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A PRESERVICE TEACHER LEARNING TO TEACH READING:
A CASE STUDY OF MOLLY'S INTERNSHIP JOURNEY

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GASTON DEMBELE

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A PRESERVICE TEACHER LEARNING TO TEACH READING:
A CASE STUDY OF MOLLY'S INTERNSHIP JOURNEY

By

Gaston Dembele

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Teacher Education

2005

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ABSTRACT

A PRESERVICE TEACHER LEARNING TO TEACH READING:
A CASE STUDY OF MOLLY'S INTERNSHIP JOURNEY

By

Gaston Dembele

The purpose of this longitudinal study is to investigate one elementary preservice teacher's learning to teach reading--especially to teach struggling students--during a yearlong internship. Although the teacher education community has gained an increasing understanding of the kinds of knowledge, skills and dispositions that teachers need to teach effectively, we need to know more about the processes and enabling conditions through which preservice teachers learn about the central task of reaching all learners and particularly learners who encounter difficulties in specific areas such as reading and writing. Thus, this study addresses the following central questions related to learning to teach reading during an internship year. How did a preservice teacher learn to teach reading--especially to teach struggling readers--during her internship experience? What enabling conditions facilitated her knowledge construction? And what did she actually construct?

In order to answer these questions, a case study was designed by using multiple sources of data during the 1999-2000 academic year in a second grade classroom in a Michigan semi-rural school. This methodology included interviewing, several times, the intern (Molly) and her collaborating teacher (Sue) reviewing documents (e.g., journals, projects, lesson plans, syllabi) videotaping and taking field notes of lessons observed weekly. Data analysis revealed that Molly made a developmental progress both conceptually and practically and her confidence level was

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reinforced all along. Over the course of her internship, Molly developed an integrated and balanced approach to reading instruction, which is very much in line with a reform-minded vision of good reading instruction. Data analysis also revealed that Molly's knowledge construction was achieved through two ongoing processes, namely appropriation and synthesis. Furthermore, evidence from the study specified some particular internal and external conditions that were salient throughout Molly's appropriation and synthesis of knowledge. These conditions included the personal dispositions--eagerness to learn, being able to work effectively with a collaborating teacher, being able to reflect upon the clinical experience, and being open to constructive feedback--with which she started the internship. They also included the existence of a collaborative reform-minded learning environment where innovative instructional ideas were being promoted, the collaborative teacher's conceptions and expectations of how best to help the intern learn the craft of teaching reading--e.g., providing space to try out ideas, engaging the intern in substantive conversations grounded in practice. Moreover, these conditions included the guidance provided by the structure of the teacher education program. In light of the processes which characterized Molly's knowledge construction and the enabling conditions, the study supports the claim that learning to teach, and particularly to teach reading, is a complex enterprise. The study also supports recent calls to teacher educators to turn the idea of a learning-to-teach continuum into a reality, by proposing a continuum of learning to teach reading during the internship year, including a structure that would allow interns to systematically and continuously take stock of what they are constructing.

This work is dedicated to my parents,
Germaine Mapin Keita and Maurice Nazoun Dembele,
for teaching me how to persevere in life.

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Next, I would like to acknowledge members of my guidance/dissertation committee: Cheryl Rosaen, Doug Campbell, Jay Featherstone, Jack Schwille, and David Pearson. Each committee members has contributed, in various ways, to my intellectual and personal growth. I am especially indebted to Cheryl Rosaen who played a critical role in helping me narrow the scope of my study during the proposal stage, and who accepted to become my dissertation director at a time when she was very busy serving on

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other dissertation committees. Through our countless e-mail exchanges and occasional

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Like Jay, Jack advised me to think about the audience of my study and to be as

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policy and program issues. I'm especially grateful to Jack for facilitating my coming to

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feel blessed to have known Jack and his wife Sharon and to have become a member of

the Schwille family, and I look forward to our continued friendship.

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the years and for helping me identify participants for my study. I am grateful to Darryl Pettway for going out of his way to help me process, in a timely fashion, the necessary paperwork for my degree requirements. I am also thankful to my colleagues and friends from the School of Education at St. Bonaventure University for their support throughout the years.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION: JUSTIFYING AND CONCEPTUALIZING THE STUDY

Statement of the problem

A student's ability to read is essential to the educational process. If students fall behind in reading proficiency, they may find it difficult to benefit from other aspects of the curriculum. In the future, poor readers may also find it difficult to participate effectively in an economy requiring increasingly sophisticated job skills. (National Center for Education Statistics, 1995)

Because of the critical importance of reading (as reflected in the above observations), anybody involved in the educative process should be concerned with the fact that in "every school some children find learning to read difficult" (Allington, 1991) or are likely to struggle in acquiring reading skills. We should be even more concerned because "an increasing proportion of children in American schools, particularly in certain school systems, are learning disabled, with most of them identified as such because of difficulties in learning to read" (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). This alarming news raises the question as what can be done to change the situation and shape a hopeful future for many of today's children.

Fortunately, there is a growing consensus that excellent instructional support can make a difference for the many children who struggle in learning to read (Carroll, 1963; Allington, 1991; Smith et al., 1998; Cunningham & Allington, 1999; International Reading Association Position Statement, 2000). In other words, the vast literature on effective teaching has made it clear that good teachers play an essential role in meeting the reading needs of today's young learners. For example, over the past two decades, there have been increasing calls for providing struggling readers with more and better instruction time, particularly in regular classrooms (Kiesling, 1978; Allington, 1991;

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National Association of State Boards of Education Study, 1992). In recent years, many

studies have developed and/or examined successful literacy and reading intervention

programs and strategies for students with reading difficulties in regular classrooms (e.g.

Pinnell, 1989; Au, Mason, & Scheu, 1995; Roller, 1996; Taylor, Hanson, Justice-Swanson,

& Watts, 1997; Tompkins, 1997; 2004; Mathes, 1998; Cunnigham et al., 1999). As a result,

> teachers are increasingly expected to take the crucial and primary role of
> accelerating the reading growth of...struggling readers..., a shift from the
> previous reliance upon compensatory and special education teachers to children
> with reading difficulties. (Duffy-Hester, 1999, p.486)

> However, the above calls and expectations have not been followed by successful

instructional practices in regular classrooms. This state of affairs is mainly due to a lack

of sufficient preparation of teachers. In the area of reading, Smith et al. (1998) eloquently

account for this lack of sufficient teacher preparation as follows:

> One major factor is that very little time is allocated for preparing teachers to teach
> reading. A second is that teacher-training programs are highly variable in their
> inclusion of the foundations of reading (p.329).

Similarly, the International Reading Association's National Commission on Excellence in

Elementary Teacher Preparation for Reading Instruction concluded that there is

tremendous variation in the content and experiences provided across the 1,150 teacher

preparation programs in the United States. As indicated in the commission's executive

summary of Prepared to make a difference,

> Some programs require as little as one three-semester course in reading methods
> while others offer as many as 18 semester hours in reading coursework that
> covers topics ranging from the structure of English to teaching comprehension.
> Some programs offer no practicum hours in public schools with supervised,
> "hands-on" experiences in reading, while others offer as many as 50 to 60 hours
> every semester. (2003)

> If teachers are not prepared enough to teach reading to average students, it is

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then unrealistic to expect them to be successful with struggling readers. It is therefore evident that in order to promote all students' reading learning, every teacher will need to acquire the type of knowledge, skills, and dispositions through training programs that were historically reserved all over the country for reading specialists and special education teachers. In addition, no matter how we increase the use of new instructional reading approaches in regular classroom, it seems that the innovation will have limited impact on teaching and students' reading achievement, unless the teacher education community invests more in the initial preparation of elementary teachers to teach reading in new and more meaningful ways. In order to invest more in quality reading teacher preparation at the preservice level, it appears necessary to learn more about what it takes to develop the types of knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to teach reading in reform-minded ways that are "both practical for teachers and responsive to the unique learning needs of individual children" (Allen & Fuchs, 1998).

This dissertation tells the story of one preservice teacher, Molly (pseudonym), learning to teach reading in a semi-rural second grade during a full-year internship, which allows interns to begin learning to "act like a teacher," putting it all together in supervised practice under the guidance of a collaborating teacher (CT) and an MSU liaison (Field Instructor). The internship starts in the fall with observation, guided teaching practice, gradually leading up to extensive independent teaching practice during the spring semester. Interns take 2 Master's courses per semester designed to support their learning. By learning to teach reading during the internship year, I am primarily referring to learning--at the conceptual and practical levels--to teach in context. This is a case study that carefully examines the processes by which Molly

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developed her knowledge, skills, and dispositions with respect to teaching reading--

particularly to teaching struggling readers--and the conditions that helped her along the

way. In doing so, I intend to contribute to efforts aimed at developing more

empirically and conceptually grounded theories about how best to prepare teacher

candidates to effectively and efficiently teach all students to become successful

readers. I also recognize that the study could serve as an educational intervention for

the participants. That is, it might push the intern teacher to examine some her own

assumptions and prompt her to reflect on how she is learning to teach reading in new

and challenging ways. With respect to the collaborating teacher, this study may serve

as an opportunity for her ongoing professional development in teaching reading and

in mentoring intern teachers.

In this chapter, I construct an argument for studying elementary preservice

teachers learning to teach reading during the internship year. I start by outlining the

overarching theme of the study. I then discuss the theoretical perspectives underlying

the study. Finally, I examine relevant literature to illustrate the importance of reading,

the links between better reading teacher preparation, on the one hand, and quality

reading instruction and the learning of reading in elementary schools, on the other

hand. In doing so, I underline the need to learn more about what it takes for

elementary preservice teachers to become competent beginning teachers.

Overarching theme of the study

This is the study of an intern teacher (Molly) constructing knowledge or learning

about reading instruction, in the context of practice, through the processes of

appropriation and synthesis. By appropriating knowledge, I mean learning--through, for

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instance, direct observation and appraisal of teaching situations, talking with the collaborating teacher--ideas, concepts, and strategies about reading instruction that are similar to ways of thinking and acting of more knowledgeable members of the teaching culture. Synthesizing knowledge involves a continuum of evolving thinking, which ranges from regrouping, i.e., taking stock of knowledge being appropriated, to adapting and transforming or weaving together existing knowledge leading to refinement, enhanced understanding and/or the development of new ideas, concepts and strategies. These concepts will be elaborated further in later chapters as well in the glossary at the end of the text.

As I examine these processes, I discuss the external conditions (e.g., the assistance of more knowledgeable others) and internal conditions (e.g., reflective abilities and eagerness to learn) that facilitated Molly's learning and the nature of what she learned--content knowledge (CK), pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and dispositions. In other words, in characterizing the process of constructing knowledge about reading instruction that Molly went through during her internship, I describe the conditions that helped her along the way, and what she actually learned as a result. In doing so, the study examines the interrelationship between three aspects of learning: namely, the learning process, learning conditions, and learning outcomes. Thus, each data analysis chapter makes an argument about how appropriating and/or synthesizing concepts and ideas is made possible by interactions between external and internal conditions. Internal and external conditions are explained below and in the glossary (see Appendix A).

Conceptual framework

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This study is guided by the basic premise that learning to teach is an on-going process that begins long before formal teacher education and also continues thereafter (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; 2001). In other words, learning to teach is an ongoing process that occurs at three stages, which are briefly described as follows. (1) A pre-formal teacher preparation stage--while elementary, secondary and post-secondary school students spend time engaging in various learning activities, they also form some ideas and concepts about teaching, some of which are likely to surface when they are formally learning to teach reading and when they teach reading. (2) A formal teacher preparation stage--professional teacher education courses and field practices that foster the integration of theory and practice. And (3) a post-formal teacher preparation stage-- induction and continuing professional development. Thus, this study assumes that prospective teachers' formal learning to teach reading is influenced by their pre-professional knowledge and experiences, as further explained below in the review of the literature. This assumption is congruent with two interrelated theoretical perspectives: namely, the Vygotskian social cultural theory of learning and instruction and Dewey's concept of educative experience as enabling conditions, which I draw upon to understand the process of learning to teach reading during the formal teacher preparation stage.

Vygotskian socio-cultural theory

The Vygotskian socio-cultural theory emphasizes the social and situated nature of learning through joint activity. The overriding tenet of this theory is that "the driving mechanism for learning and development is found in the interactions among people" (Palincsar, 1993), and it is through these social interactions that cultural meanings and tools are shared within a given group and then internalized by individuals. In this section, I

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briefly describe three intertwined theoretical assumptions underlying this theory

(Wertsch, 1991). The first assumption has to do with the critical mediating role of language

for understanding and knowledge construction. The second one focuses on the socio-cultural

and historical contexts that shape the development of higher psychological processes. And

the third assumption emphasizes the learning and development of mental processes through

participation and interaction with more knowledgeable others in cultural practices.

The critical role of language in learning

From the socio-cultural perspective, "...higher forms of mental activity (e.g.

planning, thinking, constructing meaning, remembering) are always, and everywhere,

mediated by symbolic means" (Lantolf, 1994:418). This perspective highlights that

language is one of the most--if not the most--fundamental symbolic and psychological

tools that enables human beings to think, problem solve, interact with their world, to

communicate and learn from one another (see Barnes, 1986, 1995; Wertsch, 1985), to

engage in different social activities--including literacy and teaching. According to Mead

(1934), it is within the act of communication and within its context that meaning is

constructed. Put in simple terms, language is a basic symbolic medium for knowing,

acting and interacting in a given context. By extension, this suggests that opportunities

should be provided for intern teachers to explore ideas, concepts and strategies about

reading instruction through meaningful language-mediated activities such as reading and

writing about professional texts and sharing what they read and write about with others (e.g.,

classmates, collaborating teachers, instructors). An important implication of the mediating

role of language, in the context of mentored learning to teach, has to do with collaborating

teachers and interns capitalizing on dialogue and following the three rules of dialogue.

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These rules are: (1) the rule of active participation--opportunities for engagement, questioning, trying out new ideas, and hearing diverse points of view; (2) the rule of commitment--to the pursuit of intersubjective understanding despite difficulties; and (3) the rule of reciprocity--maintaining the quality of communicative interaction through mutual respect and concern, reversibility and reflexivity (Burbules, 1993).

Socio-cultural and historical origins of higher psychological processes

While the first assumption highlights the critical role of language in the development of mental processes, the second assumption emphasizes the nature of these processes. The socio-cultural theory distinguishes between what is learned as a result of regular and sustained interactions among individuals (psychological processes) as opposed to biological processes that do not require social mediation (Vygostky, 1978; Raphael and Hiebert, 1996). According to Vygostky, "higher psychological processes" (including literacy and learning to teach) involve the mastery of socially shared conventions and strategies such as metacognitive knowledge that are needed for the acquisition of such conventions. In Vygotsky's view, it is possible to understand many aspects of mental functioning only if one understands their origin and the transitions they have undergone" (Wertsch, 1991). From this perspective, the nature of socio-cultural conventions, their purposes, and the means to acquire them do not happen in a vacuum; instead, they vary contextually, i.e., culturally and historically. As such, the way we think and act is a function of our experiences in acquiring certain social conventions and the way we acquire them; these experiences will either facilitate or impede the learning of new conventions. Hence, the centrality of context in learning, which is viewed as a cultural phenomenon, that is, as a form of socialization or enculturation into a community

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of practice (Erickson, 1982; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1990). By extension, schools are viewed as sociocultural settings within which teaching and learning take place and where cultural and psychological tools such as reading, writing, mathematics and certain modes of discourse are utilized (Richardson, 1997). Similarly, schools and colleges of education are institutional settings where certain culturally shaped ideas, concepts and strategies about teaching theory and practice are enculturated, through participation in cultural practices, in order to become effective members of the teaching community.

Internalization through interactions with more knowledgeable others

While the second assumption focuses on how social, cultural and historical contexts shape the experiences of learners, the third assumption emphasizes the occurrence of learning through participation and interactions, with more knowledgeable others, in cultural practices. The process by which social conventions become individual or psychological is called internalization and as Vygotsky (1978) pointed out,

> any function in the child's cultural development appears twice or on two planes. First, it appears on the social (intermental) plane, and then on the psychological (intramental) plane. First, it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as an intrapsychological category. (p.163)

That is to say that learning starts at the social level first and then moves to the individual level. At the social level, the learner must first observe cultural practices of a given community, which s/he then gradually internalizes before demonstrating his/her understanding and interpretation of what has been observed. The move from the social plane to the individual or psychological plane, is not a mere transfer; but is rather the active construction of new spheres of understanding through private or inner speech (Vygostky, 1978, 1986; Wertsch, 1991). As such, this internalization requires the learner

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to be actively engaged in making sense of the world through the acquisition of "socially shared conventions" (Halliday, 1978). It is this active role that allows the learner to contribute to his/her own development and to transform knowledge or create new understanding.

In addition to the active involvement of the learner, from the socio-cultural perspective, this internalization is only possible through scaffolding, "assisted performance" (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988) or guided participation (Rogoff, 1990) within the learner's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD, a concept first developed by Vygotsky (1978) is the "distance between the actual developmental level determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p.86). In other words, it is "a state of readiness in which a student will be able to make certain connections, but not others" (Burbules, 1993, p.122), and will therefore need the assistance of more knowledgeable others of a given community. In the context of learning to teach reading during the internship, this implies that collaborating teachers play a critical role in terms of helping them move from regulation by others, i.e. "social regulation" (Wertsch, 1985, 1991) to self-regulation--independent instructional decision makers. This requires scaffolding interns' learning of new ideas, concepts and strategies--through modeling and co-planning for example--and continually assessing their readiness to perform particular teaching tasks on their own or with assistance (see the glossary for further explanation).

To summarize, the social constructivist theory emphasizes the mediating role of language in the learning and development of mental processes--learning experiences-- that are shaped by socio-cultural and historical contexts. As such, this theory explains

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that prior learning experiences influence future learning in terms of content and process. It also underlines the internalization of social conventions through involvement of the learner in sustained interactions with more knowledgeable others who provide scaffolding within his/her ZPD.

Dewey's concept of an educative experience

Dewey (1938) offered a theory of education, which relies on understanding the nature of experience, suggesting that, similar to Vygotsky, he was very sensitive to the social nature of learning. For Dewey, any good educational experience should have a purpose for both the individual and society and as such, educators are responsible for providing learners with experiences that are immediately valuable and which better enable them to contribute to society. After explaining Dewey's criteria of experience-- principles of continuity and interaction, I discuss his concept of educative experience as enabling condition.

Principles of continuity and interaction

Dewey argued that experience stems from the interaction between two principles, namely *continuity* and *interaction*. By continuity, he meant that all past experiences in an individual's life are carried forward and influence future experiences. Such influence on future experiences could be either for better or for worse, simply because for Dewey, no experience has pre-ordained value. As such, what may be a rewarding experience for one student might be a detrimental experience for another.

By interaction, Dewey meant that any present experience arises out of the relationship between the situation and the individual's past experiences. Put differently, an individual's present experience is always a function of the interaction between his/her

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stored experiences and the present situation. According to Dewey, the learner brings some "internal conditions"--i.e., personal dispositions such as needs, desires, internal capacities and purposes, along with past experiences--to any learning situation. These internal conditions interact with the environment's "objective conditions" such as what the educator says and how he says it, the materials used and the social situation. By extension, an intern's pre-formal teacher preparation knowledge and experiences are part of his/her internal conditions, whereas the teaching and mentoring practices and the clinical setting would constitute external conditions of the internship environment.

Educative experience as enabling condition

Although the principles of continuity and interaction help explain the nature of experience, they do not guarantee the making of an educative experience. Dewey's theory suggests that in order for any interaction between the individual and a given situation to be educative, it has to result in growth, which has several attributes. As Dewey pointed out, "education as growth or maturity should be an ever-present process" (p.50). The concept of growth refers to the learner's ability to discriminate between educative and "mis-educative experience that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience" (p.25). He believed that every experience should prepare an individual for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality. As such, a given educative experience turns into *enabling conditions* in a new learning situation. That is to say that a past educative experience becomes internal conditions that a person brings to a new situation enabling him/her to have a positive experience. As Dewey put it, "only by extracting the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same in the future" (p.49).

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The notion of educative experience as enabling condition helps explain why Dewey underscored that growth in itself is not enough, but it is the direction that it takes that makes the difference. As he pointed out, "every experience is a moving force," which can potentially move in the right or wrong direction. Thus, it becomes essential for the learner to be helped by the educator--the more knowledgeable other--in moving in the right or most appropriate direction (see p.38). By implication, it pertains to the university and field-based teacher educators to not only assist interns to experience growth today, but to move them in the right direction for more growth in the future.

Finally, in addition to needing to help learners move in the right direction, Dewey argued that an educative experience fosters in them the "desire to go on learning" (p.48). That is, students learn to appreciate the value of learning and its potential application in future situations and develop a positive attitude toward growing as learners. As such, they are more equipped to face future learning situations with a positive outlook and mastery-oriented goals. This explains why Dewey advocated the engagement of learners in activities that "promote having desirable future experiences."

Review of the literature and rationale for the study

The purpose of this section is to review the literature related to the scope of this study. It is therefore structured according to issues that are relevant to the process of learning to teach reading, including examining what we know about literacy, the nature of reading, learning to read and effective reading instruction. These issues also include taking a look at teacher education reform with respect to our current knowledge about the nature of learning to teach. Through this review, I make the case for the need to learn more about the process of learning to teach reading at the preservice level. Although this review is descriptive in

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nature, it also provides a normative stance regarding the kind of reading teacher preparation needed.

Literacy education reform and the teaching and learning of reading

In this section, I reviewed a current and complex view of literacy, particularly the nature of reading and learning to read and effective reading instruction. However, from the outset, I do recognize that such reform-minded vision of literacy and reading instruction is actually a contested view.

What research has to say about literacy and reading

Literacy used to be defined as the ability to read and behaviorists conceived of the teaching of reading as learning a series of discrete, sequenced skills (Skinner, 1968). Basically, reading instruction was skill-oriented and teacher-centered. Tompkins (1997) gives a comprehensive description of reading instructional practice within the behavioral tradition as follows:

> Students were grouped according to reading development, often into three reading groups. The teachers introduced vocabulary words, and students practiced them by reading flash cards. The textbooks students used contained simplistic stories written to rehearse newly introduced vocabulary words, phonetic principles, and other skills. Students often took turns reading aloud in round-robin fashion, and teachers corrected words students did not pronounce correctly. Teachers drilled students on skills, and students practiced skills by completing worksheets. (p.120)

More recently however, educators have increasingly called for a new conceptualization and teaching of literacy in general, and of reading in particular. Current reform efforts are characterized by the provision of rich and balanced instruction across the full array of reading, namely 'code-based systematic word recognition and fluency strategies and meaning-based literacy experiences' or comprehension development (see Kameenui, 1993; Gunn, Simmons, Kameenui, 1995; Snow et al. 1998). Literacy has now been

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broadened to encompass both reading and writing so that literacy means the competence "to carry out complex tasks using reading and writing related to the world of work and to life outside the school" (Cases in Literacy 1989, p.36). This new conceptualization suggests that teachers are now being challenged to teach both the processes of reading and writing and also how to think with and through reading and writing, i.e., to use them as learning tools (Teale, 1995).

It is important to note that the above calls are based on recent advances in cognitive science on learning in general and on the reading process in particular. Over the past three decades, many scholars have studied and advocated that reading is a complex developmental challenge characterized by both cognitive psycholinguistic processes and social processes, and involving active meaning making (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Bloome & Green, 1984; Resnick & Resnick, 1977; Scribner, 1984; Au et al. 1995; Snow et al., 1998). In the sections that follow I discuss what these processes entail.

Reading as a linguistic process

As a linguistic process, reading is associated with other language processes, namely, speaking, listening, and writing, and as such, it is viewed as an act of communication (Taylor et al., 1995). Many scholars have indicated that this act of communication is only possible as human beings learn to make use of four cueing systems, namely: the phonological or sound system; the syntactic or structural system; the semantic or meaning system; and the pragmatic system or variation of language according to social and cultural uses (Halliday, 1978; Snow et al, 1998; Taylor et al., 1995; Tompkins, 1997).

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As a cognitive process, reading involves the use of mental operations such as attention, memory, perception, encoding, and retrieval (Taylor et al. 1995). Many scholars have argued that the focus for the readers is on comprehension, or making meaning, or constructing meaning from a text (Rumelhart, 1977; Stanovich, 1980; Pearson et al. 1990; Au et al. 1995; Tompkins, 1997, 2004). The argument is that it is the mental operations, mentioned above, that facilitate the creation of meaning from a text. That is to say that readers make sense of a given text by drawing on both background knowledge and knowledge of text structure, as well as on information presented by the author. In other words, meaning is not in the text, but in the interaction between the text and the reader; readers create meaning for the words they encounter in a text based on their prior knowledge and experiences with books.

Reading as a social process

The construction of meaning from text is not only a linguistic and cognitive process, but also a social process, which can be examined from two different angles. First, reader response theorists indicate that readers always have writers in mind in the same way writers always have an implicit audience when setting up to write. Thus, reading is viewed as a transaction between a reader and a writer to negotiate a unique interpretation that transcends the original intentions and understandings of both the reader and the author (Rosenblatt, 1978, 1983). In addition to the transaction between the reader and the author, the reader also interacts socially with characters in the text, either through identification or alienation (see Taylor et al., 1995).

Second, from a sociocultural perspective, words have no meaning without the social context (Bahktin, (1986). Thus, it is the interaction among the readers, the text

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(the writer) and the social context (Gavelek, 1986) that brings about the construction

of meaning when reading. This interaction is a complex one for different reasons,

which can be summarized as follows. On the one hand, there are multiple types of

texts, which readers read in multiple ways--more or less "deeply" (Gee (1988) and

for aesthetic purpose, i.e. enjoyment or pleasure, or for efferent purpose, that is to

locate and remember information (Rosenblatt, 1978, 1983). On the other hand,

> our age, our experiences, the histories of our people, or culture, our first language, the words it contains and does not contain, our goals, our political views, and our desires all color the way in which we read and interpret text-as it does for our students"...if each of us understands text through our own experience and culture and we have different experiences and come from different cultures, we will not read into text the same meanings. (Poplin & Phillips, 1993, p.250)

> However, as Raphael & Hiebert (1996) cautioned us, "knowledge construction

has boundaries-not just anything makes for a reasonable interpretation-and conventional

knowledge does exist within our culture and time period" (p.19). As such, the notion of

reading and constructing meaning from print through an interpretive community

(Lemke, 1989) becomes all the more important. This interpretive community involves,

for instance, "an explicit social negotiation among members within a classroom

community...when students get together to hold a conversation about a book they

have read" (Taylor et al., 1995:18). Because of this interpretive community, reading

is currently viewed as being socially acquired and facilitated both in and out of

schools (Heath, 1983; Taylor et al. 1995).

As seen so far, reading is a complex linguistic, cognitive and social process to

engage in for the construction of meaning from text. A next logical step is to examine the

nature of how this process is learned.

What research has to say about the nature of learning to read

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With reading being a complex process, it goes without saying that learning to read is also a complex process. As indicated in the International Reading Association summary position statement (April 1999), significant research evidence converges on a definition of reading and learning to reading which is articulated as follows:

> Reading is a complex system of deriving meaning from print that requires all of the following:
> - the development and maintenance of a motivation to read
> - the development of appropriate active strategies to construct meaning from print
> - sufficient background information and vocabulary to foster reading comprehension
> - the ability to read fluently
> - the ability to decode unfamiliar words
> - the skills and knowledge to understand how phonemes or speech sounds are connected to print. (see also Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998)

A prerequisite to learning to create meaning is that children should come to reading instruction with well-developed language abilities. However, children are not expected to have fully developed language abilities before they learn to read, for the former will continue to evolve as they learn to create meaning. As advocated by Smith et al. (1998), "children need simultaneous access to some knowledge of letter-sound relationships, some sight vocabulary, and some comprehension strategies" (p.84). This suggests that the act of creating meaning through text is only made possible as the learner acquires both decoding skills and comprehension strategies that play a complementary role. Whereas readers use skills automatically and unconsciously to decode graphic features in the texts, they use comprehension strategies to orchestrate high-order thinking skills (Tompkins, 1997). Research findings suggest that most of the time struggling readers are so busy processing the language, i.e., decoding the text, that they cannot focus at all on the comprehension part of reading (Tompkins, 1997, 2004).

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Because of the complexity of the process of learning to read, excellent instruction in elementary schools is essential in helping students on their way to becoming fluent readers and competent literacy users. Thus, in the next section, I examine current ideas about effective reading instruction.

