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COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS AS A STIMULUS FOR TEACHER GROWTH: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF TEACHERS AS THEY SEEK TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

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By

Frances P. Mester

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ABSTRACT

COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS AS A STIMULUS FOR TEACHER GROWTH: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF TEACHERS AS THEY SEEK TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

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The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of teachers as they had been involved in collaborative relationships as part of a staff-development effort. The staff-development effort was a year-long project for secondary teachers. The goal of the project was to influence the instructional decisions teachers make regarding the content they teach; the processes such as reading, writing, and thinking used to understand the content; and motivation of students.

An ethnographic interview was obtained from two teachers who had formed a team in the project. A work session between the facilitator and this team was tape recorded and then transcribed. The building principal was interviewed as another data source. A vignette was written by the facilitator, describing the team's efforts and the project in general. A follow-up interview with the facilitator was conducted for further elaboration of the vignette. An analysis of all data sources was conducted using the constant

comparative method by Glaser and Strauss. Two research questions were devised:

1. How did teachers perceive their relationships within a collaborative effort?

2. What insights were perceived or identified by teachers as they participated in a collaborative effort?

The analysis resulted in the formation of three themes: tensions, the impact on personal and professional growth, and the emergence of reflection. These three themes were then used to respond to the two research questions. As a result of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Opportunity for dialogue is an essential component of collaborative relationships.

2. Collaborative relationships need time to develop, possibly being time intensive.

3. Teachers are capable of recognizing their own growth as they participate within collaborative relationships.

4. The modeling of reflective thinking is a powerful staff-development tool.

5. Collaborative relationships provide an effective vehicle for the modeling of reflective thinking.

6. The merging of personal and professional relationships provides a deeper growth experience.

7. Collaborative relationships promote or support the growth of all members in the relationship.

This work is dedicated to the administrators and teachers in the district, who created a vision of what is possible.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have provided support and guidance for this study. I would like both to acknowledge and to thank them.

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I also wish to acknowledge Dr. Kenneth Wahl, who created a culture in the district where new ideas, experimentation, and teacher growth were the norm, rather than an exception. I wish to acknowledge Joyce Zeneberg, who exemplified the concept of "principal as instructional leader," and Dr. Mark Conley, who redefined the role of facilitator and researcher.

Finally, and most important, I would like to acknowledge the tremendous support from my family: Bill, Josh, Gretchen, and my other son, "John." Their love, patience, and support over the years ensured the completion of this project.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Staff-development efforts involve people in interaction with one another in particular contexts to accomplish goals for professional growth and school improvement (Griffin, 1983). A closer examination of these staff-development efforts indicates a variety of assumptions. For example, Joyce and Showers (1988) based their concept of coaching on the idea that curriculum and instruction need constant improvement. Another view of their assumptions is that expanding a repertoire of teaching skills requires hard work, in which the help of colleagues is indispensable. Sprinthall and Thies-Sprinthall's (1983) assumptions were based on the theories of adult development and that growth is influenced by placing persons in a significant role-taking experience. According to Sprinthall and Thies-Sprinthall, there have to be certain qualitative aspects to the experience, as well as a careful and continuous guided reflection on the experience. Lieberman and Miller (1986) supported the notion of significant experience and further described it as one that must be "grounded in the social realities of teaching" (p. 99).

It is by teachers talking and working with other teachers that additional insights into teaching are gained. Ward and Tikunoff

(1982) suggested that involving teachers on research teams not only produces research knowledge but also promotes professional development. Through the integration of theory and practice, teachers gain greater insights into themselves and their practices.

A critique of the assumptions of many staff-development models by Schiffer (1979) revealed several problems with existing models and provided insight for future efforts. First, many attempts at staff development are efforts to fulfill organizational needs through the use of rational change. This approach does not necessarily consider the needs of the individual. Other models are biased in the opposite direction as they stress individuals making personal changes but not necessarily considering the needs of the organization. Nor is there consideration of organizational support for individual growth. Other models make unrealistic assumptions about authority or power as the issue of choice or decision making about the staff-development efforts has already been decided by others rather than the participants (Schiffer, 1979).

Combs (1988) stated that "old assumptions for educational reform have governed our strategies for forty years with disappointing results" (p. 40). He then proposed more promising beliefs or assumptions that should be considered:

1. No matter how promising a strategy for reform, if it is not incorporated into teachers' personal belief systems, it will be unlikely to affect behavior in the desired directions.

2. To change people's beliefs requires creating conditions for change rather than imposing reforms. It calls for open systems of thinking rather than the closed systems most reformers are accustomed to.

3. Efforts at reform must be based on ideas that are important to those who must carry them out.

4. One way to achieve commitment to reform is to concentrate on the problems teachers and principals confront in their everyday tasks.

5. Teacher confidence to experiment must, once again, be seen as a necessary and desirable characteristic of the profession. (pp. 39-40)

With the classroom teacher becoming the focus of staff-development efforts and the need to support staff members' ongoing development, Evans (1989) investigated the teaching force itself. He stated, "the teaching force is now composed mainly of people in middle to late career who have been teaching in their current school for most of their professional lives" (p. 10). Evans expressed a concern that current reform efforts are lacking a career-development focus, "an appreciation of teachers' changing characteristics and needs over the course of their careers" (p. 11). He suggested that the study of career development in organizations and the research on adult development be considered when planning staff-development efforts. He further stated that "teaching is complex, draining, and isolating--and all of these characteristics become more problematic in midcareer" (p. 13). One suggestion for reform efforts is that "the workplace should emphasize collegiality by establishing measures that enhance mutual trust, support, collaboration, and reduce isolation" (p. 13).

Johnson and Johnson (1987) explored the benefits of adults being allowed to work in cooperative or collegial groups. They stated that collegial support groups offer a formal structure for

learning from colleagues to complement informal on-the-job learning. Within these groups, teachers can discuss new practices and the problems connected with implementing them. From their research, they concluded that "cooperation among adults promotes achievement, positive interpersonal relationships, social support, and self-esteem" (p. 30). Johnson and Johnson identified several necessary features for these collegial groups. They must have carefully structured positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, personal responsibility, and periodic group processing.

In summary, many staff-development efforts have been based on a variety of assumptions. New assumptions are being examined and proposed. These assumptions have included a greater emphasis on adults as learners. Influencing teachers' beliefs and attitudes rather than just increasing their knowledge base has begun to form the basis for some school-reform practices. A greater emphasis is also emerging on the formation of cooperative and collegial groups as teachers are being encouraged to contribute to the development of each other in an effort to improve schools.

Rationale

Within the field of staff development, researchers have undertaken a number of investigations of collaborative relationships as a form of professional growth. Weidman and Niles (1987) suggested that such relationships are one of three essential conditions for professional growth. Lieberman (1986) stated that collaborative efforts are being stressed due to the complexity of

the problems the profession faces today. Lortie (1975) stated that, because teachers have been working in isolation, they need to develop the skills to work with one another.

It is clear that collaborative efforts are becoming a more accepted staff-development practice. However, much remains to be learned about these relationships. Lieberman (1987) stated that "we need to understand not only the variety of collaboration activities and arrangements, but what people get from these relationships and what it takes to sustain them" (p. 5). More specifically, it is important to examine how teachers perceive collaborative relationships and to explore some of the effects of such relationships on teacher growth, as perceived by teachers themselves.

The Problem

Other researchers have stated that there is insufficient information about the nature of collaborative relationships. As situations that promote collaborative relationships become a more widespread practice, there are many potential dangers. One danger is that the practice could focus on the format or mechanics and ignore the true potential of the relationship, i.e., promoting growth through diverse kinds of collaboration. The problem of promoting collaboration is especially significant beyond the elementary level because of the even greater isolation experienced by middle and secondary school teachers. Several questions arise about the nature of collaborative relationships:

1. How do teachers perceive their relationships within a collaborative effort?

2. What insights are perceived or identified by teachers as they participate in a collaborative effort?

In an effort to address the problem, several existing relationships formed in a collaborative staff-development project at the secondary level were examined. The examination was conducted from a multiple-data-source perspective.

Purpose

The researcher's purpose in this study was to explore the perceptions of teachers as they were involved in a collaborative staff-development effort. Their insights and comments concerning the relationships formed within the project and the project in general were determined to be valuable. These perceptions, validated by other sources, might have generated possible dimensions or features of collaborative relationships for future consideration.

In this study, a set of relationships established in a secondary public school setting was explored to hear the voices of teachers as they participated in a collaborative staff-development project. The staff-development project was designed to help teachers internalize certain principles of reading in the content area and to implement them in their classrooms. A major staff-development vehicle for the project was the promotion of collaborative relationships among the faculty, who tended to be isolated in their professional roles. In addition, another form of

collaboration involving the facilitator of the project and the teachers who participated in the project was explored.

Methodology

A qualitative research design and methodology was chosen for the study. An ethnographic interview was obtained from two teachers who had formed a team in the project. A work session between the facilitator and this team was tape recorded and then transcribed as another data source. The building principal was also interviewed to gain another perspective and data source as the principal reflected on the teachers' behaviors and attitudes during their participation in the project. Finally, a case study or vignette describing the team's efforts and the relationships formed in the project was obtained from the facilitator of the project. A follow-up ethnographic interview was conducted with the facilitator for further elaboration. An analysis of all data sources was conducted using qualitative methods in an attempt to gain further insights from the teachers' perceptions as they participated in these relationships.

Importance of the Study

The works of Lieberman, Joyce, and others have provided strong evidence that the study of collaborative relationships is valid and important to the field of staff development. Further, the breadth of this area and the limited amount of investigation carried out to

date support the notion that there is much fertile soil yet to be explored.

Because collaborative relationships have the potential for such widespread application and because these relationships can take so many forms, an in-depth look at a form of collaboration can yield greater insights into the nature of these relationships and people's perceptions of them. Such increased understanding could contribute to the later development of a theoretical framework that can serve as a thread of continuity for the diversity of such relationships.

If it is possible through this study to explore how teachers perceive themselves to be changing or growing, the future possibilities of collaborative relationships as a professional-growth endeavor might be made more visible for other people.

Through this study, a contribution of a more comprehensive understanding of how to facilitate the growth of school personnel can be made. If an insight into such collaborative relationships can be achieved, a more powerful vehicle for supporting staff growth can be advanced.

Delimitations

The scope of this study was limited to a discussion of relationships formed while participating in a collaborative staff-development effort. Issues pertaining to those relationships were addressed. These other issues emerged from the analysis of the data. Included were the relationships between teachers, as well as between the facilitator and the teachers.

No attempt was made to describe how teachers learn less complex issues or how teachers could learn in a different manner or situation.

No attempt was made to assess or describe the teachers' actual knowledge of content reading strategies or the degree to which they implemented those strategies in the classroom.

Limitations

One limitation of this study is that it was based on the relationship between two teachers. Were this a quantitative study, the concern would be for generalizability from such a small sample size. Because the study was based on a qualitative research design, the sample size and generalizability concerns were of a different nature. LeCompte and Goetz (1982) suggested that, in ethnographic research, comparability and translatability should be the aims, rather than generalizability. They referred to Wolcott's definition in the following statement:

> Comparability requires that the ethnographer delineate the characteristics of the group studied or constructs generated so clearly that they can serve as a basis for comparison with other like and unlike groups. Translatability assumes that research methods, analytic categories, and characteristics of phenomena and groups are identified so explicitly that comparisons can be conducted confidently. (p. 34)

Another potential problem concerns the extent to which these teachers formed an adequate relationship within this staff-development effort. The possibility that these teachers did not have a genuinely collaborative relationship was dealt with through multiple data sources. By examining these teachers' perceptions, as

well as the perceptions of the building administrator and the project facilitator, it was possible to determine whether or not collaboration was present.

A second limitation, based on sample size, was that results could be idiosyncratic to the teachers' perceptions; that is, the views of the teachers were unique only to themselves. It is important to note that the study entailed not only teacher perceptions but also perceptions grounded in the school context. The vignette created by the project facilitator and the follow-up interview with him served as a description of the context along with observations of the other participants. The context itself, secondary teachers engaged in learning new strategies to teach their content better, is a fairly common occurrence in education today.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined in order to develop a clearer understanding of the conceptual framework of this study.

Collaboration involves the development of a relationship based on mutual trust and respect as the individuals are involved in a shared activity with shared decision-making ability.

Complex learning is the process of acquiring new information that might be in conflict with previously held ideas or beliefs and achieving a level of automaticity, an automatic response, with that knowledge in a classroom.

Ethnographic interview is a strategy or technique for getting individuals involved in a particular situation to talk about the

situation or experience so that meaning can be achieved or that inferences can be made about their behavior.

Reading in the content areas is an area of reading instruction in which secondary teachers learn to balance decisions about teaching their content with process skills and motivational considerations.

Staff development is the process whereby members of a staff, particularly teachers, participate in activities or relationships that contribute to their personal and professional growth.

A vignette is a qualitative tool designed to help capture the subtle nuances of an experience through a description of that experience.

Overview of the Study

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. In Chapter I, an introduction to the study and a rationale were presented. This was followed by a statement of the problem, the purpose and importance of the study, and methodology. Delimitations, limitations, and definitions of terms completed the chapter.

A review of the literature relevant to this study is presented in Chapter II. First, the historical context of staff-development efforts and the assumptions that have guided these efforts are described. Next, several trends that have influenced staff-development practices are reviewed. They include the empowerment of teachers, the growing use of qualitative research methods that more directly involve teachers, the changing status of education as a

profession, and a discussion of professional relationships. This is followed by a review of the literature concerning adults as learners.

The design and methodology employed in this study are presented in Chapter III. A statement of the problem, a rationale for the design, and a description of the various contexts are included. The specific procedures used to collect the data, including a description of the tools--ethnographic interviewing and a vignette--are included. Procedures for data analysis are then presented.

In Chapter IV, the analysis of data is presented. This includes a rationale, map, and narration for each theme presented. Each research question is then addressed.

A summary of the study, findings, conclusions, and implications for practice and further research are presented in Chapter V. Recommendations, reflections, and an epilogue are included.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

As the focus of this study was related to teacher growth and the relationships teachers develop as they participate in staff-development efforts, the initial section of the review of literature includes an exploration of past staff-development efforts. These past efforts, assumptions, and models are described to provide a historical context. Next, certain trends that have been exerting an influence on current staff-development practices, including the development of collaborative relationships, are discussed. These trends have included the changing status of the profession, an increasing sense of teacher empowerment that has also supported the development of collaborative relationships, and the emphasis on qualitative research, which has provided a different perspective on teachers' roles and knowledge. Since a growing body of knowledge has focused on the adult as a learner, which is relevant to the discussion of teacher growth, this area has also been reviewed. Finally, a summary of the review of the literature in this chapter is included.

The Field of Staff Development

Education has gradually been experiencing a contextual change as the world has been moving from an industrial society, with its emphasis on mass production and standardization, to an information-processing age (Naisbett, 1988). Current educational institutions conceived and developed during the previous context are not necessarily the ones that will function effectively in the twenty-first century (Shanker, 1989). The large masses of people have not been well educated, as evidenced by soaring dropout rates, inadequate literacy levels, and public concerns about public education. It is time, as Shanker stated, "to reconsider basic assumptions rather than just tinkering with the system" (p. 3).

Suggestions to improve education, which influence how teachers are supposed to grow, are plentiful, coming from a variety of sources. One source was from leaders at the federal level, when William Bennett (1986), previous Secretary of the Department of Education, proposed strategies for improvement. He suggested that merit pay would motivate teachers to improve, while career ladders like those in Tennessee would provide opportunities for teachers to expand their roles. The Teacher Improvement and Training Act would help teachers gain additional expertise in the subjects they teach, would recognize the work of outstanding teachers, and would be used to encourage qualified people from other professions to enter teaching.

Another source attempting to influence education is the world of business as education is no longer the exclusive concern of

schools and universities. Armed forces are reeducating their recruits, and private corporations are conducting extensive education programs for their employees (Houston, 1987). In 1983, 213,000 people were employed full time and 786,000 part time as educational trainers in United States corporations. The training budget, $40 billion, and the number of students, eight million, involved in programs supported by American corporations are equal to those for all four-year colleges and graduate schools in the country (Houston, 1987, p. 389). The Association of Teacher Educators (cited in Houston, 1987) commissioned a team of teacher educators to examine business's assumptions about education. The following conclusions and implications for education were reached:

1. Motivation and enculturation are emphasized and continually reinforced.
2. Skills are sufficiently developed for students to be comfortable using them.
3. Teacher induction should be improved, with new teachers gradually accepting responsibility.
4. Career-long professional growth is emphasized; no one is ever considered fully trained.
5. Experiences are provided for trainers from a wide range of educational and noneducational fields.
6. Trainers remain current by continuing to practice the roles in which they are training others.
7. Curriculum development is separated from instruction.
8. Resources necessary for first-class instruction are provided. (Houston, 1987, pp. 390-391)

These observations and comments reflect some of the dialogue concerning how to promote the growth of teachers.

Another group of teacher educators, the Holmes Group (1986), made recommendations to improve the condition of education. They encouraged changes in licensing and certification so that elementary teachers would teach subjects that they knew and could teach well. Increased research on how teachers learn, an integration of subject matter and pedagogy, and greater cooperation across departments or disciplines were other suggestions. The Holmes Group has also advocated greater collaborative efforts between schools and universities as expert teachers should become responsible participants in professional education. Schools need to become places where research on teaching and learning can become more common. The Holmes Group (1990) continued this discussion in their promotion of a design for a professional-development school. Two principles of this design are most relevant to this discussion of teacher growth. First, school adults "are expected to go on learning too" (p. 7); second, "reflection and research on practice are a central aspect of the school" (p. 7).

Burbach (1987) addressed the difficult task that educators face to prepare schools for "the global age of information" (p. 2). He was excited that an information-processing age will create a more nourishing context for innovative thinking. He considered several new assumptions:

1. There is a need to emphasize the interdependence of the organization's parts and the relationship between the organization and the environment.
2. Of primary importance are human beings.

3. The way in which people are organized is the critical variable in explaining performance.

4. Communication and coordination among specialists are central to the success of an organization.

5. Choices of an organization will be increasingly constrained by external forces.

These assumptions offer rich food for thought as we watch the context of education shift and change. This context becomes the backdrop for discussions on staff development, especially since staff development is often discussed in the larger context of school-improvement efforts (Joyce, Hersh, & McKibbin, 1983).

Historical Context for Staff Development

An exploration of the literature on staff development indicated that the field appears to be in a state of reconceptualization. A name change from inservice education to staff development was the first indication of a shift in thinking. The label *inservice education* implied something done to teachers, as opposed to with or by teachers. During the 1960s and 1970s, improvements in curriculum, materials, and programs were thought to be the key to improvement (Schiffer, 1983). Teachers were then trained or *inserviced* in new materials or programs. Teacher-proof materials became the trend; however, even the best teacher-proof material was not sufficient to improve student learning.

