative process which was not a direction I was willing to take with my students. All of these residing myths in my mind had somehow accumulated over the years and were preventing me from expending the time and energy into learning about how to use technology in relevant and authentic ways. This is why I believe that it is essential that English teachers be given appropriate guidance in how to use technology effectively in the classroom. English teachers need to become aware of the extraordinary potential of technology if they are ever really going to fully embrace technology into their teaching practice.

A final thought...

This thesis is meant as a stepping stone, an initial frame of reference for future research. Further research is necessary which incorporates and elucidates as many more perspectives as possible on how technology might effectively be incorporated into secondary English teaching / learning contexts. The further publication of narratives written on the experiences of novice and veteran teachers will provide opportunities for further reflection and growth.

Partaking in the journey of this narrative inquiry has served as an endless opportunity for personal reflection. Observing classes, teaching, interacting with students and immersing myself within the context of my study has reshaped my vision of the place of technology in schools. Even my approach to daily lesson planning and teaching pedagogy has been influenced. As a result of this conscious process of reflection I believe that I will be reacquainting myself with teaching English in September as an improved teacher. Exploring these teachers' past and present experiences as well as how their experiences have impacted their present day teaching pedagogy has made me aware of the degree to which my past has impacted choices I have made in the classroom, especially in respect to my use of technology. Conducting this research has

awarded me the opportunity to partake in ideal Pro-D; I have spent my time immersing myself in theoretical frames of reference while exploring and learning from teachers' experiences in authentic and relevant ways.

In a similar fashion the opportunity for reflection is provided for those who read this thesis. Veteran and novice teachers may use this narrative as a catalyst for reflection upon their own teaching pedagogy, what has impacted their vision of the place of technology in schools as well as how, if and why they are incorporating technology into their teaching practice. Such a narrative provides ample opportunity for interpretative measures; what has been written and observed throughout this thesis is no more than my attempt to encapsulate these teachers' experiences into a comprehensive, narrative form. Much of the meaning, though my suggestions are provided, will be left to the individual reader. This thesis is not meant to dictate a discovered truth, it is to provide an opportunity for exploration, interpretation and reflection; living vicariously through these teachers perspectives and experiences is what will encourage us to further our pursuits in becoming "reflective practitioners."

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