What research has to say about effective reading instruction

In its position statement <u>Excellent Reading Teachers</u> (2000), the IRA stated its beliefs that "every child deserves excellent reading teachers because teachers make a difference in children's reading achievement and motivation to read." This raises the question as to what makes excellent reading instruction. In summarizing research findings in the 1990's, the IRA characterized excellent teachers as sharing a number of critical qualities of knowledge and practice, namely:

1. They understand reading and writing development, and believe all children can learn to read and write--they understand the definition of reading provided in the previous section.
2. They continually assess children's individual progress and relate reading instruction to children's previous experiences--they also understand that involving children in self-evaluation has both cognitive and motivational benefits.
3. They know a variety of ways to teach reading, when to use each method, and how to combine the methods into an effective instructional program.
4. They offer a variety of materials and texts for children to read--they are aware of the reading abilities and interests of the children and they constantly provide a selection of books that will be both interesting to the children and within the children's reading capabilities.
5. They use flexible grouping strategies to tailor instruction to individual students.
6. They are good reading "coaches" (that is, they provide help strategically).

Furthermore,

> excellent reading teachers share many of the characteristics of good teachers in general. They have strong content and pedagogical knowledge, manage classrooms so that there is a high rate of engagement, use strong motivation strategies to encourage independent learning, have high expectations for children's achievement, and help children who are having difficulty. In addition, excellent reading teachers know that reading development begins well before

children enter school and continues throughout a child's school career. (IRA position statement: <u>Excellent Reading Teachers</u>, 2000)

The above qualities suggest that excellent reading instruction and excellent general instruction are very much connected and that successfully teaching children to read and keeping them motivated to become life-long readers is a complex task. It requires a proficiency model of instruction, which is assessment driven--child-centered-- and emphasizes strategic reading--through an authentic integration of both skills and strategies that learners need in order to become successful and independent readers. It also involves strategically creating the appropriate balance of instructional methods to scaffold children's efforts to succeed in learning to read.

It is important, however, to point out that many students who are experiencing difficulties in learning to read are not benefiting from the instruction in line with the above qualities. Indeed, they "often receive instruction that focuses on learning and mastering isolated skills to be put together for successful reading" (Raphael & Hiebert, 1996, p. 6). By focusing on basic and isolated skills, teachers fail to challenge enough struggling readers (Rosner, 1993; Roller, 1996). In addition, many struggling readers do not receive enough instructional time (Allington, 1991). Finally, many reading instructional practices tend to focus on a deficit model of reading instruction, i.e. what children cannot do instead of capitalizing on what they are capable of doing (Rosner, 1993; Roller, 1996).

Current understandings of the complex nature of reading, learning to read, and the impact of quality reading instruction on students' reading achievement point to the need for investment in the preparation of teachers to help all children become successful readers. This investment is even more important given that there is "compelling evidence

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that an investment in quality reading teacher preparation at the undergraduate level contributes to effective teaching and learning of reading in elementary schools" (IRA Commission on Excellence in Elementary Teacher executive summary, 2003: Prepared to make a difference).

Reform-minded standards for reading teacher preparation programs

According to the International Reading Association, teacher education programs must get preservice teachers off to a running start on acquiring the knowledge, skill, and will that it takes to be an effective teacher. In order to make this a reality, the IRA developed some standards to ensure that every preservice teacher receives quality preparation on all aspects of research-based reading pedagogy in the following areas:

1. Foundational knowledge and dispositions
- know how reading develops
- know how oral language helps students acquire written language
- know to read research reports and appropriately adapt classroom practices to match research evidence.
2. Instructional strategies and curriculum materials
- know how to select curriculum materials and help students learn how letter-sound relationships work
- know how to teach students to make sense out of texts they read
- know how to develop strategic readers and writers
- know how to match curriculum materials to students' need and levels of competence.
3. Assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation
- know how to assess the progress of every student and change instruction when it is not working
- know how to communicate results of assessments to various stakeholders, especially parents.
4. Creating a literate environment
- know how to set up, organize, and manage a classroom so that students can and will learn to read
- know how to motivate students to do their best work
- know enough about and value the cultures and languages students bring to school to use those differences as resources rather than as excuses for not teaching them well.

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5. Professional Development
   - get their practical experience under the best teachers our schools can provide as mentors
   - continue to receive mentoring support throughout their first years of teaching
   - participate in, initiate, implement, and evaluate professional development programs. (1998)

To summarize, teacher preparation programs must provide quality instruction and experiences that enable preservice teachers to develop foundational knowledge about what is involved in reading and to assess children in light of this knowledge and to adjust the balance of instructional strategies in order to give each child what s/he needs to learn (see IRA position statement: Using multiple methods of beginning reading instruction, April 1999). As such, the ultimate goal of the above standards is to ensure that the preservice teacher develops the kind of knowledge, skills and dispositions that s/he needs to be competent to teach reading from the first day on the job.

Although these standards are of great value, our knowledge about what it takes for preservice teachers to meet them, especially the process by which they do so, remains limited. As we invest in enhancing the quality of reading teacher preparation, it is important that our efforts are informed by current ideas about learning to teach.

Teacher knowledge and learning to teach

Reform efforts to improve teacher knowledge

As the literature suggests, teaching is about the intellectual and logistic management of ambiguous, dynamic and complex learning environments (NCRTL, 1992). In order for teachers to engage successfully in the above management, reformers have increasingly called for more and better subject matter knowledge (Shulman, 1986a; 1986b; Grossman, Wilson, Shulman, 1989; Quimby and Barnes, 1986;) and pedagogical subject matter knowledge (Shulman, 1986b, 1987; Lampert,

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1986; 1988). The importance of these two kinds of knowledge, which Shulmann

coined "content knowledge" and "pedagogical content knowledge," is best captured

in the following statement by The National Commission on Teaching and America's

Future (1996):

> Even given the shortcomings of some teacher education programs, studies over
> the last 30 years consistently show that fully prepared teachers are more highly
> rated and more effective with students than those whose background lacks one or
> more of the elements of formal teacher education-subject matter preparation,
> knowledge about teaching and learning, guided clinical experience (p. 52).

In the next two sections, I briefly describe the nature of what is involved in

both content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. In doing so, I draw

some parallels to knowledge for reading instruction.

Nature of content knowledge (CK)

Content knowledge in a given discipline has to do with knowing something

about its theories, ideas, etc. According to the literature, content knowledge includes

three things. First, it includes knowledge of facts, concepts, principles, and

procedures (Kennedy, 1990). Second, it includes an understanding of how the above

pieces fit together, that is, the organization and structure of the content (Feiman-

Nemser, 1989; Kennedy, 1990). Third, it involves some knowledge about the

methods of inquiry (e.g., assumptions, rules of practice, forms of argument) within

the discipline. It is important to point out that literacy is different from typical

disciplines such as math, physics and science and as such, it cannot be viewed as

disciplinary knowledge in the classic sense. Instead, it should be thought about as

"foundational knowledge, just like learning theory or social foundations, that is

required for learning in the subject areas of the elementary school" (Pearson, 2002).

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Nonetheless, in order to teach reading, teachers need to have some important

theoretical knowledge about language and literacy, as discussed below.

First, according to the International Reading Association standards for the

preparation of classroom reading teachers, especially the standards related to

foundational knowledge, beginning teachers need to have some knowledge about:

- how reading develops--which Snow et al. (1998) referred to as the relationship between early literacy behavior and conventional reading; and
- how oral language helps students acquire written language--or information about language development as it relates to literacy (Snow et al. 1998).

In addition, the content knowledge for teaching reading must include the following:

- some knowledge about the structure of language as outlined by Snow et al (1998):
    -information about the features of an alphabetic writing system and other systems
    -information about both phonology and morphology in relation to spelling;
    -information about phonological awareness, orthographic awareness, and writing development;
- some information about comprehension and its dependence on other aspects of reading and on language skills; and
- some information about bilingual language and literacy development, in settings in which children are learning to read in a language other than English. (Snow et al. 1998)

Finally, this content knowledge should include an understanding of what good readers do

(skills and strategies they use), a sound knowledge of the dialectical relationship between

the reading and writing processes, and a broad knowledge of children's literature.

<u>Nature of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK)</u>

While content knowledge deals with knowing the subject matter, pedagogical

content knowledge is about applying what is known about the subject to particular

learners and knowing how to teach those learners in particular situations. Many

scholars have advocated that the ultimate task of teaching is to connect subject matter

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to diverse learners. Such a connection requires specific pedagogical content knowledge (see Kennedy, 1991, for a review). Connecting content knowledge to diverse learners is not as straightforward as it might appear. Indeed, this connection can be examined at different levels. First, according to several researchers (Shulman, 1986b, 1987; Grossman, Wilson, & Shulman, 1989; Wineburg & Wilson, 1988), the main task of teachers is to find ways--this requires some thoughtful planning-- to represent subject matter knowledge to students in ways that they can understand (see Kennedy, 1990). In the case of reading, for example, helping young students grasp the concept of prediction (before and during and while reading a text) and its role in reading comprehension would be better achieved through some modeling by the teacher followed by some guided practice and then independent practice, as opposed to simply defining, through such means as using a dictionary.

Furthermore, other scholars (e.g. Lampert, 1986; 1988; McDiarmid, Ball, and Anderson, 1989) suggest that pedagogical content knowledge requires teachers to understand the unique difficulties that each subject presents to students and to know how students in general tend to learn this subject (see Kennedy, 1990). In the case of reading, this suggests that teachers should have, for instance, some knowledge of difficulties associated with letter sound correspondence and how best to help students master this correspondence. In addition to having some knowledge about the uniqueness of each subject and how students learn it in general, PCK also requires teachers to have some specific knowledge about different students in terms of interpretations, misconceptions, i.e., in terms of different students' ways of understanding the subject.

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In conclusion, pedagogical content knowledge requires teachers to blend knowledge of subject matter with knowledge of students (see Kennedy, 1990). Such blend necessitates an understanding of what is involved in reading, as defined earlier, and its critical implication for finding and effectively planning instructional strategies to facilitate children's learning to read. This PCK is reflected in the International Reading Association standards for the preparation of classroom reading teachers, especially the standards related to the areas of instructional strategies and curriculum materials; assessment, diagnosis, and evaluation; creating a literate environment; and professional development (see standards on p. 23). In addition to these standards, Snow et al. (1998) made reference to other aspects of pedagogical content knowledge that all teacher should acquire, namely:

- information about the learning and curricular needs of diverse learners (students with disabilities, with limited English proficiency, with English language dialect differences);
- in settings in which children are learning to read in a language other than English, an understanding of--as well as strategies and techniques for-- teaching children to read in that language;
- in settings in which non-English-speaking or limited-English-speaking students are in an English as a second language program and learn to read in English, information and skill to help these students confront a double challenge: learning to read and learning a new language;
- information on the design features and requirements of a reading curriculum;
- information about how teachers apply research judiciously to their practice, how to update their research knowledge, and how to influence research agendas, including teacher-researcher collaborations; and
- information about how to maintain and promote motivation to read and positive attitudes toward reading (pp.330-331).

What research has to say about learning to teach

The literature on learning to teach shows that it is complex process. This complexity in learning to teach is due to the fact that it involves the integration of knowledge, skills, and dispositions shaped by both personal and professional

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experiences (Ball and McDiarmid, 1987; Stoddart and Floden, 1995). The process of learning to teach is further complicated in the sense that although it begins long before formal teacher education, it also continues afterward (Feiman-Nemser, 1983; 2001). In other words, learning to teach can be viewed as a life-long process influenced by the many years spent as classroom participant observers (Lortie, 1975; Kennedy, 1991) in elementary, secondary and post-secondary education, individual personal life histories and beliefs, preservice teacher education, and in-service teacher education. This suggests that preservice teachers draw upon their prior experiences (i.e., pre-formal or undergraduate teacher preparation) in formally learning to teach reading, as further explained below. Keeping in line with Dewey's concept of interactions between the individual and the environment, pre-formal teacher preparation knowledge and experiences are part of prospective teacher internal conditions, while formal learning opportunities would constitute external conditions of learning situation.

The preservice stage of learning to teach

The formal stage of learning to teach reading requires going through a formal education program. This formal stage has two components, namely theory (i.e., course work) and field practice (i.e., clinical experience that fosters the integration of theory and practice). Before discussing these two components, it is important to examine prior school and out of school experiences, which according to the literature tend to influence them.

While elementary, secondary and post-secondary school students spend time learning to read and engaging in various reading and other language arts activities, they also form some ideas and concepts about the structure of language and how to teach

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reading. Many of such ideas and concepts are likely to surface when they are formally learning to teach reading and when they teach reading. To put it slightly differently, our experiences as students of reading can provide us with "wells to draw upon" (Calkins, 1991) as we formally learn to teach reading. Besides the learning experiences that take place in elementary and secondary schools, another important aspect of learning to teach reading at the pre-formal stage is one's personal life histories outside school. That is, a student's out of school experiences before college may influence him/her when formally learning to teach reading. For example, a student who was exposed to a rich home literacy environment may not only develop good reading skills and a love for reading, but in addition, as s/he engages in formally learning to teach reading, s/he might give a special attention to outside of school reading. Such influence could be reflected in the way a prospective teacher chooses to talk and/or write about reading instruction and learning, or in the way s/he encourages-during his/her clinical experiences-young learners to read at home.

The theoretical component suggests that prospective teachers need some substantive knowledge base about learning and teaching of language and reading (as illustrated in the previous section on the IRA standards for preservice teachers). In order for the acquisition of this substantive knowledge to be successful, the literature points to a few things that need to happen. First, teacher education programs need to recognize the informal knowledge about literacy that prospective teachers bring with them and to gradually engage them in examining and reflecting upon their taken-for-granted beliefs in relation to new visions of good teaching (Ball, 1989; Hollingworth, 1989; Pajares, 1992; Kennedy, 1991; Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Second,

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in order for this process to result in changes in beliefs, teacher candidates must be provided with 'vivid, concrete and detailed' alternative models of teaching and learning that are probably better than their initial models (see NCRTL Special Report, 1991). Finally, the literature suggests that some of the theoretical knowledge with respect to the structure of a given subject area, e.g., structure of language, language development and the development of reading skills, can be acquired through teaching practice, e.g., through clinical experiences, in the case of preservice teachers (see Ball & McDiarmid, 1988).

As far as the clinical experience is concerned, the literature reveals that it is under the influence of many instructional contexts. First, research (see Anyon, 1983) shows that the make-up of the student population, i.e., students' socioeconomic backgrounds and academic needs, can greatly shape a teacher's approach of curriculum and delivery of instruction. By implication, the type of students in a given classroom may significantly influence the extent to which prospective teachers construct the teaching of reading, and make instructional decisions. Second, the clinical experience may be also influenced by the school and teaching culture (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Lieberman & Miller, 1991). This culture include the type of collegial relationship (e.g., individualistic vs. collaborative) the kinds of instructional practices (e.g., guided reading) that are valued in a given school and the kind of curriculum structure, materials and resources, which can all impact for better or for worse the teaching of individual teachers. By extension, all these characteristics of the teaching culture may help shape, to some extent, how intern teachers learn to teach reading in a particular professional development school.

Last, but not least, the clinical experience is strongly shaped by the type of mentoring that is provided to interns. Because collaborating teachers often have different expectations for what preservice teachers should learn and of the role they should play in supporting them (Dembele, 1996; Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992), it goes without saying that those differences will impact preserivce teachers' learning differently. Many studies have highlighted the important role of mentor teachers (cooperating and collaborating teachers) in supporting the learning of novices (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Calderhead, 1996). For example, Feiman-Nemser & Buchman (1987) point out that the active involvement of the cooperating teacher is essential in order for student teachers to be introduced to the main tasks of teaching and encouraged to look beyond the pressing demands of the classroom setting to what they need to do to refine and expand their understandings and skills.

As mentioned earlier, the aim of the clinical experience is to foster the integration of knowledge and practice--helping novices to enact and reinforce teaching ideas, concepts and strategies they have encountered and acquired throughout their coursework. The success of that integration will depend mainly on three things. First, it will depend on the extent to which the teacher education courses have prepared prospective teachers to identify problems and find resources to solve them and better recognize reform-minded ideas about teaching reading during their student teaching

Second, it will depend on the role of the collaborating teacher, whether or not s/he is able to influence the intern in a positive direction. One of the first things that needs to happen is for the collaborating teacher to have a sound approach to teaching and learning (Beck & Kosnik, 2002), i.e., an instructional practice that is in line with current vision of

good teaching (e.g., see previous section on excellent reading instruction). However, as the literature points out, being a good classroom practitioner is a necessary but not sufficient condition for being a good mentor (Berliner, 1988; Stoddart; Yinger, 1987; and Dembele, 1996). Thus, collaborating teachers will need to do other important things, such as seeing themselves as students of teaching, i.e., seeing learning to teach as ongoing (Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1986), engaging the intern in sustained and substantive conversations (Stanulis & Jeffers, 1995), create a collaborative and supportive atmostphere, be flexible in teaching content and method, and give a "heavy but not excessive workload" (Beck & Kosnik (2002). Unfortunately, as the literature suggests, the absence of the above helps explain the negative influences of many mentor teachers on novices (e.g., Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1986; Zeichner, 1990; Maynard, 1996).

Third, the success of the integration of knowledge and theory will depend on interns' disposition to reflect and learn from their clinical experience, i.e., to think carefully about their own practices and to find ways to improve them. The disposition to reflect is critical in learning because experience is educative only with reflection (Dewey, 1933,1938; Schon, 1982; Shulman,1986; Anning, 1988). Schon's framework, which stipulates that reflection must happen "in and on action" (1987) helps us understand the nature of reflection. On the one hand, reflecting in action requires thinking about what we are doing while doing it in order to make some adjustments as the needs arise. On the other hand, reflection on action requires engaging in some self-analysis of reflection-in action so as to pinpoint aspects of performance that might need improvements or some revisiting.

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Schon's framework is also helpful to our understanding of how preservice teachers can be helped to reflect in and on their internship experiences through guidance and support, i.e., through reflective coaching (1987), from their classroom mentors and university teacher educators (e.g. field-instructor and course instructor). As Schon advocated, this reflective coaching must take the form of a dialogue between the coach and the student through "questioning, answering, advising, listening, demonstrating, observing, imitating and criticizing" (1987, p.114). Without such reflective coaching, the clinical experience can be miseducative simply because teaching situations are so complex and dynamic that they can distort or arrest students' thinking about teaching and learning (see Dewey, 1904/1964; Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann, 1985; Kennedy, 1991).

Some studies have provided examples of successful teacher education programs that make a difference by helping novice teachers learn both CK and PCK (see Kennedy, 1991; Ball & McDiarmid, 1993; Wideen et al., 1998). However, despite the fact that prospective teachers are able to acquire new and good visions of teaching (e.g. Florio, 1990; Ball & McDiarmid, 1993), these visions rarely translate into reform-minded teaching in the classroom. As several scholars pointed out, the lack of translation is due in part to the fact that prospective teachers' learning of good teaching has been decontextualized (see Kennedy, 1991, for a review). This argument draws upon the principle that all knowledge is situated in and grows out of the context of their use (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

As such, there has been an increasing push for bringing context(s) of classroom teaching closer to teacher education course work through case-based or virtual instructions (Snow et al, 1998; Wang, 1998). The argument for such push is that it will

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provide an early initiation in the integration of knowledge and practice. That is to say that course-based or virtual instructions will not only provide teacher education students with simulation and opportunities to identify problems and find resources to solve them, but they will also prepare them to better recognize ideas about teaching (e.g., teaching reading) during their student teaching experience. However, it is important to note that these instructions cannot be used as substitutes for field experiences for two crucial reasons. First, some researchers have argued that prospective teachers are often not ready to grasp an idea until they have wrestled with it in the field (e.g., Wilson, 1992). Second, field experiences are different from individual to individual, and they also vary for the same individual because of changing instructional complexities and ambiguities--e.g., the make-up of the student population, complex classroom situations requiring spontaneous decision making (quick and concrete answers) leaving little time to think or remember to use specific teaching principles (see Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Shulman, 1992).

Thus, in addition to case-based instruction, increasing calls (e.g., The Holmes Group, 1990; The Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1990) have been made for extensive, mentored clinical experiences along side school-based teacher educators. The underlying assumption is that learning to teach in the company of a thoughtful mentor is a powerful way to induct novices into the intellectual and practical challenges of reform-minded teaching (Cochran-Smith, 1991). These mentors are experienced practitioners open to reform-minded teaching ideas who see themselves as teacher educators and view such a role as an opportunity for their own professional development, as opposed to accepting an intern or a student teacher used primarily as an instructional aid. School-based efforts for teacher education are also encouraging school

practitioners to play a more active role in developing curriculum and providing instruction to preservice teachers (NCTAF, 1996).

Rationale for the study

Why a focus on reading?

As discussed earlier, several factors account for the need to care about reading. First, reading virtually cuts across all grade levels and virtually across all subjects. Thus, learning to read is essential in order to succeed in school and ultimately in society. A student who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by the end of third grade is quite unlikely to graduate from high school (for a review, see Slavin et al., 1994). Second, while reading well enough is essential to ensure understanding and to meet the demands of an increasingly competitive economy, "large numbers of school age children, including children from all social classes, have significant difficulties in learning to read" (Snow et al. 1998). Third, the literature suggests that learning to read is difficult; "even children who will eventually become successful readers might find it difficult at first" (Snow et al., 1998). Therefore, it is critical that students benefit from teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions to help them become successful readers. Indeed, there is a need for teachers who have a greater understanding of how to help students who are struggling to read in regular classrooms.

Why study learning to teach reading?

First, the fact that learning to teach is an ongoing and complex process, combined with the difficult nature of learning to read justify the need to pay more attention to how learning to teach reading occurs. This argument is made even stronger with the fact that how to teach to different levels (i.e., teaching a group of

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students including high, average, and low achievers) seems to be a continuing dilemma for most teachers. This has certainly been the case for me, throughout my experience as a language teacher (in middle/high school) and my work with students with various learning disabilities and needs. Being able to teach at different levels has also been a frequent struggle for most of the intern teachers I have worked with.

Second, the literature is helpful to our understanding of current reform efforts in teacher education to increase prospective teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. However, it is limited with respect to our understanding of the process through which these types of knowledge develop— particularly how they are constructed in learning to teach reading in elementary school clinical settings. In addition, Shulman's ideas about CK and PCK were primarily talked about in a theoretical way and all materials were at the secondary education level and mostly related to the teaching of literature and writing.

Finally, it has been argued that teacher preparation for the teaching of reading has not been adequate to bring about the research-based changes in classroom practices that result in success (Corlett, 1988; Nolen et al. 1990; Moats, 1994; Moats and Lyon, 1996). In addition, Snow et al. (1998), point out that "even if sufficient course work with the needed content were available, the problem of transferring the knowledge to the future teacher's practice must be addressed"; raising the question as to what needs to happen, during preservice preparation, to increase the likelihood of such a transfer.

The reasons mentioned above make the case for the need for more empirical research on the process of learning to teach reading, and on some of the opportunities

or enabling conditions that facilitate such process. Although there is now a growing consensus about the need for quality teaching and what constitutes effective reading instruction, very little is known about what it takes for teachers to learn to become competent beginning reading teachers. Knowing more about the process of learning teach reading will help us better understand how preservice teachers construct their knowledge and practice and is therefore essential to efforts of the teacher education community to invest in quality preservice reading teacher preparation. The most effective way to help the learner is to first find out about his/her learning strategies and processes.

Therefore, the following overarching research question guided this close investigation of one teacher's experience:

> *How did a preservice teacher learn to teach reading--especially to teach struggling readers--during an internship experience?*

Two subsidiary questions also guided the study:

> *(1) What enabling conditions facilitated her knowledge construction?*

> *(2) What did she actually construct?*

Overview of the study

This dissertation is organized into six chapters. In chapter two, I describe the data collection and analysis procedures. In chapters three, four and five, I describe a variety of episodes to represent how the intern went about appropriating and synthesizing ideas, concepts and strategies, the conditions that helped along the way, and what she constructed in terms of reading instruction during her internship year. Finally, in chapter six, I discuss findings from the case study and consider implications for teacher education and further studies to improve the preparation of preservice teachers. To help readers

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understand the full meaning of key terms (e.g., appropriation, synthesis, scaffolding,

internal and external conditions) used in the text, a glossary has been created at the end of

the dissertation (see Appendix A).

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Chapter 2

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Participants in context

Participants and internship site

To pursue the questions that guided this study, I decided to examine closely the experience one intern, Molly, and her interactions with her collaborating teacher, Sue. They taught second grade in an elementary school, which I will refer to as Jefferson Elementary School. Jefferson Elementary school is an MSU alliance school located in a semi-rural community about 15 minutes outside a mid-sized midwestern city. Molly is an intern who has an elementary education GPA of 4, with minors in earth science and environmental science. She was doing her internship in a second grade classroom of twenty (22) Caucasian students--all along the spectrum of academic achievement--from both working class (60%) and middle class (40%) backgrounds. Sue is a 17 years veteran teacher, all spent in second grade. At the same time, she had been teaching at her current school for eight years and she had been actively involved in the school improvement team. Sue holds a BA in English and Elementary Education from the Western Michigan University and a Master's degree in reading from Michigan State University. Molly was her second intern, in 3 years, from the MSU teacher education program.

The selection process

I had to make several decisions (i.e., grade level, the number of interns, and intern's abilities) for the design and implementation of the study. To start with, this study is limited to second grade. I made this choice because it appeared to me that it is usually at this grade, and also 3rd grade, that the issue of struggling readers becomes more salient

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and worrisome to teachers and parents. Second, I decided to focus my study on one intern partly because of the time limitation, but most importantly, because I assumed that it would allow me to do more close-up examinations of the internship experience (see also discussion below of my choice of a case study design). Third, I decided to limit my study to interns having the potential of being competent beginning teachers and to collaborating teachers who are strong or outstanding practitioners and whose mentoring practices are above average. By above average, I mean collaborating teachers who are good at providing the type of collaborative and supportive environment that interns need in order to learn the craft of teaching (see discussion of the role of the collaborating teacher below). I assumed that examining good scenarios has the potential to give the teacher education community some images of what it is possible. I drew upon three sources from one of MSU teacher preparation teams to help me make decisions: Karla (pseudonym) a student coordinator, liaisons, and TE (spring 99) course instructors.

The Teacher Education Program Requirements and Structure

At the time of the study Jefferson Elementary school had been involved in Michigan State University's Teacher Education Internship program for four years. This is a school setting where there had been lots of conversation about the internship program standards, namely: *knowing subject matter and how to teach it; working with students; creating and managing a classroom learning community; and working and learning in a school and profession.* These program standards "represent understandings, skills, commitments, dispositions necessary to be an effective beginning teacher." Developed by faculty from MSU and by teachers from Alliance Schools associated with the Teacher

Certification Program, these standards are also compatible with state and national initiatives aimed at assessing beginning teaching" (Team One Handbook, 1999-2000).

MSU's five-year field-based teacher preparation program is a model of teacher education as a "collaborative enterprise that depends on research-based knowledge as well as teachers' knowledge and ways of knowing and on continuous exploration, development and critique" (Feiman-Nemser, 1996, p.1). The program begins with two pre-professional courses before admission. Upon graduation, students serve a two-semester long unpaid internship (from September to April), which "combines extensive practice teaching with supporting master's-level seminars" (Team One Handbook, 1999-2000). During the fall semester, the focus is on "how the intern is approaching the challenges of learning to teach, not how well the intern is performing in the classroom." And during the spring semester, the emphasis is on "the intern's understanding and performance in relation to all aspects of the standards" (Team One Handbook, 1999-2000). During the internship interns have opportunities to enact their ideas and construct their practice from within; this construction of their practice becomes a combination of theory and practice.

Both the intern and the collaborating teacher play a major role in the success of each intern's journey. On the one hand, "interns are expected to take an active role in their own learning, in relation to the program standards" by fulfilling the following major responsibilities:

- observe collaborating teachers and students carefully, keeping notes and raising questions about what they are seeing;
- study and participate in the formation and maintenance of a classroom learning community;
- take initiative in suggesting teaching responsibilities, locating materials, contributing related activities, beginning during the orientation period;

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- co-plan and co-teach lessons and activities with collaborating teacher in response to ongoing classroom life and program assignments moving toward independent planning and teaching as the year progress;
- reflect on classroom interactions, lessons, school/classroom activities and events;
- act in a professional manner (e.g., arriving at school on time, notifying the school office and collaborating teacher of unavoidable absences, conferring in advance about lessons) and take initiative to introduce themselves to other school colleagues;
- confer with collaborating teachers and MSU liaison about the format and plans for individual lessons; prepare written plans before teaching; share these written plans with CT and liaison;
- confer regularly with collaborating teacher and MSU liaison about progress, concerns, etc;
- prepare for and participate in internship seminars.