The term *inservice education* also implied that there was a deficit in the teacher that needed to be corrected. Staff development suggested that change was natural and a part of

development. Change or development becomes the natural process of helping one to continue to grow, regardless of the initial state. Principles of adult development and growth have begun to serve as the foundation for many staff-development models. The word *staff* also implied a broader level of participation as the focus shifted from just the classroom teacher to all professionals involved in educating children. As a result of this involvement, principals, consultants, and researchers began to redefine their roles as professionals. More emphasis then became placed on the relationships that professionals have with each other as they work on staff-development projects. Words such as collegial, collaborative, and cooperative began to describe these relationships.

The emphasis in the past was placed on inservice programs and practices rather than on models. There was little discussion about the assumptions that these programs were based on and about the implications that follow from them. As staff-development models have been created, there has been greater dialogue about the assumptions that drive these models. Assumptions concerning adult growth, the school as a social organization, the nature of knowledge, complex learning, the connection between teaching and learning, and developing professional relationships have been identified with many staff-development models. With these assumptions more clearly articulated, practitioners have a greater understanding of the potential, direction, and limitations of these models.

Assumptions Guiding Staff-Development Models

Staff-development efforts involve people in interaction with one another in particular contexts to accomplish professional-growth and school-improvement goals (Griffin, 1983). A closer examination of these efforts indicates a variety of assumptions. For example, Joyce and Showers (1988) based their concept of coaching on the idea that curriculum and instruction need constant improvement. In addition, expanding the repertoire of teaching skills requires hard work, in which the help of colleagues is indispensable. Sprinthall and Thies-Sprinthall's (1983) assumptions are based on theories of adult development and the idea that growth is influenced by placing a person in a significant role-taking experience. According to Sprinthall and Thies-Sprinthall, there have to be certain qualitative aspects to the experience, as well as careful and guided reflection on the experience. Lieberman and Miller (1986) supported the notion of significant experience and further described it as one that must be "grounded in the social realities of teaching" (p. 97).

It is by teachers talking and working with other teachers that additional insights into teaching are gained. Ward and Tikunoff (1982) suggested that involving teachers on research teams would not only produce research knowledge but would promote professional development. Through the integration of theory and practice, teachers can gain greater insight into themselves and their practices.

Howey and Vaughan (1983) reviewed staff-development efforts, offering several insights. First, classroom-relevant content and strategies are too infrequently presented, with little account for the needs of the specific participants, both student and teacher, in the classroom. Second, there is little continuity or coordination between and among the staff-development offerings. Third, these activities have not been related to measures of changed teacher behavior or student learning outcomes. Insufficient feedback is available to evaluate the models. Finally, inservice activities focus only on the teacher as the person responsible for improving instruction, ignoring other factors, influences, and roles. For example, how do teachers acquire the skills or information to work with other teachers? It also ignores the need of the teacher to be directly involved in his/her own growth and to work with other professionals.

In general, the assumptions underlying several staff-development models have suggested that individuals grow from working with one another. Reflection on those experiences can provide additional and crucial insights for the individual. The opportunity to integrate theory and practice by being actively involved in research efforts in real classrooms is an important component for professional growth. The different contexts within which individuals work should be considered as staff-development efforts are planned.

Influencing Trends

As the field of staff development shifts and changes in an attempt to meet the needs of the future, several trends have converged, creating an influence on how teachers perceive themselves and their growth. First, a growing sense of empowerment has appeared as assumptions about decision making in an organization have been reconceptualized. This has allowed teachers to choose and direct their own path for growth, as well as the relationships they form to support that growth. Next, the development of qualitative research methods in the field of education has promoted the creation of various collaborative relationships, as the classroom becomes the focus of attention and the classroom teacher becomes an equal partner. Finally, this new knowledge grounded in the classroom becomes essential as the educational profession experiences a shift in status. The influence of these trends has contributed to a framework for collaborative relationships.

Empowerment

In staff-development literature, new assumptions about decision making, power, and authority are emerging. The term *empowerment* has appeared, which describes the teacher's desire for power or control over personal-professional growth. Maeroff (1988) proposed three principles that would promote the empowerment of teachers. First, *the status of teachers needs to be increased.* When teachers have greater confidence in and recognition of their expertise, they will be able to play a more active role in their growth and in the field

of education. Second, teachers, even at the elementary level, need to *become more knowledgeable about the specific content areas they are teaching*. This would make teachers less dependent on texts for information and in a better position to make instructional decisions independent of the text. Finally, *access to decision making* would grow out of the first two principles and would complement them.

Lambert (1988) described the characteristics of an empowered individual:

> 1. A capacity for cognitive complexity is essential so that the individual can perceive relationships between ideas.
>
> 2. Flexibility, a sense of interdependence, self-reflection, and a self-assurance that allows the relinquishing of old ways of thinking and working are the hallmarks of an empowered individual. (p. 665)

One arena over which teachers want influence and choice is the path of their own learning. In an evaluation of two projects in which 375 high school teachers completed self-directed studies and some 1,050 middle and high school teachers participated in summer institutes, teachers demonstrated their desire to direct their learning (Banner, 1985). Banner found that "teachers want to seek knowledge, proud to have the chance to study and learn as trusted adults, free to carry out a professional task without oversight and rigid accountability" (p. 75).

With a sense of empowerment, a redefinition of roles for teachers has emerged on the agenda for professional development. In the past, the teacher's role was defined by the classroom and the students. The teacher often worked in isolation (Lortie, 1975),

in some cases rarely talking to other adults. This role of the teacher became extended as teachers began to participate in educational activities beyond the classroom. Serving on curriculum committees, developing curriculum materials, and supporting other teachers became some of the professional activities beyond the classroom (Hatfield, Blackman, Claypool, & Mester, 1985). Some envision the teacher of the twenty-first century with an even broader set of multiple roles, such as "researcher, colleague, consultant, leader, child advocate, and school transformer" (Blackman, 1989, p. 13).

A closer look at one role in particular, teacher as researcher, reveals some interesting ideas. As Chall (1986) pointed out, this is not a new role for teachers. During the 1920s and 1930s, many educational researchers were classroom teachers or school administrators. Their audience was other practicing teachers. However, during the 1940s and 1950s, there was a decline in these efforts as more emphasis was placed on theory, which produced more technical reports that were not necessarily read by practitioners. The 1960s and 1970s brought an even greater emphasis on theory-based research, especially as universities and research centers were funded by the federal government and private foundations. Teachers were then presented with the results of this research in the form of instructional materials. Research in the 1980s experienced shifts and changes as the value of teachers' perceptions as an aspect of conceptualizing professional development (Holly & McLoughlin, 1989) became recognized. Another major development that has supported the

role of the teacher as researcher has been the emergence of qualitative research.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative data, data in the form of words rather than numbers, can offer rich descriptions and explanations of processes occurring in local contexts (Miles & Huberman, 1984). The local context or classroom setting acquires an increased role of importance, which requires at least the cooperation of a classroom teacher and, at best, the active involvement of the teacher.

Qualitative data can provide depth and detail in understanding a situation or phenomenon as a whole (Patton, 1980). Rogers (1984) listed the following assumptions that have driven qualitative research:

1. Any social entity or institution is complex and subtle.
2. Intensive study of a given phenomenon over a long period of time is essential for genuine understanding of that phenomenon.
3. People and institutions must be studied holistically, and not in isolation from the forces that influence them.
4. The most effective way to study a phenomenon is through direct, on-site, face-to-face contact with the people and events involved.
5. The basic function of the researcher is description. (pp. 86-87)

These assumptions reinforce the role of teacher as researcher as they assert the importance of on-site data collection and the need to involve the teacher when studying many aspects of what happens in classrooms. Through this role of researcher, teachers can gain a

deeper understanding of their practice as they reflect on and integrate theory and practice.

Some people might question the value of collecting these rich, verbal descriptions; however, each description contributes to a greater understanding of the whole. Generalizable theory can emerge from the study of specific settings or situations. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) and Glaser and Strauss (1967) described this as grounded theory. Through the role of researcher or active participant in research, teachers can become contributors of new knowledge to their profession, just as doctors are responsible for the renewing aspects of their profession.

These rich descriptions can also take the form of stories as the use of narrative inquiry has become more frequent in educational research. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) stated the following reasons for the use of narrative in research:

> The main claim for the use of narrative in educational research is that humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially, lead storied lives. The study of narrative, therefore, is the study of the ways humans experience the world. This general notion translates into the view that education is the construction and reconstruction of personal and social stories; teachers and learners are storytellers and characters in their own and others' stories. (p. 2)

This type of research allows the voices of teachers to be heard as "the practitioner, who has long been silenced in the research relationship, is given the time and space to tell her or his story so that it gains the authority and validity that the research story has long had" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 4). Practitioners

might become the audience again of the researchers as they listen and create their own stories.

The Changing Status of Education

There has been increased dialogue concerning the professionalization of education. Some might say that education has always been considered a profession, just as law and medicine are professions. The practices that characterize education, however, have not been similar to the practices of other professions. It is not just educators making decisions about membership, working conditions, or curriculum. Darling-Hammond (1988) claimed that the profession of education is at a crossroads, with two very different paths to take. The choice of path is related to the initial discussion of the changing context for education. Should education revise basic assumptions and reconceptualize the profession or engage in tinkering that promotes the status quo? If the decision is to take the path that makes education a true profession, there are certain implications. Darling-Hammond stated:

> For occupations that require discretion and judgment in meeting the unique needs of clients, the profession strives to guarantee the competence of members in exchange for the privilege of control over work structure and standards of practice. It is the profession itself that assumes collective responsibility for the definition, transmittal, and enforcement of professional standards of practice and ethics. (p. 5)

One practice that has emerged that reflects the path for a true profession is mentoring. This model advocates reflection as a prerequisite for further growth for both parties involved (Howey, 1988). Professional teachers need to use reflection in action;

however, because professionalism is still identified mainly with technical expertise, reflection in action has not been considered a legitimate form of professional knowing. Mentoring also allows for a gradual acceptance of duties and responsibilities into the profession instead of equal responsibilities regardless of experience. It is a collaborative relationship in which the mentor models the ways and means of studying a classroom and provides a more experienced perspective in interpreting what is observed and recorded. It encourages teachers to take a more active leadership role in the profession. One responsibility of a professional is to contribute new knowledge to the profession.

The conceptual framework for one mentoring program in Columbus, Ohio (Howey, 1988), drew from three distinct but related fields of knowledge: research-supported classroom processes, multiple means of classroom observation and analysis, and instructional supervision. This knowledge base and the ability to reflect would set the stage for producing new knowledge for the professionals involved, and for the field in general.

Daloz (1986) used the metaphor of a journey, with the mentor being a "trusted guide rather than a tour director" (p. 2). He also used storytelling or narrative inquiry to trace how adults changed or were transformed through their experiences.

Lambert (1988) argued that professional development is the development of the profession. Teachers have the responsibility to contribute to the profession through the redesign of schooling, by contributing to the knowledge base, and through the enculturation of

new teachers. Mertens and Yager (1988) stated that the "hallmark of professionalism is professional judgment" (p. 34). Teachers need to be allowed to develop and use that judgment because "professional knowledge could be transmitted to teachers ad infinitum, but there is no defensible purpose if the system does not provide them the authority and power to function in accordance with their professional understanding" (p. 35). Mertens and Yager stressed that the "strengthening of the profession must provide for formal structures for ensuring that teachers are empowered" (p. 35).

Rogus (1988) discussed the concept of teacher-leaders and presented an image or definition of an ideal teacher-leader as a professional:

> Effective classroom teachers are reflective practitioners who know the research and the literature on teaching; they model the best practice in instruction; they are well grounded in their discipline(s) and are liberally educated; they place their classrooms in a larger social context and understand alternative visions of school and how external political and cultural factors influence these variables; they demonstrate command of program regularities; and they have internalized the wisdoms of daily practice. (p. 48)

In summary, these trends have supported and reinforced each other, creating a major influence on how teacher growth is perceived.

Professional Relationships

As the need to work together becomes more apparent, the notion of collaboration is being considered. There appears to be some confusion about the concepts of cooperation and collaboration. In her review of the literature, Hord (1986) attempted to offer some

clarification. Cooperation and collaboration are different processes with different purposes. The lack of current literature describing collaboration has contributed to this confusion. The forms for cooperation and collaboration may look very similar, but the processes are different, leading to different results. Hord cautioned that using the wrong process to achieve a result may hinder future staff-development efforts.

Lanier (1979) used the metaphor of a family to describe the difference between cooperation and collaboration. A mother may *cooperate* (grant permission) by allowing and encouraging her son to play the drums, but the family is *collaborating* (mutual sharing) when they all work together to prepare a family meal.

An examination of collaborative relationships has indicated that they may be:

> . . . small or large, heavily funded or not funded at all; organized within schools by a group of teachers or a principal or encouraged by someone from the district; or they may be organized by a business, a foundation, university, or professional association in collaboration with schools. (Lieberman, 1986, p. 6)

Form also varies as the extent and kind of participation changes. Collaboration could involve two teachers observing each other to provide feedback for each other, or participation on a school-improvement team or as a member of a research team. There can be collaboration between organizations as well as between individuals (DeBevoise, 1986).

Research into the process of collaboration has offered some insights. As a result of his participation in a long-term

collaborative relationship, Trubowitz (1986) observed that the relationship passed through a series of stages. The initial stage was one of skepticism. As opportunities to share feelings were provided, the feelings of skepticism began to dissipate. The creation of trust, the next stage, occurred as members gained common experiences and communicated about those experiences. When trust was achieved, professionals could begin to work side by side. Then the professionals could recognize the growth of each member and their true accomplishments. The last stage might even involve some regression as the vision became blurred and needed to be reclarified, causing the group to become self-renewing in its efforts.

DeBevoise (1986) also stressed the importance of trust and the need for the relationship to occur over time. Persistence is essential as short-term difficulties arise because some individuals might lost sight of the long-range goal. Collaboration might not be appropriate for all individuals. It does depend on "a community of believers where enthusiasm, flexibility, and a shared language help break down traditional barriers" (p. 6).

As coaching reaches a more complex stage, that of mutual examination of a teaching strategy, it takes on characteristics of a collaborative problem-solving session (Joyce & Showers, 1988). Coaching facilitates professional development, especially as it reaches the complex stage through the development of a shared experience and language. It also promotes the norm of

experimentation where the status quo is questioned and an air of "what if" becomes the norm.

The possibilities or outcomes generated from collaborative relationships have not been well defined. Some suggestions have been offered, as well as support for the need for further research. Porter (1987) stated four benefits of these relationships:

1. Collaboration breaks down isolation.
2. It provides the distance and time that enables teachers to analyze and reflect upon their own practices.
3. It enables participants to be more receptive to new ideas and more analytical in assessing them.
4. Collaboration also increases professional confidence and strengthens a commitment to the improvement of practice.

Wildman and Niles (1987) argued that complex learning generates certain side effects, such as increased cognitive and emotional demands. Collaboration addresses these side effects as new ideas are generated and emotional support is offered.

The possibility for teachers to assume new roles and exhibit leadership has been identified as another outcome of collaborative relationships (Lieberman, 1986). As teachers take the initiative to support one another, become involved in decision-making situations, and step outside their classrooms, the traditional role of classroom teachers begins to break down. As concepts such as teacher as professional, teacher as curriculum, and school as laboratory emerge even more, this leadership will become more evident in the schools (Blackman & Hatfield, 1986).

In summary, the discussion of staff-development models included the importance of professional relationships. The process of collaboration has emerged as having an influence on professional development. However, the lack of research to date has hindered a better understanding of its processes, outcomes, and implications.

Adults as Learners

The discussion of adults as learners began with the efforts of Houle as he investigated different types of adult learners and continued as Tough analyzed the learning patterns of adults. The concept was expanded as Knowles (1982) proposed a difference between pedagogy and andragogy, "the art and science of helping adults learn" (p. 145). The conversation continued as the concept of developmental stages or phases emerged (Aslanian & Brickell, 1982). Lifelong learning (Gross, 1982) and experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) expanded the discussion. The issue of motivation to encourage adult learning (Wlodkowski, 1985) and to develop motivational as well as instructional plans for adult learning provided a new dimension. As the promotion of professional relationships (Lieberman, 1988) contributes to the development of a professional culture, the issue of adults as learners as well as teachers has become a central focus. Today the emphasis has shifted to creating an adult-development perspective when planning staff-development efforts (Levine, 1990).

Foundational Theory

Houle (1961) conducted a series of in-depth interviews with 22 adults who were very active learners. The similar characteristics among these adults were their continual desire to learn, the setting of goals for themselves, and the enjoyment of participation. Their differences were more a matter of emphasis. Although there is much overlap and no absolute distinction among adult learners, Houle (1982) described three types or kinds of learners:

1. Goal-oriented--Those who use education as a means of accomplishing fairly clear-cut objectives. . . . Their education is characterized with episodes, each of which begins with the realization of a need or the identification of an interest. There is no even, steady, continuous flow to the learning of such people, though it is an ever-recurring characteristic of their lives. Nor do they restrict their activities to any one institution or method of learning. (p. 134)

2. Activity-oriented--These learners take part in learning primarily for reasons unrelated to the purposes or content of the activities in which they engage. . . . They go in search of a social milieu, and the adult educational institution is one of the places where they look for it. It was social contact that they sought and their selection of any activity was essentially based on the amount and kind of human relationships it would yield. (p. 136)

3. Learning-oriented--These learners seek knowledge for its own sake. . . . Education might also be called a constant rather than a continuing activity. . . . Each particular educational experience of the learning-oriented is an activity with a goal, but the continuity and range of such experiences make the total pattern of participation far more than the sum of its parts. (p. 139)

Tough's original research conducted in 1977 on adult learners focused on three basic questions: what they had been learning in the past year, how they had gone about it, and how much time they had been spending on it. His primary focus was on learning

projects. One finding was that "80% of all learning projects were planned by the learner himself rather than by professionals" (Tough, 1982, p. 155). In addition, Tough included learning projects that involved personal aspects as well as professional ones. Another finding was that the "most common motivation is some anticipated use or application of the knowledge or skill. Less common is satisfying curiosity or wanting to possess the knowledge for its own sake" (p. 156).

Knowles (1982) originally defined andragogy as the art and science of helping adults learn. His model of learning was based on the following four assumptions:

1. It is a normal aspect of the process of maturation for a person to move from dependency toward increasing self-directedness, but at different rates for different people and in different dimensions of life. Teachers have a responsibility to encourage and nurture this movement. Adults have a deep psychological need to be generally self-directing, although they may be dependent in particular situations.

2. As people grow and develop they accumulate an increasing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasingly rich resource for learning--for themselves and for others. Furthermore, people attach more meaning to learnings they gain from experience than those they acquire passively. Accordingly, the primary techniques in education are experiential ones--laboratory experiments, discussion, problem-solving cases, simulation exercises, field experience, and the like.

3. People become ready to learn something when they experience a need to learn it in order to cope more satisfyingly with real life tasks or problems. The educator has the responsibility to create conditions and provide tools and procedures for helping learners discover their "needs to know." Learning programs should be organized around life-application categories and sequenced according to the learners' readiness to learn.

4. Learners see education as a process of developing increased competence to achieve their full potential in life. They want to be able to apply whatever knowledge and skill they gain today to living more effectively tomorrow. People are performance centered in their orientation to learning. (pp. 149-150)

Lifelong Learning

At about the same time that Houle was investigating the learning patterns of adults, in 1961 Gardner was raising questions about the decline or growth of societies and the individuals who were members of those societies. He stated:

> When organizations and societies are young, they are flexible, fluid, not yet paralyzed by rigid specialization and willing to try anything once. As the organization or society ages, vitality diminishes, flexibility gives way to rigidity, creativity faces and there is a loss of capacity to meet challenges from unexpected directions. (1981 reprint, p. 3)

What he proposed instead was a picture of an "ever-renewing society where what matures is a system or framework within which continuous innovation, renewal and rebirth can occur" (p. 5). Gardner cautioned that renewal is "not just innovation and change. It is also the process of bringing the results of change into line with our purposes" (p. 6).

Gardner then described the types of individuals who would create this ever-renewing society. He acknowledged the increased opportunities for adults to continue their learning. However, he stated that what is really blocking the self-development of adults is "the individual's own intricately designed, self-constructed prison, or put it another way, the individual's incapacity for self-

renewal" (p. 8). He then suggested what a self-renewing person might be like:

1. Self-development. . . . For self-renewing men and women the development of their potentialities and the process of self-discovery never end. (p. 10)

2. Self-knowledge. . . . The individual who has become a stranger to himself has lost the capacity for genuine self-renewal. (p. 13)

3. Courage to fail. . . . We pay a heavy price for our fear of failure. It is a powerful obstacle to growth. It assures the progressive narrowing of the personality and prevents exploration and experimentation. (p. 15)

4. Love. . . . They are capable of accepting love and giving it--both more difficult achievements than is commonly thought. They are capable of depending on others and of being depended upon. They can see life through another's eyes and feel it through another's heart. (p. 15)

5. Motivation. . . . Self-renewing people know that if they have no great conviction about what they are doing they had better find something in which they can have great conviction. (p. 16)

The same ideas proposed by Knowles and the picture of a self-renewing person portrayed by Gardner were also reflected in the lifelong-learning principles advocated by Gross (1982):

1. Lifelong learning is a personal, existential challenge to each of us, not just a rubric for certain educational activities.

2. Lifelong learning is a perennial humanistic ideal, not merely a new educational concept.

3. Lifelong learning takes diverse forms, not one pattern.

4. Lifelong learning is an international movement, not an American invention.

5. Lifelong learning is both individual and communal, not just one or the other. (pp. 22-23)

As Gross further explained, it is not just the acquisition of techniques or information that is involved in learning, but rather a commitment to an individual. "In the field of adult education, where the stuff of our work is human potential itself, . . . caring, commitment, even love must undergird and inform our skills" (p. 24). These principles could be reflected in any staff-development efforts where adults are pursuing their own growth.

Experiential Learning

Another important theory in the field of adult education is that of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984). Kolb set the stage for his theory in stating that "the learning process itself was distorted first by rationalism and later by behaviorism. We lost touch with our own experience as the source of personal learning and development" (p. 2). Kolb then drew upon the works of Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget, basing his model on the following ideas:

1. Learning is a continuous process grounded in experience.
2. It is the resolution of some conflict or problem.
3. It is a holistic process involving the total person as that person adapts to the world or new situations.
4. It involves transactions between the person and the environment.
5. It is the process of creating knowledge. (pp. 26-36)

Kolb's working definition of experiential learning was that "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (p. 38). Several critical ideas are emphasized in this definition. First, the emphasis is on process

rather than content or outcomes. Then knowledge is created rather than acquired or transmitted. This knowledge is filtered through experiences, becoming different in some way with the difference dependent upon the experience. The model shown in Figure 2.1 represents this definition.

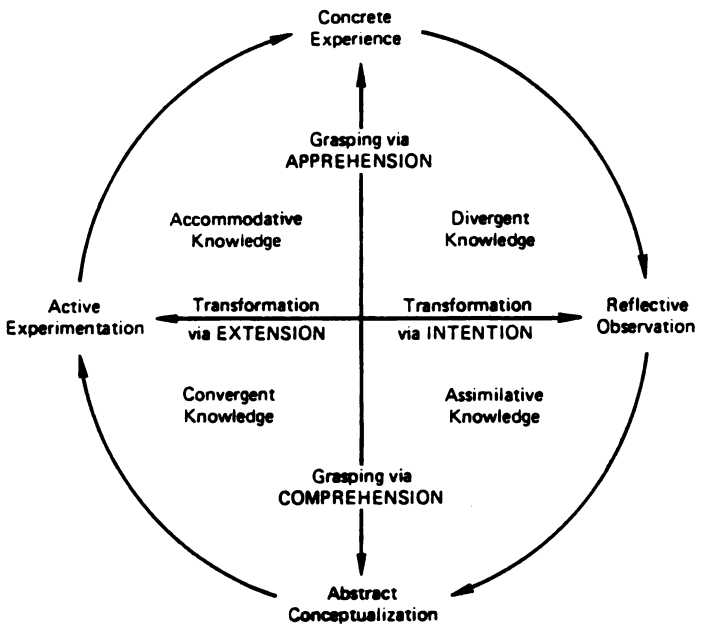

Figure 2.1: Model showing Kolb's working definition of experiential learning. (From Kolb, 1984, p. 42.)

As described in the model, there is a four-stage cycle with two opposing dimensions being created. Concrete experience and abstract conceptualization form two very different learning modes. Reflective observation and active experimentation form the opposing ends of the other learning modes. Through the interaction of these four dimensions, the experience is transformed, creating new

knowledge. It is important to note that there is not a predetermined starting point to the cycle. According to Kolb:

> The complex structure of learning allows for the emergence of individual, unique possibility-processing structures or styles of learning. Through their choices of experiences, people program themselves to grasp reality through varying degrees of emphasis on apprehension or comprehension. (p. 64)

Developmental Theory

While some researchers investigated learning theories, others searched for answers by interviewing a large number of adult learners. The landmark study, "Americans in Transitions," was conducted by the Exxon-funded project "Future Directions for a Learning Society." Aslanian and Brickell (1982) summarized some of the findings of that study. The findings that deal with the relationship between learning and the personal dimensions of the learner are included for the discussion in this study.

1. Adults learn in order to cope with some change in their lives.--Almost all the adult learners interviewed pointed to their changing circumstances as their reasons for learning. Adults who learn because of one kind of transition differ from those who learn because of another. (p. 161)

2. Learning can precede, accompany, or follow life transitions.--Learning before a transition presumably is the best way. But adults cannot always plan their lives well enough to prepare for all changes ahead of time. (p. 162)

3. Transitions--and the learning needed to accomplish them--occur unevenly in the several areas of adult life.--Career transitions predominate for several reasons. First, careers are more turbulent than other aspects of adult life; second, that career changes are more likely to require learning; third, that learning opportunities are more plentiful for career shift; and fourth, that many adults think they can handle other kinds of life changes without learning anything new. (p. 163)

4. Every adult who learned because of a transition pointed to a specific event in his or her life that signaled, precipitated, or triggered the transition and thus the learning.--The need, the opportunity, and even the desire are not sufficient to cause most adults to learn at a particular point in time. But it will take specific life events to convert most of them from latent learners into active learners. (p. 164)

In general, events in an adult's life influence his/her desire to learn.

The theories about adult development have been expanded to address the issue of adult motivation, as well. Wlodkowski (1985) proposed that "cognitive evaluation theory, as a single overview of human behavior, has probably the most natural relationship to the central assumptions of adult learning theory and research" (p. 6). Wlodkowski advocated that motivation must be looked at from both the learner and the instructor perspectives. He described four integrated levels to this theory. The first level is success + volition. A sense of choice in relationship to the learning activities is critical for the success of the learning. The next level adds value (success + volition + value) to the equation. The learner decides that the activity is meaningful and worthwhile. This separates superficial learning from relevant learning and significantly adds to the self-esteem of the learner. The last level adds enjoyment (success + volition + value + enjoyment) to the equation. The learning must be perceived as pleasurable. With this equation in mind, Wlodkowski described five critical assumptions for helping adults who want to learn:

1. People are always motivated--they are motivated to do something even if it isn't to learn.

2. People are responsible for their own motivation--seeing learners as responsible allows us to develop mutual respect and interdependence with them. This assumption gives us the right to expect their cooperation as well as ours in making learning the reciprocal relationship it naturally is.

3. If anything can be learned, it can be learned in a motivating manner.

4. There is no one best way to instruct.

5. Every instructional plan needs a motivational plan. (pp. 12-14)

Developmental Perspective

Levine (1989) has listened carefully to adult-development theories but has raised questions about how much the information has been incorporated into current staff-development practices in the schools. She described promising practices such as writing, individual and group supports, and organizational supports. "Many of these practices require reflection, involve collaboration, and encourage a sense of ownership. Like most effective professional development strategies, they also require commitments of time, training, and resources" (p. 266). Levine advocated the development of an "adult development perspective" (p. 265), which would be developed from the following ideas about what is known about adults:

1. No matter how hard each of us tries to appear in control and competent, everyone is vulnerable and no one is immune to being hurt. A related reality is the universal need for approval and recognition.

2. We must attend to the personal and professional lives of adults.

3. Teachers can use their work as a source of stability when other aspects of their lives are in flux.

4. Like children, adults continue to change and grow. While teachers and administrators may not need totally new assignments every year, we can expect adults to want to modify their teaching and leading, adopt new curricula, change grades or schools, take sabbaticals, or otherwise alter their work to reflect their growth and development.

5. Like children, adults do not all see the world or themselves in the same way. Adult development theories underscore the importance of attending not only to what adults say, feel, and do; they invite us to look beneath these responses toward a more fundamental understanding of how they are making sense of themselves and others, and what these patterns of sense-making might mean for the ways we respond, the kinds of supports we make available, and even possibilities for expanding world views through the introduction of dilemmas.

6. Schools are complex social environments as well as places to gain skills and knowledge. . . . Social interactions, particularly peer interactions, are central to the growth of adults.

7. Support is an essential precondition for growth. School principals and staff developers can use an adult development perspective to understand the nuances of support and to provide clues to the kinds of supports adults will need at different stages of development.

8. Many organizations, and perhaps most schools, require and reward conformity rather than independence. It is not coincidental that adults who demand a great deal of autonomy can find schools confining and may choose to leave. (pp. 266-270)

In summary, the differences in adults and children as learners have been investigated, beginning with the works of Houle, Tough, and Knowles. Lifelong learning and the notion of experiential learning have elaborated on the original ideas. An exploration of the transitions that adults experience introduced the idea of developmental phases and the effect of an adult's personal life on his/her learning activities. Motivation as an essential component of staff-development activities was explored. Finally, the need to

develop an adult-development perspective in order to incorporate these theories into practice was described.

Summary

The field of staff development was explored in this chapter from a historical perspective to capture a feel for the shifts and changes within the broad context of education. Some of the assumptions that guided more current models were described. Several assumptions stressed the need for teachers to grow from working with other teachers. Another assumption was that reflection upon experiences could provide critical insights for the individual. A third assumption stated that the opportunity to integrate theory and practice contributed to professional growth.

Next, several trends were reviewed that have merged, creating an influence on how teachers perceive themselves and their growth. These trends, such as empowerment, which describes teachers' desire for power or control over their own growth, the increased role of teachers in qualitative research efforts as they contribute new knowledge to the profession, and the changing status of education as the profession itself develops, have affected staff-development efforts. The increased emphasis on professional relationships was described as another trend.

Finally, the theories and models that related to adults as learners were reviewed. The foundational theories from Houle, Tough, and Knowles were described. Lifelong-learning principles and Kolb's experiential-learning model expanded the original theories.

The continued development of adults was then presented. Finally, the struggle to develop practices reflective of this knowledge about adult learners was presented through the argument for a developmental perspective when designing staff-development efforts.

CHAPTER III

THE DESIGN

The design employed in this study is described in this chapter. It includes a statement of the problem, a rationale for the particular design, a description of the different contexts, and the procedures used to collect the data. A description of the tools used for data collection and the procedures for data analysis is also included.

Statement of the Problem

As reported by other researchers, there is insufficient information or description about the nature of collaborative relationships in school projects. As situations that promote collaborative relationships become more widespread, there are several potential dangers. One danger is that the practice could focus on the format or mechanics, ignoring the true potential of collaborative relationships. A second danger is that without a variety of descriptions of collaborative relationships and more specific pictures created of these relationships from the teachers' perspectives, staff-development efforts to promote collaborative relationships might be abandoned. Furthermore, the problem of promoting collaboration is especially significant beyond the

elementary level because of the greater isolation experienced by middle and secondary school teachers. Several questions arise, then, about the nature of collaborative relationships:

1. How do participants engaged in a collaborative effort perceive their relationships?

2. What insights could be perceived or identified by teachers as they participate in a collaborative effort?

To address the problem, several relationships formed within a collaborative effort were examined.

Rationale

The researcher's goals in this study included describing (a) teachers' perceptions of their relationships as they participated in a collaborative staff-development effort to integrate content reading strategies into their classroom practices, and (b) the teachers' insights concerning this collaborative staff-development effort. Because of the exploratory nature of this study and the interrelationships among these goals, a design offering rich descriptions and explanations of social processes was required. Because qualitative research provides these kinds of descriptions and explanations, this study was based on a qualitative research design.

Qualitative research is based on the following assumptions (Rogers, 1984):

1. Any social entity or institution is enormously complex and subtle.

2. People and institutions must be studied holistically and not in isolation from other forces that may influence them.

3. The most effective way to study a given phenomenon is through direct on-site, face-to-face contact with the people and events in question. (pp. 86-87)

Collaborative relationships take place within the context of a school, a complex organization. The formation of these relationships, the forces that influence them, and the outcomes they produce are not obvious phenomena; however, further investigations might help make them more visible.

These assumptions parallel the findings of recent research dealing with collaborative relationships. For example, Lieberman (1986) argued that school-based collaborations are highly complex. The formation of these relationships is contingent on features of schools as organizations, and face-to-face interactions throughout a typical school year. Because qualitative methodologies have been developed with these factors in mind, it seemed most appropriate to use a qualitative design for this study.

Contexts

Because collaborative relationships can exist in many different settings and formats, it is important to describe the contexts that influenced the particular relationships described in this study. First, the district is examined in an effort to describe the organizational context that existed before the content reading project. Second, the project itself is defined so that the reader can visualize the setting and the types of experiences in which the teachers participated as they formed their collaborative

relationships. Finally, the professional backgrounds of the teachers are provided.

The District

The district was a small, suburban district located in the mid-eastern section of Michigan, serving approximately 3,000 students. It had a long history of emphasis on curriculum development and staff development. New programs and innovations were the norm rather than the exception. An air of experimentation and change could be found in the climate of the organization. As part of the student teaching program, weekly seminars and inservice offerings were held for supervising teachers, which created an opportunity for ongoing professional dialogue. There was a clear expectation that building principals were the instructional leaders of the building; therefore, they needed to participate actively in all staff-development efforts.

Due to a failing economy and declining enrollment, however, the district laid off 14 teachers for the first time in the history of the district. This situation resulted in the reassignment of other staff members, with the middle school being especially affected. In an effort to support these teachers, a grant for middle school math teachers was written to better prepare teachers who were teaching outside their area of expertise. The professional-development grant was awarded for two years, ending before the reading project began.

During the implementation of the math grant, the new reading goals and objectives from the state were being published and

disseminated, which had raised the level of concern at the secondary level within the district. Several of the teachers had attended the State of Reading conferences and were looking for more direction for implementing the goals and objectives in the classroom. These events prompted the district to seek a vehicle for facilitating the growth of secondary teachers in the delivery of their content to students as they implemented the new reading goals and objectives.

The Project

The collaborative staff-development effort or project in which the teachers were involved had one major goal. The goal was:

> **To impact the instructional decisions teachers make regarding the content they teach, the processes such as reading, writing, and thinking used to understand the content, and the motivation of students.**

The project was funded by Section 98 Professional Development funds from the state, coordinated through an intermediate school district. These funds were allocated by the state legislature for projects that were designed to improve the teaching abilities of current staff serving in K-12 public education. Clearly established guidelines and criteria were developed by the State Department of Education for each grant. All applications for each grant or project were read by at least three independent readers, who then chose a limited number of grants to fund.

The participants were middle school and high school teachers from several districts in the area. Administrators and curriculum specialists also attended.

The central focus of the project was to assist teachers in acquiring knowledge of content reading strategies, especially as they related to the implementation of the state's Essential Goals and Objectives in Reading Education. The specific outcomes of the project were defined as:

1. Expansion of teachers' knowledge in applying content reading strategies in their own classroom.

2. The implementation of a staff-development model that contributes to ongoing professional growth.

3. Gains in students' abilities to construct meaning from text, use knowledge about the reading process, and develop positive attitudes toward reading.

As this was a three-year project, not all outcomes were expected to be achieved by the end of the first year.

The staff-development model for the project was based on the following assumptions:

1. To influence behavior, there is a need to influence existing values and beliefs as well as to increase the knowledge base.

2. Collaborative relationships are a condition for growth.

3. Knowledge can be dynamic rather than fixed, and it can come from various sources.

For this reason, all participants were volunteers who could decide to leave the project at any time. Second, there was a strong emphasis on teachers using their own materials from their classrooms as the models and examples of the strategies. Third, the facilitator, a university professor whose area of expertise was

content reading, demonstrated the strategies or techniques in the teachers' classrooms, sometimes videotaping the lesson to share with the whole group. Finally, collaborative discussion was encouraged as the participants offered feedback on the workshops as well as the content reading strategies. This allowed the facilitator to monitor and adjust to meet the needs of the group.

The structure of the project involved two separate components: formal workshops held once a month, and the concept of support days. The workshops were conducted for a full school day, with release time being provided for classroom teachers. The first workshop was held in September, and the last one was held in May of the same school year. The facilitator planned and conducted the workshops. The workshops were characterized by a gradual transfer of learning, with the major responsibility shifting from the facilitator to the teachers as their ability to reflect on their own instruction gradually increased.

The agenda for each workshop session included the following topics:

1. A theory base for decision making about content reading strategies and options (when to use what type of strategy or technique).

2. Specific classroom strategies and options.

3. Support for classroom implementation and adaptation.

A consistent theme throughout all the workshops was that, by using content reading strategies, teachers could more effectively teach their content, which was their primary concern.

The second component of the project was the concept of support days. Support days were scheduled once a month, between workshop sessions, in each building that had participants in the project. Several substitute teachers were hired for the support day, with participant teachers being able to decide how much release time they needed. On a support day, a participant teacher could decide to meet with the facilitator, work alone preparing materials, or work with other teachers. The teacher could also decide not to use the support day that month.