On the other hand, the collaborating teacher plays a major role in guiding, supporting and assessing interns' learning to teach across the internship year, as outline in the following list of major responsibilities:

- stage appropriate, classroom-based learning opportunities for intern(s) across the school year;
- meet with intern at least once a week at a regularly scheduled time to c-plan and discuss concerns;
- assist intern in getting to know students' parents, school colleagues;
- assist intern in developing and implementing personal/professional learning goals;
- help intern gain familiarity with district curriculum and grade level objectives, school policies, curricular resources;
- model the intellectual work for teaching by sharing goals and beliefs, co-planning, discussing dilemmas, etc;
- participate in appraising intern's progress at mid-term, end-of-semester, and end-of-the-year conferences;
- participate in professional development activities for collaborating teachers (e.g. summer institute, CT study group).

In addition to the intern and the collaborating teacher, it is important to note that there are other individuals--MSU Liaison, The School Liaison and the Principal--who contribute to the internship. The MSU Liaison is the program representative supporting the learning of interns both individually and as a group, in one or more schools. The

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school/teacher liaison is a teacher or principal working closely with program staff in the planning of school-based teacher education activities. The principal works with team leaders and other program staff to develop a strong, field-based teacher education program and s/he also supports collaborating teachers' participation in ways that promote professional development.

As indicated in chapter 1, interns take 2 graduate level courses per semester designed to support their learning. During the fall they take TE 801: Professional Roles & Teaching Practice I: Curriculum & Teaching in Mathematics) and TE 802 Reflection & Inquiry in Teaching Practice I: Writing & Children's Literature. In the spring, they take TE 803 Professional Roles & Teaching Practice II: Curriculum & Teaching in Science and TE 804: Reflection & Inquiry in Teaching Practice II: Learning From Teaching. These four courses allow them to continue to work in curriculum development, study their own teaching, and explore the teacher's role and responsibilities in relation to the school and community (Elementary Intern Handbook, 1999-2000). It is important to point out that the structure of these courses along the internship year and the guidance provided by course instructors play an essential role in shaping interns' thinking and action as they construct their knowledge of teaching in context.

Research Methods

Elaboration of research questions

As discussed earlier, the following overarching question guided the study: *How did a preservice teacher learn to teach reading--especially to teach struggling readers--during an internship experience?*

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In order to answer this question, two subsidiary questions were examined as follows.

(1) What enabling conditions facilitated her knowledge construction?

This first subsidiary question aimed at getting at understanding the various conditions (internal and external) that facilitated Molly's knowledge construction in context. Several areas of influences were looked at in order to address these conditions. These areas were: (1) the influence of the collaborating teacher; (2) other instructional factors (i.e., the culture of teaching that prevails in a given school setting; the curriculum materials and supports that are available and the kinds of students in a particular classroom); and (3) the influences of the various seminars offered during the internship year. Several questions were used as probes in order to get at these areas.

Area one: influences of the collaborating teacher

- What are the beliefs, conceptions and practices of her collaborating teachers?
- What are the collaborating teacher's conception of her mentoring role & her expectations for what the intern needs to learn about teaching reading, especially teaching struggling readers?
- How do the collaborating teacher's beliefs, conceptions, practices and expectations influence her collaboration with the intern?
- What are the intern's expectations from her collaborating teachers in terms of learning to teach reading, especially to teach struggling readers?
- How do the intern's beliefs, conceptions and expectations influence her work with the collaborating teacher?
- What does the intern learn or claim to have learned about teaching reading, especially teaching struggling readers, from the collaboration?
- How does she learn it?

Area two: other instructional factors

- What kinds of literacy learning and instruction are valued in each school?
- What kinds of literacy curriculum materials and supports are available to interns?
- What types of students does the intern have to deal with in the classroom?
- How many students in the classroom are having difficulties in reading?
- How many struggling readers does the intern notice in the classroom and how does she pay attention to them?

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- What type of instructional needs do those struggling readers have?
- How does the intern respond to the kinds of literacy learning and instructional values that exist in the school?
- How does she make use of curriculum materials and support available to her in the school?

Area three: Influences of internship seminars and other TE courses

- What is taught in TE 802 and 804?
- What ideas in relation to struggling students, particularly struggling readers are discussed in TE 501 Guided Practice Seminar, and how?
- What ideas, if any, from junior and senior year and intern–year courses are used in the classroom, and how are they used?
- What aspects of and/or ideas from junior and senior year and intern–year courses does the intern report as important in learning to teach reading, especially to teach struggling readers?

In addition to the above areas, I recognized the possibility of the emergence of other areas (e.g., Molly's experiences during her apprenticeship of observation, her current life experiences, dispositions) during the internship. So I needed to pay attention to additional areas that emerged.

(2) What did she actually construct?

This second subsidiary question looked at the development of Molly's conceptual and practical knowledge during the course of her internship. In other words, it looks at what she constructed at the conceptual as well as practical levels, in relation to the knowledge base for learning to teach reading, as outlined in chapter 1. I paid attention to the following areas of topics during data collection.

Area One (Content Knowledge): The intern's conceptual development with respect to literacy and the learning and teaching of reading.

- Knowledge about the nature of language
- Knowledge about the nature of literacy in general, and reading in particular
- Knowledge about learning to read
- Knowledge about assessing students' reading achievement
- Knowledge about struggling readers

- Knowledge about the teacher's role in facilitating reading
- Dispositions toward struggling readers
- Skills and strategies considered essential in facilitating reading development for struggling readers

Area Two (Pedagogical Content Knowledge): The intern's practical development with respect to literacy instruction in general, and reading instruction in particular.

- The ways she goes about planning a reading literacy unit or reading lesson
- The rationale she gives to the choices she makes as she plans
- The types of activities she engages students in
- The ways she structures reading activities
- The ways she engages struggling students in reading activities
- The types of questions she asks
- The ways she responds to students' responses—comments and interpretations--to texts (e.g. students' novel ideas)
- The ways she responds to students' questions (e.g., struggling readers' difficulties in understanding particular words in a text)
- The ways she assesses and evaluates her lessons (e.g. students' learning and thinking, their own learning, thinking, and revising)?

Why a case study?

The above lists of diverse areas to be addressed in order to answer the main research questions, reinforce the idea that learning teach, especially to learning to teach reading, is a very complex undertaking (see chapter 1), the understanding of which requires a complex research method. As such, I decided to use the case study design which is an ideal when a holistic and in-depth investigation is needed (Feagin, Orum, & Sjoberg, 1991. It has the advantage of investigating a phenomenon within its real-life context where the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which a multitude of sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984, p.23). As such, I assumed that focusing on a case of one intern would allow me to engage in a close-up look at the process by which Molly constructs her learning with respect to teaching reading in context. In doing so, I had the advantage of engaging in rich and thick description of data gathered from a variety of sources, given the highly situated nature of

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learning to teaching. Furthermore, this up-close description allowed me to start broad and narrow in as I went, and to provide a richer description of Molly's knowledge construction.

Because of the study of small samples, qualitative studies-- including case studies --have been frequently criticized for offering no grounds to make generalization of findings--i.e., for establishing reliability or generality of findings. However, several researchers (Yin, 1984, 1993, 1994; Hamel, Dufour, & Fortin, 1993) have made the case for the usefulness of any given study, as long as it is carefully planned and parameters are shaped by the goals of the study and have met the established objectives (for a review, see Myers, 2000). Yin (1989, 1994) argued that the issue of generalizability is dependent upon the rigor with which a study is constructed and its methodological qualities--data gathering and analysis procedures for a qualitative case study must be used systematically and properly. These case study procedures must also be well documented so that they could be replicated in another setting--albeit not an exact replication because of the uniqueness of a study in a specific context--and findings based on sound evidence from the study might be partially generalized to similar populations (Creswell, 1994; Myers, 2000; Yin, 1989). More importantly, despite their limited generalizability, well conducted case studies do provide insights into issues, ideas and concepts that could be pursued in subsequent research, and have the possibility of offering hypotheses to pursue.

Data Collection

Data were collected from early November 1999 to May 2000 (see Appendix B for a full description of instruments used). When I set out to collect data, my intention was to focus on observing lessons directly related to the teaching and learning of reading. As

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soon as I started my fieldwork, I was drawn, somehow naturally--maybe because of my

background as a former Liaison and as a student of teaching--to other non-reading related

experiences that Molly was having. This quickly reminded me that teaching reading, and

by extension learning to teach reading, does not happen in isolation, but instead in

connection to other curriculum and instructional areas, and forced me to make some

adjustments in my data collection framework. For example, in chapter 3, I discuss a Math

lesson debriefing session between Molly and Sue in early November 1999. Although this

was not related to reading instruction, it provided me with some initial insights into

Molly's teaching as a whole and her disposition to reflect on her experience.

In order to increase the richness of the data and subsequently give me more

insights into the complex process of learning to teach reading triangulation (i.e., using

multiple methods and sources on the same phenomenon) was used for this study. Stake

(1995) and Yin (1984, 1994) made the case for the importance of triangulating data

sources by pointing out that it is a strategy that increases the reliability of the data and

how it was gathered, and serves to corroborate the data collected from other sources. The

data collection methods I used included participant interviewing, participant observation,

and reviewing documents, as described below. Table 1 summarizes the different data

sources and types of data collected to examine each subsidiary research questions.

Table1: Research Questions, Data Sources, and Data Types

Subsidiary Research Questions	Data Sources	Data Types
1) What enabling conditions facilitated her knowledge construction?	• 3 interviews with intern • 3 interviews with collaborating teacher • 1 interview with the MSU Liaison • Course syllabi and related documents (TE	• Transcribed interviews • Transcribed interviews • Transcribed interviews • Summary of courses' objectives and selected

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	501/502/802/804) from course instructors and/or intern. • Debriefing sessions between the intern & CT • Questionnaire administered to course instructors • Intern's Journal • School literacy/reading curriculum materials • Attending Interns' study group	activities used to meet them • Transcribed debriefing sessions • Written open-ended answers • Selected journal entries • Selected pieces of school literacy/reading goals and achievement methods • Notes from interns' study group
2) What did Molly actually construct?	• 3 interviews with intern • Pre/post observational conversations with intern • Classroom observations of the intern • Artifacts (from intern's lessons) • Debriefing sessions between intern & CT • Attending Interns' study group	• Transcribed interview • Transcribed pre/post observational conversations • Videotaped observations and field notes • Samples of lesson plans, worksheets, handouts, quizzes, students' work • Transcribed debriefing sessions • Notes from interns' study group

In-depth Interviews (audio taped)

In order to help me answer my research questions, I conducted three in-depth interviews with Molly as follows.

• **Early November 1999:** Molly was interviewed to find out about her educational backgrounds and life histories, and some of her theoretical instructional orientations. Among other questions, I asked her to remember how she learned to read. I also asked her to talk about her view of literacy instruction--particularly her view regarding characteristics of good readers, struggling readers, and instructional approaches to be used to improve reading performance. Finally I asked her questions about how she had been learning to teach to teach reading successfully. Since my study did not start

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until early November, this interview engaged Molly in taking a retrospective look at what happened during the first two months of her internship journey. It also engaged her in setting up learning goals for the rest of her internship.

- **Early February 2000**: Molly was interviewed to find out about her perception of progress she made up to that point in the internship. In doing so, I asked her to recall something significant to her learning to teach reading that happened to her since our first interview, or even before that. The interview also focused on new goals that she might have for the spring semester. Thus, similar to the November interview, this second interview asked Molly to both think back and look ahead with respect to her learning across the internship. In addition, this interview also gave me chance to ask some follow-up questions on what she said during the first interview in early November interview.

- **Late May 2000**: Molly was interviewed in order to reflect back on the internship experience and also to look at new goals she might have for herself. Everything that has been said about the second interview is also true for this third one. The only difference is that this final interview asked Molly an overall question in terms of how well she felt prepared to teach reading in her own classroom the next school year.

Part of studying the learning of someone is having that person talk about his/her learning to find out how s/he is making sense of it. It is not just about gathering data on what the researcher thinks was learned. As such, many follow-up questions were asked during subsequent interviews to engage Molly in examining her own learning. In many instances, I went back to see where Molly was with regard to goals she set up in earlier interviews. The same was true when interviewing Sue.

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In-depth Interviews with collaborating teacher (audio taped)

- **Early November 1999**: Sue was interviewed to find out about her theoretical and instructional orientations toward literacy. This interview also focused on the her perception of her role as mentor, and the objectives she had in terms of Molly's learning to teach reading.

- **Early February 2000:** Sue was interviewed to find out about her perception of progress made by the intern. The interview also focused on new goals that she might have for Molly during the spring semester.

- **Late April, 2000: Sue** was interviewed in order to engage her in reflecting back on Molly's learning to teach reading and also to look at new learning goals she might have for her.

In-depth Interview with MSU liaison (audio taped)

Although I initially intended to interview the MSU liaison at Jefferson Elementary School --Early January 2000 & early/mid April 2000--I ended up conducting only the January interview. This interview focus mostly on the Liaison's perception of her role as mentor, and the objectives she had in terms of interns' learning to teach reading as well as to get a sense of her perception on Molly's progress.

Participant Observation (video taped)

I observed Molly from early November 1999 throughout late March 2000, on an average of two observations per week. In order to be systematic and consistent with the data collection procedure, I tried to use an observation protocol, which I abandoned after the first two weeks because I found it constraining. It was too detailed-oriented and difficult to follow; it somehow took away the spontaneity in taking open field notes,

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which allowed me to document a range of events that either did or did not anticipate. During my observations, I paid particular attention to how Molly engaged students in reading-related activities and how she dealt with students' difficulties (e.g., when decoding words). In addition to gaining some insights into their knowledge, skills and dispositions, I assumed that observing Molly teach might give me a sense of some of the things that were influencing her knowledge construction. For instance, I might be able to see Molly adapting a given reading activity based on the types of question(s) students were asking. In addition to taking field notes during my observations, I videotaped several lessons, which allowed me to revisit some lessons in order to gain more insights into what was happening. Furthermore, most classroom observations were preceded and followed by some conversations with Molly, as described below.

Pre-instructional conversations (audio taped)

Pre-instructional conversations aimed at finding out what Molly would be teaching and how she was thinking about it (e.g. objectives, activities, and assessment methods). Planning is one of the most important program standards (Elementary Intern Handbook, pp.43-44) that is used to assess interns' progress throughout the internship year. Thus, I assumed that pre-instructional questions would allow me to have some access to Molly's knowledge and skills at different levels. First, it would give me some sense of her own understanding--content knowledge-- of what was to be taught and how she was would go about deepening such understanding. Second, it would give me some sense of how she would go about taking the necessary steps in identifying "big ideas," framing worthwhile goals based on knowledge of students, standards and curriculum expectations, keeping in mind the needs of struggling readers. Third, it could give me

some sense of how the CT and/or the resources available in the school were influencing Molly as she was planning a unit or lesson. Finally, it would allow me to have a sense of how she was going about organizing materials and learning activities and assessment tools (pedagogical content knowledge). To stimulate pre-observational conversations with Molly, I used a set of guiding questions (see Appendix B). Some of the questions used were:

- *How did you plan this unit (lesson)?*
- *What did your CT do in helping you plan this unit (lesson)?*
- *What are your intended outcomes (i.e., goals/purposes/objectives of the unit (lesson)*
- *What activities/materials are you planning to use?*
- *What assessment methods are you planning to use?*
- *What are some of the questions or concerns you have as you look ahead to teaching this unit (lesson)?*

Post-instructional conversations/debriefing sessions (audio taped)

Post-instructional conversations aimed at engaging Molly in reflecting on her teaching in terms of students and teachers' activities, interactions, learning and thinking. As such, I assumed that engaging Molly in post-instructional conversations would give me a sense of how she was assessing or learning to assess her students, how she was reflecting on her teaching practice and whether and how she used assessment and reflection data in deciding where to go next. I also assumed that engaging in post-observational conversations with Molly might give me a further sense of some of the things that were influencing her knowledge construction. To stimulate the post-observational conversations, I used a combination of field notes, and a set of guiding questions (see Appendix B). Some of the questions used were:

- *What were the most difficult things to teach in this unit (lesson)?*
- *Did you make any change(s) from what you planned during your teaching of this unit (lesson)?*
- *What did your CT do in helping you teach this unit (lesson)?*

- *How did you feel the unit (lesson) went?*
- *Were you able to reach your objectives?*
- *How do you know that students learned what you wanted them to?*
- *What were the important things you learned from this unit (lesson)?*

I also sat in and audiotape a couple of debriefing sessions between Molly and Sue. I assumed that such sessions could provide me with more opportunities to witness Molly's reflection on her teaching--learning and thinking--as well as to see Sue's role in assisting her reflective thinking. They could also lead me to have follow-up conversations with Sue to find out more about her expectations and new objectives she might have for Sue. My main goal was to look for instances of Molly's reflection on her learning and her experiences working with struggling students--struggling readers in particular.

Interns' Study Group

I planned to sit in on a couple of Interns' study group sessions in each intern's building the spring semester. I assumed that this could be another window into how interns learn to teach out of the classroom context, i.e., it might give me a chance to see how theoretical and practical ideas associated with literacy instruction and learning difficulties were surfacing during professional conversation among preservice teachers. I was able to sit in two study group sessions, during which I paid particular attention to Molly's participation and contribution.

Artifacts

Gathering artifacts produced as part of different lessons was part of my data collection strategy. These artifacts included lesson plans, worksheets, handouts, students' work (reading logs, etc.). The goal of having lesson plans was to give me an enhanced picture of how Molly went about planning a particular unit (or lesson). I assumed that

other artifacts would be important especially in helping me, for instance, have an idea of activities that took place earlier and that I missed. In this way, it would allow me to make some useful connections between different lessons or activities. In addition, these artifacts could be helpful when engaging in a post-instructional conversation with Molly who might, for instance, make reference to an assessment worksheet that students had to complete as part of a reading lesson.

Journal entries

As part of their learning to teach, interns are required to keep a journal to reflect on their actions and observations. Journal entries can be windows into interns' thinking in the sense that the journal is the place where they engage in internal conversation with themselves as they process students' actions as well as their own actions and thinking. Often times such journal entries take the form of an account of what has been done and/or seen, and also a set of questions for either the CT and/or the MSU liaison or course instructors. Thus, having access to some journal entries was viewed as an effective way of supplementing insights from interviews and observations.

Review of Documents

I assumed that reviewing the documents might be another window into how Molly's knowledge, skills, and dispositions were being shaped. Thus, I was able to have some access to:

- School language arts/reading curriculum materials (i.e., goals and achievement methods) from Molly and Sue.

- Course syllabi and related documents (TE 402/501/502/802/804) from Molly.

Questionnaire

Having course instructors respond to a questionnaire was a way to find out about the main objectives of the course they taught each and its related projects and its related projects and opportunities to learn. I assumed that this would be an effective way to supplement the information I might be able to gather from reviewing course syllabi and related documents. Unfortunately, I did not get any data through this method because the course instructors never responded to the questionnaire they were given.

Theoretical assumptions as well as my research questions influenced the data collection. Although special emphasis was placed on Molly's learning about and teaching of struggling readers throughout the analysis, I also paid attention to how she went about planning for instruction--including collaborating with other professionals in getting ideas and accessing resources and materials. The reasoning behind this is related to the primary role that planning plays in teaching and subsequently in learning to teach, as illustrated by major responsibilities for interns and collaborating teachers in the section about MSU TE Program requirements and structure. See also, in chapter 1, section on pedagogical content knowledge--finding and planning instructional strategies to facilitate students' learning to read. The above observation also held true for the data analysis, which is discussed below.

Methods and Strategies of Data Analysis and Reporting

I relied on multiple data sources as I engaged in analyzing data and looking for patterns and themes in Molly's learning to teach reading. I also used methodological triangulation'--i.e., different approaches to data analysis--in order to increase confidence in data interpretation (Denzin, 1984). Both data collection triangulation and data analysis

triangulation play a critical role in giving case studies strengths in their findings and conclusions.

Following the advice of Bogdan & Bickden (1992) and Creswell (1994), I engaged in some data analysis along with data collection. I took field notes and wrote some reflective notes while observing and interviewing participants. Many of those notes were expanded upon later on to write analytic memos summarizing what was standing out to me. After each set of interviews with and observations of each participant (e.g., first interview with the intern plus a series of observations), I wrote an analytic memo summarizing contents and general themes, including quotes and some of my tentative hypotheses. This required some listening to audio taped interviews and re-reading of interview transcripts. These analytic memos were helpful in looking for patterns, gaps in information received from previous interviews and conversations, in guiding subsequent interviews and conversations, as well as in guiding the focus of subsequent observations-- in terms what to look for. For example, during the first interview with Molly in early November 1999, I asked her questions about her goals and concerns for the rest of the fall semester and the internship. I made sure to revisit Molly's answers to these questions during our second interview in early February 2000. Similarly, new goals and concerns that were articulated during the second interview were revisited during my third and final interview with Molly in May 2000.

After the data collection period, I pursued with a more in-depth analysis of data, which included re-listening to audio taped interviews and re-reading interview transcripts, revisiting analytic memos in order to confirm or reject initial hypotheses and emerging patterns. While re-examining my data more deeply, I noticed that I was over-

relying on interview data. Through conversations with my dissertation directors at the time, I came to realize that I needed to use multiple data sources in order to give more credibility to the story I wanted to tell. As such, triangulation became a focal point for subsequent analysis and discussion. I began to attempt to understand Molly's knowledge, skills and dispositions by looking for interactional patterns across multiple data sources and allowing theories--i.e., learning by appropriating and synthesizing knowledge--to emerge out of the data.

When I first designed this study I was thinking about a linear approach to my data analysis in terms of stages. I realized (in the summer of 2001) that this approach would have been a contrived and even premature way to make sense of my data, and eventually to make sense of Molly's journey. It would have forced me to come up with some phases and to merely look for specific evidence to confirm them. And in doing so, I might have been blinded with respect to other possibilities or important aspects of Molly's knowledge construction with respect to reading instruction. Therefore, I decided to outline the writing of Molly's story, based on significant learning episodes--events that mark a major turning points and/or appear to trigger some transformation within the learner. I would then look back to see exactly what happened in terms of common themes with respect to how she went about learning to teaching reading during her internship. In other words, I decided to let the specific learning episodes dictate the unfolding story of Molly before drawing any final conclusions about common themes. The specific learning episodes discussed throughout this study were chosen based on several factors, namely: their connection to background information about Molly, their connection to reading instruction, and their relevance with respect to teaching in general, i.e. what teachers need

know, be able to do and care about. I also wanted to make sure to select learning episodes to represent the full spectrum of the internship (i.e., the beginning of the internship, the fall guided lead teaching, the pre-lead teaching period and the lead-teaching period). The unit on Native American legends (see chapter 4) dealt not only with literacy instruction but also with some fundamental aspects of teaching in general such as planning and assessing, and it also corresponded to a significant stage (the guided lead teaching period) in Molly's journey.

I also struggled as to whether to start by telling Molly's story by contrasting her early and late conceptions of literacy instruction--especially reading instruction--followed by telling the story of how she got to formulating her conceptions the way she did at the end of the internship. This did not feel like a natural progression to me. It felt as if I had some preconceived notions about her late conceptions of literacy instruction, which I needed to find data to confirm. I then decided to let the story unfold naturally, starting with her early conceptions of literacy instruction, followed by telling her knowledge construction story and ending with her late conceptions. This allowed me to discuss how her learning experiences might have contributed to her knowledge construction with respect to reading instruction.

Although I went into the study with some analytic categories (e.g., CK, PCK) that grew out of the literature review and the assumption that they were important to pay attention to regarding what Molly learned, others emerged later during the study. I did not go in with analytic frames that helped me uncover the processes by which she learned (appropriating, synthesizing) or frames that described influences. For example, Dewey's concept of an educative experience was used later as I proceeded with data analysis and

sought frames that would help me explain what happened and to write the story. In addition, the theme of developing a teaching identity (discussed in chapter 5) emerged late in the writing process. Once the story was drafted, I gained the insight about her voice coming through more strongly. The above examples illustrate that I was open to new possibilities and also that writing was part of the analysis process regarding Molly's knowledge construction.

After providing some background and discussing Molly's early conceptions of literacy instruction, the next three chapters describe a variety of episodes to represent how she went about appropriating and synthesizing ideas, concepts and strategies, the conditions that helped along the way, and what she constructed in terms of reading instruction during her internship year. The description of each episode starts with a discussion of why it was chosen, and ends with a summary of external conditions and internal conditions that facilitated the knowledge construction process and the nature of what she constructed learned--content knowledge (CK), pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and dispositions.

Chapter 3

THE BEGINNING OF THE INTERNSHIP: MOLLY'S EAGERNESS TO LEARN AND HER EARLY CONCEPTIONS OF LITERACY INSTRUCTION

"I'm trying to learn so much right now. Anything I can grab, I'm trying to do". (First Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

This statement, made during our first interview, captures the essence of some of Molly's internal conditions (e.g., her readiness and willingness to absorb everything she could) that facilitated her appropriation of concepts, ideas and strategies, particularly at the beginning of her internship. This chapter centers around three learning episodes, which stand as critical in helping me demonstrate what was involved in Molly's appropriation of knowledge about reading instruction, through interactions between internal conditions and external conditions (e.g., such as opportunities to observe, and engage in conversations). This chapter also reveals evidence of Molly synthesizing knowledge, i.e. taking stock of what she was learning.

In all three episodes, Molly encountered opportunities to work with her students and to reflect upon her interactions, in collaboration with Sue. In the first episode, the most important in the early stage of Molly's internship, I describe how (through self-report) Molly had a 180 degree change of mind regarding the use of learning centers. As for the second episode, it briefly describes how being exposed to a successful pull out strategy during spelling test--which Molly was not excited about at the beginning of the school year--convinced her of the value of small group instruction and breaking down the code to help struggling students. Finally, the third episode is a debriefing session, following a math lesson, during which Molly demonstrated her willingness to learn from

constructive feedback on her own teaching and her growing awareness of the need to focus on students' learning.

I begin this chapter by briefly introducing Molly with some background information, including some of the dispositions with which she started her internship. As revealed through upcoming discussion, this information seems to constitute a key piece of internal conditions that facilitated Molly's appropriation of concepts and strategies, during the course of her internship. This is followed with an examination of her early conceptions of literacy, which involve her ideas and beliefs about the definition of literacy, characteristics of good and poor readers, instructional strategies to accelerate reading performance. I then present some in-depth description of each of the three learning episodes, to illustrate the process of appropriating knowledge. I end the chapter with a summary of Molly's appropriation of concepts and strategies, facilitated by interactions between internal conditions (e.g., Molly's motivation to learn and her ability to reflect) and external conditions (e.g., Sue's scaffolding role and opportunities to observe and work directly with students). This summary also includes what Molly constructed in terms of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and dispositions.

Background Information

Molly is a twenty-three year old Euro-American female who majored in elementary education, with minors in earth science and environmental science. Molly grew up on a small farm in the Midwest. She is part of a close family with a total of ten siblings, including twin brothers.

As the literature suggests, many of the experiences children have in elementary and secondary classrooms play a crucial role in the process of learning to teach (e.g.

Lortie, 1975, Kennedy, 1991 & 1998). Kennedy (1998) stated that "from these experiences, teachers do acquire not only a set of ideals to strive for but also a repertoire of ideas to guide them through a wide range of teaching situations." As such, this case starts with a brief description of some of Molly's preschool and early school experiences; I also briefly discuss one of her college experiences, which appeared to have influenced her thinking about teaching.

Learning to read

Molly always had a love for reading and she remembered reading at a very young age, as follows:

> I remember reading a lot to my younger brothers. And my grandparents read a lot with us. And when I would read to other people, they actually had me on recording, tape recordings, like reading to other people. But like I would make up, if I didn't learn, if I didn't know how to read yet, I'd just look at pictures and make up stories as I'd go along. Probably ever since like I was four-I think the tape that I have, it was from when I was four. And I had a lot of encouragement from my older brothers and sisters. There's ten of us total so I had a lot of siblings to either help learn how to read or that helped me. (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

Molly's reminiscence illustrates that she grew up in a rich literate home environment. As research has pointed out, children who have had several "informal" literacy encounters prior to coming to school, are likely to develop "critical understanding about the nature of reading and writing and the 'I can' attitudes toward their inevitable inclusion into the literate community" (Allington & Cunningham, 1999). Indeed, Molly appeared to have started formal school already knowing many of the conventions of print. "I don't really have a lot of memories of school except for it was, reading was always pretty easy...I can't even remember learning to read though. It just seemed like it happened," she stated (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999). In

other words, learning to read is a process that came rather easily to Molly who

remembered trying, as soon as she could, to get into chapter books such as "the

babysitters club" series and "Sweet Valley High" series in 5th and 6th grade. As she

indicated,

> As soon as I started reading chapter books, I read them like every spare minute I could...pretty much all the time, unless I was outside playing. Usually I was up in my room reading a lot of the time. (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

In addition to chapter books, Molly was an avid reader of magazines such as

Scholastic News. She considers herself a good reader; she currently reads for recreation,

2 or 3 times per week when she is busy and 4 or 5 times per week when she is not so

busy. To summarize, Molly seemed to have become, mostly through home support and

encouragement, a self-motivated and an independent reader at a very young age.