The Teachers

In an effort to promote the collaborative discussion, workshops were limited to 25 or 30 participants. In the district mentioned previously, 26 middle school and high school teachers volunteered to participate in the project. After the first month, three teachers decided to leave the project for a variety of reasons. The remaining teachers represented a wide variety of content areas: English, math, science, social studies, business education, and health. In addition, the middle school principal and the high school principal participated in the workshops and were available on the support days. Two teachers from the same building who had previously worked well together were provided with additional release time by the building principal to form a building support base for the project. This study was explained to them, and they were offered an opportunity to participate. Both teachers expressed a strong interest and agreed to participate in this study.

"Sally" (a fictitious name) had taught science in the district for 15 years. She was considered an experienced teacher who was well respected in her field. Sally had participated in the student teaching program for many years, as a supervising teacher. She had served on various curriculum committees, such as the K-12 Science Review. Her teaching experience included seventh-grade science at the same middle school and two years teaching science at the high school. Sally had a master's degree in education. The principal of the building selected Sally to participate in a series of workshops held by the state to introduce the new reading goals and objectives at the secondary level, which were held before the start of the project.

"Mary" (also a pseudonym), the other teacher of the team, had taught home economics courses at the high school for at least ten years before being reassigned to the middle school. At the middle school, she was assigned to teach seventh-grade English, which she was certified to teach; however, she had not taught at this level or in this content area before. She had taught English then at the middle school for three years before the beginning of the project. The year the project began, the district was to begin a comprehensive K-12 Language Arts Curriculum Review, which was to integrate the new reading goals and objectives from the state as well as to revise the existing curriculum. Mary was also selected by the building principal to attend the workshops held by the state on the new reading goals and objectives at the secondary level. An

initial assessment of the current language arts curriculum at the seventh- and eighth-grade level had revealed a very sketchy set of goals and objectives, as well as inadequate text materials.

Procedures

The central issue for the study was the participants' perceptions of and insights into the relationships formed within a collaborative effort or project. Data were collected using ethnographic questioning techniques (Spradley, 1979). Questions consisted of grand tour and dyadic contrast questions. Grand tour questions ask subjects to describe their experiences and perspectives in a global fashion (e.g., How do you feel about what you have learned? What is your relationship with your teammate?). Dyadic contrast questions ask subjects to describe changes in perceptions, from one time to another (e.g., Has your relationship with your teammate changed? How has it changed?). Teachers were interviewed individually at the end of the first year. In an effort to capture the exact wording and particular language used, interviews were tape recorded and then transcribed for analysis. A two-hour time block was reserved for each interview so that the teachers would not feel rushed or pressured to hurry up with their responses. Each teacher was interviewed in the familiar setting of their building. The researcher conducted all interviews since the participation of the researcher in the project contributed to establishing rapport.

To validate the teachers' perspectives from other sources, an interview of the building principal was also obtained using ethnographic questioning techniques. The interview with the building principal consisted of the same questions asked of the two teachers, revised to tap into the principal's perspective on their relationship (e.g., What is the relationship between Sally and Mary?). This interview was held within the building, tape recorded, and then transcribed. It was approximately an hour in length and was conducted at the end of the first year of the project.

In addition, a vignette of the project and the relationships within the project was created by the facilitator for this study. The vignette, written by the facilitator, followed procedures developed by Lieberman (1987). Finally, an audio-recording of a typical work session between the facilitator and the two teachers on a support day was obtained and later transcribed. This work session was approximately two hours in length and was conducted near the end of the first year of the project.

Ethnographic Interview

An ethnographic interview is a strategy or technique for getting individuals involved in a particular situation to talk about the situation or experience so that meaning can be achieved or inferences about their behavior can be made.

Ethnographic interviewing involves two processes, that of establishing rapport or a harmonious relationship between the researcher and the informant and of eliciting information (Spradley,

1979). Since the researcher was a member of the same project as a participant observer and a staff member of the same district for 15 years, establishing rapport to allow a free flow of information was not difficult. To elicit the maximum amount of information about the experience in general, a series of descriptive questions was developed. Although there are five major types of descriptive questions (Spradley, 1979), typical grand tour questions were constructed, with follow-up specific or guided grand tour questions generated as needed. The length of the grand tour questions was increased to expand the length of the response. The grand tour questions were framed only to focus on the aspects of this study and to limit the scope of information, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1984).

The following questions were asked of both teachers separately as they were interviewed:

1. As you think about the project that you were involved with, think about it as a whole, total experience from September, when it began, to the ending of it in May. How do you think this experience in content reading was different from other professional-development experiences that you have had?

2. Personally, how do you think you have been affected by this experience?

3. How would you describe the relationships that you have formed through the workshops, or through the support days?

4. Where do you see these relationships going in the future? What do you see as a direction for them?

5. If you had to summarize what you saw as outcomes or what has happened as a result of your participation in this project, what would it be?

6. Is there anything else that you want to add about the experience in general? Anything that we haven't covered through the questions or any other comments that you want to give?

Vignette

As part of an evaluation report for the New York City Teacher Centers Consortium, Lieberman (1987) designed an instrument that she termed a *vignette*. A vignette is a qualitative tool designed to help capture the subtle nuances of an experience. The tool was piloted for a year and then used. The vignette consisted of a series of topics which were chosen to be natural elements of the experience so that the writer of it would have a consistent format to follow but one that would not be restrictive. It was approximately six to ten pages in length.

The facilitator of the content reading project was asked to compose a vignette of the experience at the end of the first year. It was determined that the topics used by Lieberman were also appropriate for this situation. The following outline was used.

The context--Tell a little about the context of the school.

Your hopes--What did you hope would happen?

Who was involved? Were you working with one person, a group, the whole school?

What I did--What were the specifics of your work?

What happened?--What was the reaction or results of your work?

The impact--What happened in a larger sense, to the other teachers?

Why did it happen?--What were the reasons for the impact?

Other comments--Anything else of importance?

The vignette created by the facilitator, who was an integral component of the project with a unique perspective, served as another source of data. Some comments in the vignette were not clear, so a follow-up ethnographic interview of the facilitator was conducted for further elaboration.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was guided by a combination of "emic" and "etic" ethnographic approaches (Pike, 1967). An emic approach strives to reconstruct the perspectives of the participants most directly involved. An etic approach consists of data collection and analyses external to the experiences of participants, such as with administrators and facilitators. The purpose of etic procedures and analyses is to confirm and contrast the participants' personal perspectives.

Determination of the teachers' perspectives was based on an analysis of the transcripts of the teachers' interviews and from the work session between the teachers and the facilitator conducted on a support day. Analysis was based on principles of grounded theory, using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The following steps were followed. First, after multiple readings of

the transcripts, comments or phrases were coded into as "many different categories of analysis as possible" (p. 105). This process underwent a continual reexamination of categories as the transcripts were read and reread, especially as the context of the comments or phrases was considered. Then the same process was conducted using the transcripts of the interview with the building principal, the vignette, and the follow-up interview with the facilitator. Categories consistent in all sources were then combined, being careful to identify the source of the comment (teacher, principal, or facilitator).

Second, the categories were analyzed for their properties and then searched for possible relationships which would allow some integration of categories. This then led to the third step of the process, delimiting the theory.

> Delimiting occurs at two levels: the theory and the categories. First, the theory solidifies, in the sense that major modifications become fewer and fewer as the analyst compares the next incidents of a category to its properties. Later modifications are mainly on the order of clarifying the logic, taking out non-relevant properties, integrating elaborating details of properties into the major outline of interrelated categories--and most important, reduction. (p. 110)

The process of reduction involved the grouping of categories under higher-level concepts. At this step of the process, Spradley's (1979) taxonomic analysis was used. This process led to the emergence of three different broad areas of categories. Each area was considered independently and labeled as a separate theme. A taxonomic analysis or map was then constructed for each them.

The last or fourth step according to Glaser and Strauss (1967) is the actual writing of the theory. The written theory is based on the "analytic framework which forms a systematic substantive theory" (p. 113). A narration was then created for each theme, organized around the map of the theme, and fleshed out by quotations from the transcripts and vignette.

Although the data were combined into one set of categories and themes, an attempt was made to preserve the individual "voices" heard during this study. Britzman (cited in Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) described the importance of "voices":

> Voice is meaning that resides in the individual and enables that individual to participate in a community. . . . Voice suggests relationships: the individual's relationship to the meaning of her/his experience and hence, to language, and the individual's relationship to the other, since understanding is a social process. (p. 4)

Summary

The perceptions of teachers involved in a collaborative effort to improve student learning guided the focus of this study. Two research questions framed the collection of data: How do teachers perceive their relationships within a collaborative effort? What insights were perceived or identified by the teachers as they participated in a collaborative effort?

To obtain the rich description needed, a qualitative design was chosen. The contexts within which these collaborative relationships existed were described, in an effort to create a more complete picture. The district's past staff-development efforts and attitudes toward professional growth were included as they set the

stage for the content reading project that served as the vehicle for the collaborative relationships studied. The project itself, its goals and objectives, how it was structured with a blend of workshop and support-day experiences, and the role of the facilitator were also included so that the teachers' comments are more meaningful to the reader. Finally, the teachers themselves were described in terms of their professional backgrounds and experiences before their participation in the project.

With this rationale and context developed, specific procedures for data collection were described in this chapter, including a description of the two major tools used, the ethnographic interview and the vignette. Finally, the methods for data analysis were described.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

In this chapter, data are presented relevant to these questions: (a) How did teachers perceive their relationships within a collaborative effort? and (b) What insights were perceived or identified by teachers as they participated in a collaborative effort? The application of qualitative analyses described in Chapter III resulted in the identification of three themes that address these questions. This analysis involved the sorting of data from all data sources into categories, using the language from the transcripts, such as "decisions in the classroom." The categories were then analyzed for relationships among the categories. The categories formed into three different groups, each revolving around a central theme: tensions, growth, and reflections. Categories within a theme were then arranged into maps that depicted these relationships. A narration was then written, which described the themes by using excerpts from the data sources. In the narration, the voices of the teachers, the building principal, and the facilitator are identified as the themes are developed.

Tensions

Rationale

As the categories within this theme were examined, several different relationships began to emerge. First, phrases containing "definite or definition" and "ambiguous" appeared as opposite concepts. The categories were then searched for other possible opposite relationships. "Old routines or activities" and "new practices" appeared as another relationship. Finally, another possible relationship developed between "building needs" and "project needs." These relationships were placed at opposite ends of a continuum.

Next, the remaining categories were examined to determine whether anything was pulling the teachers toward either end of the continuum. A reading of the transcripts indicated that when the teachers were referring to "definite or ambiguous" they were discussing "content reading" or "new practices." It seemed that "content reading" and "new practices" formed a central focus that could pull teachers toward either end of the continuum. When the teachers, building principal, and facilitator discussed "building needs" or "project needs," "time" and "physical setting" were mentioned. These factors seemed to be pulling teachers between the "building needs" and the "project needs." Finally, "comfort level" was a common refrain as teachers talked about "old routines" and "new practices."

As these relationships became clearer, the label "tensions" seemed to best reflect their nature. These tensions created by

forces pulling in opposite directions appeared throughout the transcripts as teachers voiced their concerns and frustrations. Three specific tensions emerged. The first tension resulted from the teachers' desire for definition or clarity during the project, and yet there seemed to be a high degree of ambiguity. Next, there was, at times, a tension between fulfilling the needs of the building and those of the project. Finally, as teachers participated in the project, a tension arise between old routines and new practices. A map was then created to better illustrate the theme (see Figure 4.1).

Narration

Definition versus ambiguity. Participants frequently mentioned the need for clarity in defining practices that were the focus of the collaboration, but at the same time experienced ambiguity. For example, in her efforts to take the information about content reading study guides and adapt them to her curriculum, Mary stated, **"It made me feel very uneasy not being told exactly what to do."** She also observed that other staff members **"who didn't have someone to fall back on were very uptight about the whole situation."** The facilitator also struggled with a desire to replicate previous understandings of content reading and a desire to search for new understandings. The notion of study guides as a definite, particular content reading strategy would have satisfied the teachers' desire for clear definition but also might have limited

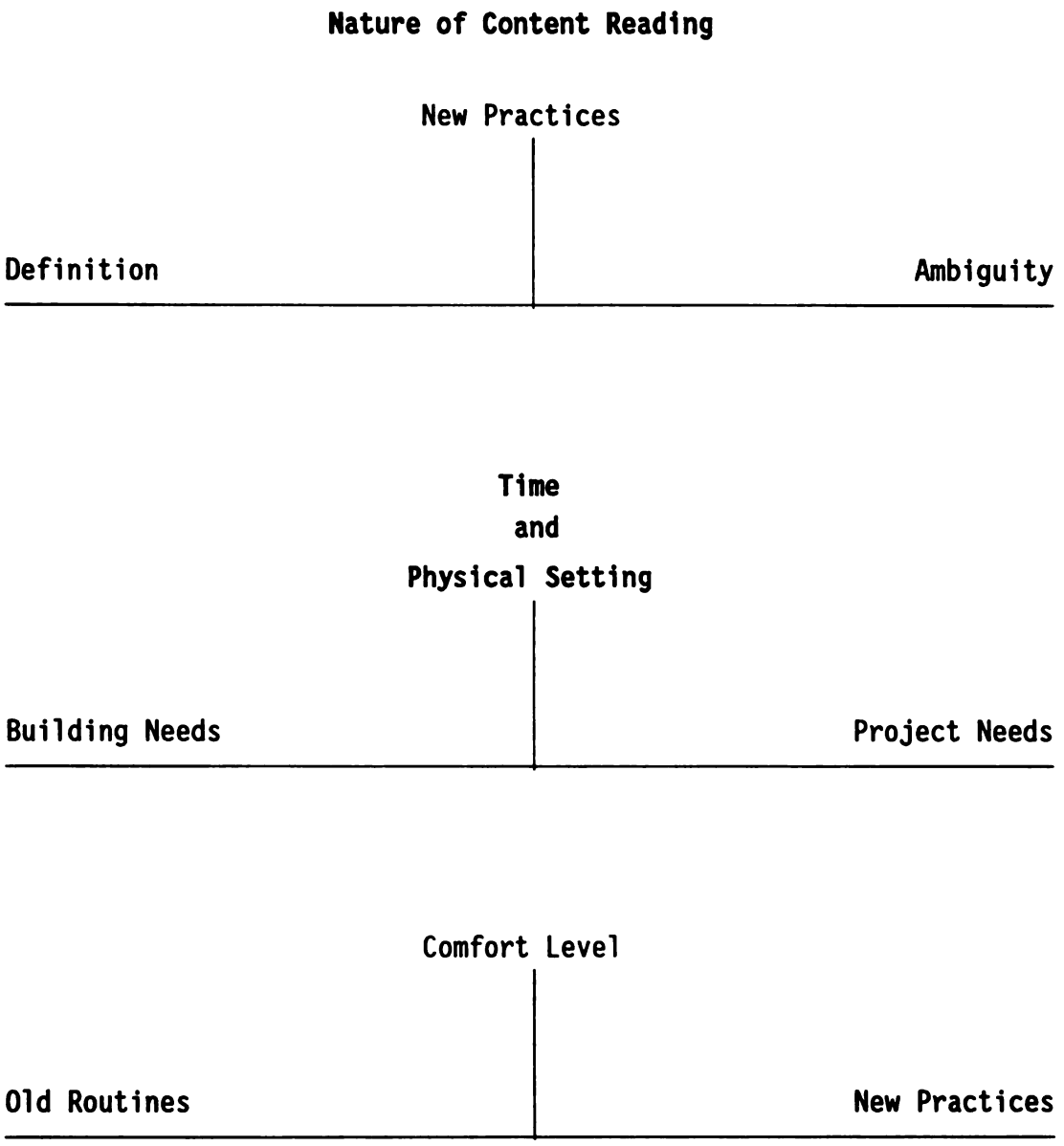

Figure 4.1: Map--Tensions.

their understanding. The facilitator, in the group discussion with Mary and Sally on a support day, commented:

> **What happens is that people start cranking out the guides and then what you end up seeing is the guides are there, but some of the outcomes like motivation, like are the kids getting a better understanding . . . all those kinds of things won't happen.**

The facilitator continued to reflect on this tension between definition and ambiguity, finally concluding that **"I keep trying to figure out how you balance both ends."**

Another practice that was a focus of the collaborative effort was the creation of a new role for Mary and Sally, in an effort to support the other teachers in the building as they attempted to implement content reading strategies. According to the building principal, Mary and Sally were provided with one period of release time a day so that they could gain greater expertise in content reading. However, the role was not clearly defined as there was not a precise understanding that could be communicated. Sally felt very frustrated by this, stressing, **"We have to be very concrete and explicit in what it is we are doing."** She did, however, see the ambiguous nature of the role. **"I don't know that we ourselves were quite clear on what it is we were going to do. That may have been part of it, I'm not certain."** Sally also saw that, as a result of the ambiguous nature of this role, the other teachers in the building thought they couldn't **"trust"** the situation, perceiving Mary and Sally's release time as just **"another hideaway job."** Negative comments were made directly to Mary and Sally by other staff members, which made Mary and Sally reluctant to continue with

the release time. The building principal validated this perception as she commented on the release time notion:

> **Due to several factors, not the least of which was moving into this too soon without specifically established guidelines for the support teachers as well as the classroom teachers, this support time or release time for Mary and Sally was eliminated after one semester.**

The grant that defined the project included a new practice, support days. The intention behind this practice was to support the teachers in some manner as they attempted to learn and integrate new knowledge about content reading. The specific details of how this support was to be provided were not predetermined but were to be developed by the teachers. This new practice was not clearly defined; however, it appeared to be used very effectively by the teachers. The support days provided time for Mary and Sally to meet with the facilitator. As reflected in the transcript from the group discussion, the teachers and the facilitator discussed what happened on the previous workshop day, commenting on what appeared to work or not to work: **"the vocabulary lesson . . . how could we forget it!"** It also provided time to plan the next workshop as the remainder of the discussion focused on the next workshop, which was designed to integrate content reading and the instructional process from the school-improvement model that the district was also implementing. Some members of the project did not see the connection between content reading and the instructional process. However, Mary said, **"I can see the correlation between the instructional process and reading in the content area . . . but how do we get the others to**

see the relationship?" The rest of the session that day focused on ways to set up the workshop to make that relationship between content reading and the instructional process clearer.

The other members of the project in that building also demonstrated initiative and creativity in using the release time provided on the support days. The building principal noted that "support days were used most productively by most participants in our building." She further described why she thought the concept of support days functioned well even though they were not a clearly defined practice:

> Teachers appreciated the fact that they were valued enough as professionals to be provided specific times for planning and discussing these newly developed concepts. Each teacher was responsible for planning how she/he would use the support time. We always tried to schedule coverage so that at least two or three staff members would be freed up during the same time block, allowing for collaborative opportunities if teachers so desired. Teachers were also free not to use the support time.