Becoming a teacher

Molly's desire to become a teacher dates back to her early elementary school

years, which she commented upon as follows:

> I first knew that I wanted to be a teacher when I was in 2nd grade actually. I have a lot of cousins who are teachers; my grandpa was a teacher. So whenever I'd go to my grandparents' house, I always used to play school. And I played in school like forever and I always knew I wanted to teach. Why? I guess I don't know. I always looked up to all my teachers, I think almost all of them. They fascinated me. So I've always loved children and teaching them. Especially, I have two twin brothers who are like 3 ½ years younger than me so I spent a lot of time helping them learn how to read and teaching them how to read and things like that. (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

The above comments suggest that Molly is a people person who seemed to

have contemplated the idea of becoming a teacher for a long time; she was growing up,

she was inspired by educators in her family as well as by her schoolteachers. She

particularly seemed to enjoy helping her twin brothers learn to read. Molly's fascination

with seeing people learn was further developed when she had the chance in college

(during either her sophomore or junior year I believe) to participate in the "Read to

Succeed Program"--a one-on-one tutoring program for children who are below grade

level in reading and writing in the Lansing area elementary schools and churches.

Throughout this program Molly tutored a 2nd grade girl who could not yet read at a 1st

grade reading level. And within three months of working with her, Molly indicated that

the girl was already making considerable progress in reading level. This seemed to have

had a particularly positive impact on Molly, in reinforcing her desire to pursue a teaching

career. "So that was nice--- I mean, she couldn't really spell her name and stuff so...just

seeing people who are struggling to accomplish something makes it worth it" (1st

Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999).

As illustrated through the "Read to Succeed" experience, Molly had a

fascination with those who are struggling in the learning process. According to Molly,

this special interest is something that she fully realized once she was into her internship

experience. As she put it:

> I like to see kids that are excited to learn and that was like my main thing. Until
> like probably a few months ago, then I realized that I really have more fascination
> with seeing people who are struggling at first or who have no desire to, and then
> to see them learning...that's more exciting to me, for teaching them. (1st Interview
> with Molly, November 11, 1999)

The quotes mentioned above suggest that Molly's motivation to become a teacher

was heavily influenced by interpersonal ideals: role models--both at home and at school--

and her emerging interest in struggling students, i.e. her fascination with and satisfaction

in teaching them. It also appears that it is only after getting in and working with students

that her interest in struggling students crystallized; I shall pay close attention to how this plays out throughout this case study.

Molly is determined to learn

As Molly began her internship, she was quite aware of and articulate about her own weaknesses, limitations, and apprehensions about teaching reading. Despite her love for reading and her ability to read with ease throughout elementary and secondary schools and the fact that she thinks of herself as a good reader, Molly considered literacy to be her weakest instructional area. As she stated, "I started off not knowing anything, or feeling like I didn't, I probably did know some stuff but I didn't feel comfortable, really comfortable with it. I don't like going into situations not knowing" (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999).

This lack of comfort originated from the fact that Molly didn't feel like she had a strong instructional background in literacy coming in from her Teacher Education courses, which she referred to in different ways during our first interview in November 1999. First, she talked about her lack of exposure to children's literature and wished she had taken a minor in children's literature. Second, she pointed out her limited knowledge of Guided Reading as follows: "I did not even know what guided reading seriously was until this year with Sue, and that's why I'm so embarrassed because I feel like I'm confident as far as teaching other areas" (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999). Lastly but not the least, Molly was feeling unprepared with respect to knowing what to expect of second graders in terms of reading ability and how to help kids at different levels. Her own words better illustrate this point: "How are we going to work with kids that are at different levels? I wasn't sure if we would be, you know, doing a whole group

basal learning or if we'd have that in addition to small groups with reading at their own levels" (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999).

Because of the above-mentioned limitations and apprehensions, Molly began her clinical experience eager to learn and to take advantage of every single opportunity available to her. As this case study will show, Molly's openness to constructive feedback and willingness to engage in reflecting on her teaching were helpful to her learning from the beginning to the end of her clinical experience. In addition, her learning was facilitated by her readiness to ask insightful questions, right from the beginning of her internship, as illustrated below:

> When I started the internship, I was asking Sue so many questions because before I really didn't know what to expect. I was just, you know, I'll learn as I go. ...My questions weren't as complex as they became after even the first day of school. Then I had so many questions about, you know, how fast do they progress? You know, what do you do with the different levels of readers, things like that...And another thing was were my expectations of them coming in too high. That was a big thing I struggled with for a few weeks. You know! Am I expecting too much out of them? Am I not expecting enough out of them? I wanted to be challenging for them but I didn't want to be too overwhelming for them. I thought they would all come in reading already. (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

Similar to her emerging fascination and satisfaction in teaching struggling learner mentioned earlier, this statement suggests that it was only through working with students, including struggling ones, that Molly began to ask more complex and detailed questions about children's needs and abilities. In other words, it was through hands-on experiences with students that she began to appreciate, with some depth, the different paces at which children progress and the meaning of providing developmentally appropriate instruction.

As discussed above Molly came into her internship with dispositions--recognizing her own weaknesses, eagerness to learn (e.g., working with students at different levels), and asking insightful questions--conducive to learning. In addition, this discussion also

foreshadows the type of interactions between internal conditions and external conditions (e.g., opportunities to work with students at different levels) that enabled Molly to appropriate knowledge about reading instruction, as discussed in later sections.

I now shift to Molly's early conceptions of literacy instruction, particularly reading instruction, which she articulated during our first interview in early November 1999. Since these conceptions were expressed after two months into the internship, many of them appear to depict early signs of Molly's learning to teach reading in the context of practice.

Molly's early conceptions of literacy instruction

Before describing Molly's conceptions of literacy instruction, it seems important to take a look at her overall teaching philosophy. I believe that in many ways, this might shed some light on some of her dispositions with respect to how to facilitate children's learning as well as set the tone for what she is able to accomplish throughout her internship journey. Molly described her teaching philosophy as follows:

> I like to have kids interacting with each other as much as possible. The focus, I don't mind if it's on me but I prefer to have it on them so that they're learning from each other. You know, group work, collaboration. As far as how would I describe myself as a teacher, just someone who encourages the growth in the students and helps them progress and get them excited to learn. And kind to, not let, kind of lead them, be a guide, instead of a lecture to them, be a guide to their learning...Kids as learners. I think if you can just reach, reach them, if you can find a way to reach each individual child and they are all so different that you kind of have to find their little thing that gets them going so you can get them excited. Then it's gonna make your job as a teacher easier, or my job as a teacher easier to relate to them at their own level. (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

Three points stand out from Molly's teaching philosophy. First, it shows that Molly is committed to an interactive and student-centered approach to teaching. Second, it shows that she is aware of the fact that there are different learning styles and needs.

Hence, the need for the teacher to make sure to get to know each student as a unique

learner, a need which will become one of Molly's driving forces throughout the rest of

her internship, as discussed later on in this case study. Third, one gets a sense that Molly

is particularly keen on making kids excited about learning. That is to say that engaging

students--one of the leitmotivs of good teachers--appeared to be one of Molly's

instructional goals.

Molly talked about her goals in terms of getting to know her students very well

and to assess their reading performance. She also talked about the fact that it was

important for students to feel confident when reading. She articulated her conceptions of

literacy, which shows a significant conceptual change just during the first two months of

her internship. This is what she had to say about the concept of literacy:

> I would say even a year ago, I had, literacy was reading. If people can read, you know, you'd hear on the news so many percentage of Americans are literate. They can read or write and now, through working with Sue, a lot of my ideas are kind of the same as hers because she's been the biggest role model for literacy I have. But literacy is, I think, I feel now a combination of reading and writing but also speaking, being able to listen to people and interpret what they're saying, comprehending it. (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

First, from this definition, one can see that Molly has begun to see literacy as a

range of abilities that go beyond reading in an effort to comprehend/create meaning.

However, it is important to notice that her definition is limited to the four traditional

language arts (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and does not include visual

literacy, which is composed of two language arts, namely viewing and visual

representation (International Reading Association (IRA) and National Council of

Teachers of English (NCTE), 1996). Second, the fact that Molly attributed her new take

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on literacy to Sue is an important signal of her collaborating teacher's influence (external

conditions), on her journey, an influence that I shall discuss throughout this case study.

Characteristics of good readers

Molly described characteristics of good readers as follows:

> Good readers. High fluency does that sound right? Fluency is that the right word?
> I'm thinking, yeah, fluency. Comprehension skills, good comprehension skills,
> positive decoding skills... I'm trying to think what else. Oh, earlier this year we
> tested for sight words too. It was within the first few weeks of school all second
> graders had to go through a list of fifty (50) sight words and on the back of the
> page there was another list of about fifteen (15) words that were just the oddest
> words, they're just nonsense words. And the kids had to go through so that we
> could see their decoding skills...Well, I think that that test alone does not tell if a
> kid is a good reader because you can't tell if they're comprehending. I mean, it's a
> list of words; it's not like a sentence. So also another characteristic I just thought
> of would be if they're reading with expression--not just monotone reading, but
> with some expression. (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

Two points are worth noting from Molly's ideas about good reading. First, Molly

showed some sign of uncertainty, when referring to the concept of fluency, which she did

not really fully explain. Even later on when she talked about reading with expression as

being an important characteristic of good reading, there was not a clear sense that she was

looking at it as a feature of fluency. However, the notion of expression speaks to Molly's

awareness and understanding of the importance of being engaged with a text.

Second, although Molly felt that she knew very little about teaching reading at the

start of her internship and was not so sure about the concept of fluency, she did address

some very important characteristics of good reading. Overall, Molly recognizes that the

ability to comprehend is essential to good reading. Along the same line, she also realizes

that knowing sight words or merely decoding isolated words could not be equated with

being able to comprehend texts. Her experience in observing children take a sight

vocabulary test seems to have enabled her to come to this realization.

Characteristics of poor readers

Molly talked about characteristics of poor readers by contrasting them with those of good readers as follows:

> Struggling readers are not very fluent in their reading, comprehension skills aren't there...Very low decoding skills, strategies to learn how to decode, very low sight word recognition. If they're very hesitant or seem very, if they're not very confident...If they're reading and they're looking up, is that right, is that right...A good reader, I see maybe has a little bit more confidence. Just showing, like they're ready to jump in...They are the ones raising their hands in class. Oh, I'll read it, even if they've never seen it before. (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

In addition to characterizing poor readers as having limited and/or non-existing comprehension and decoding skills and sight words, Molly puts an emphasis on their lack of confidence. In contrast, her words suggest that she believes good readers are usually more confident and are willing to take risks, which is an important disposition in learning in general and in learning to read in particular.

Problems inhibiting the progress of struggling readers

Molly described her beliefs about problems inhibiting the progress of struggling readers through the following words:

> ...No follow up at home, like if there's, you have some parents who read with their kids every night or have them read to their siblings...Or if they don't. Like that would be an ideal family situation but you know, sometimes at home, there may not even be any books at home for kids, like appropriate levels for them...Oh, maybe no individualized instruction at school. Teachers, I think it's important to find time to work with each individual child on their weaknesses. But if you have a teacher who doesn't make the time or doesn't have the time, I guess, I don't know. I think there's always the time that could be made for that but if there's none of that, then you can't really meet those needs. (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

This statement raises some interesting issues that are worth pointing out. First, Molly is convinced that the lack of a rich literate home environment--presence of appropriate reading materials and parents reading to their kids or siblings reading--slows

down the learning to read process for many students. This conviction seems to be in line with Molly's own childhood reading experience, which I briefly described earlier. Second, Molly believes that the lack of one-on-one attention during formal instruction contributes to reducing the chance of struggling readers to make any progress. As such, one can say that she recognizes a role for both school and home in helping children learn to read. Finally, the above statement illustrates how committed Molly is to making time to provide assistance to students who need it the most.

Effective instructional strategies to accelerate reading performance

During our first interview Molly indicated that prior to the internship she had assumed that first grade teachers--who are under lots of pressures to get children to read-- were doing the hard work. In other words, Molly assumed that reading instruction would be easier in second grade. However, she had had a "big eye opener" coming into her second grade classroom placement. As she said, "...we have some kids that came into us this year who didn't, weren't very strong readers. So I'm seeing the importance of using so many different skills and strategies to get them to learn."

It appears that as a result of working early on in her second grade classroom with kids who could not read, Molly had come to realize the importance of using different instructional strategies, some of which are described below.

> I think, like I just mentioned individualized instruction. So you know exactly where the kids are coming from, what they know, what they can do, what they're comfortable with, what they need to work on like decoding skills with them or comprehension. Most effective strategies... oh, just to kind of keep them reading, encouraging them to keep reading and working on it, and giving them material that's at their level, not something that's totally way above them so that they feel like they're stupid or something. That's the worst thing... (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

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Three key strategies stand out from this statement. The first one is using one-on-one instruction to get to know each child as an individual learner in order to determine background knowledge, strengths and limitations as well as set new goals. Although Molly did not use the term assessment, it is evident that she was referring to the use of informal assessment in an individualized context so as to inform reading instruction and help students move forward. The second strategy is that of providing positive reinforcement to students in order to keep them going. The third strategy is making sure that reading materials are appropriate to students' needs; and by doing so, giving students opportunities to feel successful as opposed to failing all the time. Both of these strategies (the second and the third) speak to Molly's awareness of the importance of the affective dimension of reading, given that improvement of students reading achievement often improves their self-concept. As Gipe (2002) points out, "The classroom teacher must make every effort to help students feel good about themselves, to feel successful, especially if they have difficulty with academic subjects such as reading."

Ineffective strategies to accelerate reading performance

Molly's ideas regarding the least effective reading instruction are best articulated as follows:

> I would have, the first thing that came to my mind would be basal reading, just strictly that's all that reading is-the whole class reads out of the basal because then you have some kids who can't even read up to that level...So then they're kind of, they fall through the cracks, so to say...That's what sticks out the most. I will probably add more onto that as we talk. I know there's got to be more but I can't think of it now. (1st Interview with Molly, November 11, 1999)

Several points are worth mentioning here. First, this statement reveals Molly's awareness of the fact that using only the basal reading would not reach all students in the classroom, simply because it does not cater for the needs of individual students. In other

words, her statement suggests that she is sensitive and committed to making sure that all students experience success in learning in general, and in reading, in particular. Second, Molly's words indicate that she was critical of the effectiveness of basal reading to reach struggling readers; an issue which became even more apparent during her lead teaching in the spring semester. Finally, through her awareness of the limitation of the basal reading, Molly gave a sense that as a teacher candidate, she realizes that there are problems associated with limiting oneself to only one instructional approach.

So far, I discussed Molly's early conceptions of literacy instruction--particularly reading instruction--which indicate that one-third through her internship, she viewed literacy as going beyond reading words to comprehend and create meaning. Although she did not include visual literacy in her conceptualization of literacy, she expressed an awareness and understanding of the connection between the four traditional language arts, namely reading, writing, listening and speaking. Furthermore, her conceptions reflect some understanding of the differences between good and poor reading behaviors. I also examined her keen sensitivity and realization that using appropriate reading materials, making time and using a variety of instructional strategies (e.g., individualized instruction, providing positive reinforcement and opportunities to be successful) are necessary in order to meet the diverse needs of her students with respect to learning to read.

The foregoing seems to have resulted from the presence of several internal and external conditions. To start with, the fact that Molly grew up in a rich literate home environment and learning to read seemed to have come easily to her appeared to have made her more sensitive to the needs of those students who are not as fortunate as she

was. She also had an emerging fascination with helping those who are struggling in the learning to read. This was a fascination, which Molly fully realized once she was given opportunities--during the first two months of her internship--to work with second graders. Furthermore, these same opportunities or external conditions appeared to have helped her realize the importance of using different instructional strategies. Another external conditions seemed to have been the influence of Sue, which Molly referred to during our interview.

I will pay close attention to Molly's early conceptions and dispositions as I attempt to portray her learning about reading instruction throughout her internship journey. Doing so will help me understand her evolving construction of ideas, concepts, strategies and dispositions pertaining to reading instruction, and the internal and external conditions assisting her along the away, as in the case of the three events to come.

The learning centers experience: The big eye-opener

This section provides a description of how Molly went from having an intellectual resistance to learning centers to being an enthusiastic advocate for using them, because she realized that they facilitate students' learning. In doing so, it shows that being exposed to learning centers and learning about them marked a turning point for the rest of her journey, as she gradually became more deliberate about using centers. The following table previews the transformative process Molly went through regarding the use of learning centers as an instructional framework and sets the stage for the organization of discussions related to this learning episode.

Table 2. Summary of the transformation of Molly's ideas about learning centers

Time Period	Focus
Friday, September 10th, 1999	Molly and Sue meet to set up chart centers and to talk about the rationale and the process
Week of September 13-17, 1999	Molly participates and witnesses the enactment of the learning centers
Weekend (September 17-19)	Molly spends part of the weekend contemplating the idea of learning centers
Wednesday, September 22, 1999	Molly writes a reflective journal entry on the idea of learning centers
November 1999	Molly uses centers during her legend unit
December—January 1999	Centers are put aside in Sue and Molly's classroom
February—March 1999	Molly decides to bring learning centers back with some innovative ideas

Molly's exposure to using learning centers

Learning centers are "permanent or temporarily arranged areas in which students can work individually, with a partner, or in small groups in order to engage in activities such as "exchanging ideas, rehearsing a play, reading, writing, conducting research, or practicing a newly learned skill" (Gipe, 2002, p.29). From the outset, it must be pointed out that Molly was already familiar with the idea of using centers as an instructional approach prior to her internship experience. In fact, while she was a senior in spring 1999 semester, Molly visited Sue, as part of the process of finding a placement for her internship experience. During her visit, she had the opportunity to witness learning centers and to even talk about them with Sue. One idea Molly vividly remembered from their conversation is that according to Sue, during center time she would not usually go around the room, as this was a time for students to practice and work on their own (1st interview with Molly, November 11, 1999).

At the beginning of her internship, Sue reminded Molly about the learning

centers she usually incorporates into her classroom each year, about 3 weeks

into the school year, "after the students get a handle on correct classroom

behavior and routines." Learning centers in Sue's classroom lasts on average 40 to 45

minutes and involve usually some combination of both choice centers and assigned

centers, with a total of six centers. These centers are: (1) Writing (e.g., creative

writing, practicing penmanship), (2) Math, (3) Read Around the Room, (4) Listening

to audio taped stories, (5) Computer, and (6) Sentence Building. Sue's main goal in

using learning centers is to allow students to practice skills and foster their

independence. Although Molly could appreciate what learning centers had to offer to

students, she did not, at first, show too much excitement about the concept.

> I was hesitant if this is something I would actually pursue in my own classroom in
> the future. Why? Well it simply just seemed like such a lot of work to put into
> something and what if the kids really didn't get much of a benefit from it?
> Wasn't this taking away from teacher instruction that they all need? Wouldn't
> there be too much commotion in the room with people going from center to
> center? I think those questions made me think that centers weren't for me.
> (Molly's journal on learning centers, September 22, 1999)

One can see that at the beginning of her internship Molly had doubts about the

idea of using centers simply because she was not sure if it would be beneficial to

students. In addition, and most importantly, Molly seemed to view instruction time as the

sole property of the teacher, who brings about learning. Therefore, allowing students to

work in small groups would take away from such critical teacher time. Furthermore, the

above statement suggests that Molly was concerned about the teacher being in charge and

effectively managing behavior so that the classroom runs smoothly. It is interesting to

note that this state of mind is a classic illustration of beginning teachers' survival

concerns or stage--worrying about their own personal survival and things getting out of hand (see Fuller, 1969 and also Feiman-Nemser, 1983).

However, meeting with Sue after school, on Friday, September 10, to set up centers for the following week, proved to be the first big eye-opening experience for Molly. During that meeting, Sue and Molly spent their time putting up a center chart on the black board. As they organized the chart they also talked about what would actually happen during center time each morning. The following excerpt from Molly's journal entry gives a sense of the type of conversation that took place and how it impacted her thinking.

> I came to find out that during these times, Sue meets with individual reading groups. How wonderful...After all, it has become quite obvious to me that there is a wide range of reading levels in our room and how can we all read the same thing each day and accommodate all of the various learning needs? Sue's reading program provides opportunities for students to work at a pace that is comfortable to them. We all read the basal together, but in the separate reading groups, they may actually read more difficult literature or less difficult literature based on their reading needs. (Molly's journal on learning centers, September 22, 1999)

It is clear that Molly recognized not only the presence of diverse reading abilities, but also the need to do something about it. As such, talking with Sue--instead of simply observing her--appeared to have made her realize that center time could be the solution to the problem she recognized in the classroom. Indeed, Sue seemed to have engaged Molly in an educative conversation about the rationale, goals and potentialities of learning centers in meeting the needs of diverse learners. The above pedagogical encounter appears to have been a good way to set Molly's mind to witness the enactment of learning centers--she observed students working at centers and worked with some of them on a one-on-one basis--during the period of Monday September 13 through Friday

September 17. This period proved to be filled with great revelations for Molly as evidenced by her own words.

> My opinion of centers has now changed. Yes, they do require a lot of work to set up and change, but if they can help a student understand something, it is worth it! In addition, I spent a lot of the weekend contemplating on the whole idea of centers and came to the conclusion that I was being selfish of my time. I didn't think that centers were "for me" and I was right... They aren't for me. They are for the students who deserve every possible opportunity to learn and if working at a center makes that connection for them, then I should make it happen. I also realized that not every student will need the same amounts of teacher instruction. Hence, during center time, I can meet individual needs by working one-on-one with the kids. What about the commotion? If centers are introduced after the students know the classroom routines, the only commotion there should be is that of learning taking place, and who can disagree with that? (Molly's journal on learning centers, September 22, 1999)

This excerpt and the previous one (from Molly's journal on learning centers) seem to illustrate that early on during her internship, Molly engaged in some regrouping, i.e., taking a stock of what she was appropriating. As above excerpt reveals, Molly went from resisting the idea of learning centers to fully embracing their use in the classroom, simply because they worked for her students. This suggests that Molly was not simply looking for what worked for her, but rather what would best facilitate her students' learning. In other words, Molly's comments say something about her dispositions, i.e., going for whatever it takes so that students can learn.

Another important point worth mentioning is the change in Molly's conception of instructional time. After an active participation during center time in her second grade classroom, she had come to realize that centers can actually increase instructional time in the sense of creating more learning opportunities for students through individualized and small group work. Subsequently, she also seemed to have begun to think about learning and management in an important and interconnected manner. That is to say that there was

a shift from looking at logistical management in isolation and from the perspective of the teacher's survival to looking at it in terms of students' learning. This shift is critical, for when a novice teacher's response is based upon the need to survive complex classroom activities instead of the need to push students forward on a worthwhile task, that response will not be productive in fostering learning (Feiman and Floden, 1980; Feiman-Nemser and Floden, 1986; Kennedy, 1991).

Enabling conditions: Molly's learning and Sue's role through the Vygotsky Space

Besides highlighting what Molly learned during the learning center experience, it is important to understand the conditions that facilitated such learning. As discussed earlier, Molly went into her internship with some dispositions including her eagerness to learn, her reflective attitude (e.g., asking insightful questions), her sensitivity to and emerging fascination with doing whatever is necessary to help those who are struggling in the learning-to read-process. These dispositions seemed to have helped her to take stock of what she was witnessing with respect to learning centers. These internal conditions, along with the scaffolding Sue provided, appeared to have made Molly realize what learning centers have to offer to students' learning.

A close-up look at the learning center experience indicates that Molly's learning and enabling conditions seem in line with the "Vygotsky space", a social constructivist learning model developed by Harre (1986, p.121-22) and adapted by Gavelek (1991) (see also Gavelek & Raphael, 1996). This space is a visual representation of the Vygotsky's theory (see Figure 1.1), which depicts any high order psychological process as being learned first in the public domain where it is used socially by more knowledgeable members of a community and made visible to the learners. Through social interactions

within the public domain individuals are then in a position to internalize, i.e., to adopt

and adapt what was observed and then use it privately. According to this model, high

order learning occurs through four processes--*appropriation, transformation, publication,*

and conventionalization.

Figure 1.1 The Vygotsky Space

Public

|

Conventionaliztion

Individual **Publication** IV I **Appropriation** **Social**

II II

Transformation

|

Private
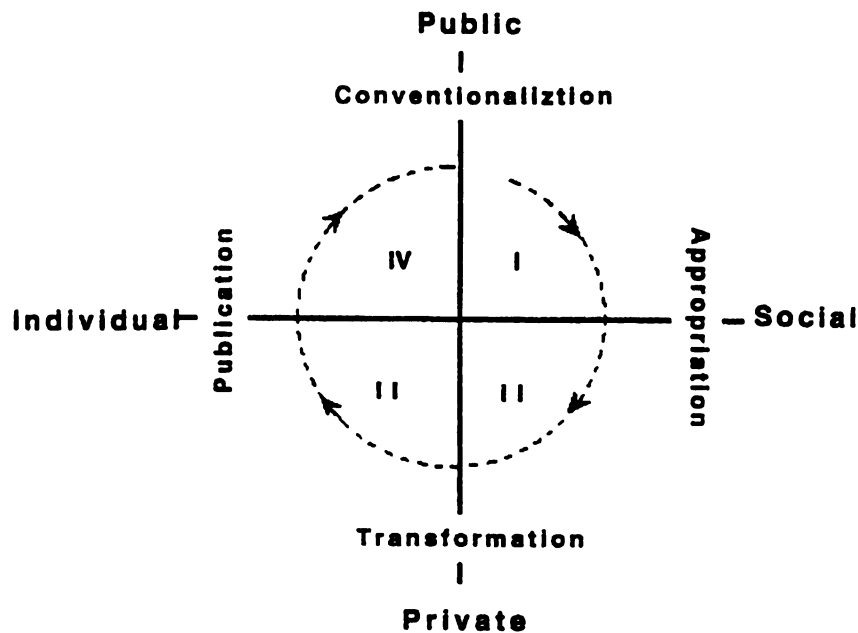
Adapted from Model by Harre (1986)
(Gavelek, 1991)

The *appropriation* process has to do with how learners are initially introduced to

strategies, concepts and ways of thinking in the social context of classroom learning and

how they use them in ways quite similar to what was observed in the public discourse

(Raphael and Hiebert, 1996). Through a gradual process of scaffolding--participating in

and talking about the behind the scene work--Sue helped Molly appropriate concepts and

strategies related to learning centers. Organizing together the center chart, and talking

about the rationale and what goes in during center time is a true example of how through

joint participation in activities authentic to teaching, the mentor and the novice develop

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shared understandings about what the meaning and purposes of these activities, and the novice gradually internalizes ways of knowing, problem solving and acting needed to carry them out (Feiman-Nemser & Beasley, 1997).

According to the conceptualization of the Vygotsky space, such internationalization or *transformation* of strategies and concepts takes place in the private domain and is therefore invisible. However, through *publication*--learners make their learning public--one can get a sense of transformations that have occurred (Raphael and Hiebert, 1996). Molly made her transformation--understanding and internalization of the rationale and strategies relative to learning centers--public at two levels. First, she shared her journal entries with both her Liaison and me, revealing her disposition to reflect on what she was being exposed to. Second, she used learning centers as a part of her teaching, particularly during the spring semester.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that throughout the rest of her internship, Molly added her own voice to the use of learning centers. First, unlike Sue, Molly decided to move systematically around to different centers to make sure that students are staying on task and also to support those in need (1st interview with Molly, November 11, 1999). I also witnessed this during several instances of classroom observations, including during her guided lead-teaching unit, which will be discussed later on. Second, right before the beginning of her lead-teaching, Molly decided to bring back learning centers into the classroom--learning centers were not used during the period December 1999 through January 2000 although it was unclear to me as to why that was the case. As she told me, she felt that there was a gap for not using centers in the classroom. More importantly, she felt that there was a need to use centers again so that she could have

more opportunities to give individual attention to students who needed it the most (2nd Interview with Molly, February 3, 2000). Lastly, during her lead teaching, Molly created learning center evaluation forms for students to fill out to make sure they were staying on task instead of goofing around. The above changes or ideas that Molly brought in will be discussed in more detail later on, especially when taking a close look at her journey during the spring 2000 semester. For the time being, suffice it to say that these changes are congruent with the *conventionalization* process, within the Vygotsky space, which occurs when "transformed and publicized ideas become part of the conventional conversation in the classroom (Raphael and Hiebert, 1996).

As explained above, being exposed to and learning about learning centers through joint participation, was a big eye-opener for Molly in terms of getting new insights into instructional time and the benefits of individualized and small group work. The above experience had shown that Molly went from resisting the concept of using centers to adopting it because it worked for her students. A similar transformation occurred when she was exposed to the idea of pulling students out during spelling tests.

As discussed earlier, Molly came into her internship with some significant dispositions conducive to learning teach. These dispositions include her eagerness to learn, her reflective attitude (e.g., asking insightful questions), her sensitivity to and emerging fascination with doing whatever is necessary to help those who are struggling in the learning-to read-process. It is apparent from the learning center episode and the upcoming spelling episode that these dispositions enabled her to better appraise--from a student's point of view--the benefits of instructional strategies she observed and implemented at the beginning of her internship experience.

Pulling out students during spelling test

When I went for my second classroom observation (November 4, 1999), I witnessed a spelling test during which Sue would, pretty slowly, read out loud compound words (e.g., up-on) which students had to write down. She broke each spelling word down into its unit of pronunciation, illustrated it in a sentence before asking students to write it down. At the same time, in the far right hand corner, as you enter the classroom, Molly was reading, very slowly (much slower than Sue), the same spelling words to a small group of four students. It was in fact that same day that I found out that these students were among the five struggling readers in Sue and Molly's classroom. As my focus kept switching from Sue to Molly, it became apparent to me that they were working on increasing students' phonemic awareness, which is an insight into how oral language works--the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds or phonemes in spoken words (IRA, 1998 & Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 1998, 2001).

As soon as the spelling test was over, I had the chance to speak with Molly, who informed me that at the beginning of the school year, she was not thrilled about pulling students out. Although she did not explain why, considering her early conception of instructional time (see Molly's journal entries on learning centers) and sensitivity, it seemed to me that she was simply not keen on the idea of pulling or singling out some students during what was supposed to be a whole class instructional time. However, during our post-instructional conversation, Molly indicated that she had begun to see the value of pulling students out in order to give them instructional support. Indeed, she brought to my attention the fact that she thought these five students were beginning to

spell words that were being broken down for them; and as a result, their "self-esteem was being boosted" (Field notes, November 4, 1999). This growth is congruent with the literature, which suggests that phonemic awareness is the single best predictor of success in learning to read--it provides children with an easier time learning how to relate phonemes to graphemes (written symbols representing individual phonemes) and learning to read and spell (IRA 1998, Center for the improvement of Early Reading Achievement, 1998, 2001, Ehri & Nunes, 2002).

Enabling conditions

Pulling out students during spelling tests made Molly realize the value of "breaking things down even simpler," a concept which she learned from Sue (first interview, November 11, 1999), as being critical in helping struggling students. She went from a general stance of not being keen on pulling students out to break words down into units of pronunciation to seeing the positive impacts of this activity on increasing phonemic awareness. Similar to the learning centers experience, the opportunities to observe and work with second graders coupled with the disposition to reflect on it and her sensitivity toward struggling students seemed to have helped Molly gradually learn to pay more attention to their learning. This focus was further demonstrated through a math lesson debriefing session (between Molly and Sue) that is discussed below.

Tell me what you guys thought about the math lesson

Molly reflects upon her lesson

In addition to underlining her learning through working with students, this debriefing session exhibits Molly's willingness to reflect and learn from constructive feedback. Furthermore, I included this third episode because it was a significantly

unplanned learning experience that I witnessed. By unplanned I mean that I, and probably

Sue as well, were not expecting this session.

During lunchtime on Thursday, November 4, 1999) Molly was eager to hear from

both Sue and me about the first lesson of her math unit (the lesson for the day centered

around an activity called "guess what my rule is"), which she taught earlier in the

morning. Although Molly wanted feedback from both of us, being the researcher, I ended

up participating mainly as an observer as Molly and Sue engaged in what appeared to be

a lively educational conversation about her lesson. This conversation is divided into two

segments as follow.

> **Note: M =Molly; G = Gaston; S = Sue; [ ] = Note**
> M: So do you have a minute? Tell me what you guys thought about the math lesson.
> G: Oh, the math lesson? Let's see. [I was caught by surprise and did not know what to say; I had just finished a pre-instructional conversation with Molly about her legend unit and I had no idea that this was coming].
> [Molly was looking at both Sue and me and jumped right into her self-critique].
> M: Well, first let me tell you what…I have. If you have a couple of minutes
> G: Sure, Yeah, I have a couple of minutes.
> M: First of all, the very first thing I put [Molly jotted down some self-evaluation notes and questions during both snack and library times] was that my closure was weak because I knew it was and as soon as I was like, go get your snacks, I was like whoa, I just kind of left them like okay, that's math for today. So I glanced at the clock and realized that we had only 8 minutes for snack and to get ready for the library and then tomorrow's lesson, to kind of make up for how I left that, I'm gonna open by saying or reminding the students where we left off. Like to say attributes are important to look at when sorting data. And today, what I meant to say which I had it right here was to inform them that in the next lesson, we'll be taking a closer look at the data that we collected today.

This first segment of the debriefing speaks to the three intellectual attitudes

of 'open-mindedness', 'whole-heartedness', and 'responsibility'--essential to critical

reflection--that Dewey (1932) presented. First, Molly's initiative to approach her

collaborating teacher and myself about her lesson is a sign that she values what others

have to offer. It shows that she had an "active desire to listen to more sides than one" (Dewey, p.29). Second, the fact that Molly came prepared--with some jotted reflection notes--to fully participate in the post-instructional conversation and was very attentive to Sue's comments, during the entire session, indicates that she was wholehearted. That is to say that she was "giving (her) full attention to the matter at hand", (Feiman-Nemser & Rosaen, 1994). As such, she was willing to take risks and act, unlike many preservice teachers who "express fears of making mistakes, being criticized, disturbing traditions and making changes" (Goodman, 1991). Third, Molly demonstrated that she was intellectually responsible, i.e., she was able and willing to consider consequences of her actions and decisions. While Dewey referred mainly to projected positions and actions, in Molly's case, being intellectually responsible had to do with examining certain effects of some of the teaching moves she made during her lessons and putting on the table what she planned to do in the future. For instance, her words suggest that she was well aware of the importance of closure during instruction. She appeared prepared to bring closure to her lesson for the day, but was unable to do so according to her original plan because of the time pressure. This seemed to have caused her to worry that she might have ended the lesson without her students realizing the importance of attributes when looking at data. As a result, she planned to make up for how she 'left off' the following day. In doing so, Molly demonstrated that she was able to think-on-action, i.e., to engage in some self-analysis of her reflection-in-action so as to pinpoint aspects of her performance, which might need improvements or some revisiting (see Schon, 1987). Furthermore, the very fact of considering the consequences of her decisions and planning to take actions to address them acknowledges that Molly was learning to focus more and more on her

students' learning. I interpret this to mean that instead of simply worrying about the schedule, she was mostly concerned about what her students were getting out of the lesson.

The next segment of the debriefing illustrates the scaffolding role of Sue in bringing Molly's attention to the importance of being flexible when enacting a lesson plan as well as in highlighting what she did to keep the students engaged during the lesson.

Sue: Just remember that the lesson plan is just-you don't do everything in your lesson plan. And if you don't get to something, you've got tomorrow. But sometimes the kids don't need it [Molly was carefully listening and nodding her head].

M: Uh, uh.

S: I think they had, I think they had plenty--They understood, it wasn't a bad ending. It just wasn't the ending you planned. And most teaching is, happens far away from the plan.

S: It does. You won't end up on the exact note that you want every time-- [Molly was carefully listening and nodding her head].

M: Okay.

S: And they were getting distractible and so you kind of—you picked a good time to stop. You knew that they were getting wiggly and...

M: So I had no idea... like I told Sue this lesson might only take ½ hour, I don't know. And it didn't, but and I knew that they were really into it, it seemed like.

S: They were very active for as long as you went.

M: Yeah, I was surprised.

S: That was surprising. But you know why it went? Because you had them actively involved--everybody was getting up and moving around.
        If you would've been explaining it from up on the overhead, you would've lost them 20 minutes earlier.

S: That was terrific. [Molly was carefully listening and nodding her head].
[At the end of the debriefing, Molly asked both Sue and me to pay attention to the types of questions she asked students when teaching; an issue which she raised again during an intern study group session that I attended on December 15, 1999].
(Debriefing Session, November 4, 1999)

The above segment, which took the form of a dialogue between two willing

participants--the coach and the student--illustrates that Sue used some of the reflective coaching techniques (e.g., listening, telling, advising, and questioning) advocated by Schon (1987) to help Molly reflect upon her teaching and learn about teaching. After listening to her opening self-analysis, Sue advised Molly on some of the intricacies of planning and enacting lessons. She reassured her that lessons don't always go according to plans and that there is a need to be flexible. Such a reassurance was especially timely for Molly who admitted to being "very scheduled"; a disposition which I shall come back to next, when discussing her legend unit. She also mentioned that the kids understood the concepts Molly was trying to cover, without making clear what evidence made her think that--this is an instance where it seems that telling by showing would have been more effective than simply telling. Furthermore, Sue pointed out that the way Molly ended the lesson was not a bad one; informing her that she used a good judgment in stopping the lesson at the right moment, since the students were getting distracted. In doing so, it seems that she was also attempting to make Molly realize the importance of being in tune with students. In addition, Sue appeared to have effectively brought to Molly's attention what she did in order to keep them actively engaged during the lesson.

Finally, the fact that Molly asked both Sue and me to pay attention to her questioning techniques is an indication that Molly was not only concerned about what she says, but about how she said it; a disposition that seems rare in today's society. An unknown French philosopher argues that asking questions, or at least good questions, is more difficult than answering them. This leads me to speculate that maybe Molly was aware of this reality, hence her commitment to working on her questioning skills. Most importantly, she seemed aware of the fact that asking the right questions can indeed

promote students' learning and thinking. This focus on student's learning suggests to me that the learning center experience and other work with students were yielding substantive fruits; signs of Molly's learning were carrying over to different subjects, including reading, as the rest of this case study will demonstrate.

Enabling conditions

The foregoing suggests that Molly was able to appropriate about some ideas and concepts about teaching (e.g., the importance of being flexible and in tune with the learner) during the debriefing session she had with Sue. Similar to both the learning centers experience and the spelling episode, such appropriation seems to have been partially made possible thanks to both some internal conditions and external conditions. On the one hand, Molly's eagerness to learn (including being open to constructive feedback), her disposition to reflect and her sensitivity to and emerging fascination with helping struggling students, appeared to have allowed her to take the initiative to get some constructive feedback in order to better facilitate students' learning. On the other hand, Molly seemed to have benefited from some external conditions, namely the spontaneity and availability of Sue and her mentoring skills, to make the most out of her reflection on action. Although the debriefing session was unplanned, some of the mentioned-scaffolding moves (e.g. listening, telling, advising, and questioning) reiterate Sue's ability to help preservice teachers think carefully about their own practice and find ways to improve it. As illustrated in later sections, Molly continued to benefit from this ability throughout the rest of her clinical journey in Sue's classroom.

Summary and conclusion

This chapter illustrates noteworthy examples of appropriation of concepts, ideas and strategies during the first two months of Molly's internship. There is evidence of this appropriation through the conceptions of literacy provided and the three learning episodes discussed, which revealed that some of Molly's content knowledge (CK) and pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and dispositions appeared to have been reinforced and/or developed, as summarized below.

1) Content Knowledge (CK):

- A fairly broad-based conception of literacy--which she attributed to the influence of her collaborating teacher. Although she did not include visual literacy in her conceptualization of literacy, the chapter indicated that one-third through her internship, Molly expressed an awareness and understanding of literacy as going beyond reading to comprehend and create meaning.

2) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK):

- An awareness and understanding of many of the characteristics of good and struggling readers.

- A keen realization that different instructional strategies (e.g., individualized instruction, providing positive reinforcement and opportunities to be successful, breaking words down to increase students' phonemic awareness; using appropriate reading materials) must be used in order to meet the diverse needs of students in her classroom.

- A deeper understanding of the 'what' and 'how' of learning centers (see learning centers episode); and some awareness and understanding of the need to be flexible when planning and delivering lessons (see debriefing session with Sue).

3) Dispositions

- Emerging sign of looking at teaching from the learner's point of view--being able to realize the benefits of specific instructional framework or procedures (e.g., learning centers, breaking out sounds) for students.

- A disposition to reflect upon and appraise existing instructional practices, including her own (e.g. debriefing session with Sue).

- An increased commitment to doing whatever is necessary to help all students succeed.

The above appropriation seems to have been made possible by interaction between internal and external conditions. On the one hand, the background information provided at the beginning of this chapter showed that Molly came into her internship context with some internal conditions that seemed to play a pivotal role in her learning. These internal conditions are summarized as follows.

- Sensitivity towards struggling students: the fact that Molly grew up in a rich literate home environment and learning to read seemed to have come easily to her appeared to have made her more sensitive to the needs of those students who are not as fortunate as she was. She came with an emerging fascination with helping those who are struggling in the learning to read.

- A willingness to absorb as much as possible and being receptive to feedback: Molly came into the internship feeling unprepared to teach reading and ready to engage right away in knowledge construction with respect to reading instruction;

- A commitment to helping all students succeed by getting them excited and reaching out to them (see Molly's teaching philosophy); and

- A disposition to reflect upon and appraise existing instructional practices, including her own.

The above dispositions constituted key pieces of information that helped me to make sense of the three learning episodes (the learning centers experience, the spelling activity, and the math lesson debriefing session) discussed in this chapter. Indeed, the discussion of these episodes suggested that these dispositions, coupled with being placed in a collaborative context, allowed Molly to successfully engage in collaborative activities, experiential learning, reflection and self-examination--the types of field-based opportunities that are advocated in constructivist teacher education (Kaufman, 1996; Kroll & LaBosky, 1996). In all three learning episodes there is evidence of meaningful interactions between external and internal conditions. Throughout all three episodes, Molly encountered opportunities to observe and/or work with her students and to reflect

upon her experiences, in collaboration with Sue who provided sustained and worthwhile scaffolding. Molly's reflections acknowledge her ability not only to appraise instructional practices she had been exposed to, but to analyze the strengths and limitations of her own teaching. In doing so, these episodes also reinforced her commitment to absorbing as much as possible in order to find what works for students. This is a commitment that would remain prevalent throughout the rest of Molly's internship.

The dispositions, concepts and strategies developed and/or reinforced during the first two months of Molly's internship guided my thinking as I examined her literacy unit on Native American legend throughout the fall guided lead-teaching period. In other words, I came to understand how these internal conditions constituted a key piece of information that would help me, in the next chapter, to make sense of how she went about appropriating and synthesizing knowledge during the design and implementation of her literacy unit.

Chapter 4

MOLLY'S LITERACY UNIT ON NATIVE AMERICAN LEGENDS: FROM KWL TO WHISPERING FAWN

"I was pulling it together and kind of trying to make sense of it. Still at this point... I don't think I felt really confident until around February". (3rd Interview, May 30, 2000)

The above statement, made while reflecting upon her clinical journey captures the essence of Molly's effort to synthesize knowledge during the second third of her internship experience. As such, this chapter centers around one learning episode (Molly's literacy unit on Native American legends, which stands as critical in helping me make sense of how she went about appropriating and synthesizing knowledge during the fall guided lead-teaching period, the internal and external conditions helping her along the way, and what she constructed. As mentioned in chapter one, synthesizing knowledge involves a continuum of evolving thinking ranging from regrouping, i.e., taking a stock of knowledge being appropriated, to adapting and transforming, or weaving together existing knowledge leading to refinement, enhanced understanding and/or the creation development of new ideas, concepts and strategies. The fall guided lead-teaching period is a time when interns are no longer observers; instead it is a time for them to get their feet wet before undertaking full time teaching responsibilities in the second semester of their clinical experience. It is a period that allows them to design and implement two units (literacy & math) mostly on their own--with some input from collaborating teachers, seminar instructors, and MSU liaisons. Interns are given a formal opportunity to try to make sense of what they have been learning during course work--e.g., hearing about, reading about, or witnessing--in the context of their own teaching. This is a

process that is intended to help them to recognize the big picture in teaching. By the same token, they typically begin to see the big picture and to discover a teaching identity.

Besides the fact that this unit on Native American legends was part of Molly's guided lead teaching experience and a requirement of TE 802 ("The Role of Writing in the Literacy Curriculum"), I decided to focus on it for various reasons that are discussed below. It is important to point out that these reasons reflect connections to several internal conditions, discussed in chapter 3, which I will draw upon in order to understand how Molly was synthesizing knowledge during the design and implementation of her literacy unit.

- First, Sue played an important scaffolding role, including helping Molly make her legend unit more interesting, i.e., more engaging for her students--a goal that would become even more apparent during the lead teaching in the spring semester.

- Second, this unit is particularly interesting to me in light of the way it integrated reading and writing. This is important because of the critical connection between the reading and writing processes, which feed off of each other (for a review, see Tompkins, 1997, 2004). This connection is also part of the MSU's Teacher Education Program view of literacy instruction and can be seen as external condition since it is a learning expectation.

- Third, the unit reflects Molly's struggle to synthesize how use of literature, teaching literature content, and writing all fit together.

- Fourth, the unit reflects Molly's ability to implement a variety of authentic assessment strategies, allowing her to be flexible and adjust instruction. The notion of flexibility is an internal condition, which Molly appeared to have started to develop during the first two months of her internship, as discussed in chapter 3. Flexibility can also be considered an external condition in that professional knowledge needs to be used flexibly in relation to particular situations and contexts--an MSU Teacher Education Program expectation.

- Fifth, the unit serves as further evidence of Molly's sensitivity and ability to help all students--the quality of her questions and the efforts she made to adjust instruction in order to meet the needs of struggling students. This indicates a further development of the PCK and dispositions discussed in chapter 3.

- Finally, but not the least important, the unit further reinforces Molly's ability and commitment with respect to reflecting upon her own teaching--these are internal conditions that were discussed in chapter 3.

Since this unit was a requirement of TE 802 Reflection and Inquiry in Teaching Practice: Writing and Children's Literature, it appears relevant to give a brief overview of this course in order to situate the context of this learning episode. TE 802 is a seminar that builds on interns' senior year experience with literacy instruction by focusing on the teaching of writing and the uses of literature.

> Interns will consider their own experiences as writers and students of writing, how to support as writers, and how to integrate literature and writing. Interns will also undertake the analysis, adaptation, and planning of curriculum and teaching in language arts for specific students, classroom, and school context of their school placement. Interns will develop unit plans to be implemented during the Guided Lead Teaching, featuring writing, reading, and children's literature. This course serves a context for ongoing investigation and study of the practice of teaching in the English language arts and for contending with the dilemmas and challenges interns experience in their own teaching. (Elementary Intern Handbook, 1999-2000)

This learning episode has three main parts. The first part provides an overview of the conceptualization and planning of the unit. The second part focuses on the enactment of the unit--descriptions and discussions of lessons that I observed and summaries of other lessons. It also includes Molly's reflection on each of her lessons in terms of how it went, what she would do differently, and things that still puzzled her (a requirement of TE 802). The last part is an assessment of the unit, which includes not only Molly's reflection upon the implementation of the unit and what she learned, but also some of my reflections on what I witnessed and/or discussed, particularly Sue's role. Throughout the description and discussion of this learning episode special attention will be given to Molly's ability to meet the needs of struggling students--i.e., how she is synthesizing knowledge about ways to scaffold their learning.

Conceptualizing and planning the unit:

I had the opportunity to engage in a pre-instructional conversation with Molly

four days prior to the beginning of her unit. I was mostly interested in the goals of the

unit and also in how Molly designed it, as well as some concerns she might have had.

The most important concepts in the legend unit

According to Molly, the most important concepts she thought her students should

learn was what a legend is, i.e., "an explanation of something that has occurred in nature,

and what is needed to create a legend, like creativity, nature-based thinking" (Pre-

instructional conversation, November 4, 1999). She also wanted her students to become

interested in and respect other cultures and to enable them to acknowledge how different

cultures, specifically Native Americans, used their heritage as a way to expose their

literature and ideas to others. Finally, Molly wanted her students to realize that it is

possible to "learn a lot about other people by listening to what they have to say, by

speaking to, and reading and writing about them" (Pre-instructional conversation,

November 4, 1999). The following table highlights specific lesson objectives designed to

help Molly reach her goals and sets the stage for the organization of discussions related to

the implementation of the unit, as discussed in upcoming sections.

Table 3. Summary of specific lesson objectives for the unit on Native American legends
(from Molly's written plans)

Specific lessons	Specific Lesson Objectives
1. Introduction: Why are legends so important to us? (45 minute-lesson)	1. Students will identify what they are thankful for. 2. Students will transfer their ideas to paper. 3. Students will show respect for their surroundings.
2. What is the Importance of Retelling a Story? (1 hour-lesson)	1. Students will use listening skills to create a sequence of events from a story. 2. Students will find personal strengths in themselves and others. 3. Students will learn how to face adversity 4. Students will acquire an understanding of heritage.
3. The Legend of Sleeping Bear (1 hour-Lesson)	1. Students will compile a list of genre characteristics. 2. Students will use analytical thinking skills to answer questions @ a video.

4. Brainstorming Legend Ideas (30 minute-Lesson)	1. Students will demonstrate their understanding of what makes a story a legend. 2. Students will generate ideas of possible legend ideas or characters
5. Main Ideas for Legends (45 minute-lesson)	1. Students will demonstrate their understanding of what makes a story a legend. 2. Students will generate ideas of possible legend ideas.
6. Working on legends (several sessions)	Students will show group collaboration skills while working on their legends.
7. Powwow (1 hour-lesson)	Students will participate in a Powwow and read their legends to their fellow classmates, and acquire an understanding for how others may celebrate an accomplishment.

A three-step designing process

When designing her legend unit, Molly took three important steps-- (1) finding a topic, (2) planning alone and (3) planning with Sue. As Molly was looking for a topic for her literacy unit, she did not hesitate to ask Sue about the kind of theme she usually focuses on during the month of November. It is important to note at this point that, without getting into details about the kinds of things she does, Sue informed Molly that she tends to focus on Native American folktales (Pre-instructional conversation, November 4, 1999). Although I was not there and did not have access to Sue's thinking, my assumption about the fact that she refrained from giving any specifics, is that she probably wanted Molly to do some homework on her own. This assumption seems to be in line with Sue's mentoring practices, which she partially described in the following statement. "...She [Molly] kind of goes home and thinks things out and then she brings them back to me and it's like I give her ideas and she takes them and fine tunes them and then I critique those and fine tune them more" (1st Interview with Sue, November 11, 1999). This type of scaffolding can be characterized as a gradual release of responsibility (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) which is needed in order to guide the learner in his/her zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978).

With the information received from Sue in mind, Molly decided to create a unit on

Native American legends, by first engaging in a solo thinking and planning process,

which is partly described below.

> ...My first original plan was first, do KWL on the board, what they know about folktales or legends. You know, what they know, what they want to learn. Then, I was gonna read a folktale to them and then point out the characteristics. (Pre-instructional conversation, November 4, 1999)

This description suggests that Molly initially thought about her unit with a focus on

a teaching format--KWL--she was familiar and comfortable with. The KWL (Ogle, 1986)

is a simple instructional procedure that can be used with any content or grade level,

individually or with groups. It is designed to help students combine new information with

prior knowledge and to develop active reading of expository. The letters K, W, and L

stand for What We Know, What We Want to learn, and What We Learned. Teachers

introduce a three-column KWL chart at the beginning of a theme or unit to require

students to identify what is already known about the subject (first column) and what they

want to learn (second column). Toward the end of the theme, students are required to

complete the last column of the chart with what they have learned.

Despite her intention to plan her unit in a way that facilitates students' active

knowledge construction, Molly did not seem to make any connection between the KWL

approach and her reading of a folktale and pointing out its characteristics to her students.

Instead, her thinking revealed a linear and transmission model of teaching, aimed at

enlisting her students' prior knowledge and what they wanted to learn, and yet not taking

it into account with respect to expanding their knowledge of folktale. It appears that

Molly was at a point where she could accurately explain how to implement the KWL

approach, and yet she was not quite capable or ready to synthesize--weave it into her

thinking about teaching a unit on legends. This suggests to me that being cognizant (knowing the steps) of a given instructional approach cannot necessarily be equated with being able to pull together such knowledge when planning and teaching within the context of a specific topic.

According to Molly, she was not excited after planning the first two lessons of her unit; and she began to worry about whether the unit would be exciting for her students. This provides evidence that Molly was working on making her lessons more interesting and engaging for her students. As a result, Molly took the initiative to seek help from Sue, to draw upon her expertise and wisdom, which engaged both of them in a co-thinking process of redesigning the unit. The statement that follows is a self-reported summary of how her legend unit was collaboratively redesigned.

> I told Sue, I said it doesn't seem very, it just seems boring to me. I said I need help with some more creative ideas…Actually, we were driving into town and she helped come up with ideas…I know a friend who has a headdress. Why don't you come in wearing that, Native American headdress? So she helped me bring in the cool aspects of it, the more exciting and then we played off of each other to expand on those ideas…I said what are some of the legends that you have? And she mentioned the <u>Knots on the Counting Rope</u> and we went to the bookstore actually and read it together there and that's when I said, Sue, <u>we</u> have to read this in front of our kids that way [with an excited voice]. So just from then, I did the sleeping bear lesson, stumbled across that video in another classroom of another intern… And then the intern's collaborating teacher said oh, I have the sleeping bear video and she was like here, you could use that. So then I came back to Sue and I said <u>we</u> should use this, too. And it was perfect timing because Nick Van some[thing]… I can't think of his last name but he was the illustrator for that book, was here just the week before. (Pre-instructional conversation, November 4, 1999)

Several points are worth highlighting here. First of all, the fact that Molly was not herself excited about what she had planned on teaching made her realize that her students would probably not get excited either. I interpret this realization to mean that, as a student of teaching, she is "able to see things from the child's viewpoint" (Van Manen, 1991,

p.193). In other words, Molly is able to put herself in the shoes of her students and think about the impacts of specific learning activities on them. This is a very important disposition to have in teaching for, in my mind, it is a prerequisite to any efforts to bring about meaningful instructional adjustments. This disposition is reminiscent of the internal conditions--looking what excites and works for students--discussed in Molly's teaching philosophy and in the learning centers and spelling episodes (see chapter 3). It is important to highlight this because it shows that the internal conditions developed or reinforced during the first two months of her internship seemed to be influencing Molly's learning throughout the rest of her clinical journey.

Second, despite the lack of an original transcript of the conversation that took place, it can be concluded that, similar to the learning center experience, Molly and Sue jointly participated in an authentic activity aiming at accomplishing a task, in this case, making the unit more creative and interesting. The above description seems to suggest that this joint participation resulted in some learning on the part of Molly. For instance, Molly's suggestion (expressed with excitement) about reading the book in front of the students indicates that she realized or was reminded of the importance of modeling (e.g., reading aloud) good reading behaviors for her students.

Third, there is a shift in focus in the way Molly referred to the legend unit. During her initial idea about the design of the unit, Molly was only talking about what she would do. However, as she engaged in collaborating with Sue, she began saying we (e.g., "... So then I came back to Sue and I said we should use this, too"). Another example of such a shift can be seen when she talked about addressing some of her concerns (e.g., back-up plans for how to present ideas, technology glitches) as follows: "so we'll plan, we'll

probably have to get together this weekend to do that kind of stuff, just to make sure."

This shift speaks to Molly's disposition with respect to seeing teaching as a collaborative enterprise, i.e., team effort, as opposed to a mere solo activity. This was also suggested by Molly's openness to ideas from another collaborating teacher (at her internship site) and sharing them with Sue. This is an important disposition for a novice teacher to have, for good teaching entails exchanging ideas with colleagues. As Van Manen (1991) eloquently stated, "teachers need to be experts at alternative points-of view, perspectives, outlooks, biases, orientations"(p.193).

Finally, although the above description seems to reveal that the co-planning focused primarily on the structural aspect of the legend unit, with very little or no attention given to exploring content by either one of the participants, Sue's own words suggest otherwise.

> She doesn't have a very broad range of literature. She doesn't know many books. So when she chose to focus on Native American legends for her unit, I first got out my books I have on legends and then we went to the bookstore to find others. And so I got her queued in on what we could use to show the children what kind of literature we're using..." And then we talked about the characteristics of something and we're building the unit together (1st Interview with Sue, November 11, 1999).