In general, the tension between a need for clear definition and the necessity for ambiguity emerged from the data as the teachers were involved in a collaborative effort to learn content reading strategies. This tension focused on the issue of what is content reading, the newly established role for helping implement that understanding for Mary and Sally, and the use of the support days as a component of the project.

Project needs versus building needs. Another tension that emerged was the need to develop a better understanding of content reading through the project and still fulfill other building needs that had to be addressed as well. There just did not appear to be

enough time, or sometimes space, to provide for the needs of the project as well as other building needs. The facilitator sensed this as the topic arose during the group discussion. He stated:

> I thought things were a lot simpler in the beginning of the year when everybody was ready to jump in and try things. Then what happened was that as the year went on, things got more complicated. The thing I started to sense was the environment in the building started changing in ways that I didn't fully understand. . . . About February, content reading became less of an issue, and the things that became more of an issue were things in the building and trying to hold the building together.

Mary and Sally supported this observation as they shared some of the things that had occurred in the building. They had both taken on "other obligations during some of that time, like academic track [a program where students competed with other schools by performing or demonstrating their ability in academic areas]." This involved "dealing with setting up the meets and helping to make sure they were going to show. . . . A lot of paperwork was involved in that." As a result of this, "my content reading time ended up doing more of the track things." Even "after-school time" was stretched as the pressure of academic track and other concerns began to build up. Time then emerged as a major factor in dealing with the tension between the project needs and the building needs. Mary commented during the group discussion, "I think that just the organization of the time eventually just got to us where we just couldn't manage any more."

Another dimension of time that became a factor in this tension was the time spent out of the classroom while teachers participated in the workshops and support day activities. Although the teachers

recognized the value of their own growth, they felt responsible for the growth of their students, needing to be directly involved rather than just planning for a substitute teacher. At the beginning of the year, both Sally and Mary were asked to participate in a series of conferences offered by the state on the new reading goals and objectives at the secondary level. Finally, both teachers declined the last conference because they thought they had been "out of the room for so many times . . . too many meetings and conferences." Sally felt the need "to get some stability back into what I felt was the classroom. The kids . . . it may not have been bothering them, but it was bothering me."

The physical setting for the teachers to plan or meet with other teachers to discuss content reading also became a factor in this tension between building needs and the needs of the project. According to the principal, the building was experiencing overcrowding so that every available space in the building was used. The teachers' lounge then became the only place for Mary and Sally to meet on their release time or the only place to read and prepare materials. Sally commented that "as other teachers, some of the most severe critics of the project, dropped in, they made it a point to be sure and come into that room and use the telephone and make comments." This lack of privacy hindered the teachers' ability to learn as they changed their behavior due to the pressure from some parts of the building. Mary stated that "it got on my nerves so

much that I would start to do busy work just so that it would appear as though I was doing something they considered work."

On the other hand, a positive factor also resulted from the teachers working in a public space. The principal said, "the conversation in the lounge began to revolve around content reading more and more." Teachers in the project would ask questions about specific concepts or strategies presented. They would seek advice from Mary and Sally about "how to write study guides." Teachers not involved in the project "listened to the conversation in the lounge, sometimes asking questions." The building principal noticed and supported this change in "lounge talk," commenting in her interview that one teacher stopped coming in the lounge for lunch because "lunch-time discussions were 'too educational' during his 'time off.'" This lack of space then contributed to the tension between the activities of the project and those of the building. There was also a positive aspect as sharing a public space increased awareness of the project for other teachers.

In summary, the tension between the building needs and the project needs were affected by time constraints and physical space constraints. Time constraints centered on the desire to meet the obligations and duties in the building, as well as the tasks involved in the project. Time was also a factor as teachers balanced being out of the classroom and being in the classroom.

Old routines versus new practices. As the teachers became more deeply involved with the project, there emerged a tension between their attempts to acquire new practices and yet feel the comfort and

ease of old routines. To write or develop a three-level guide, a content objective became the principal organizer. Content objectives were developed from the concepts of the disciplines. Many teachers were not familiar with this type of objective, nor were their curricula organized in that fashion. Sally, who was very familiar with her subject area, had a well-developed plan that she followed in teaching seventh-grade science. As the year progressed, she "spent more time looking . . . a little more deeply in the concepts." This search changed her old routine as "some of my lessons I would normally teach, I didn't teach. Some things I just didn't do because I felt that they weren't getting deeply enough into any higher level of thinking." Sometimes, Sally just used the old lessons because there wasn't enough time "to redo a lesson." Sometimes it was easier to just "make new things." Sally viewed her old routines in a new light as she had always liked to get students "involved in quite a bit of lab work" but discovered that some old lessons appeared to be "lab work for the sake of lab work" rather than leading to a better understanding of a concept. Sally struggled with her desire to incorporate new lessons. She cautioned that "if we don't continue to work at it next year, people will tend to fall back into their old habits--back into our rooms, and back into teaching the way that's most comfortable and also the easiest."

Mary also viewed her curriculum in a different light. She did not have a strongly established previous routine as she had only been teaching English for three years. In addition, there was not a

strongly delineated curriculum to be followed as there was in the science area. She did feel a pressure to emphasize grammar as that was to serve as a foundation for the next grade level. Her old routines focused on grammar and skill instruction, especially as the eighth-grade English teacher sent a clear expectation about the level of incoming eighth graders. Mary described herself as "just going along with the flow--you know, what I had done I would continue to do." Mary began to view her old routines differently as she got excited about the applied level of the study guides. She felt a "strong need to have students read something and try to see the relationship between what we're doing in school and what it should be doing in your own life." She even made the statement to the eighth-grade teacher that "she will not be teaching grammar next year or at least very little." As she developed "a firm belief" in that application level of the guide, she resolved any tension between old routines and new practices.

The building principal also witnessed this tension between old routines and new practices in her staff. She observed and commented on the initial hesitancy of staff to become involved in the project. Questions such as "How will I have to change my behavior?" or "What is expected?" were asked. Comments were made to the principal, such as "But I have always been successful teaching doing it my way, why should I change?" As the workshops progressed, the teachers became more open about "trying out" new things but not necessarily making a commitment to accept them as established practices. The staff even joked about this "intentional messing around." Teachers thought

they could "challenge and critique" the facilitator when he presented a new strategy rather than passively accepting the information.

Several new practices in addition to the content reading strategies emerged during the project. Teachers began to "watch other teachers teach a lesson, stepping into the classroom across the hall for the first time in years." While observing, they "talked to the kids about what was going on and what the lesson was about." Sally commented: "One fellow, who is really a good friend, for him to come into my room and actually watch what I was doing, that was a big risk for him. It made him uncomfortable."

Another new practice was for teachers to exchange guides they had written and to get feedback from Sally or Mary or any other teacher in the project. Sally read through a study guide from an art teacher and told him that "Frankly, I felt that it didn't seem right to me. I didn't feel bad telling him. It wasn't a put down." Another new practice was to use school time to read journal articles or professional books and then to have time to think. Although this appeared intellectually as an accepted practice, subconsciously Sally wasn't doing her "normal teacher program of either teaching, correcting papers, or working with students." She commented: "I know that subconscious image interfered because there would be times I wasted time just trying to make sure that I was trying to do the thing that would fit everybody's image."

Finally, another new practice that emerged was the role of the facilitator in the project. Sally noticed that the most obvious difference was that he "stayed with us. . . . He came back again and again to reinforce, to check to see if we understood." As a result of this frequent contact, the teachers "became personal with him," and they could really tell him if "this just doesn't work this way for me." Sally also commented that people wouldn't risk comment if the contact wasn't frequent. During a one-day workshop, people might just "politely grumble among ourselves, never really seeing what it can do for the students." The fact that the facilitator was willing to teach a lesson in their classrooms with their material created a lot of credibility. The facilitator spent time in classrooms, observing teachers and just "sitting and watching." He got to know the students, as well, who "accepted him just like another teacher." Mary described an initial distrust of the facilitator as she reacted to the traditional stereotype of "professor." She also questioned which side he was on, "the administration or the teacher's side." As the facilitator made frequent contacts and spent more time in classrooms, this distrust disappeared, and Mary "felt more comfortable and friendlier." Mary also perceived that the facilitator was not just the "expert" but was also seeking "clarity and definition about content reading." The facilitator's concern for the classroom and the teachers was readily apparent. He was there "to support, not just to give us his wisdom and then depart."

In summary, old routines felt comfortable and were easier to work within. These old routines came into question as teachers acquired new insights or new practices. There was always, though, a tendency to fall back on the old routines when things became difficult or time was short. New practices emerged as part of this project. Teachers visited each other's classrooms, sometimes providing feedback on materials or design of a lesson. Reading, thinking, and challenging became a form of professional activity. The role of the facilitator was perceived differently from other staff-development efforts.

The Impact on Personal and Professional Growth

Rationale

Another general theme that emerged across the data was the recognition of the growth that occurred during the project as teachers participated in a collaborative relationship. The categories that were loosely grouped together under the general heading of growth were examined and searched for relationships. Unlike the previous theme, there were not clear-cut relationships present, but rather the emergence of components. It appeared that, within the context of the total transcriptions, phrases such as "big picture," "purpose or why," "perceptions of others," "more confidence," "beliefs," "initiative," and the descriptions of Mary's and Sally's different focuses of learning defined "areas of growth." This term then was used to describe one component of this theme, with those phrases serving as subheadings or further descriptors.

Upon reflection, the categories of "time" and "dialogue" appeared to be related as things that either promoted growth or hindered it. For this reason, a second component, "factors that influence growth," was identified. In addition, two other categories, "internal pressure" and "growth of students," were related in the transcripts to any conversation about why the teachers either participated in the project or continued in the project. For this reason, these categories were labeled as "motivators" of growth. Finally, there were several categories or constant descriptors such as "open," "comfortable," and "willing to risk," which, within the context of the complete transcripts, were describing necessary conditions for collaborative relationships to succeed, according to the perceptions of the teachers. This category was then labeled "conditions for growth." As these components were examined, the title for the theme, The Impact on Personal and Professional Growth, was chosen. A map was then created to illustrate the components of this theme (see Figure 4.2).

Narration

Areas of growth. Although there was an obvious expectation that teachers would grow in their knowledge of content reading strategies, other areas of growth were identified as well. First, both Sally and Mary expressed the notion that they could see the "big picture" better. This meant that they saw the interrelationships between the strategies and their decisions about "why are we teaching, how are we teaching it, and then what is it

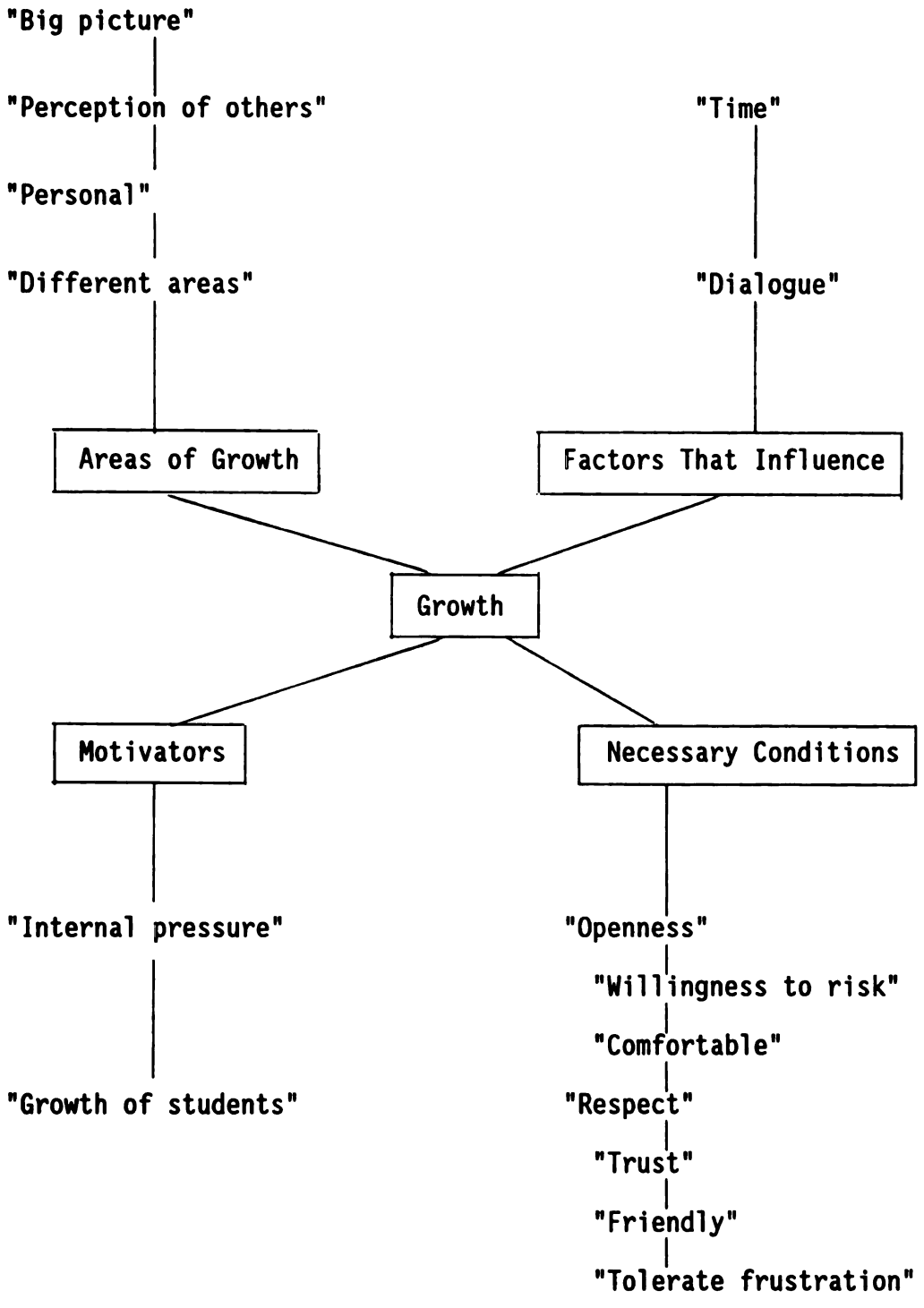

Figure 4.2: Map--The impact on personal and professional growth.

the kids are learning?" Sally stressed that the big issue was "why --So often, people just quit because they don't see why." The building principal supported this when she described the focus of the initial discussions in the school as "centered around establishing purpose." Both Sally and Mary also generalized the importance of why to the students as they saw the need "to get kids thinking at deeper levels, especially the application level, so that they could use the information in real life." As the teachers became more analytical of themselves and their teaching, they also began to view other teachers in different perspectives. During the workshops, Mary and Sally had the opportunity to hear other teachers talk about why they designed three-level guides the way they did for their students and their curriculum. Mary said that she:

> . . . really gained a lot of respect for the people that I am working with. You have to not only understand where they are coming from, but you have to respect them for the decisions that they're making. It definitely won't work to say, "Let me show you this way to do it." The complexity that comes from adapting is really something.

In her building, Mary sometimes was "shocked at the reactions of other staff members to the project." One teacher who, in general, had been perceived by the staff as "going with the flow, very organized, could handle things" did not react that way. Mary "saw her falling apart, and I don't have any less respect for her but I was really surprised by that reaction." Sally perceived "a newly hired teacher in the project as stronger teaching eighth-grade science that he had thought." She also thought that it helped him

"to see all of us struggling and that he was going in the right direction."

As the teachers grew in their understanding of content reading and its relationship to the classroom, this growth affected other areas of their lives. One particular area of growth for Mary was that she "gained a lot more confidence in what [she] was doing." Through her discussions on purpose and why, Mary developed "a strong conviction about the value of the applied level and getting kids to apply knowledge." This "firm belief" and confidence in herself "has carried over in other areas of school relationships with personnel." Mary described a staff meeting that was a planning session for a seventh-grade event in the building:

> A lot of complaining was happening which wasn't very productive. Previously, I would have felt frustrated at the conversation but would not have said anything. At this meeting, though, I said, "Look, we've got to do something."

She took the initiative in the group, and the event was planned. Mary also described taking the initiative when meeting with other teachers working on three-level guides. She became "a little bit more aggressive--You just can't sit back and say yes, you understand, but not help them to find a way of handling whatever is happening."

It is important to note also that Mary and Sally focused on different areas in which to grow. Sally had a specific and well-developed notion of her curriculum but was looking "for ways to improve [her] performance in the classroom." She described how she struggled during a lesson "to deliberately and consciously phrase

questions at the right level of thinking, training myself to think at that level." She realized it was not "automatic behavior" yet. Mary, on the other hand, struggled with the writing of the guides, "sometimes struggling for hours to get the right wording so kids would make the connections." But once the guide was written, she seemed to have an intuitive feel for guiding the discussion in the classroom. The facilitator commented in the vignette that he had observed a class discussion that did not focus on a three-level guide led by Mary. He was surprised to observe that "her questions which guided the discussion naturally seemed to follow the format of a written guide."

Factors that influence growth. *Time* and *the role of dialogue* appeared as two factors that influenced the growth of the teachers. First, there was the concept of what happened "over time" or during a long period of time. During the interviews, as the teachers reflected on the first year of the project as a whole, they noticed several things. At the beginning of the year, "everybody was ready to jump in and try things." Then "things got to be more complicated, and several teachers decided to leave the project." Sally saw that, in general, the group's ability to talk and question the facilitator "clicked in more toward . . . past the middle of the year." She also saw individual teachers "clicking in much earlier." Mary and Sally both saw that the relationship with the facilitator developed "over time." In the first month, Mary reacted to the facilitator as the "university professor," unconsciously thinking back to when she was a student and "there was a distance between a

professor and his students." As the facilitator "came back, again and again," and spent time in classrooms, also getting to know the students, this image began to change, and a "more comfortable relationship began to develop." Mary and Sally's relationship had existed for several years before the project. Neither teacher thought there had been any major change in their relationship.

According to Mary and Sally, it was toward February or March of the first year of the project that other teachers in the building began to ask questions about the project, asking whether "they could get involved next year." This led to a discussion of how to plan for the second year of the project. The teachers did not want to just create a "first year" and "second year" group. They believed that "not all teachers needed the same amount of time to learn the strategies." Sally commented:

> If we get a chance to get people involved at all different levels, they won't feel overwhelmed . . . so they don't feel that "You guys had a whole year in this. I'll never catch up, I'll just not bother." I think the way we have it structured next year for people to get involved just at the learning about level and the actual teaching level will help deal with it.

Teachers could enter at the actual teaching level without having participated during the first year of the project. Teachers who had participated the first year could choose to increase their understanding of the strategies but pace their implementation of them by participating in the "learning about content reading" group. Time then became perceived differently.