Sue made similar remarks when reflecting on Molly's first lesson as follows:

> ...She borrowed authentic clothing from a Canadian descendant of a tribe in Southern Canada (Lake Superior). She had to research to make sure it was close to Michigan's culture, not southwest (Arizona, etc.)...Dressing up and getting the children familiar with the culture was a lot of preparation. She asked for lots of clarification and practiced before the kids were involved. (Sue's written reflection on Molly's lesson, November 12, 1999)

Although I do not have the data to describe what was exactly talked about, Sue's words seem to indicate that some attention was given to discussing the books that were read during the co-planning session described above, as well as to clarifying

some content related-matter throughout the unit. These descriptions, along with

Molly's summary of the co-planning session acknowledge Sue's role in assisting

Molly with both exploring content--to increase her content knowledge of children's

literature--and designing learning activities--to develop her pedagogical content

knowledge.

Molly looks ahead with some concerns

The pre-instructional conversation I had with Molly revealed that Molly had some

concerns as she was getting ready to start her unit. One of her concerns had to do with

finding ways to keep her students focused because of their short attention. As she stated:

> ...I don't know if this is typical for all 2nd graders. This is my first time working
> with 2nd graders but their attention spans are very short. So I wanted to
> incorporate as many interesting activities that will keep their attention there. So
> when I'm planning, I think about, you know, I'm going to have, you know, little
> Hillary [one of the struggling readers in the classroom] over here who I know
> after ten minutes is going to be gone...So what can I do to keep her interested? I
> also want to bring in group activities that they can do so it is not just me lecturing
> to them, talking. So more, just in general, with this age kids, I want them
> participating as much as possible. (Pre-instructional conversation, November 4,
> 1999)

This statement further demonstrates Molly's disposition toward looking at

teaching from the point of view of her students, which I discussed earlier. Molly did not

want to incorporate interesting activities just for the sake of doing so; instead, she wanted

to use them to promote an active participation in the learning process on the part of her

students in general, and struggling students in particular. As such, her statement is

consistent with her teaching philosophy, implementing a student-centered pedagogy in

which she clearly indicated that she was not excited about lecturing. Furthermore, this

statement seems to suggest that after two months into her internship Molly had begun to

develop a pretty good knowledge of her students in terms of needs and what might work

best for them. This is important for it acknowledges Molly's disposition and skills with respect to getting to know students, which is a critical component in teaching in general and in teaching reading in particular.

Along with making sure to keep her students actively engaged, Molly was concerned about the fact that she did not know how quickly her students would understand concepts. Her own words best articulate this apprehension:

> ...I don't know if they're gonna really understand this stuff right off. I don't know, I'm a little concerned because, either they could get it really fast and then I'll have to really pick up on my lessons or, you know, re-teaching things. I guess I'm questioning, you know, I need to have, I know I need to have back-up plans for how to present something. (Pre-instructional conversation, November 4, 1999)

A lack of any reference point to give her a sense of how quick or slow her Second graders would grasp legend-related concepts, coupled with her schedule-oriented nature [I'm very scheduled", Pre-instructional conversation, November 4, 1999], caused Molly to be worried about running out of activities. This state of affairs also seems to confirm Molly's lack of awareness of the role the KWL procedure could have played in helping her understand her second graders as learners. However, in order to reach her goals (see pp. 99-100), she knew that she needed to be flexible and come up with some alternative plans to be used, depending on how things would evolve.

The fact that Molly was thinking about conceptual understanding and the need to come up with alternative plans also acknowledges her awareness of the need to monitor both students' learning and her own teaching. Such awareness is further illustrated through the following statement:

> ...I know my first two lessons and then over the weekend, I'll be thinking of my other lessons, more specifically...and then even on Monday night, after I teach my first lesson, it will help me know kind of what they know, if they're grasping it, if I'll need to re-teach anything. (Pre-instructional conversation, November 4, 1999)

Indeed, it is clear that Molly was planning and prepared to engage in some ongoing assessment of students' understanding of concepts so as to help her gauge the pace of the unit and the need to make instructional adjustments accordingly. I interpret this to mean that Molly is aware of the importance and need to use assessment to inform instruction, i.e., to "make assessment instruction's working partner" (Routman, 2003).

Enactment of the unit

Based on her written lesson plans (see table 3, pp. 99-100), self-report and my observations of lesson 1, lesson 2, lesson 4 and lesson 6 (the Powwow), I would say that all of Molly's lessons seemed planned with clear instructions and carefully sequenced activities, with each activity setting the stage for the next one. With the exception of lessons six (students worked extensively on their legends) and seven (The Powwow), all of Molly' lessons consisted of four stages. First, there was an introductory stage during which Molly explained the objective and importance of what was to take place, prepared students to read (e.g., picture walking) and/or did some modeling (e.g., explaining how to play the game operator) followed by some directions given to students. The second stage involved engaging students in whole group activities (e.g., listening to a story followed by discussions, or brainstorming ideas). The third stage required students to do some practice either individually or in small groups, often time during center time. Finally, the fourth and final stage brought closure to each lesson, summing up what was learned or done and helping students to look ahead to the next lesson. It is also important to note that throughout the enactment of the unit a selection of Native American legends were set aside for students to read (either individually or with a partner) sometimes at the end of a lesson and other times during silent reading time.

In the discussion that follows, I give some detailed descriptions of the lessons I observed and some summaries of the ones I did not observe, where I relied on Molly's lesson plan and reflections.

Lesson one: Why are legends so important to us? (Introduction)

The first lesson, which was taught on November 8, 1999, focused on helping students understand what it means to give thanks to something or someone, and in doing so to introduce them to the importance of legends and to help them show respect for their surroundings. The lesson began with Molly entering her classroom dressed as a Native American guest speaker in order to grab students' attention. She invited the students to the carpet (in the reading area) and engaged with them in a short exchange, which went as follows.

Note: M (Molly); S1, S2,... (1 student); SS (Several students); --(Silence);

[ ] (Observations notes).

> M: Good morning boys and girls. My name is Whispering Fawn
> [Students looked excited, several of them discussing if Whispering Fawn was Molly.]
> M: Can you tell me which holiday is coming up?
> S1:   Thanksgiving?
> M: Why do we celebrate Thanksgiving?
> S2:   Because of the Pilgrims.
> M: Any other idea?----I'm going to share with you today a story about   my people giving thanks.
> (Field notes, November 8, 1999)

As evidenced in the above short excerpt, Molly did not content herself with students mentioning Thanksgiving as the upcoming holiday; she tried to push them to think about the reason behind celebrating it. As a pre-reading activity, it seemed to me that Molly's goal was not to go into details about the history of Thanksgiving. Instead, it appeared that she wanted her students to begin thinking about what it means to be

thankful. This probably explains why after receiving only one response ("because of the Pilgrims"), with respect to celebrating Thanksgiving, she decided to tell them the main idea of the story and to start reading the book <u>Giving Thanks</u> she brought in.

Molly's decision to move on, after only receiving one answer, is an illustration of the fact that novice teachers tend to try asking why questions but often lack the ability to probe more deeply. They seem to need to go on with the lesson (survival mode) or perhaps are unsure about how to follow up for more depth. In addition, this could help to explain why Molly asked both Sue and me to pay attention to her questioning techniques while teaching (see debriefing session in chapter 3); this was an indication that she realized that this is something she would need to work on. It also helps make sense of the fact that Molly told me that she wanted to learn to challenge her students, that is, to help them to engage in higher level thinking (first interview with Molly, November 11, 1999).

Molly began reading a story out loud--holding the book up and moving it around so that everybody could see the picture. As she was reading the book, she would stop at times to ask questions about what the people in the book were thankful for. The students were very attentive throughout the reading and their answers were right on target. Molly would also point out some "beautiful illustrations in the book and the nice wording the author used", as part of her strategies to help the students "develop positive attitudes and perceptions" (written plan for lesson #1, November 8, 1999). Asking questions to check comprehension and paying attention to context clues (e.g., illustrations) are both effective comprehension monitoring and repair strategies necessary to the process of becoming a skilled reader/good comprehender (Snow & al, 1998). Thus, it was a good thing to see Molly modeling these reading habits.

When Molly finished reading the story, she made the following statement:

I was hoping that you would pick up some ideas about what my people are thankful for…I want you to think about what you are thankful for and I am going to put them on the board. (Field notes, November 8, 1999)

The students generated a list of things they were thankful for, including cat, puppies, deer, brother, deer, birds, people, Willie, lizards, families, Mother Nature, books. After writing these words on the board, Molly continued dialoguing with her students as illustrated by the following excerpt.

M:	Why are you thankful for your brother?
S1:	He is someone to play with
M:	Why are you thankful for Mother Nature?
S2:	Because it gives us food
M:	Why are you thankful for people?
S3:	Because you would be lonely.
S4:	Yes!
M:	I would be lonely too.
M:	Why are you thankful for your life?
S5:	Because my life is nice
M:	Why are you thankful for books?
S5:	Because you can read.
M:	If you read them do they give you anything?
SS:	Information!
M:	Good! I would like to thank you for being such good listeners. What I want you to do is I am going to give you a piece of paper and have you write what you're thankful for. You can draw a picture to go with it. We'll put them together to have a class book. I wrote on the board "I give thanks for…" [Molly's sentence was written on the board prior to the beginning of the lesson]. I want you to use it to start your sentences.

[Soon after Molly finished giving writing instructions to students Sue added a few words of her own, in a nice and non-threatening manner]

Sue: Boys and girls, as in the Native American story [she was referring to the pictures in the story read by Molly] use lots of natural things when you draw.

[From that point onward, the students kept working quietly at their desk, while Molly, Sue and myself walked around the room occasionally to see how they were doing. Most of them, if not all, were focused writing or attempting to write sentences along with pictures, including family members, pets, trees, the sun.. Just five minutes before lunch Sue praised four students]

Sue: I want to thank this group [she looked in the direction of a group
         composed of two strong students, an average student and a struggling one]
         for putting period at the end of their sentences.
(Field notes, November 8, 1999)

A couple of points are worth noting from the foregoing. First, similar to the early

excerpt on Thanksgiving, Molly pushed her students to think about the rationale for what

they were thankful for. In doing so, she allowed her students to appreciate what was

important in their own lives. I interpret this to mean that, as a pre-service teacher learning

to teach reading, Molly is aware of the need to connect books to students' lives, as

opposed to merely discussing facts from stories in an isolated manner. Second, the fact

that Molly wrote on the board "I give thanks for..." indicates to me that she is well

aware of the importance of modeling good writing and reading behaviors for students,

especially at a young age. Third, Molly's comments about creating a class book speaks to

the importance she attached to giving her students a picture of the end result of their work

and giving them a real audience to write for. This is critical, for when learners, especially

young children, have a concrete image of what they are working toward, it can serve as

an incentive by inspiring and giving them a sense of purpose for learning. This was

indeed the case for Molly's second graders who became excited about the idea of a class

book and were eager to pull out their writing journals. A final point to make with respect

to the idea of turning students' individual writings into a class book is that it is an

indication of Molly's awareness of and commitment to integrating across a variety of

language arts, which I discussed, in detail, below.

As reflected in the selected excerpts, Molly was able to engage her students not

only in reading and writing, but also in speaking, listening, and visually representing.

First, students had a chance to listen to a story ('Giving Thanks') that Molly read to them

and to answer questions. Second, they were given the opportunity to see their own words and a model phrase written on the board and to engage in writing (along with a picture) about what they were thankful for. Third, they were able to talk about why they were thankful as well as to pay attention to what their classmates had to say. As the literature suggests, "reading and writing are not isolated activities; they occur with and in relation to a number of meaning-making experiences that children have" (Tierney and Readence, 2000. P. 199; see also Tierney and Shanahan, 1991; Tierney, 1992). Thus, the interplay of reading, writing, talking, drawing and peer relationship (e.g. listening to and showing respects towards each other) is a critical aspect of literacy instruction that pre-service teachers need to be aware of and learn to implement.

It is also important to acknowledge Sue's comments, which speak to her efforts to scaffold the students as well as to provide some modeling for. From her first observations about using natural things when drawing, it appears that she felt the need to get the students started in terms of the kinds of drawing they could do. This type of assistance is particularly useful for struggling students who oftentimes need a nudge to get them started. Sue's observations seemed to be also an appropriate way to make a connection with a book that was just read to them and to one of the objectives of the unit and the first lesson, i.e. "students will show respect for their surroundings." As for the praises Sue had for some of the students, they served as a way to model good writing for the rest of the class. It also seems to me that they served as a model for Molly, showing her when and how to praise and/or provide feedback to students as they engage in the act of writing. Sue's remarks were made at the end of the lesson--giving students a chance to write down their ideas first without worrying about the mechanics of writing.

Molly's assessment of this lesson indicates that she was very happy with the way things went. As she wrote:

> The students loved meeting Whispering Fawn! It was fun to hear them discuss if Whispering Fawn was Mrs. Sue! The purpose of dressing up was to grab their attention. It worked! They were great listeners and active participants in discussion. Transitioning from reading the book and working on writing their journals went really well. Next time, I might change the introduction by telling them, before I got changed, that a visitor was coming into the room and that we need to be on our best behavior (they were a little rowdy when they first came into the room—as expected though). I was a little nervous about acting as Whispering Fawn. I know next time what to expect and I'll loosen up even more! Nothing really puzzles me about this lesson. It was very straightforward. (Molly's reflection on lesson #2, November 8, 1999)

It is obvious that Molly was very pleased with the students' level of participation during the lesson, which indicated that they were interested in the topic and activities of the day. Molly wanted students to show participation by asking and answering questions in an appropriate manner. Along with the participation level, the most striking point from the above excerpt is that it reinforces Molly's commitment to finding ways to engage her students to the fullest. Her words suggest that she realized that the more she is relaxed during activities such as dressing up as Whispering Fawn, the more she will have her students engaged and excited. In other words, she realized that she would have to learn to be fully immersed in the moment when acting up so as to maximize the effects on students. As Sue stated, "dressing up and pretending to be "Whispering Fawn" was not a "natural" for Molly" (Sue's reflection on lesson #1, November 8, 1999). This also leads me to wonder whether being more relaxed might have allowed her to do more in-depth probing during discussions.

A couple of key ideas, which are extensions of several internal and external conditions discussed in chapter 3, stand out from this first lesson. First, there appeared to

be a reinforcement of Molly's commitment to doing whatever is necessary to engage her students in the learning process (discussed earlier) which came through as she was brave enough by including dressing up and acting up like Whispering Fawn. Second, Molly's disposition to reflect was illustrated in the details she provided in her reflection on the lesson. Third, there seemed to be a reinforcement of Molly's awareness and understanding of the need to connect across a variety of language arts in order to comprehend and create meaning (see chapter 3). Finally, Sue's scaffolding role (discussed earlier) also seemed to come through as she provided some modeling with the comments she made while students were writing.

Lesson two: The importance of retelling a story

The second lesson, which took place on November 9, 1999, focused on helping students understand the importance of retelling a story. This lesson was carefully sequenced; unfolding with several interconnected activities such as listening Molly's childhood tractor story, reading Knots on the Counting Rope (a book by Bill Martin Jr., which tells the story of a grandfather and his blind grandson reminiscing about the boy's birth, his first horse, and an exciting horse race) and making a filmstrip. According to Molly, this lesson was a transition toward talking explicitly about the nature of a legend, as stated in her rationale: "Educate students on the importance of retelling a story. This is a very valuable lesson that will nicely lead into what exactly is a legend" (written plan for lesson #2, November 9, 1999). Before getting into the details of this lesson, it is important to acknowledge that the above rationale speaks to Molly's awareness of the need to look at individual lessons in relation to each other--instead looking at them in isolation--as the unit evolves.

Similar to the first lesson, Molly started this lesson with an attention grabber, i.e.,

the game 'operator'. In order to play the game she had students sit in a circle on the

carpet (in the reading area). As soon as the rules of the game were explained, a student

asked if they could make their own sentences. Molly's response to the student's request

was concise and yet delivered in a sensitive manner: "Actually, I will start the sentence.

We will get to that one later" (Field notes, November 9, 1999). After playing one round

of the game operator Molly attempted to make her students think about why the sentence

changed (the sentence was generated by Molly but I never had the chance to find out

what it was), as follows.

> M: Who has an idea why it changes? Why do you think it changes?
>   [No responses from students who were just staring at Molly]
> M: Do you think that if there were 2 or 3 people it would change as much?
> Ss: No!
> M: Why not?
>   [Again no responses from students]
> M: Because there are so many people to tell it to, someone may have wanted
>   it to be more interesting. I want you to keep that in mind. [Sue was in the
>   circle and she intentionally changed the sentence a little].
>
> (Field notes, November 9, 1999)

The above excerpt clearly shows that Molly did not involve her students in the

'operator' game just for the sake of it. First, in addition to using it as an attention grabber,

she used the game as a way to introduce the concepts of repetition and change, both of

which are relevant when talking about legends. Second, after repeating and rephrasing

her question to get her students to think about why the sentence changed, Molly resorted

to direct instruction. In doing so, she brought her students' attention to the fact that when

retelling a story it is possible and okay to make some changes but with good reason, such

as making the story "more interesting".

Molly then went on to inform her students that she was going to tell them a story about herself. She let the students know that each time she told the story she would tie a knot in the rope and that when the rope was filled with knots, they would know the story by heart and would be able to tell it to themselves. Similar to informing the students about creating a class book, discussed earlier, explaining to the students the end result of retelling a personal story and tying a knot further demonstrates the importance Molly attached to giving her students a sense of purpose for learning. The following description is what I was able to write down as Molly was telling her childhood story with animation and excitement.

> M: The story happened to me before I was in Kindergarten. I was 4…I fell off of my Dad's tractor. My dad and his friend helped me. They pulled me out and put me in a crib. I didn't like being in the crib. I broke my pelvis. Does anyone know what the pelvis is? [Students were silent. At that point, Sue explained what the pelvis is in simple and understandable terms to them]. I also had some seizures.
>
> S: Who knows what a seizure is? [Again the students were silent and Sue proceeded to explain the meaning of seizure to the kids who were good listeners throughout the entire episode].
>
> M: Now I want you to tell each other something that happened to you when you were little [The classroom became very loud as students were busy sharing their childhood stories with each other].
>
> (Field notes, November 9, 1999)

Two points stand out from the above description. First of all, this story speaks to Molly's willingness to open up to her students and thereby giving them an opportunity to appreciate her personal life, through a childhood story, which, I believe second graders could easily connect to. This suggests to me that Molly realized that sharing part of a teacher's personal life is "usually very interesting to children" (Gallagher & Norton, 2000, p. 57) in not only motivating them but in helping them grasp concepts and enhance connections they are making. And according to Sue, the way Molly related her own story

to the idea of story telling and re-telling was "magical" (Sue's reflection on lesson #2, November 12, 1999). In doing so, her personal story telling seems to have served as an appropriate transition to read <u>Knots on the Counting Rope</u> to the students and to engage them in making a filmstrip representing it.

The second point worth discussing here has to do with the two key words, namely 'pelvis' and 'seizure'. The fact that Molly checked to see if the students knew the meaning of pelvis acknowledges her awareness of the need to stop at times during the act of reading or telling a story to explain difficult terms which might otherwise interfere with comprehension. Thus, although she did not ask students about seizure, I assumed that she might have done so, had it not been for Sue's intervention. As far as Sue's intervention in explaining the two words and asking students about the second one, it was done in my opinion, in a natural and non-threatening manner for, it did not seem to have bothered or distracted Molly at all. Once again, Sue appeared to have played the role of providing her with some modeling, showing her how to explain key concepts and words by using a simple language that children can easily connect with.

Before reading <u>Knots on the Counting Rope</u>, Molly gave her students some specific directions regarding what was about to happen and what to look for. Indeed, after informing the students that she and Sue would be reading out loud to them about a young Native American boy and his grandfather, Molly told them that they should pay attention to the details and sequence of the story. This is another evidence of Molly's awareness of the importance of giving students a sense of purpose when reading.

While both Molly and Sue were reading the book out loud, Sue was simultaneously using a computer keyboard to show pictures from the book on the screen.

This was one of Sue's ways of spicing up the lesson, i.e., "the mood of the literature"

(Sue's reflection on lesson #2, November 12, 1999). This is important in terms of

Molly's learning to teach reading, as this was an example of how to integrate technology

into reading instruction in order to motivate students and enhance their learning.

After reading the book out loud, Molly engaged the students in a question/answer

session. Some of the questions and respected answers that were provided are listed