There were occasions when time became viewed as an "external pressure" or a constraint. Mary felt the pressure of "a date or

deadline to have a guide finished by," so the facilitator could see it before the next workshop. When the pressure got to be too much, Mary told both the facilitator and Sally that "things had to ease up. . . . Don't expect a guide this week and next week don't expect something else. Don't push your students because it's all brand new. I do work under pressure, but I don't handle that feeling well." When discussing the tension between extra duties within the building and trying to meet on the content reading project, Sally saw that "the organization of time eventually just got to us where we just couldn't manage anymore." Mary saw lack of time as a constraint when "wanting to sit down with teachers and show them that what they are doing is worthwhile." Mary also saw that it took more time to work with other teachers than by oneself. "When you take time to discuss, those discussions don't just go five or ten minutes, which is maybe all the thinking that it takes you, but when you first start them, they go much longer."

Another factor that emerged which influenced the growth of the teachers was the role that dialogue played. Multiple and varied "opportunities to talk out loud" brought people together and promoted the development of "professional relationships." The broader context that the workshop sessions created by bringing a variety of people (high school, middle school, all content areas, teachers, and administrators) together stimulated a rich dialogue. Sally saw the formation of "professional relationships" since before they had only:

> **. . . talked socially and never really talked about what we were really teaching. It helps to see across the way where we relate to one another and how our concepts flow. We just never take the time to intentionally talk it over and point out how we are doing.**

As the project gained momentum, dialogue continued in the **"hallways"** and became **"lounge talk,"** as described previously.

Dialogue revolved around a variety of tasks. Sometimes, the conversation was casual, **"how the workshop went and wondering what the next new topic would be."** Once Sally sat down with another teacher in the project who was having difficulty creating the guides. The teacher described what she wanted to get across to the students, and then **"we wrote statements to coordinate with the three-level guide pattern."** Another time described was when the art teacher asked Sally and Mary to critique a guide he had already written. Dialogue then focused on his purpose and what he wanted the students to know. Sometimes, dialogue reestablished social and personal connections between teachers. Mary commented that the first part of the workshop was spent **"catching up on the latest news."** The facilitator became aware of the need for dialogue to be personal as well as professional as he **"learned to kick back at times and talk about family and personal issues--not just business."**

The dialogue of students emerged as a factor that influenced growth. First, the facilitator spent time talking with students about the new strategies Sally and Mary were trying out in the classrooms. The students' feedback provided **"a valuable source of data about the effectiveness of the guides."** Sally and Mary also talked with students about **"why they were changing their teaching**

style, being very open that we were students in this project." They also encouraged students to express their opinions about the guides. This dialogue was ongoing throughout the year. Sally also began to see the value of the students talking among themselves while they worked on the guides. "Sometimes what they had jotted down on paper doesn't really mean anything until they talk about it."

Motivators. Two issues emerged across the data that motivated the teachers to continue working in the project despite the various tensions they had experienced. The first motivator was an "internal pressure" or drive to learn or grow. When asked how this project was different from other staff-development efforts she had participated in, Mary's first reaction was:

> I found myself having an internal pressure on myself to pay attention . . . because I didn't understand what was going on, and it wasn't the type of . . . here are a bunch of work sheets, pass them out. There was that internal pressure, like, I have to create, I have to do this.

As Mary became involved in the project, the complexity of the tasks, the emphasis on thinking skills, and the challenge to implement them successfully in the classroom captured her attention. This then created the "internal pressure" to grow. Sally thought this project was an excellent approach to staff development because:

> It isn't something that's being put on us nor in turn do we feel we're putting something new on the student that's just going to be this magical solution. It has just been an excellent way to look at what we're teaching to see why are we teaching, how are we teaching, and what are the students learning.

As the purpose and form of the project matched the teachers' desires, the motivation to learn became internal rather than external.

Decision making also influenced this "internal pressure" to create; Mary realized that:

> I was the one in front of the class so I had to know what I was doing, why I was doing it, where I wanted to go. The decisions were entirely mine. The facilitator might guide or make suggestions, but the decisions belonged to me.

This was also reflected on the support days, where teachers chose whether they wanted to use the time that month or not. In addition, how they used that time was their choice. The building principal said, "The use of support days varied in as many ways as there were participants--and participants chose different options on different days, depending on where they were in the process." The building principal also observed that the teachers had become decision makers regarding the curriculum content, rather than "allowing the text to make the teaching decisions."

The other motivator that emerged was the growth of students. As students demonstrated greater understanding of the content through the use of the guides, teachers began to incorporate them more and wanted to learn new types of guides. Sally described how the facilitator had helped devise a test that attempted to measure how well the students had thought about the material. He then sat down with the teachers to interpret the results with them, showing the progress the students had made. Sally especially "got really excited about that." Mary saw the students as the focus for why she

was involved in the project. She described a benefit from working within a collaborative relationship as:

> **[the ability] to compare students, their reactions, the benefits that this is having . . . seeing carry-overs from one class to another, and hopefully some other changes and feelings and reactions towards school or learning in general.**

As students verbalized their positive feelings about the guides and the increased discussion in class, the teachers were motivated to continue in the direction they were moving. Mary described a student who told her she should do more of the guides because "**it makes us think.**" Mary's reaction was "**that one student sure made an impact on me, and that in itself was gratifying.**"

Conditions for growth. Several conditions emerged that the teachers thought were necessary for people to grow within the collaborative framework of the project. First, "**a certain level of openness**" to a new idea or a new way of learning was necessary. Mary could describe times when she herself was not open to listening; therefore, she did not "**get anything out of the experience.**" She drew a parallel between some teachers who did not appear to be open and students who were convinced that they could not do something. This led to the next condition, which was demonstrating a "**willingness to take a risk.**" Mary thought that some people say, "**Show me how to do it, show me that I can be perfect at first, and then I'll take the risk.**" Related to this sense of openness and a willingness to take risks is the need to feel "**comfortable**" with the people with whom you are working. That

particular word emerged time and time again when Sally and Mary described how the relationships felt.

Part of being comfortable involved a sense of "respect." When teachers felt respected either by the facilitator or other teachers, they "felt better about themselves." There was also the need for the teacher involved to respect the decisions of others. The word "trust" was also frequently mentioned. If you did not feel that you could trust the facilitator or the teacher, there was not much of a relationship involved. "Friendly" was also used to describe a necessary condition. Both Mary and Sally described the workshop's atmosphere as "friendly, with much laughing and joking." This implied a personal as well as professional dimension to the relationships. A final ingredient or condition for growth was the need to "tolerate frustration." Mary noted that "there are a lot of frustrations that people are going to feel. There are things that are going to be said, and there are feelings that are going to be hurt." Mary saw that a collaborative relationship helped this sense of frustration as she said, "They need to be working with someone who suggests all the things that are happening, takes a deep breath, and says 'Let's try again.'" In Mary's relationship with Sally, she described herself as "often listening to Sally's frustrations about different things in the building." Sally would feel better just talking about her feelings and "getting them out in the open."

In summary, one theme that emerged across the data was the effect on the personal and professional growth of the teachers

involved in the project. Areas of growth were described, as well as factors such as time and dialogue that influence the growth of the teachers. Some motivators that encouraged the growth of the teachers were also identified. Finally, several conditions for growth were expressed by the teachers.

The Emergence of Reflection

Rationale

The third theme that emerged across the data was the notion of reflection as teachers developed a questioning process throughout the project. A search of the categories loosely grouped in this theme indicated some process to this questioning activity. First, the facilitator was described as "asking lots of questions." Then the teachers started to "ask myself questions," and then they "challenged the facilitator with questions." "Questioning students" became the next focus as teachers attempted to have students think more deeply about the content. Two types of questions emerged: questions about "instructional decisions" and "general questions that helped to sort things." It seemed that these questions then served two different purposes so that the larger category was named "purposes of questions." Two other categories appeared to be distinct from either a "questioning process" or "purpose of questioning." "More of a thinker" and "growth of the facilitator" appeared as "outcomes" or a result of the questioning process. When "purposes" and "outcomes" as well as "questioning process" became the three components of this theme, the title of reflection

suggested itself. Questioning was not being conducted just to gain information, but to think deeply or consider past events, which is the definition of reflection in the Oxford American Dictionary. A map, shown in Figure 4.3, was created to illustrate this theme.

Narration

Questioning. One word that was often repeated throughout the interviews was "questions." When Mary was asked how this staff-development effort was different from other efforts, she replied that:

> [The facilitator] kept asking more questions. . . . How do you think this is going to work in relationship to this? What made you make this choice compared to possibly this choice? I think that, in itself, made you do more thinking, and the more thinking you did, the more relaxed you felt about, well yeah, you know, I guess my thinking is in place. I just didn't realize it was in place as much as it was.

Sally also said that a major difference in this project was that the facilitator "questioned us as to how we decided to do the lesson and implement some new ideas, and then continued to help us learn new methods." This questioning role of the facilitator became even more apparent in the transcript from the group discussion held between the facilitator and the teachers on a support day. Early in the discussion, the facilitator shared "the questions that were in my head." He then proceeded to talk about an issue "that's a worry I have right now." The teachers then responded to his "worry," asking questions of their own.

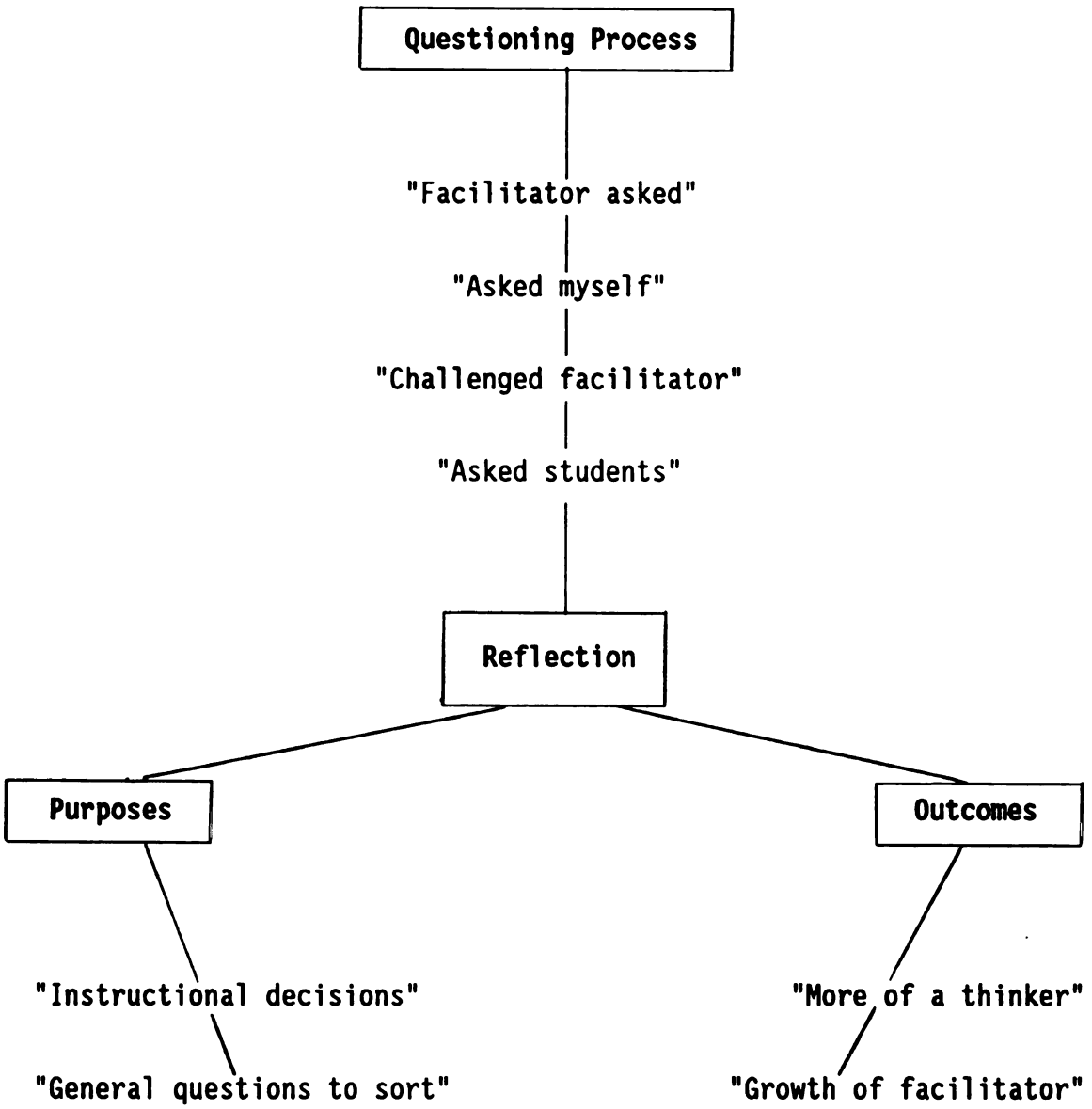

Figure 4.3: Map--The emergence of reflection.

At some point, Mary noticed that:

> As [the relationship with the facilitator] progressed through the year, I started asking myself questions, instead of him always having to ask the questions. I'm not sure that I ask them in the same manner, or anything, but it doesn't have to be the same.

This questioning activity also emerged in the relationship between Sally and Mary. Sally described how she and Mary "went into one another's rooms when we were teaching. . . . I could ask her questions about her lesson, and she could ask questions about my lesson." Questioning even spread to other teachers in the building who were not participating in the project: "As they overheard us in the lounge, talking about a lesson that went well , . . . they started to ask questions." Sally described another development as the relationship grew with the facilitator: "Our relationship really grew tremendously over the year to the point where I could question him. He didn't take offense if I questioned. He could question me and I didn't feel insecure at all."

Questioning became a major concern in the classroom as Sally and Mary "concentrated on the questions they were asking students so that they would reach higher levels of thinking." Sally found herself "constantly, in my head, thinking 'Now, let's see now, ask the right question so I can keep him at the right level.'" Students were encouraged to ask "questions of themselves and of each other as they discussed the study guides."

Purposes for questioning. Questioning was used as a means to get teachers to think about the instructional decisions they needed to make when implementing the guides in the classrooms. During the

group discussion with Mary and Sally, the facilitator wanted teachers in the workshop to analyze lessons based on materials the teachers had prepared. He voiced a concern, though, that:

> I don't think people have the insight in terms of swapping lessons. I didn't do any of that this year. Maybe what we could do among us is identify some criteria to help you walk through, not only look at the piece of paper [a study guide], but also think about what do you think is going to happen when you use the guide.

This statement was consistent with an earlier comment that the format of the workshop "eventually became more 'I'll show you a strategy, then we'll learn how to do it.'" Then the facilitator demonstrated the questioning process for Sally and Mary so that they would be able to use it with other teachers.

> You must say to somebody, "What do you expect to happen? What do you think is going to happen?" All you do is respond as you look for things that you don't understand. That's all you do. Just say, "I don't understand this." Then get them to explain it to you. As you go through the explanation, don't stop asking questions until you finally understand exactly how that's going to play out. All I did [when he worked with another teacher] was, I said, "I think I see what you're doing, but walk me through this." Then I looked for points that I didn't understand. I said, "I didn't understand this. How is this interpreted?" That gets into that reflection a little bit more.

Mary recognized the importance of sharing this type of questioning with the other teachers. She stated:

> It's very hard for me to sit down with another teacher and go through the same process that you do with us. Sometimes, I don't know what I'm doing and so forth either, but I think teachers need to hear it.

The facilitator found:

> When I do that [questioning], teachers end up talking more. The more they talk, the more you start getting into a reflection on their part, and it can kind of in a funny way. . . . They start learning how to do that for themselves. So

> that's really one of the things we should think about is how do you get a dialogue going with the teachers more, so that they can be more reflective about what they are already doing in a very positive way and in the right direction.

According to the teachers, questioning also played a more general role of helping them "sort things through my head." As other teachers asked them questions about what they were doing, they "searched for answers, thinking back on what had been done." As Mary and Sally "looked back over what had happened," they gained "a greater understanding" of what they were doing. Because sometimes the "most often heard phrase was 'I don't understand this,'" questions became a natural way to deal with this. Through questioning, "suggestions and ideas started to develop." Mary saw that Sally's comments and questions became a way of clarifying her own half-formed thoughts as she raised "questions that are in my mind that I haven't vocalized yet."

Outcomes of questioning. One major outcome that both Sally and Mary identified as a result of their involvement in a questioning process, as described previously, was their growth as "thinkers." Mary stated:

> I had never been involved in the thinking process behind many of the things that I had learned before. I think that I'm much more a thinker now than I was nine months ago, when we first started.

Mary also saw a difference in her discussions with Sally:

> When it came to Sally and [me] working, she and I were more into the, sometimes the mechanics of it. Not so much into the thinking of why did you word this statement as such, just, is this statement, do you understand what this statement is saying? It was the facilitator who kept asking questions, and then we started to ask each more more "Why?" questions when we worked together.

Sally set a goal "to begin to think automatically that way" and then wanted her students to "reflect more about the concepts in class and how they fit into their own lives."

Another important outcome as the result of the opportunity to interact with and question teachers, students, and others in the district was the growth of the facilitator. In the vignette, the facilitator described his initial impressions of the district as "committed to growing." It impressed him that:

> People actually sat together and talked about their goals for students and their practices. It affected me deeply to see people coming together in what is usually the very uncaring context of schooling.

The facilitator stated:

> My first and foremost hope [in working with the project] was selfish. I saw the come-on to grow as a way to develop some clarity, to take some time to really reflect on what I was doing, with caring people to help.

Although the facilitator wanted to clarify his thinking, in the follow-up interview he commented that he:

> felt threatened at first with the spirit of questioning in the district. People were articulate about voicing their past experiences, and I had to adjust to the idea that people were attacking ideas--not personalities. What is most important were the ideas.

The facilitator was very knowledgeable about content reading, especially at the secondary level; however, he discovered that:

> The conversation often focused on broader issues, such as culture, staff development, and outcomes. I had worked with other school administrators before, but this superintendent saw the system in a holistic way. He not only saw the micro picture but also the macro. He provided models for how the whole system could look and where this particular project fit in. He invested in my personal growth, recommending books and articles to read. The superintendent showed a direct approach

> **that not only reflected information but personal conviction. He was not afraid to face an issue and make a decision. This caused me to rethink my approach to personal decision making and confronting issues.**

Questioning from Mary and Sally helped the facilitator clarify his thinking about content reading and the strategies involved. In the vignette, the facilitator commented that:

> **The most help they [the teachers] provided me came in the form of asking critical questions. Sally, in particular, pressed me mercilessly for clarification about vocabulary instruction. Her comments really helped me to get clearer about what I think it means to teach vocabulary.**

Broader issues involving instructional decision making were also a focus of questioning for the facilitator. He described his interaction with Mary as **"she sorted out her goals for teaching and integrating them with three-level guides."** Then he stated:

> **These experiences have made me reflect a great deal on what comes first--developing a vision of the curriculum or developing a sense of instruction. Though it changes day by day, my sense now is that curriculum comes first, with instruction not far behind.**

In summary, a third theme that appeared across the data was the emergence of reflection. The process of questioning helped people reflect on the knowledge they were learning and the experiences in which they were involved. This questioning served several different purposes. Finally, two outcomes developed as people questioned and reflected.

Research Questions

In an effort to guide this study, two questions were devised. The themes developed from the data have been used to address these

questions in an effort to convey the teachers' perceptions of the relationships formed.

Question One

How do teachers perceive their relationships within a collaborative effort?

According to the responses of the teachers, the building principal, and the facilitator, relationships needed time to develop. Frequent and predictable contact with the facilitator and the other teachers, as outlined by the grant for the project, became a factor that influenced the development of these relationships. As these relationships developed over time, a full school year with the promise of a second year, several things occurred. First, the teachers perceived their relationship with the facilitator differently. The facilitator was perceived as someone with knowledge and expertise; however, "he understood classrooms," "spoke with students," and "was open to being challenged on ideas." A personal as well as professional relationship with the facilitator developed over time, which contributed to a sense of mutual respect. Second, the teachers were able to merge personal and professional relationships with other teachers through their participation in a collaborative effort. Personal relationships became richer as "dialogue," especially over time, focused on professional topics, such as "student growth." Professional relationships became stronger as teachers' "view of others" and their ability to see "the big picture" developed. Finally, as these relationships emerged,

teachers perceived that they had grown, gaining "more confidence" and becoming "thinkers."

The teachers also perceived that certain attributes were necessary for collaborative relationships to develop. Descriptors such as "open, willingness to take a risk, comfortable, respect, trust, friendly, and tolerant of frustration" were used to describe personal attributes. These attributes applied to the facilitator, as well as to the teachers.

Collaborative relationships did not develop with all teachers in the project. Three teachers left the project within the first two months. These teachers were described by the facilitator and the building principal as "loners." They were not looking to develop relationships but were interested in gaining the information; however, they discovered that the relationships were an integral part of the project that could not be avoided, so they left. According to the facilitator, some people continued in the project because they were searching for meaningful relationships. They developed a sense of belonging within the group, which met their needs.

Teachers also perceived that, because of the "comfortableness" of these relationships, a "spirit of questioning" developed. This questioning process, which focused on "decisions in the classroom," helped teachers reflect on their practices and the new information or theoretical knowledge about content reading that was presented. This process was not always easy as teachers struggled to redefine their understanding of content reading, experiencing various

"tensions" and "frustrations." Collaborative relationships then provided the emotional support necessary when involved in complex learning.

Question Two

What insights were perceived or identified by teachers as they participated in a collaborative effort?

Teachers perceived that they experienced various "tensions" as they participated in this collaborative effort. As they struggled with these tensions, the collaborative relationships that developed provided the flexibility to address these tensions. Through these relationships, factors such as "time" and "dialogue" emerged, which helped the participants manage the "tensions." As the collaborative relationships stressed shared decision making, teachers had input into the expectations of the project. This helped manage the tensions between the building needs and the activities in the project, as well as addressing teachers' "comfort level" as they acquired new practices.

The teachers also identified "motivators," such as an internal desire to learn, which developed as they were involved in this collaborative effort. As the teachers became more involved with discussions that focused on instructional decision making, incorporating theory and practice, they became more involved, perhaps more responsible for their own growth. The teachers also perceived that watching students grow in their understanding of the

content encouraged or motivated the teachers to continue their own growth.

Outcomes were identified by the teachers as they participated in this collaborative effort. One outcome identified was the teachers' own growth. The teachers' perception was that they had improved their ability to make instructional decisions in the classroom. In a more general sense, they also perceived themselves as "thinkers." This reflection went beyond the strategies as the teachers questioned purpose, reevaluating what should be taught. Personal conviction developed as teachers gained "more confidence" and a view of the "big picture."

Another outcome identified was the "growth of the facilitator." The facilitator described his own growth as a result of his participation in the project. His understanding of content reading and the instructional process deepened as he facilitated the teachers' search for meaning. A third outcome was the development of "new practices." The teachers, the building principal, and the facilitator perceived the value of this type of collaborative effort and for the development of the relationships formed. The "new practices," such as the role of the facilitator, the support role of the teachers, and the flexibility of the support days, were perceived as a positive and significant difference from previous staff-development efforts.

Summary

In this chapter, the data from the study were presented in an attempt to answer these two questions:

1. How did teachers perceive their relationships within a collaborative effort?

2. What insights were perceived or identified by teachers as they participated in a collaborative effort?

The raw data were organized from the teachers' perspective into categories, using the language from the teachers. These categories were searched for relationships and then organized into larger categories. Finally, the categories began to cluster around broad themes. The rationale for each theme, the specific map, and the elaboration of the map in narrative form, supported by quotations from the teachers, the facilitator, and the building principal, were then presented. The research questions were then addressed, using the information presented in the themes.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

In this chapter, a summary of the study is presented, followed by the findings and conclusions. Implications for practice and for research are discussed. Recommendations for further study are then presented. A reflections section is included, followed by an epilogue.

Summary of the Study

In this study, several relationships established within a collaborative effort in a secondary public school setting were examined. A description and possible insights from the participants' perspectives concerning their involvement in this effort were obtained. The collaborative effort, in this study, involved a staff-development program designed to help teachers internalize certain principles of reading in the content areas and to implement them in their classrooms. This staff-development program was designed as a collaborative effort that promoted the development of relationships among the teachers, as well as between the facilitator and the teachers.

Two research questions were devised in an attempt to guide the study. They were:

1. How did teachers perceive their relationships within a collaborative effort?

2. What insights were perceived or identified by teachers as they participated in a collaborative effort?

The following procedures were used to collect data in order to respond to the research questions. An ethnographic interview was obtained from two teachers who had formed a team in the project. These interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed. A work session on a support day between this team and the facilitator was also tape recorded and then transcribed for further analysis. In an effort to validate these perceptions, the building principal was interviewed as she reflected on the teachers' behaviors and attitudes during their participation in the project. Finally, a case study or vignette, describing the teachers' efforts and the relationships formed in the project, was created by the facilitator of the project. A follow-up ethnographic interview of the facilitator was conducted for clarification and further elaboration of the vignette.

Data analysis for developing grounded theory was then conducted. Multiple readings of the transcripts of the teachers' interviews and the work session with the facilitator led to the coding of comments and phrases into categories. The interview of the building principal, the vignette, and the follow-up interview of the facilitator were then read several times, with the comments and phrases being coded into categories. Consistent categories between the sources of data were then merged, being careful to retain the

source of the "voice." Categories were then searched for their properties and any inherent relationships. Three broad areas developed, which were each labeled a theme. Within a theme, a taxonomic analysis was then conducted, which led to the creation of a map that attempted to convey the higher-level categories and their relationships. Next, a narration was written based on the map to describe the categories and relationships within the theme. Each narration contained the "voices" of the teachers, the facilitator, and the principal. Finally, a response based on the themes was developed for each research question.

Findings

The following statements summarize the response to each research question.

Question One

How did teachers perceive their relationships within a collaborative effort?

1. Teachers perceived that collaborative relationships needed time to develop.

2. Teachers perceived that collaborative relationships merged professional and personal dimensions of their lives.

3. Teachers perceived that roles such as that of the facilitator or their own role as teacher underwent a change.

4. Teachers perceived that certain attributes or necessary conditions needed to exist in order for collaborative relationships to develop.

5. Not all teachers were willing to develop collaborative relationships.

6. Teachers perceived that collaborative relationships provided the emotional support needed when involved in a complex learning situation.

Question Two

What insights were perceived or identified by teachers as they participated in a collaborative effort?

1. The teachers identified several tensions that arose when involved in a collaborative effort. The collaborative relationships that developed helped to achieve a balance between these tensions.

2. The teachers also identified motivators, such as an internal desire to understand something complex and the growth of their students in the classroom, which encouraged their continued participation in the project.

3. The teachers identified their own growth as an outcome of participating in this collaborative effort. Growth was identified in the areas of instructional decision making, their ability to think or reflect, and the development of a "big picture" or broader context.

4. The teachers and the facilitator identified the growth of the facilitator as an outcome of this collaborative effort.

5. The teachers also perceived the emergence of new practices as supportive of the collaborative relationships.

6. The facilitator modeled reflective thinking for the teachers, who then internalized it.

Conclusions

As a result of the findings in this study, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Opportunity for dialogue is an essential component of collaborative relationships.

2. Collaborative relationships need time to develop, possibly being time intensive.

3. Teachers are capable of recognizing their own growth as they participate in collaborative relationships.

4. The modeling of reflective thinking is a powerful staff-development tool.

5. Collaborative relationships provide an effective vehicle for the modeling of reflective thinking.

6. The merging of personal and professional relationships provides a deeper growth experience.

7. Collaborative relationships promote or support the growth of all members in the relationship.

Implications

Given the findings and conclusions of this study, several implications for both the field of educational practice and educational research became apparent.

Field of Educational Practice

1. If opportunity for dialogue is an essential component of collaborative relationships, restructuring efforts need to consider and provide for these opportunities.

The present structure of the school day, the school year, or the school building does not necessarily promote opportunities for teachers to dialogue. Time, another factor that influences collaborative relationships, is related to dialogue. Dialogue takes time, possibly more time than needed just to convey information. Units of time such as class periods or planning time are inadequate, needing a shift in basic underlying assumptions. More options need to be generated, especially with teacher input. The possibility of an extended school year without students for the extra time is an option that could promote these opportunities; however, intentional efforts would be necessary to insure that collaborative relationships would become an integral part of that time unit.

Another area that could promote dialogue for teachers is at the university or college level. As teachers continue advanced degrees or additional credits, teachers could find themselves in university classrooms, a natural setting for dialogue outside of their buildings. Careful consideration might be given to structuring those classes so that collaborative relationships could develop as teachers dialogued. This dialogue might be richer as teachers have opportunities to interact with educators from other districts, whose contexts and perspectives are different. This setting might also

allow for a broader definition of teachers' roles as classroom teachers take a more active leadership role in these classes.

2. If teachers are capable of recognizing their own growth in collaborative relationships, they need to have more input into and control over their own growth.

One choice teachers might have as they direct their own growth is from whom they will learn or with whom they will interact. As discussed earlier, collaborative relationships merge personal and professional dimensions of one's life. If, within the group, a baseline of personal relationships has not been established or negative relationships have already occurred, the individual's ability to feel comfortable, be open to the situation, or be willing to risk within that particular group could be compromised. The individual might have a legitimate reason not to join that particular group but could choose another group. Since personal and professional dimensions are impossible to separate, there could be considerations or factors in a teacher's personal life at a particular time that would prohibit participation in a collaborative effort at that particular time. The door must be left open for teachers to join or rejoin these collaborative efforts when the teachers are ready.

Another choice teachers might have as they direct their own growth is the choice of role within a collaborative relationship. Although there is a real blend of roles, such as learner or expert, for the individual within a collaborative effort, people do assume a primary role. Flexibility needs to exist so that teachers can

choose different roles, depending on the particular collaborative effort. This is especially important as individuals might be involved in multiple efforts with differing roles. Sometimes perceptions of teachers become formed that are difficult to change, which limits their options or choices of roles. Collaborative relationships promote different perspectives of others, especially as teachers develop a broader picture of their world.

Teachers also might be involved in more than one collaborative effort or relationship at one time. Roles might be different in different relationships. For instance, in this study, the two teachers who were interviewed had formed a collaborative relationship with each other, as well as with other teachers in the building. They had also formed a relationship with the facilitator. These teachers were perceived as learners in the context of their relationship with the facilitator, but they were perceived as "experts" in their relationships with the other teachers. The facilitator had also formed several relationships. His role with the teachers in the project primarily was that of "expert"; however, his role in other relationships in the district, especially as the focus became staff-development or organizational issues, was that of learner.

3. If modeling of reflective thinking is an important staff-development tool and if collaborative relationships provide an effective vehicle for this to occur, schools should reexamine the attributes or characteristics of individuals playing leadership or facilitator roles.

The ability to express one's thinking, as well as to think in a reflective manner, would appear to be an essential attribute of a facilitator who is involved in the growth of teachers. This is a different ability from demonstrating knowledge or expertise in a content area. If teachers are involved in situations where they are dealing with complex learning, such as instructional decision making, the modeling of reflective thinking might facilitate the integration of theory and practice. Selection criteria for individuals to be facilitators might be reviewed in light of this ability.

Preservice education is another area where the modeling of reflective thinking could play a crucial role. Collaborative relationships can be the vehicle for the modeling of reflective thinking. Should student teachers be able to form collaborative relationships with their supervising teacher? If so, these relationships need to develop over time, which the current situation does not allow. Possibly, a year-long student teaching assignment would allow this type of relationship to develop. Within this relationship, the supervising teacher could model the ability to think reflectively about instructional decisions, the students, and the broader context of school. Selection criteria for supervising teachers and the procedure for assigning student teachers would also need to be reconsidered.

Other practices that promote reflection, such as journal writing, could supplement and enrich the thinking in the

relationship; however, some individuals may need the thinking modeled before they can access their thinking through writing. Some individuals may do their best thinking aloud, through dialogue.

Further Research

1. Collaborative relationships in many different settings and forms need to be studied in order to gain additional insights.

2. Although this collaborative relationship was investigated from the teachers' perceptions, the facilitator's perceptions should be explored, especially as more teachers might expand their roles to include this.

3. This researcher conducted an internal analysis of collaborative relationships. Analysis of other collaborative relationships could be conducted, using expert opinion to guide the analysis.

4. The link between the teachers involved in collaborative relationships and the students in their classrooms was briefly mentioned in this study. A closer examination of this relationship might add support to the development of collaborative relationships.

Recommendations

1. Teachers need to be involved in directing their own growth, choosing their own path.

The development of personal-professional growth plans as the basis for teacher-evaluation practices provides one model for teachers to direct their own growth. This plan is developed with the building administrator as the teacher identifies topics to be investigated or skills to be implemented in the classroom. A plan

is then developed, identifying the specifics of how the teacher will direct his/her own learning. This learning could take place independently or through participation in a more formal staff-development effort. The building administrator would meet periodically with the teacher throughout the year to help the teacher evaluate the progress being made and to redesign the plan, if necessary.

2. Collaborative relationships need to be promoted as one form of staff-development effort.

Teachers should be encouraged to form collaborative relationships as they direct their own growth. The organization needs to recognize officially these relationships as a valuable component of a staff-development program. Teachers should be allowed to choose whom they would like to work with and when they are ready to form these relationships. It should be recognized that these relationships are only one form of staff development.

3. Schools need to consider new practices necessary to support collaborative relationships.

Collaborative relationships do not exist in isolation. They flourish and develop within the context of the school day as teachers perform their daily tasks. New practices need to emerge that allow teachers the opportunity and time to come together for a common purpose. More flexible use of substitute teachers would free teachers so that they could plan together, observe teach other teaching, and/or develop new materials.

4. Instructional decision making should become a greater focus in staff-development efforts, especially as it promotes the integration of theory and practice.

In the past, staff-development efforts focused on providing teachers with new information, materials, or techniques. It was the teacher's problem to make the necessary adjustments for implementation in the classroom. Decisions such as when within the teaching sequence to use the techniques, what the necessary prerequisite skills were, and determining the readiness level of students were made by the classroom teacher during the implementation. If those decisions were not successful, the teacher might decide to abandon the new information, not risking failure again.

If discussion centered on the necessary instructional decisions, teachers could reflect on these decisions and then evaluate the decisions, making necessary adjustments before the next effort to implement the information or techniques in the classroom. This common sharing of decisions would help teachers realize the factors to be considered for implementation, as well as provide the emotional support necessary for their efforts to grow.

5. Teachers need to be more deeply involved in educational research, becoming active partners and creating new knowledge for their profession.

As researchers focus on classrooms as a source of information, the cooperation of teachers becomes essential as a minimum requirement. If a partnership was formed between the researcher and

the classroom teacher, this relationship could be mutually beneficial. The researcher would develop a greater understanding of classrooms as the teacher explains, offers insights, and questions. The classroom teacher would develop an appreciation for the role of research, a deeper understanding of the processes involved, and possibly a broader perspective of the classroom as a place for learning.

In addition, the teachers might develop a stronger sense of professionalism as they contribute new knowledge.

6. Multiple roles for teachers need to be encouraged and supported by school organizations so that teachers' insights can be more effectively shared.

As teachers adjust their perceptions of their roles within and beyond the classroom, an expansion of roles will emerge. Teachers will become "experts" as they share their thoughts and feelings with other colleagues. At the same time, they will function as "learners" as they read books and journals and attempt to incorporate new learning with previous behaviors. Teachers could also become "researchers" as they raise questions and search for means to answer them. They also will always remain as "teacher" to their students. These multiple roles might exist simultaneously as teachers participate in a variety of activities within the school day. Each role could develop different dimensions or facets of a teacher. Organizations would need to recognize the variety of roles

for teachers, the simultaneous nature of them, and provide the necessary support for these roles to exist.

Reflections

As a result of the researcher's being a participant observer in the project, several observations became apparent. The sharing of these observations or reflections might offer a richer picture of the relationships already described.

In the follow-up interview with the facilitator, he commented on the large degree of adaptation that he saw, rather than just replication or adoption of the techniques and strategies. As teachers internalized the knowledge about content reading strategies with their knowledge of their content area, adaptation rather than adoption became a typical practice. The classroom teachers followed the basic information about the strategies that the facilitator had presented; however, the actual design of the materials and their implementation appeared different. Since the facilitator could not possibly be an "expert" in all the various content areas represented in the project, the acknowledgment that the classroom teacher was most "expert" concerning the content was made by the facilitator. The facilitator's role then evolved into asking questions concerning process and motivation issues, as well as prompting the teacher to think more deeply and aloud about the materials constructed or how they were used in the classroom. As teachers then reflected on the theoretical knowledge they had gained and their experiences

implementing it in the classroom, they integrated the two, with adaptation becoming one outcome.

If the facilitator had recognized or valued only replication of the techniques, he might have misperceived some of the outcomes of the project. He might not have encouraged this adaptation, which could have halted the efforts of the teachers to continue experimenting with new ideas in their classrooms. Adaptation could become more common as an outcome of a collaborative relationship in which the focus was on the integration of theory and practice. Facilitators and individuals becoming involved in collaborative relationships should be aware of adaptation as a possible outcome, or it might be misinterpreted.

Another observation gained during the study was the blurring of roles within a collaborative relationship. At times, the role of the participants in the relationships shifted and changed. In the beginning of the project, the facilitator presented information, modeled strategies and techniques, and asked probing questions of the teachers. A gradual shift occurred when teachers began asking questions of themselves and later challenging comments or statements made by the facilitator. Teachers expressed opinions and made assertions about implementing these strategies in the classroom, and they pressed the facilitator for greater clarification. A passive learning role was abandoned as teachers became more deeply involved in their own learning. Teachers began to recognize their own role as an "expert," as well as being a "learner."