below.

```
M:      Did the boy seem to know the story?
S1:     Yes,
M:      How did you know?
S1:     I noticed he was finishing up some of the questions.
M:      What was special about this grandson?
S2:     He was blind.
M:      Why do you think it is important to tell the story again?
S3:     You remember better. It makes you smarter.
M:      Yes, you remember better and it makes you smarter. That's a great idea!
(Field notes, November 9, 1999)
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Although this excerpt does not include the voice of everyone in the classroom, it

indicates that those who answered showed some understanding of the story read to them.

This understanding could be attributed to several factors, among which the directions

Molly gave students prior to the reading, the numerous repetitions throughout the story,

as well as the fact that both Molly and Sue read the story with animation and excitement

along with computer images. Furthermore, this excerpt is an example of Molly's ability

to push students' thinking, in this case making them ponder about the need to repeat

stories, through follow-up and engaging questions (e.g., how, why?). In addition to

asking probing questions, Molly repeated a student's answer before praising him/her.

This type of pedagogical move is critical because it gives other students who might have

missed the original and correct answer a chance to hear it again.

Once this question/answer session was over, Molly asked for volunteers to

Share with the whole class any story that someone had told them over and over

again. However, realizing that she was running out of time (only 7 minutes left

before lunch), she decided to switch to a paired activity as follows:

M: I see many hands raised. Instead of telling me, why don't you tell the
        person next to you". (Field notes, November 9, 1999)

Molly's suggestion generated lots conversation among the students, as the entire room

became very rowdy. The above description suggests two things. First, asking students to

share stories that were retold to them further demonstrates Molly's awareness of and

commitment to connecting books to children's personal life. Second, transforming a

whole group activity into a paired one is a testimony to Molly's ability to think on her

feet and to be flexible, in this case, because of time constraints.

Since I did not get the chance to see the activity on making a filmstrip, which took

place in the afternoon, the description that follows is based on self-report. Molly's written

lesson plan indicates that this filmstrip was an extension activity designed to "help

students extend and refine their knowledge" of the importance of retelling a story"

(written plan for lesson #2, November 9, 1999). When planning the filmstrip activity,

Molly anticipated that it could be a potential area of difficulty for lower level kids, i.e.,

"lower level kids may not be able to keep up with the filmstrip (CT and teacher facilitate

around the room) " (written plan for lesson #2, November 9, 1999). Molly's reflection

upon the lesson indicated that some of the struggling students found it difficult to recall

the events and sequence of the story. A difficulty, which seems to have been further

complicated by the time lapse (lunch) between the reading of the story and the filmstrip

activity. In order to overcome this hurdle, Molly noted that she had to talk to students by using techniques such as:

> who knows what happened next in the story? And if someone gave a wrong answer, I would say "okay, that's a good idea but I think that happened a little bit, you know, later. What happened? Is there something that stuck out to you in the story that happened before that? (Molly's reflection on lesson #2, November 8, 1999)

The foregoing is important for two reasons. First, Molly's anticipation of difficulties in remembering the events of the story in sequence further speaks to her disposition and sensitivity toward struggling readers and meeting their needs. Second, it acknowledges her growing ability to find and try what works for them. In this case, she was able to break down a given task to make it manageable by asking more specific and contextualized questions, to help students identify the events of the story in <u>Knots on the Counting Rope.</u>

Molly's own reflection suggests that she was pleased with many aspects of her lesson. As she wrote:

> Transitions in this lesson were smooth. The kids were in good moods and I think having several 'fun' activities helped (game 'operator', my telling personal story, rope with knot in it, listening to my CT and me telling a great story, and then making filmstrips). Even though there was a lot of activities, the timing and order was perfect. Our discussion following the book was good also. (Molly's reflection on lesson #2, November 1999)

Indeed, these words indicate that the lesson unfolded to Molly's satisfaction. In addition to the kids being in good mood, it seems to me that the success of this lesson had a lot to do with her detailed and careful planning of activities, which I alluded to earlier (see pp. 107-108). In her reflection on the lesson, Sue also made a similar observation: "She made great transitions from carpet to desk and from listening to discussion; the activities were well planned and nicely carried out!" Furthermore, I attribute the

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effectiveness of this lesson to Molly's remarkable ability to ask good questions (e.g., during the discussion following the reading of the book and the filmstrip activity).

Interestingly, Molly herself seemed to be somehow puzzled by some of her questions, which she articulated as follows: "I'm curious to know how my questions for discussion were" (Molly's reflection on lesson #2, November 1999). A puzzlement to which her TE 802 course instructor responded to as follows: "Your questions reflected a variety of cognitive levels and connected well to your lesson objectives" (comment written by the TE 802 Instructor on Molly's reflection on lesson #2). For Molly to be curious about the quality of her questions during discussion, is a further indication of her awareness of the role of questioning in promoting students' learning and thinking and her commitment to working on honing her questioning skills (see discussion of the November 4 debriefing session). Ultimately, it reaffirms her growing ability to see things from the learner's perspective, as discussed in chapter 3 and the section about designing the unit.

Besides being pleased with many aspects of her lesson, Molly also reflected on what she might do differently in the future. One of such changes was formulated as follows:

> Some of the lower-level children had a difficult time thinking of the events of the story in sequence. Next time, I would pass out a copy of the book to each table so they could go back and check their work (Written reflection on lesson #2, November 9, 1999).

The idea of providing a copy of the book to each table suggests to me that Molly realized or was reminded that checking for understanding is an essential reading strategy or habit that all readers can benefit from, especially the struggling ones. Compared to her initial plan to facilitate around the room, this strategy is more concretely connected to the

learning and teaching of reading. This concreteness of Molly's idea about helping students check their work seems to be a sign of Molly's knowledge construction from instructional context.

This sign appears to suggest that Molly was synthesizing knowledge about ways to assist in monitoring their work as a result of two enabling conditions, namely having the opportunity to experience a specific act of teaching and having the disposition to reflect upon it. In doing so, she was developing a situated under-standing of some concepts and strategies relevant to the teaching of reading. Such an understanding is critical, considering the fact that many of the concepts teachers must learn are best understood in the context of the situations to which they refer (Brown et al., 1989).

Lesson three: The legend of sleeping bear

The third lesson, which took place during the week of November 12, 1999, focused primarily on helping students understand what a legend is (e.g. characteristics of a legend) through the use of the legend of the Sleeping Bear video. As discussed earlier, another collaborating teacher in her building recommended this video to Molly when she was planning her unit. Since I did not observe this lesson, I based my discussion on Molly's written lesson plan.

Molly's lesson plan suggests that she started the lesson by telling the students where they were heading, which further demonstrates her awareness of the need to give the learner a sense of purpose for learning. Her reflection on the lesson seems to acknowledge Molly being pleasantly surprised and having an even greater understanding of the effectiveness of such a pedagogical move: "they reacted really well to me telling

them where we were headed in the unit. It was like 22 light bulbs turned on in the room."

An observation to which Molly's TE 802 course instructor reacted in the form of an

advice as follows: "giving students a purpose for learning is a powerful teaching tool."

Molly's reflection suggests that she was satisfied with the outcome of her lesson.

As she wrote:

> The video went very well. Students were really paying attention to it. The
> discussion we had about what was a legend went better than I thought it
> would. I didn't realize that they had any clue! We also had a good discussion
> about the difference between a fairytale and a legend (student-oriented talk).
> (Written reflection on Lesson #3, November 10, 1999)

More importantly, this reflection demonstrates Molly's ability to give specific

reasons for why she thought her lesson or at least part of her lesson went well, as opposed

to merely making broad statements, as is the custom for many pre-service teachers.

Along with reflecting upon specific aspects of her lessons, Molly showed once again, as

was the case in the learning center episode and the spelling activity discussed earlier, her

ability to appraise existing instructional strategies or procedures. As she stated,

> I liked having the questions already in the bear books because the kids didn't
> have to write down the questions and answers. That would have taken a long
> time. I might combine a few of the questions next time...I think it would be
> helpful to experiment with follow-up activities after the video. I'm not sold on
> the bear book...it seemed a little boring to me! (Written reflection on Lesson
> #3, November 10, 1999)

Although Molly followed instructions from the Sleeping Bear booklet, it is

obvious that she felt that there was room for improvement. I interpret Molly's

suggestions to mean that she is able to interact with the curriculum with critical eyes and

adjust it to meet the needs of students. Not only did she think that it would be better to

blend some of the questions (there were 17 questions), but she also came to the

conclusion that it would be more productive to come with some supplemental activities.

Furthermore, stating that the bear book is a little boring reinforces once again Molly's ability to put herself in the shoes of her students--the fact that the booklet is boring to her indicates that she is projecting that it would be probably boring for her second graders as well. This is reminiscent of the disposition, i.e., looking for what excites and works for students, discussed earlier.

Lesson four: Brainstorming legend ideas (Molly is unsure about when to bring closure to her unit)

While the third lesson focused on helping students understand what makes a story a legend, the fourth lesson, which took place on November 16[th], aimed at inviting students to demonstrate such understanding and thereby generating possible legend ideas or characters. Although this lesson was videotaped, the data was not accessible because of some technology glitches--I only have some field notes on the later part of this lesson. Thus, the description that follows relied mostly on Molly's written lesson plan as well as her reflection on action.

As part of this lesson, Molly read out loud part of <u>Coyote Walks on Two Legs</u> (A Navajo myths and legends book) by Gerald Hausman and Floyd Cooper to her students who sat in a circle in the reading corner of the room. The reading of the story was followed by a discussion. Some of the questions used to guide this discussion were written up in Molly's lesson plan, namely: What makes this book a legend? What is a trickster? What was your favorite part? Part of the discussion I witnessed went as follows:

M:	Did everybody notice how this story talks about animals and nature?
SS:	Yes
M:	Good! Keep that in mind!---
M:	Boys and girls, we have been talking about legends. We are going to brainstorm ideas to write our own legend.

[At that point Molly asked students to return to their seats and to take out their writing journals and pencils].

As she engaged the students in brainstorming legend ideas, Molly wanted them to start by focusing on where the legends would take place. Some of the places that were suggested by students are listed as follows: <u>France, jungle, rainforest, barn, school, ocean.</u> After writing up this list using an overhead projector, Molly advised her students to write them down. "I want you to write all these ideas down. They might help you later when you don't like your own ideas." This piece of advice, along with her earlier suggestion that students should keep in mind that the story talked about animals and nature are both indication of Molly's keenness and ability to provide them with some useful strategies, which might come in handy later.

Although she was happy with some of her students' legend ideas, Molly was also not pleased with what others had to offer and she attributed this to the fact that her guidelines were not as specific as they could have been. As she wrote:

> The students gave many great ideas for legends; but some of their ideas were far off and I should have been more specific about what I was looking for (something explaining a natural occurrence, etc.). I am wondering how I could have specified more about what I wanted from them without creating 22 legends written by "Mrs. Molly's robots". I wanted them to take ownership of their legends but also to fit some guidelines. (Written reflection on Lesson #4, November 16, 1999)

The above statements, which further illustrate Molly's ability to reflect on action (Schon, 1987), appear to be addressing the issue of transfer of knowledge. It seems to me that because students were able to understand characteristics of a legend (see lesson #3), Molly was expecting all of them to be able to immediately transfer such understanding by creating great legend ideas. At this level, it seems that Molly failed to realize that for many students, especially the struggling ones, this might take a while. I shall come back

to this issue later on in the subsection dealing with assessing the unit. From Molly's

reflection, it also appears that she was struggling with balancing instruction in such a way

that takes into consideration both direct and indirect method. As a result, she seemed,

understandably, to be wondering about the effectiveness of her direction. Similar to the

third lesson, her TE 802 course instructor reacted to her dilemma, in the form of practical

words of wisdom, as follows:

> Remember-having more specific guidelines at the beginning of acquiring a
> concept is helpful for students and serves as a basis on which they can build
> better understanding. Great artists always study and copy the Masters first
> (TE 802 instructor's written feedback).

At the end of the lesson, I had the chance to talk informally with Molly about how

the unit was evolving. After mentioning that the unit was going well, Molly talked briefly

about the Powwow event--a gathering among certain North American Indians to

celebrate an accomplishment--she had been planning. She was excited to inform me that

the powwow event was something she had thought about since the very beginning. As

she said, "I knew all along that I was going to do that. When I was planning my first time,

I said I want to end it with the powwow." I was curious to find out if the Powwow would

be the end of her legend unit. To my surprise, Molly was not so sure, and as she often

did, she was quick to consult with Sue as illustrated in the following exchange:

> M: I'm not sure, we will be doing the powwow next Wednesday (i.e.,
>   November, 24th). Sue will that be the end of my unit?
> S: Yes, that will be the end of your unit. And that will be a nice transition
>   to talk about holidays celebration: Christmas, Kwanza, what else?"
> M: Okay (nodding her head). Thank you! [And that was also the end of
>   our short and informal conversation]. (Field notes, November 16,
>   1999)

Three points are worth mentioning here. First, I interpret Molly's response to

mean that at this point in her learning to teach experience she was struggling with how to

bring closure to her unit. Her uncertainty took me by surprise initially, simply because of the fact that Molly, to use her own words, is a "very scheduled person". In addition, her uncertainty appeared to be in contradiction with her earlier comments indicating that she wanted to end with the powwow. However, it all eventually made sense to me; considering that this was Molly's first designed unit, I came to the conclusion that, as an intern teacher, developmentally she was not quite ready to do it all by herself. Although her original intention was to end with the powwow, it appeared that she was not clear about the connection between this event and the bigger picture of the unit, including how to bring it to a closure.

Second, not only did Sue tell Molly that the powwow would be the end of her unit but she turned the event into a teachable moment to help Molly realize the connection between her unit and the time of the year. In other words, she attempted to make Molly realize that her legend unit was very much in line with the flow of the year and was a nice preparation toward talking about holidays' celebration in the classroom. Despite the fact that Molly nodded her head and thanked Sue for her input, I am not so sure if she fully captured the big picture Sue was talking about. In fact, Molly never talked or wrote about or referred to this connection either throughout the rest of the unit or beyond. This state of affairs suggests to me that maybe with a more structured and intentional conversation Molly could have had a better realization of the connection Sue was referring to. Put differently, Molly might have benefited from a more carefully designed scaffolding session at a later stage.

I am also led to wonder whether Molly did what a lot of novices and experience teachers do--they come across a 'neat activity' that they just want to do, and fail to

consider whether or how it supports the overall objectives or the big picture. Eventually, the powwow did help her provide a way to share the legends, but writing was not even a prominent goal in her unit. She realized the place of writing in her unit after the fact; a realization which seemed to have been possible thanks to her disposition to reflect. This suggests that Molly was working on synthesizing how use of literature, teaching literature content, and writing all fit together; an issue that I shall come back to in the assessment section of the unit.

Lesson five: Main ideas for legends

The fifth lesson aimed at helping students generate the main ideas for their own legends. Molly's reflection suggests that it was a successful lesson (I did not observe this lesson). As she wrote:

> The students responded well to the story. I read to them after lunch and it was a great time for settling. I was also impressed with how eager they were to give me/or write down their legend ideas. I was a bit pressed for time today and instead of having the kids begin writing their actual legends, I had to modify my lesson and ask the children to write one idea of what their legend might be about. I didn't like this at first--it wasn't what I had planned, but looking back, I see that it really got them into it, knowing they could only write one or two sentences. They wanted to keep going! Next time I might try the lesson letting them continue with their legends. (Written reflection on lesson #5, November 17, 1999)

Besides being satisfied with the outcome of the lesson, the above reflection gives the impression that there was a little bit of discomfort on Molly's part in making changes to her original plan, because of time constraints. Again, this is not that surprising considering Molly's own admission (early on) that she was a scheduled person, who wants things to go according to plan and does not like surprises. However, it is a good sign that she was able to go ahead and make the necessary changes to accommodate the students--an illustration of her disposition teaching from students' point of view and

doing what is necessary to facilitate their learning. By the same token, she seems to have realized the importance of simplifying a given task for students in order to make it more manageable and to lead to higher productivity. This is further indication that Molly was learning to become more in tune with students' needs and development, i.e., she is working on synthesizing knowledge about ways to scaffold their learning.

Lesson six: Working on legends

The sixth lesson aimed at allowing students to work on and finalize their legends. This lesson is particularly important to Molly's learning in the sense that it seems to have helped her realize that writing is a complex process, the mastery of which requires efforts and time and does not happen over night. By the same token, this lesson further illustrates how, through her dispositions to reflect and the scaffolding role of Sue, Molly was working on synthesizing knowledge about ways to support students' learning, including their writing skills.

Initially designed as a one-time activity, this lesson ended up unfolding over four sessions. Unfortunately, I did not get the chance to see any of these writing sessions. Therefore, the following discussion is based solely on post unit conversation, which suggests that Molly was happy with students' participation. As she wrote,

> I didn't have to give much direction for these days. The kids were very excited to write their legends. Basically, each day I walked around while they worked on their drafts. On 11/9, I met individually with each child (with help from my CT) to review what they have done. This "conferencing" was a great experience (for all of us). The kids worked great independently..." (Written reflection on lesson #6)

Despite the excitement and active participation of students, it is important to mention that Molly encountered some difficulties due to the fact many students had a hard time generating and writing their own legend ideas; which helps explain why the

sixth lesson ended up unfolding over 4 days. In order to overcome these difficulties,

Molly told me that she had to rely a lot on Sue who had one-on-one conferences with

students who were struggling. These conferences were not only beneficial to students but

also to Molly who seemed to have learned a lot from observing (a couple of times) Sue's

conferencing techniques, as illustrated below:

> Before she would call a kid up, she would read over the legend with me and
> point out things and she would write on the back of the legend where it wasn't
> really visible to them different questions she was going to ask them. And then
> make comment in terms of questions she would ask them, such as "okay, so
> what was the little boy doing here?" or "where was he?" to make it more
> descriptive. "What color was the sky that night" or...trying to get it more
> descriptive for them, and that was beneficial because when the kids came back
> with her, and she had some of these questions that probed their thinking and
> expanded their thinking, I guess, is what I would say, then they, like little light
> bulbs, it would look like, ooh, you know, it was a bluish green sky or it was,
> you know, this kind of animal so. Then she would start by saying, "I'm going
> to help you, we need to work on a few things here. Read me your story first,
> what was the question you're answering in your legend?" "Does this make
> sense right here?" Like when the kids would be reading it, she would ask
> them, "now does that make sense?" "does that follow your question that
> you're trying to follow?" And oftentimes they would say, "no, not really."
> And went on to something else. I watched her actually write for a student who
> was having a hard time writing. I think her handwriting was not that good and
> so she was getting frustrated because she couldn't even read it so Sue said
> "you tell me and I'll write it and then you can just copy what I wrote ...you
> can copy it onto your final draft." So that was helpful because some kids do
> get hung up. (Post unit conversation, December 3, 1999)

By the same token, she seems to have realized the importance of simplifying a

given task for students in order to make it more manageable and to lead to higher

productivity. This is further indication that Molly was learning to become more in tune

with students' needs and development, i.e., she is working on synthesizing knowledge

about ways to scaffold their learning. The above description gives evidence of Sue doing

noticeable modeling for Molly prior to and while conferencing with students. Similar to

the learning center experience, this description gives a sense that--through thinking

aloud--Sue successfully broke down the task of conferencing for Molly by not only

telling her what she planned on doing, but by also giving her a rationale for it. This

appears to have been a good way to set Molly's mind to observe Sue scaffolding

students' writing. Witnessing the preparation stage and running stage of conferencing

seemed to have been a big eye-opener for Molly. Indeed, she appeared to have gained

new insights into many of the steps and questions used in both writing workshops as well

as guided reading; two instructional approaches which became dominant during her lead

teaching (as discussed in chapter 5). Besides Sue's scaffolding role, it is also important to

note that the fact that Molly was able to remember so many details about what she

witnessed and to also explain the implications of the Sue's actions reinforces her

eagerness to learn. This is further reiterated by the very fact Molly is the one who came to

Sue and asked if she "could sit with her while she helped some of the people who were

struggling so that she could see how she handled that" (Post unit conversation,

December, 3, 1999).

Another difficulty that Molly encountered was connected to peer editing, which

she had intended to use. After she started doing self-editing with the students, Molly

realized that a lot of them couldn't even do that. At that point, she knew that peer editing

was not going to work and she had to come up with an alternative. As she wrote

> ,...I did go over an editing checklist with each child to expose them to what
> they will eventually be doing later on in the year. [This checklist was
> attached to any work students did on their legend so that Molly could go back
> to see their progress; see checklist sheet in Appendix D]. I might cover the
> editing sheet earlier on in the year next time. I was hoping that we'd get to
> peer editing, but they had a difficult enough of a time editing their own work.
> There is still a lot of questions as to where sentences begin and end (written
> reflection on lesson #6).

The above reflection leads me to believe that Molly made some assumption with respect to her second grade students' editing skills. At the same time, it shows signs of an intern who was beginning to see the big picture; i.e., recognizing that there are some developmental patterns for literacy acquisition and that writing is a complex process, which requires time and practice to master. For example, there are some essential writing skills (e.g., checking for meaning, spellings, and punctuation...) that need to be explicitly taught in the process of helping students self-edit before engaging them in peer editing. It is in keeping with this developmental awareness that, I believe, Molly's TE 802 Instructor gave her the following advice: "This is certainly a 'developmental process'. Keep working on it over the year' [as if to reassure Molly that with time and effort, she would have a better understanding of what young learners are capable of doing]. Along the same line, Molly's TE 802 Instructor advised her to think about students' questions with respect to the beginning and ending of sentences as data that "will help [her] plan mini-lessons as needed" (TE 802 Instructor's written feedback). These words of wisdom from the course Instructor are important, particularly in the light of the fact that Molly's awareness and under-standing of children's writing development and how to support it crystallized in the spring semester, as illustrated by her inquiry project (see chapter 5).

The Last Day: The Powwow

I was fortunate enough to attend the powwow, which took place on December 3[rd], 1999, as I was particularly impressed by the students' engagement and attention span during the entire event as well as by the quality of their individual presentation. The goal was for students to participate in a Powwow and read their legends to their fellow

classmates, and acquire an understanding for how others may celebrate an accomplishment. The Powwow event was divided into three parts. It started with a preparation ceremony that began at 1:45pm. While Sue was setting an artificial and symbolic fire in the middle of the classroom--with woods, candles, and some Native American objects--Molly was busy putting necklaces around students' neck and some belts around their waist. Once everybody was seated, in a circle around the fire, Sue showed them (one by one) the artifacts she brought in. These artifacts seemed to fit well the goals of the powwow activity and a goal of the unit, which was to help students to become interested in and respect other cultures and to enable them to acknowledge how different cultures, specifically Native Americans, used their heritage as a way to expose their literature and ideas to others.

As for the second part, it required students to take turns to read out loud the legend they had written over the course of the unit. Just before the beginning of this stage, Molly reminded the students to be active listeners. After proudly reading his/her legend, each student would then choose another person to stand up and do the same. I was impressed by the efforts they put into reading out loud; so was Molly who, at one point made, the following comment: "Boys and girls, I am really proud of you. There are lots of older people who have not had experience reading in front of people. Everybody is doing such a wonderful job" [Field notes, December 3, 1999]. The only exception had to do with the last student--a usually talkative and even hyperactive young boy (based on my own observation and what I was told)--who categorically refused to read his legend. After quickly consulting with Sue, Molly sat by the boy and read his story--he showed some excitement (e.g., smiling) during the reading. After all the students finished

reading their legends they, unexpectedly, had to go to Creative Art, in another room

(from 2:30pm to 3pm). This interruption gave Molly and Sue the opportunity to get

everything ready for the third part, which brought closure to the event. After the art

session, students came back and sat by the fire to enjoy each other company with juices

and cookies made by Molly. At the end of the powwow, students expressed their

gratitude to both Molly and Sue as follows:

> S: You need to thank Mrs. Molly for this great party.
> SSS: Thank you so much Mrs. Molly!
> M: Say thank you to Mrs. Sue preparing the firework for us.
> SSS: Thank you both of you!
> (Field notes, December 3, 1999).

With the exception of the student who refused to read his story, and the

interruption for the art lesson, I thought that this culminating activity, which showed

creativity on the part of Molly, went well. It seemed to have successfully excited and

engaged students in demonstrating what they learned during the unit, as discussed in the

assessment section below. The excitement on the students' face throughout the powwow

appeared to be an indication that they took pride in their work and enjoyed this grand

event. Similarly, Molly expressed her satisfaction with the event through her comments

during the activity (e.g., praising students about the way they read their legend) and

during the post-unit conversation that we had right at the end of the day. Another

important point worth underlining is that, based on what I witnessed, I am led to believe

that some thoughtful planning went into this lesson. Along the same line, this lesson

further illustrates the remarkable and natural collaboration between Molly and Sue (e.g.,

setting the stage, Molly consulting with Sue about the student who refused to read,

getting everything ready for the feast around the fire).

Assessing the unit

The assessment of this unit was done at two levels. First, as illustrated throughout the various teaching episodes discussed above, Molly engaged in a post-assessment of each lesson. In doing so, she demonstrated her ability to assess the merits and limitations of existing instructional practices, including her own. Second, at the end of the entire unit, I had the opportunity to engage in a post instruction conversation with Molly. I was interested in how she felt about the unit in terms of being able to achieve her goals, obstacles she came across and how she overcame them, things she had to change all along and things she would do differently if she were to re-teach the same unit. At both levels of assessment, it is fair to say that, Molly expressed a general satisfaction with how the unit evolved in meeting her objectives as well with being major instructional achievement and a significant learning experience for her. However, this satisfaction did not prevent her from addressing areas for improvements.

During our conversation, Molly indicated that she felt that her unit went very well. She felt particularly good about the outcome of the powwow, because of the high quality of the students' legends. The following statement specifically demonstrates her satisfaction in terms of achieving her learning goals.

> I think that they learned a little bit about respecting each other when they were helping, coming up with ideas for each other. Respecting other people in general, other cultures. I know that they learned what legends are now and a process of writing and this is something that I didn't write into my unit (...) Process of writing, but they did, they wrote, you know, rough drafts, they started with a topic sentence and they did a rough draft, then it was the editing...I didn't write in [referring to her unit objectives] as them practicing process of writing...and it was so much in this and I overlooked that. Duh! But, another thing that they learned is oh, how pictures can aid in their writing. They had symbols drawn around their legends. And the symbols were supposed to pertain to what was in their legend. (Post unit conversation, December 3, 1999)

The above statement indicates that overall, Molly was satisfied with the outcome of her unit in terms of achieving her overarching learning goals--she wanted students to understand the concept of a legend, and to respect and appreciate other cultures through literature objectives (see introduction to the unit and table 3). This satisfaction is also corroborated by Molly's written reflection on individual lessons, as discussed in previous sections, as well as my own observation--e.g., students' engagement during the different reading and writing activities, the quality of their individual legend presentation, and their sustained attention span during the powwow. See more below about how Molly achieved her unit goals.

In addition, the above statement shows that the students learned about the writing process, an outcome that was not specified in the original design of the unit. The fact that Molly overlooked specifying the writing process into her learning objectives for the unit was a bit surprising to me. This is so, especially when considering the fact that her literacy unit focused on writing--keeping in mind also that the main focus of TE 802 is to look at the role of writing in the literacy curriculum. This leads me to believe that had Molly initially given much thought to the writing process, she might have anticipated that it would take students much longer to write their legends. As discussed earlier, this indicates that she was working on synthesizing how use of literature, teaching literature content, and writing all fit together.

During our conversation, I was interested in hearing Molly articulate how she knew that students learned throughout the unit. The following excerpt illustrates how she talked about some of the assessment measures she used.

For the first lesson..., I was checking for understanding of what it means to

give thanks to someone or something, and I made a note of how detailed each child's journals were on that. So...in lesson 2, I was looking to see if the students correctly placed the events in the order on their filmstrips. Were they able to explain their filmstrips to another student? Were the questions that they asked and comments made during the discussions appropriate and thoughtful? For lesson 3, which was the sleeping bear lesson, after going over the question in the booklet together, did it seem that the students had an accurate understanding for what a legend was? Do they answer questions correctly? Other, the rest of them were mostly observation, to see if they were contributing or not contributing in class discussions. How were the legends going? I kept every piece of anything they wrote on their legend, starting from the very first day and I'd staple it onto the back so I have everything to see their growth, so that was one way. (Post-unit conversation, December, 3, 1999)

Two points are worth highlighting from the above statement. First, it shows that each aspect of table 3 was addressed during the implementation of the unit. On the one hand, the first three lessons focused on a gradual process of helping students understand the concept of a legend and respecting and appreciating other cultures, through discussions and exposure to a variety of literature. On the other hand, the last 4 lessons emphasized students' demonstration of their conceptual understanding.

Second, the above description indicates that Molly was using a variety of direct assessment tools to make sure that students were grasping concepts and making progress. I will discuss, in a later section, how she interpreted some of the data she collected. As it appears, Molly had a complex assessment system composed of documentation and record keeping, including reviewing (and keeping) students' written work and "kidwatching", which is "careful and knowledgeable observation of students as they are immersed in their own learning and language use" (Goodman, 1996, p.209). In addition to the above-mentioned assessment procedures, Molly used success stories outside the classroom to talk about what students got out of the unit, as demonstrated through the following anecdote:

Also it was kind of interesting, yesterday we went to the library and after, actually it was after you left, I had three different girls come up to me and show me, in their books, oh, here's a Native American. Here's a legend, all this kind of stuff, so that was so... And another one said I found out my, my grandma has part some kind of Indian in her so that makes me part, too. So, it's nice to see them relating it to a real life connection; so authentic learning as MSU would say (Post unit conversation, December 3, 1999).

The fact that these three students were transferring what they were learning about to real life situations, including personal connections, is evidence that they were developing some conceptual understanding of the unit on Native Americans legends. Such understanding reflects Molly's satisfaction with the outcome of her unit. By the same token, Molly's own reference to what she learned or heard about in her TE coursework at MSU is a sign of her own conceptual understanding about the true meaning of authentic learning and assessment.

In the foregoing, I discussed that Molly used a complex assessment system, which in my view, is a sign that she was having first hand experience with assessing students learning in an authentic context. This leads me to believe that she was either learning about or reaffirming her awareness of how, through a variety of authentic assessment procedures such as observation and anecdotal records, teachers can effectively record "learning in action" (Drummond, 1994, p.89). Besides her insights into the role of assessment in facilitating and monitoring learning, this unit showed that Molly learned a great deal with respect to other aspects of teaching, which I now turn my attention to.

Molly's learning

Seeing the big picture: Learning to be flexible

During our post-instructional conversation, I wanted to learn about Molly's assessment of her own growth from designing and teaching this unit on Native American

legend unit. Molly told me that one of the main things she learned personally from the unit was that of the timing aspect of teaching, in the sense that things don't always go as planned. As she noted,

> It didn't stress me out at all but it was just kind of interesting to see some of the lessons I would say 35 minutes and they would take 55 minutes. And I don't know if it was when I was actually teaching that I got into it so much more that I, you know, would kind of go off on little things a little bit more. Or if the kids directed me in a certain way through conversation, I would go there, too. (Post unit conversation, December 3, 1999)

Although Molly was initially nervous about not having a full idea of how the unit would evolve, she seemed to have learned not to panic about the fact things did not always go as planned. I interpret this to mean that she was learning to see the big picture, i.e., recognizing that details are only a part of a larger framework, in this case, the overarching goal of the unit. In doing so, there is sign that she was learning a great deal about the need to be flexible and follow the natural flow of individual lessons--for instance, lesson #6 (working on legends) turned out to unfold over 4 sessions. More importantly, she was learning to or synthesizing how to adjust instructions in order to meet the need of diverse learners, which is further discussed below.

Meeting the needs of diverse learners

Molly's apprehensions prior to the unit, her ongoing assessment of the unit and post assessment, coupled with my own observation, underline not only her commitment to meeting the needs of a variety of learners throughout her unit, but also an increasing awareness of different ways to scaffold students. As such, she engaged them in an assortment of learning activities. On many occasions, she had the most capable students work independently while providing assistance to others. In addition, assessing students'

writing on an on-going basis appears to have played a critical role in helping Molly

support her students, along the way, particularly the struggling ones. As she told me,

> after they would do any writing, I would take them home...So I probably took
> them home and read them through all three times. Initially, their topic and
> then the next week and then the week after that...I took all the legends home,
> like a week ago, or a week and a half ago, and I read through them. And I
> made a list on my computer of who's totally fine, who needs a little help
> they're getting off their focus and who really needs major help. (Post-unit
> conversation, December, 3, 1999)

Molly shared her assessment data with Sue who provided some scaffolding to

struggling students during one-on-one conferences, which I referred to when discussing

lesson six. Observing Sue during conferences with students allowed Molly to appropriate

a great deal about the role of jumpstarting students during the writing process, as

illustrated below.

> Tina [one of the struggling readers in the classroom] started off a little
> shaky on her legend. Her first legend was pretty much real life stuff, about her
> brother and her dad on a horse. And then her second legend we [Sue] just gave
> her a little starter story starter, and then she took off. So, some of the kids who
> I thought I would have to help more were fine, being creative..."I watched her
> [Sue] actually write for a student [another one of the struggling readers]
> who was having a hard time writing. I think her handwriting was not that good