Although only the relationships between the teachers themselves and between the teachers and the facilitator were examined in this study, other relationships also existed that supported the relationships described. The role of the building principal also needs to be considered. The building principal attended most of the workshops and was available during the support days. Through the principal, organizational support was perceived by the teachers as they struggled with their learning. Not only was support perceived, but there was freedom to direct their own growth. Teachers were allowed rather than mandated to decide how to use their time on support days. Their decisions were respected by the principal rather than questioned. Teachers were encouraged to try new practices, and resources and materials were made available. If this relationship had been different, the nature of the relationship between the teachers might also have been different.

Another relationship that existed was between the facilitator and several administrators in the district who served as a support base for the facilitator. This group provided relevant background information and current information on other events happening in the district that might affect the project. This group also served as a source of encouragement and feedback for the facilitator. As members of this group often attended the workshops, they were able to comment objectively on the previous workshop and make suggestions for the next one. If the facilitator had not had this supportive relationship, the relationships with the teachers might have been different.

The relationships already described existed within the context of the organization. Organizational support was necessary for these relationships to flourish. Support was provided on a formal level as the grant created a legitimate reason for coming together. Informal support, though, was also perceived as administrators' comments were positive and encouraging. Support had to be "in sync" throughout the organization. If the superintendent had valued these relationships but not the building principal, the relationships would have been different. The same would be true if the building principal had valued them but not the superintendent. If the group of teachers who had participated in the project had not found these relationships satisfying, they would not have developed to the degree they did. If the facilitator had not been selected for the reasons he was, the relationships might have been different. All elements had to be "in sync" to create or promote the collaborative relationships. Another observation was that the teachers in the project found the workplace to be more satisfying as they participated in the project. As they became more satisfied with the work they were doing, they worked harder than they had before. They put more thought and time outside of the school day into developing materials and preparing lessons. This internal satisfaction without external motivators such as increased salary or a different title was sufficient to encourage teachers to act as professionals. Perhaps, the nature of teachers' work needs to be explored so that teachers are not just using skills but making professional judgments

and decisions. Perhaps, the more complex teachers are encouraged to become in their teaching, the more satisfying the workplace will be. If teachers are allowed to develop multiple roles, the more connections they will make between teaching and learning, theory and practice, and growth of adults as well as students.

Epilogue

The project continued for a second year as it was approved for further funding. The original group of teachers continued with the same facilitator. Three other groups of secondary teachers from various school districts were formed. Another facilitator, who was also a university professor, conducted two of the groups, while the first facilitator worked with the third group. The same structure of workshops and support days continued, with the same emphasis on professional relationships. The feedback from the teachers during that second year and from the districts involved encouraged people to seek alternative funding after funding from the state ended. The intermediate school district that served these districts continued the project with at least two groups and one facilitator. Although the formal relationship ended between the facilitator and the teachers in this study as the project ended, the effects of the experience still continue.

APPENDIX

PROFESSIONAL-DEVELOPMENT GRANT

INSTRUCTION

1. ABSTRACT

   a. Participants

      Participants will be middle school and high school teachers from the districts in the intermediate school district area. Additionally, administrators and curriculum specialists will participate at local cost.

   b. Needs

      This project address three specific needs: (1) the need for content area teachers to learn how to teach reading as a natural part of their curriculum, (2) the need to study and improve a staff development model for content reading, and (3) the need for middle and secondary school students to use reading strategically in an instructional context in which they possess positive attitudes about learning.

   c. Program Design and Important Activities

      The program is designed to assist teachers in integrating content reading strategies as they relate to the Essential Goals and Objectives in Reading Education naturally into their teaching of content. It does this via a series of workshops and follow-up support sessions in schools. A major feature of the project is the use of lessons that are video-taped for demonstration purposes in participants' schools.

d. Specific Outcomes

The outcomes of this project include: (1) expansion of teachers' knowledge in applying content reading strategies in their own classrooms, (2) the implementation of a staff development model that contributes to ongoing professional growth, and (3) gains in students' abilities to construct meaning from text, use knowledge about the reading process and develop positive attitudes toward reading.

2. PLANNING

The planning committee will become the project advisory committee. The purpose of this advisory committee will be to monitor and adjust the direction of the project to fulfillment of the project goals. Representation from each of the four training sections will provide information for the monitoring of the project. This group will meet at least four times during the first year and more frequently if needed.

3. NEEDS ASSESSMENT

a. Needs of Reassigned Staff

The focus of this grant is to teach and assist teachers in integrating reading and the essential goals and objectives for reading education into their content area. Participating teachers will come from a variety of content areas. The teachers expressing interest in this project were assessed as to their awareness and knowledge of the

essential goals and objectives of reading education. Less than 10% expressed knowledge at even an awareness level.

Teachers were also surveyed as to whether they had ever taken a course in content reading. Less than 20% of the teachers participating in the survey had ever taken a course in content reading. Many of these responded that the course they had taken was not worthwhile.

b. Priorities of Reassigned Staff

Participating staff completed an attitude scale designed to measure their attitudes about content reading and the Essential Goals and Objectives for Reading Education. In addition, the scale measures teachers' confidence in their ability to implement various goals and objectives. The measure was constructed on a 1 to 5 scale, with 1 representing strong positive attitudes and high confidence and 5 representing strong negative attitudes and low confidence. Results from the sampling of the participants indicated that over 89% responded either that they strongly agree or agree with the need for this type of program.

4. PROJECT PLAN AND DELIVERY

a. Relation Between the Project and the Needs Assessment

This project is motivated by three needs: (1) the need for content area teachers to learn how to teach reading as a natural part of their curriculum, (2) the need to study and improve a staff development model for content reading, and (3) the need for middle and secondary school students to use

reading strategically in an instructional context in which they possess positive attitudes about learning.

The needs assessment supports each of these needs. Teachers in the assessment all possessed positive attitudes about goals related to content reading, goals consistent with the Michigan goals and objectives for reading education (Michigan State Board of Education, 1987). Specifically, teachers and administrators responded positively to statements expressing the need to help students develop motivation and gain knowledge and strategies for learning from texts. At the same time, these teachers expressed little confidence in their ability to implement instruction that achieves these goals.

This lack of confidence can be attributed to several problems. One problem is that many of the respondents, particularly in the middle school, are reassigned staff who are not updated in their content area. They lack sufficient knowledge about the content and about the instruction unique to each discipline. Without this distinctive knowledge, decisions about how to communicate the content--and especially, how to teach students to learn from texts--are severely limited (Shulman, 1987). Without this knowledge, instruction often descends into low-level routines with teachers more concerned about covering the content than whether students are achieving (Cuban, 1984).

A second problem consists of teachers' orientation to "reading." To many, the phrase calls up images of separate, remedial reading classes, replete with different types of materials, students and instruction. To others, it suggests basal readers, long lists of reading skills and elementary teachers (Herber, 1978). Middle and secondary school teachers find it difficult to reconcile the types of learning-to-read activities that occur in remedial and elementary settings with their own priorities: to teach students about content (Herber, 1978). As a result, many teachers cannot envision how reading could be incorporated naturally into their curriculum (Ratekin, Simpson, Alvermann, & Dishner, 1985).

Content reading is defined as: <u>helping students use reading to think and learn in each subject area</u>. Rather than teaching reading directly (i.e., helping students find main ideas), participants will learn to use reading strategies functionally: adapting reading instruction to students' needs in relation to the demands of the content. In effect, instead of teaching students how to read, the emphasis here is on reading-to-learn.

Helping teachers learn and apply content reading is far from easy. Teachers are isolated from each other in their knowledge and practice. Opportunities are rare for teachers to collaborate within and across disciplines, to construct

common understandings of problems and pose possible solutions, in effect, to develop the professional knowledge required for effective teaching (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986). Secondary schools especially are characterized by many fragmented approaches to teaching which further contribute to this isolation (Cusick, 1982). Resistance to change can be high since teachers deal with their isolations in personal ways, resorting to routines that are justified by "That's the way I am" rather than teaching to specific outcomes (Buchman, 1983). Given these constraints, it comes as no surprise that teachers can see a need to assist students in reading to learn from textbooks--yet they do not feel capable of responding to this need. It is in response to these needs and constraints that this project has been organized.

b. Goals and Objectives

The project is organized around three general goals. These goals reflect the needs that motivate the proposal. Objectives are organized around each goal and reflect specific project activities. Because of assumptions underlying the staff development model, the project brings together personnel from two universities, an ISD and eight local school systems, including teachers, administrators, and curriculum specialists. Consequently, goals and objectives will be described in terms of participants rather than restricting the focus to any one group.

GOAL 1: TO DEVELOP IN TEACHERS THE KNOWLEDGE BASE ABOUT CONTENT READING AS IT APPLIES TO THE ESSENTIAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR READING INSTRUCTION.

Objective 1.1: Participants will demonstrate knowledge of instruction in content reading.

Objective 1.2: Participants will apply their knowledge as a natural part of their content area lessons.

Objective 1.3: Participants will grow in their confidence in applying content reading in their own classrooms.

GOAL 2: TO APPLY, STUDY AND REFINE A MODEL FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN CONTENT READING INSTRUCTION.

Objective 2.1: The project will promote collaboration in order to (1) encourage collegial relationships, (2) identify common problems, (3) test possible solutions and (4) generate new knowledge.

Objective 2.2: Networking will be supported both within and among schools throughout Michigan (1) to address reading needs, (2) to increase the capacity of schools and other organizations to engage in meaningful staff development and (3) to provide methods for continuous interaction among participants.

Objective 2.3: The staff development model will be studied to improve its value both in developing professional knowledge and in encouraging ongoing school change.

GOAL 3: TO ASSIST STUDENTS IN MEETING THE MICHIGAN ESSENTIAL OBJECTIVES FOR READING EDUCATION, TO PROMOTE ACTIVE AND LIFE-LONG LITERACY.

Objective 3.1: Students will demonstrate an increasingly positive attitude toward the use of text materials and reading in content areas.

Objective 3.2: Students will exhibit an increased awareness of strategic reading to construct meaning.

Objective 3.3: Students will exhibit a greater understanding of the concepts taught in content areas.

c. An Overview of Training Methods and Materials

This project will employ a staff development model that combines the features of two other successful models (see Nelson, 1981, and Putnam, Roehler, & Duffy, 1987). One feature is staff development that addresses long-range changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of teachers, supervisors and administrators in a whole school or school system (Nelson-Herber, 1981). Other features address the training materials and methods required to promote these types of changes.

Staff development in this project will be responsive to the professional and personal needs of all participants. While the needs assessment highlights a desire for this type of training, participants have also expressed a personal and professional desire to increase their capacity to teach content through reading. For this reason, all participants will be volunteers and early activities will focus on reviewing goals of the project, identifying problems that will be addressed, and relating their current practice to content reading instruction. Methods will consist of brainstorming, collaborative discussions, and development of support materials based on teachers' own classroom texts. Needs and goals will be periodically reviewed to maintain genuine support for the project.

The project will be grounded in a research-based framework and presented through consistent sources of information. Training will be based on a textbook (Conley, in preparation) that integrates knowledge about the teaching of content with knowledge about teaching students how to learn from textbooks. Specific guided reading strategies will be introduced for comprehension, reasoning, text patterns, and vocabulary. Participants will view video-taped lessons to learn (1) how to plan and teach content reading lessons, and (2) how to reflect on the lessons they will be teaching. Lessons will be video-taped in participants' classrooms so that conditions and constraints will be familiar.

The training will be characterized by a gradual transfer of responsibilities to the participants and the gradual development of participants' capacity to reflect on their own instruction. Early workshop sessions will be based on lessons conducted by a university specialist in content reading. Later sessions will focus on lessons conducted by other participants, including teachers, administrators and supervisors. Early sessions will begin with demonstrations and explanations from the university specialist. Participants will design and critique their own lesson plans by the end of each session and will try out lessons before each subsequent session. Later training will evolve so that peer coaching occurs at the beginning and end of each

session: at the beginning, participants will analyze experiences in teaching lessons and, at the end, they will critique upcoming lessons. In order to facilitate more personal interaction, participants will be divided into four separate groups (25-30 participants for each group).

What follows is a sample agenda for each workshop and follow-up support session. Each session will provide: (1) a theory-base for decision-making about content reading, (2) specific classroom strategies and options, and (3) support for classroom implementation and adaptation. A consistent theme will be to demonstrate how content reading can be a way of strengthening current instructional practices.

SAMPLE AGENDA

1. WORKSHOP DAYS

Workshops will follow a cycle of demonstration, discussion, planning, implementation and debriefing. All activities will be geared toward helping teachers make better use of their own materials and instructional practices. Workshop days will have the following form:

Introduction, Orientation

Demonstration Lesson (Video Taped)

Discussion and Explanation of the Strategy

Common Planning Session

Lunch

Individual Planning

Lesson Critiques

2. SUPPORT DAYS

Individual and Small Group Conferences

Demonstration Teaching

Observation or Examination of Teaching Materials

d. Timeline for the Project

YEAR 1

The emphasis in the project during year 1 will be on GOAL 1 and its related objectives. However, in considering the activities for the timeline below, we have anticipated preparation for GOAL 2 and GOAL 3 in subsequent years. A detailed timeline for year 1 follows.

SESSION	CONTENT OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES	RESOURCES
WORKSHOP 1	To develop an orientation content reading that is related to current practice	Instruction: Whole- and small-group discussion Demonstration teaching Simulation of lesson planning and instruction Integration of principles of cooperative learning with principles of guided reading Goal setting for future workshops and support days Evaluation: Field notes and participant observation Audio recordings Development of ordered trees Administration of scale to assess attitudes and confidence ratings	Instruction: 1. University trainer 2. Textbook, supplementary materials 3. Video cassettes 4. VCR 5. Textbook materials, handouts Evaluation: 1. Tape recorder and blank audio tapes 2. Resources for transcription 3. Evaluation assistant for transcription assistance, Xeroxing and record-keeping. Evaluation will also include tabulation and summarizing of data sources.
SUPPORT DAY 1	To support application and confidence in using content reading strategies	Instruction: Individual and small-group conferences Demonstration teaching Collaborative lesson planning Evaluation: Teacher pre- and post-interviews, classroom observations and audio-taping Analysis of completed reading guides Student post-lesson interviews	Instruction: 1. Handouts containing minutes, summary from the previous workshop 2. University trainer Evaluation: 1. Pre- and post-interview forms for teachers 2. Audio tapes for observed lessons 3. Post-interview forms for students 4. Guide materials used in classrooms 5. Evaluation assistant for interviews
WORKSHOP 2	To learn and apply guides for comprehension	Instruction: Introduction of the first content reading strategy through demonstration teaching Review and analysis of demonstration lessons (video) Collaborative planning in similar subject areas Individual planning of lessons Evaluation: Field notes and participant observation Audio recordings Reflective journals	Instruction: 1. University trainer 2. Textbook, supplementary materials 3. Video cassettes 4. VCR 5. Textbook materials, handouts Evaluation: 1. Tape recorder and blank audio tapes 2. Resources for transcription 3. Evaluation assistant for transcription assistance, Xeroxing and record-keeping. Evaluation will also include tabulation and summarizing of data sources.
SUPPORT DAY 2	To support application and confidence in using content reading strategies	Instruction: Individual and small-group conferences Demonstration teaching Collaborative lesson planning	Instruction: 1. Handouts containing minutes, summary from the previous workshop 2. University trainer

SESSION	CONTENT OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES	RESOURCES
		Evaluation Teacher pre- and post-interviews, classroom observations and audio-taping Analysis of completed reading guides Student post-lesson interviews	Evaluation: 1. Pre- and post-interview forms for teachers 2. Audio tapes for observed lessons 3. Post-interview forms for students 4. Guide materials used in classrooms 5. Evaluation assistant for interviews
WORKSHOP 3	To integrate guides for comprehension with specific questioning techniques	Instruction: Coaching based on previous lessons Demonstration of new content Simulation of the new strategy Large- and small-group interaction in preparation for planning Small-group interaction designed to plan lessons within similar content areas Individual lesson planning Coaching based on completed plans Evaluation: Participant observation Reflective journal writing	
SUPPORT DAY 3	To support application and confidence in using content reading strategies	Instruction: Individual and small-group conferences Demonstration teaching Collaborative lesson planning Evaluation: Teacher pre- and post-interviews, classroom observations and audio-taping Analysis of compelted reading guides Student post-lesson interviews	Instruction: 1. Handouts containing minutes, summary from the previous workshop 2. University trainer Evaluation: 1. Pre- and post-interview forms for teachers 2. Audio tapes for observed lessons 3. Post-interview forms for students 4. Guide materials used in classrooms 5. Evaluation assistant for interviews
WORKSHOP 4	To design and apply guides for reasoning	Instruction: Coaching based on previous lessons Demonstration of new content Simulation of the new strategy Large- and small-group interaction in preparation for planning Small-group interaction designed to plan lessons within similar content areas Individual lesson planning Coaching based on completed plans Evaluation: Participant observation Reflective journal writing Development of ordered trees Administration of scale to assess attitudes and confidence ratings	

SESSION	CONTENT OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES/STRATEGIES	RESOURCES
SUPPORT DAY 4	To support application and confidence in using content reading strategies	Instruction: Individual and small-group conferences Demonstration teaching Collaborative lesson planning Evaluation: Teacher pre- and post-interviews, classroom observations and audio-taping Analysis of completed reading guides Student post-lesson interviews	Instruction: 1. Handouts containing minutes, summary from the previous workshop Evaluation: 1. Pre- and post-interview forms for teachers 2. Audio tapes for observed lessons 3. Post-interview forms for students 4. Guide materials used in classrooms 5. Evaluation assistant for interviews
WORKSHOP 5	To adopt reasoning guides to varying contexts and purposes	See Workshop 3	See Workshop 3
SUPPORT DAY 5	To support application and confidence in using content reading strategies	See Support Day 3	See Support Day 3
WORKSHOP 6	To design and implement guides for text patterns	See Workshop 3	See Workshop 3
SUPPORT DAY 6	To support application and confidence in using content reading strategies	See Support Day 3	See Support Day 3
WORKSHOP 7	To adapt guides for text patterns according to sophistication and difficulty	See Workshop 4	See Workshop 4
SUPPORT DAY 7	To support application and confidence in using content reading strategies	See Support Day 4	See Support Day 4
WORKSHOP 8	To design and implement maps and organizers for vocabulary development	See Workshop 3	See Workshop 3
SUPPORT DAY 8	To support application and confidence in using content reading strategies	See Support Day 3	See Support Day 3
WORKSHOP 9	To integrate reinforcement and application activities with strategies for vocabulary development	See Workshop 3	See Workshop 3
SUPPORT DAY 9	To support application and confidence in using content reading strategies	See Workshop 3	See Workshop 3
WORKSHOP 10	To synthesize individual lessons into units	See Workshop 4	See Workshop 4
SUPPORT DAY 10	To support application and confidence in using content reading strategies	See Support Day 4	See Support Day 4

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