> and so she was getting frustrated because she couldn't even read it so Sue said
> you tell me and I'll write it and then you can just copy what I wrote but
> they're words but you can copy it onto your final draft. So that was helpful
> because some kids do get hung up (Post unit conversation, December 3,
> 1999).

The above excerpt speaks, on the one hand, to Molly realizing that many kids

only need a little bit of a nudge on their way to producing good pieces of writing and to

becoming good readers and writers. On the other hand, it also signals her realization of

the fact that other students need more scaffolding. All in all, Molly appeared to have

benefited from many of the teaching tools (e.g., questioning techniques mentioned in

lesson 6) Sue used during conferences, as "motivator(s) to jumpstart students who have

encountered difficulties as they attempted to enter the world of reading and writing"

(Gallagher & Norton, 2000, p.2).

Furthermore, Molly seemed to have realized that the best way to support students'

learning is to help them help themselves. As she put it,

> Oh, another thing I would probably do is have the kids actually reading
> legends by themselves more. We had a display out that they could choose
> legends during like DEAR time or whatever. And I didn't really observe, I
> wish I would've looked back to see how many kids actually did choose those
> books to read. I would guess, I remember seeing kids reading them but not as
> many…like I didn't come across as wow, they're all grabbing these legends.
> So I would probably next time make sure I add a time for reading legends.
> That's it. Just reading legends to get more ideas in their heads (Post unit
> conversation, December, 3, 1999).

Indeed, this excerpt suggests that Molly is an advocate of the idea of reading to

learn, even in the early grades; in this case, reading legends to learn more about them.

This suggests that she is cognizant of the fact that "writers read extensively to gain

information about writing topics and to revise their writing" (Gipe, 2002); as such,

reading more about legends could inspire her students to write or rewrite their own

legends. Furthermore, Molly seems to have become aware that an environment filled with

books needs to provide a structure that encourages reading. In other words, it is not

enough to have an environment filled with books; students need to be directed toward

reading until they can take the initiative to do so on their own. The literature also

suggests that during such reading time as DEAR time, the teacher should be reading

along with students, in order to provide them with some modeling, the importance of

which Molly appeared to have realized throughout this unit, as reflected in the following

statement:

> Another thing was the importance of modeling for students. Reading books to
> them and asking questions about it. You know, I didn't just read a legend to

them, I tried to read a legend each day or Sue would, if I wasn't here, she would read a different legend to them. (Post-unit conversation, December, 3, 1999)

Enabling conditions

Internal conditions

Throughout discussions in this chapter, several references were made to some essential knowledge and dispositions, which Molly developed and/or reinforced during the first two months of her internship. I am led to believe that without these internal conditions, the conceptualization and implementation of the Native American would not have produced the outcomes it did. These essential knowledge and dispositions are:

- A fairly broad-based conception of literacy--this appeared to have helped Molly in integrating different language arts into her lesson (CK);

- An increased awareness and understanding of helping all students succeed through the use of a variety of instructional strategies and reading materials--this seemed to have helped Molly work on synthesizing knowledge about how to scaffold students' learning, including writing (PCK);

- An increased commitment to doing whatever is necessary to help all students succeed--a disposition which seemed to have helped Molly work on synthesizing knowledge about how to scaffold students' learning, including writing;

- An emerging sign of looking at teaching from the learner's point of view, i.e., being able to realize the benefits of specific instructional procedures--this seemed to have prompted Molly to redesign her unit in order to make it more exciting and engaging for her students (disposition and PCK);

- A willingness to absorb as much as possible and being receptive to feedback --a disposition, which appeared to have helped Molly to effectively collaborate with Sue, throughout the various stages of the unit development and implementation;

- A disposition to reflect upon and appraise existing instructional practices, including her own--this appeared to have helped Molly reflect, with some depth, on each lesson of her unit.

External conditions: Sue's role

As suggested throughout the various excerpts discussed above, it is clear that Sue contributed a great deal to Molly's learning-- appropriating and synthesizing knowledge. Similar to the learning center experience, it is evident that Molly benefited considerably from Sue's assistance at the planning as well as during instruction stages of the unit. Not only did she help her come up with a topic and offer some creative ideas (e.g., Native American head-dress) to make Molly's unit more interesting, but she also intervened at some key points throughout, to provide some scaffolding, as Molly worked on synthesizing knowledge. Indeed, on many occasions, I discussed how she seized opportunities to scaffold Molly's learning either in the form of modeling (e.g. the writing workshops she conducted with different students or praising students for using some spelling conventions) or by simply answering her questions and giving her suggestions. Molly's own words best describe Sue's contribution:

> She provided feedback all the time for me. Even during the lesson, I could, if they were working independently on something, I could go and ask her. Do you thing I should, you know, now that I did this, do you think its all right if I do this instead of what I had planned?...after a lesson was finished, Sue would say things like "Very good! I really like how you drew the kids in or if you noticed some weren't paying attention, how you would walk over where they were" type of things. Basically, we did a lot of talking and I asked a lot of questions to her, what her perception of how the lesson would go. And she would give different suggestions. She'd come in the next morning, "hey, I thought of you, you know, I thought of this that you might be able to do". Or "here's more references to look at, to give you more ideas." Even in the middle of my unit. (Post unit conversation, 1999)

This description indicates that there were ongoing conversations between Molly and Sue throughout the unit. These conversations ranged from getting feedback on specific lessons, to asking clarification questions (e.g., question about whether the powwow would be the end of the unit became a teachable moment by Sue), to queuing in children's literature and giving her new ideas through reference materials. Based on

Molly's own words and what I witnessed, it is fair to state that her legend unit would not have had the same positive outcome it did without Sue's sustained and varied scaffolding.

External conditions: The role of TE 802

It is fair to say that the structure provided by TE 802 seemed to have guided Molly's thinking throughout the unit, and in doing so, have contributed a great deal to her accomplishments and learning. First, throughout the discussion of the unit, I made references to some of the feedback the course instructor provided (e.g. the importance of "giving students a sense of purpose for learning, giving them specific directions), in order to guide Molly's thinking and learning. Second, Molly had to meet certain project requirements, which, I believe, were critical to her success. For example, the unit required interns to use a step-by-step approach throughout the entire semester ranging from analyzing school curriculum to collaborating with their collaborating teacher and other school personnel. In addition, throughout the planning and teaching of the unit, interns had to be mindful of students' differences with literacy. They were also encouraged to follow and assess the work of some struggling writers and they had to assess how they met the needs of a variety of learners. Finally, the course required them to reflect on each lesson taught, using the following framework:

1. What went well in this lesson? Why?
2. What would you change next time? Why?
3. What still puzzles you about your lesson and/or teaching? What would be helpful?

The foregoing leads me to conclude that maybe TE 802 provided a structured learning context--it seemed to reinforce Molly's disposition to reflect--which she would not have been able to do well without, especially when considering the fact that she admitted that she needs structure (as discussed earlier). In other words, TE course was an

important enabling condition guiding her thinking, allowing her to fulfill her unit goals and learn along the way.

Summary and conclusion

This chapter illustrates a noteworthy of appropriation and synthesis of knowledge with respect to developing and teaching a literacy unit during the fall guided lead-teaching period. There is evidence of knowledge appropriation and synthesis through the discussion on how Molly redesigned her unit, in collaboration with Sue, in order to make it more engaging and exciting. There is also evidence of how she worked on synthesizing how use of literature, teaching literature content, and writing all fit together. In addition, Molly worked on appropriating and synthesizing knowledge about how to scaffold students' writing, with Sue's help. Throughout these processes, some of her content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and dispositions appeared to have been reinforced and/or developed, as summarized below.

(1) Content Knowledge (CK):

- An awareness and understanding of how use of literature, teaching literature and writing all fit together (e.g., see lesson four);

- A broader knowledge of children's literature through reading and teaching about Native American cultures (Sue introduced Molly to new books) along with an understanding of genre;

- An increased awareness and understanding of the writing process--recognizing that writing is a complex process, which requires time and practice to master-- and the critical connection between reading and writing as well as the integration across different language arts (e.g., see lessons five and six);

(2) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK):

- New insights into finding ways to make her lessons more exciting and engaging (e.g., sharing a personal story, connecting books to children's personal life; dressing up like Whispering Fawn) in order to help students better understand concepts;

- An increased awareness and understanding of what second graders are developmentally speaking capable of doing, with respect to writing (e.g., see lessons five and six; see also Molly's reflection, in the unit assessment section, on how she interpreted data about some of her students' writing);

- An increased awareness and understanding of how writing and content (e.g., literature) fit together;

- An increased awareness and understanding of ways to scaffold students, particularly struggling students' learning. That is, becoming more in tune with the needs of students and learning about strategies to support the development of their skills. These strategies include using starters during one-on-one conferences, simplifying tasks--writing only one legend idea instead of several, adjusting the pace of instruction and asking thoughtful questions that are at a variety of cognitive levels;

- An increased ability to use a variety of authentic assessment procedures to document students leaning students learning and inform instruction, allowing her to be flexible in adjusting her teaching (see section on unit assessment);

- An increased understanding of the importance of modeling good reading and writing behaviors (e.g., the first lesson during which Molly modeled reading comprehension monitoring and repair strategies; talking to and observing Sue during writing conferences; see also her post-unit assessment); and finally,

- An understanding of what it takes to develop and implement a unit, as reflected in the following comments by the TE 802 Instructor who had nothing but praises for Molly:
    Well organized! I highly suggest that you place your work in a 3 ring binder
    for future reference. You'll want to show this off at job interviews...Your
    hard work plus great effort researching and planning your lessons is clearly
    evidenced! Lessons have been thought out in depth, which was reflected in the
    success of your students in achieving the learning outcomes....You have
    "spelled out" what you looked for in assessing students' understanding. Nice
    job constructing your "Young Author's checklist"...Your written reflections
    show that your are gaining important insights into your teaching...
    Outstanding work Molly! This is a model unit! Congratulations (Literacy Unit
    Final Evaluation by Instructor, December 1999)!

(3) Dispositions:

- An increased awareness of and sensitivity toward helping all students, particularly struggling students, and her commitment to find what works for them; a commitment which she emphasized during our first interview;

- An increased disposition toward looking at teaching from the learner's point of view;

- Ability to co-plan and co-teach effectively with her collaborating teacher. Throughout the unit, Molly showed that she was receptive to feedback, which she incorporated into her teaching; and finally,

- A further commitment with respect to reflecting upon her own teaching, as illustrated by her insightful post-assessment of individual lessons and her overall reflection on the unit.

As discussed earlier, the reinforcement and/or development of the above content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and dispositions seemed to have resulted from the interactions between some internal and external conditions. On the one hand, it was apparent that Molly was able to make use of some of essential knowledge and dispositions (summarized earlier) with which she started the legend unit. These internal conditions constituted a key piece of information that helped me to make sense of how she went about appropriating and synthesizing knowledge during the design and implementation of her unit. On the other hand, the discussion illustrated the prominent role of some external conditions--Sue's ongoing support as well as the structure of TE 802, including the guidance provided by the course instructor during the various stages of designing and implementing the legend unit.

I would be remiss to end this chapter without reminding the reader of the fact that despite the above positive list of reinforced and/or developed knowledge and dispositions, the design and implementation of the unit illustrated some areas of improvements for Molly. These areas included being able to accurately explain how to implement the KWL approach, and yet not being quite capable or ready to synthesize it-- i.e., weave it--into her thinking about teaching a unit on legends. Molly also revealed her lack of awareness of the role the KWL procedure could have played in helping her understand her second graders as learners. As discussed earlier, being cognizant

(knowing the steps) of a given instructional approach cannot necessarily be equated with being able to pull together such knowledge when planning and teaching within the context of a specific topic. Another area for improvement had to do with Molly's lack of ability to probe more deeply after asking a 'why' questions. Although she appeared successful at this in lesson two, it was not always the case, as illustrated in lesson with the question about 'why do we celebrate Thanksgiving'. As discussed in chapter 3, Molly herself admitted that this was an area she needed to work on.

As I examine Molly's journey during the second semester, these areas for improvement, especially Molly's inability to probe students' thinking more deeply, will serve as lenses in helping me make sense of her learning episodes. Obviously, The knowledge and dispositions developed and/or reinforced (discussed in this chapter) are key pieces of information that will also help me to make sense of how Molly went about appropriating and synthesizing knowledge during the second half of her internship. One of the most important insights Molly gained throughout the design and implementation of the legend unit, seemed to have been finding different strategies (e.g., dressing up like Whispering Fawn) to make her lessons "more interesting", to use her own words. As such, she was more than ever determined to strengthen this ability throughout the spring semester, as illustrated in chapter 5.

Chapter 5

MOLLY'S SPRING SEMESTER INTERNSHIP: BECOMING MORE CONFIDENT AND BEGINNING TO CREATE A TEACHING IDENTITY

"January, February, March was my major growth. I started to analyze who I was as a teacher of this, what I was doing, how often I was doing it, why I was doing it; that was a big one, why... I also, probably more in January, started keying into who my learners were more, even though I thought I was doing it (before)". (3rd Interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

The above statement, made while reflecting upon her clinical journey in Sue's classroom, embodies the essence of Molly's construction of knowledge about reading during the spring semester of her internship. While there is some evidence of appropriating knowledge, especially at the beginning of the spring semester, it is a semester that is mostly characterized by instances of Molly synthesizing knowledge-- taking stock of knowledge being appropriate d, transforming existing knowledge, enhancing understanding and developing new ideas, concepts and strategies.

The chapter illustrates how, through synthesizing knowledge, Molly began to create a teaching identity, i.e., to demonstrate her ability to talk about the how and why of her teaching moves and a readiness to make her own teaching identity public. According to Danielewicz (2001) "becoming a teacher" is an identity forming process by which individuals define themselves and are viewed by others. It is a dynamic and ever-changing process; it is always under construction to varying degrees--reformation, addition, erosion, reconstruction, integration, dissolution or expansion. Thus, as a preservice teacher engages in learning to teach in context, s/he can recognize her own knowledge construction--moves, concepts, strategies, and confidence--as defining her in becoming increasingly competent throughout the internship. At the same time, others (e.g., collaborating teacher, liaison or researcher) can also recognize the knowledge

constructed and implemented as signs of an intern who is becoming a competent beginning teacher. Some of those signs are taking more initiative and risks, teaching with confidence.

As her knowledge of and confidence in teaching in general and reading instruction in particular increased, Molly started to take bigger steps, i.e., taking risks, trying out new instructional approaches, modifying existing instructional materials with a clear rationale. Molly also started keying more into students' interests and finding ways to make her lessons more interesting, i.e., engaging. The idea of keying more into students' interests and needs seems to have followed and resulted from the fact that, during the fall semester, Molly spent a great deal of time getting to know second graders and their developmental levels and needs. As such, she appeared more prepared (during the spring semester) to come up with activities and opportunities that better suited them-- being at a point where she no longer worried about instructional time; she just wanted to implement whatever was necessary to help students move forward. Furthermore, although Molly continued to collaborate with Sue throughout the rest of the internship, there was a shift in the focus, *especially after the month of January*. Instead of seeking ideas or suggestions, as was the case for instance during the legend unit, she would mostly go to Sue to share her satisfaction or just to have a quick chat about something she had noticed.

This chapter centers around five episodes that stand out as critical in helping me discuss the foregoing. The first episode--an instance of appropriation-- discusses how, after encountering some difficulties, Molly learned to level books. The second episode examines some of Molly's reflections (during our second formal interview) on her

knowledge construction--that is, it discusses instances of how she was taking stock of what she was constructing. As for the third episode, it discusses how she brought back learning centers into her clinical classroom, with some innovative ideas. The fourth episode looks at the influence of Molly's inquiry project in helping her become a thematic planner. Finally, the fifth episode discusses how she made teaching reading through "Garden Gates' more interesting. After discussing the above-mentioned episodes, I examine Molly's late conceptions of literacy, particularly reading instruction, in comparison to her early conceptions and end the chapter with a look at her reflection on her journey and participation in the study.

Some background information at the start of the spring semester

The internship is a highly demanding and tiring experience--lots of pressures to stay on top of both classroom responsibilities as well meeting the requirements of graduate courses. Such demands, coupled with being around sick kids, result oftentimes in interns being vulnerable to illnesses. Molly experienced that in different forms during her internship. I remember having a casual conversation with Sue toward the end of guided lead teaching when she indicated to me that Molly looked worn out as a result of the increase in her teaching load. I don't know if being worn out in late December made Molly vulnerable to being sick; but in any case, the second semester had barely started (only one week of teaching) when she had to stay in bed, for about a week, with the flu virus. It is important to note that because I was myself sick (I had malaria) I was unable to observe Molly during the month of January. Therefore, I can only corroborate some of Molly's references to that time period with Sue's words.

Molly came back to school in mid-January feeling refreshed and determined as ever to take charge; it was as if being bed-ridden provided her with the space to put many things into perspective and to get ready to embark on the boat for the rest of her journey. Indeed, Molly came back ready to face whatever challenges the rest of the internship would present to her in order to be successful. As Sue put it,

> After the flu, she came back. It transformed her. No I'm kidding! She came back with this more of a planning mode than a just get up in front of the kids and teach mode. She wants to have really neat activities that will help to focus the kids. And I think that is a real strength on her part that I have seen happen. She has probably always had it but she is pulling it out now and digging more for things. (Second Interview with Sue, February 3, 2000)

The Book was too difficult for the students: learning to level books

One of the first steps Molly took after her sickness was to learn how to level books. I chose to focus on this learning episode because it was, according to Molly, the most important recent event that happened to her and that she talked about with Sue, prior to our second interview on February 3, 2000. Leveling books to match readers is the process of selecting books that readers can read at the instructional level, i.e., with 90-95% accuracy in word recognition and with 75% comprehension or better. Instructional reading level books offer just the right amount of support and challenge, allowing readers to successfully read and understand, with some assistance and supervision, and to experience growth in reading. It is therefore a critical process that elementary reading teachers should know about and be able to use. In the lines that follow I discuss how Molly came to learn about this process.

During the third week of January 2000, Molly had a guided reading session with the lowest reading group of students, using a coded red or early preprimer book (Imogene's Antlers, written and illustrated by David Small) that was selected by Sue.

After quickly realizing that the book was too difficult for the students, Molly attempted to

provide them with some scaffolding. Here is how she described her experience:

> We sat down and the book looks easy. I mean, there are big words, the
> pictures aid in what's written in the book so I thought it wouldn't be a
> problem. Well, they just had the hardest time with it. Like we were constantly
> stopping and ...I would, you know, "look at this part of the word. Do you
> know this part of the word" and they just didn't get it. It was kind of
> frustrating to me because I knew within the first five minutes that the book
> wasn't at the appropriate level so I kind of just got them through, instead of
> trying to make it through like a first chapter or section of it, we just went
> through and I focused on the first page and I had them silent read it and then I
> would say "point to the word night" or you, you know, "Henrietta, you point
> to this word so they would have to go through and try to find it". And then we
> read it all together and then they would each individually read it. So we, I
> really stressed that page. We probably did three within the whole 25 minutes,
> three pages. (2nd Interview with Molly, February 3, 2000)

Several points stand out from the above description. First of all, the fact that

these second graders could not even read a preprimer 1 or level C book acknowledges

that they were indeed struggling readers. And their level of struggle appeared to have

been a surprise to both Molly and Sue. As a reminder, level C books "have simple story

lines and topics are familiar to children...oral language structures are used and often

repeated, and phrasing is often supported by print placement. Frequently encountered

words are used more often, and there is a full range of punctuation (Fountas & Pinnell,

1996).

Second, inspite of the above features of early literacy books, Fountas & Pinnell,

point out that,

> Whether a text is easy or hard for a child depends on more than characteristics
> inherent to the text. The way the text is introduced and the supportive
> interaction during reading play important roles as well. The teacher is
> constantly balancing the tension between text level and the amount of support
> he will provide to readers. His knowledge of individual children and the way
> they approach texts is the most valuable tool (1996).

Molly's observations and actions seem to be, to some extent, in congruence with the above remarks. Even though I was not privileged to seeing whether and how Molly introduced the book to the students, given that it did not take her a long time to figure out that the book was at a frustration level speaks to her sound judgement in seeking to know her students well and in assessing the reading task appropriately. Further- more, despite being personally frustrated because the book she thought would be easy to read turned out to be difficult, Molly did not give up on her students; instead, she found a way to provide some supportive interaction in an attempt to make the reading possible. Although many more strategies can be used to support students' reading (see Fountas & Pinnell, 1996, pp. 107-162), the way Molly walked her struggling readers through the beginning pages of the book seems to reinforce her keenness on learning to scaffold their learning--reading--needs. Similar to the spelling episode (see chapter 3) and to some of her unit lessons (see chapter 4), she broke down the task by, for instance, having students independently solve words--through identification of part(s) of a word or pointing to a given word.

Once Molly decided to stop the reading session, she immediately went to Sue to share with her what she had experienced and to ask for help. As she said,

> ... I said Sue, this isn't, I don't, I didn't know. Not that I didn't know what to do but this isn't the right level of book and do we stop with this book because I know it is not at the right level. And she said she didn't realize it was so much harder. If you look at it though, it doesn't really look that difficult. But it was for them. So we talked about it. ...I was going to carry over with the literature groups for my lead teaching, so then I asked her... "Can you help me with leveling because I want to make sure I have the right books instead of having to get everything prepared, my questions prepared for them and then have the book be too hard or something..." (2nd Interview with Molly, February 3, 2000)

As it appears, the difficulties Molly experienced with her students triggered in Molly the desire ("value-triggered interest", Reeve, 1996) to be able to choose books that were appropriate to students' needs and ability. As discussed in chapters three and four, this desire further speaks to her inclination to do whatever is needed to help students experience success in learning in general, and reading in particular. It is also evident that Molly wanted to be prepared to run literature groups smoothly and successfully and to avoid frustration for both her students and herself; a further illustration of her schedule-oriented disposition (discussed in chapter 4).

What did Molly learn about leveling books?

Molly's wish was answered just one week later when both she and Sue attended a half-day in-service (in Grand Rapids, Michigan) on selecting books and guided reading strategies. From what she told me, this workshop seemed to have enhanced her knowledge and skills with respect to matching children with books. As she indicated, with excitement, "I totally know now how to level books so that's interesting...after that in-service, I told her [Sue] I would be able to help too" [with leveling books] (Interview February 3, 2000). The following brief description, which was voluntarily provided by Molly, gave me a sense of how she understood the process of leveling books.

> ...I have picked up on the literature children read, they should 80%, what is the word? Capable? I don't know if that is the word but it should be easy enough like where they don't have problems with 80% of it. And then the other 20% of the story or whatever should be kind of challenging to them. (2[nd] Interview with Molly, February 3, 2000)

Although she did not use the exact figures, the above description suggests that Molly was referring to the three reading levels, namely, independent (95%- 100% accuracy in word recognition) instructional (90%-95% accuracy in word recognition) and

frustration (below 90% accuracy in word recognition) (The Wright Group, 1995). The independent reading level indicates that the reader can read comfortably and understand without assistance. As for the instructional level, it refers to the level at which the reader can successfully read and understand with some assistance and supervision. And the frustration level is the level at which the reader cannot read, even with assistance, because the text is too difficult and leads to frustration. Her description also reflects a good understanding of the fact that the instructional level--which combines a high degree of accuracy with little bit of challenge--should be the target when selecting books. Such an understanding is very much in line with the literature (The Wright Group, 1995).

Enabling conditions

It appears from the foregoing that Molly's insights into leveling books resulted from interaction between some internal and external conditions. It is to these conditions that I now turn my attention.

Internal conditions:

Molly's determination to become a good reading teacher (disposition discussed in chapter 3) seemed to have played an important role in her wanting to know how to level books so that she could provide her students with successful experiences with texts. By the same token, it seemed to me that that same determination allowed her to make the most out of the in-service on leveling books and guided reading strategies, which I shall come back to later on.

External conditions:

Having the opportunity to work with the lowest reading group of students who encountered difficulties reading an easy text seemed to have helped Molly realize her

lack of knowledge with respect to matching kids with books and the burning desire to do

so something about it. I am not sure if she would have developed the same desire to learn

about leveling books without the challenges she encountered while working with

students. Along the same line, I am also not sure if she would have had the same vested

interest in the in-service without these challenges. As Alexander, Kulikowich & Jetton,

(1994, p.217) suggest, "interest, particularly one's personal investment in the topic or

domain, stimulates depth of processing in the content and, thus, enhances subject-matter

learning" (see Schiefele, 1991 & 1992, for similar remarks).

As discussed in this episode, Molly appeared to have appropriated noteworthy

knowledge about leveling books as a result of interactions between internal and external

conditions. The internal conditions had to with Molly's eagerness to be good at reading

instruction (disposition discussed in chapters 3 & 4) seemed to have predisposed her to

want to learn how to level books. As for the external conditions were related to working

with students who experienced difficulties with a seemingly easy book, which appeared

to have provided Molly with "actualized opportunities for need involvement and skill

development" (Reeve, 1996). In addition, these opportunities seemed to have prepared

Molly to appropriate as much knowledge as she could about leveling books during the

half-day in-service workshop. I also discussed the fact that the difficulties the students

encountered with the book prompted Molly to provide them with some supportive

instructional strategies. In other words, these difficulties gave her the opportunity to use

some of the scaffolding strategies she had appropriated up to that point in time. In the

section that follows, I discuss Molly's reflection on how she went about learning some of

those instructional strategies.

Becoming more confident: "It is coming to me now"

During my second interview with Molly, I gave her the opportunity to reflect

upon where she was (with regards to some of the goals she had in early November) and

where she wanted to be by the end of her internship. This interview was highly

characterized by the expression of feeling of excitement and above all a sense of

accomplishments, that is, an epiphany. This epiphany seems to reflect a turning point

two-thirds through Molly's internship journey, as she was starting to see more and more

connections between ideas, concepts, and strategies she had appropriated and she was

starting to feel more confident in her ability to support students' learning more

appropriately and effectively.

When asked how she learned about strategies to support students' learning (e.g.,

strategies she used to help students through the opening pages of Imogene's Antlers)

Molly gave the following response.

> I think everything, I think through Sue primarily, just observing her leading
> groups...through that literacy conference in Grand Rapids....Through that
> guided reading book [by Fountas & Pinnell (1996), which she received from
> Sue]. I have been reading little bits of it there so...I mean it could be from
> observing but just working with them so much more. I'm so much more
> involved with them that I don't know, I mean, obviously I must have learned
> things from before but it seems like now I can just--instead of just thinking
> what can I do, just immediately I can say look at this part of the word or, just
> you know, what other word to you know that might start with that? You know,
> it is coming to me now, which is so good, finally...Where before I might have
> jotted down in a journal some ideas and then before I would lead a group, I
> would look, okay, now, if this happens, I'll do this. Now, I don't really need
> that. I kind of have them in my head so I just use them. That's exciting
> because I told you that at the start of the year I really didn't feel like I had a
> good understanding of how to teach it [reading]. (2nd Interview with Molly,
> February 3, 2000)

Two points stand out from the above excerpts. First, the fact that Molly attributed

her learning to several sources indicates to me that metacognitively, she was aware of her

own thinking and learning processes. This is an awareness, which I believe is essential in

learning general, and learning to teach in particular. In addition to learning about

strategies primarily from observing Sue leading groups, Molly also mentioned learning

from three other sources namely, attending the literacy conference, gaining insights from

reading the guided reading book, and last, but not the least important, "working with

students much more." Second, Molly's description suggests that ideas, concepts and

strategies were coming together in a handy manner for her. That is, her efforts to

synthesize knowledge appropriated through observation, reading, listening, and teaching

appeared to be interwoven into a practical knowledge readily available, allowing her to

think on her feet--in a way that seemed to have surprised her. I still remember the

excitement on Molly's face when talking about what was happening to her, as if she was

having a self-realization. Indeed, Molly's words suggest that she was beginning to

realize her potentials and reach her goal of becoming an effective reading teacher, hence

the expression of joy.

While all of the different sources mentioned above contributed to appropriating

and synthesizing ideas and strategies to facilitate students' learning, it seemed that the

increased opportunities to work with students in the fall as well as early during the spring

semester, were starting to pay off for Molly. On the one hand, these opportunities

appeared to have allowed her to get to know her students better. The more Molly worked

with her students, the more she was getting to know them as learners, as further

illustrated below by her own words about some of her struggling readers.

> Sheila has made great improvements just recently [she is no longer in the
> lowest reading group originally composed of 5 struggling students], yes but
> we've done a lot of, she is really bonded with me recently...When I give her a
> lot she get busy, she does it. I would say it is because I have been kind of

giving her more individual attention and Sue has been, too. We have both been trying to build up her self-esteem a little bit. And so it is almost, I think, like she is trying to work harder for us maybe...So I think all the positive reinforcement, is keeping her going along... Let me tell you about Tina...she is totally amazing me; she is not so needy. Like she's independent and her reading, she's very still low in like decoding and comprehension are not there at all really but she is trying and ...before in out literature groups, guided reading groups, she'd be the giggly one just would let someone else answer. Now she is looking at me and I can tell she is ready. She is following along. She tries, you know, she is trying...Henrieta is still pretty low. Her parents met with Sue at a conference...and they think we should be pushing her harder.... And we don't, I don't know. Sue doesn't think maybe she is developmentally ready to be pushed. But now maybe we are second guessing like maybe she's pulled one over us and slipped by us and we didn't realize that maybe she is capable. But she is very distracted still and we are looking into that with her reading. She is so into wanting to read chapter books...and if you hand her something like Frog and Toad--Sue has been trying to say Henrieta, this is more appropriate for you; this is a great story and she will take it...this actually happened last week. (2nd interview with Molly, February 3, 2000)

The above excerpts, which provide an up-close description of some the struggling readers in Molly's classroom, show that she was developing a substantive and detailed knowledge and understanding of her students in terms both their progress and needs. It is also important to mention that she seemed to be able to articulate such knowledge with ease and confidence. As the literature (e.g., Duckworth, 1996) suggests, getting to know and understand students as learners is at the core of teaching. Knowing and understanding students' understanding, needs, abilities and progress is indeed at the core of instructional decisions, for it plays a major role in determining the focus, the nature and the pace of a given instructional task. By extension, learning to observe, know and understand students is critical to the learning to teach process (see TE 301 Child Study Guidelines in Appendix G).

On the other hand and consequently, being given increasing opportunities to work with students and getting to know them better appeared to have facilitated Molly's

understanding about using more developmentally appropriate instructional strategies--one

of the goals she articulated during our first interview in early November 1999. As she put

it,

> ...I could explain to you within the first few weeks of school this is a lower
> student with reading, this is a higher student. But now I really know, I have
> accepted that they will have to work at their own pace, I'll work more one on
> one with them and my question at the beginning of the year was expectations
> of the kids...I remember, am I expecting too much of them or not enough?
> But I think now I have a better handle, just because I have, <u>Sue's given me the</u>
> <u>opportunity to be working with them so much. I have not been lead teaching</u>
> <u>but, I've been covering a lot of subjects for a long time now</u> so...I think I have
> each of my kids pegged now as far as exactly what their level is. And what
> their strengths are...I think strategies is one of the things that I didn't really
> feel like I had a solid background of how to, you know, if you have a beginner
> that comes to you or an emergent reader, whatever, that comes to you, how
> do you handle that as opposed to someone who's reading at a 3rd grade level.
> And now I feel like, like I was just telling you the strategies are just coming to
> me. So it's a lot easier. I'm so glad...I think my questioning has also gotten a
> lot stronger. So that was one of the things that I was wondering about. Are the
> questions I am asking open-ended and focused or not focused or whatever. So
> I think my questioning has developed so that the questions I ask I really do get
> the answers back of do they really understand what they read. Do they
> understand what the question asks or something? (2nd Interview with Molly,
> February 3, 2000).

Later on during our interview, Molly made related comments as follows:

> ...At the beginning of the year, I was still trying to feel out what 2nd grade
> exactly was. And now...for some reason, within the last few weeks, it just
> seems very natural, even more than before. And before I felt all right, like
> fine, comfortable. But now it just feels like...natural, like really natural. So
> my pace with things, I think I'm getting better at knowing, being able to read
> them, their facial expressions, their body language, their comments, to know if
> I need to go back and re-teach something...I've really come to realize the
> importance of even though, so we just taught money or time, it is still going
> back and talking about it so that they don't forget how to do things or, you
> know, just little mini-lessons, too...Another thing that lately has just come to
> me too is being able to figure out ways to on the moment thinking of another
> way to prevent things (2nd Interview with Molly, February 3, 2000).

As the above excerpts suggest, it seems that, compared to the beginning of her

internship, Molly was having or realizing a deeper and refined understanding of her

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students' developmental levels and was feeling more and more comfortable in her ability to help them leap forward. Indeed, while, at the start of her journey she was questioning whether she was expecting too much or not enough from the students, Molly was becoming more knowledgeable and confident in her instructional decisions, including her questioning skills--another goal she articulated during our first interview. Her solidified confidence level seems also apparent in the fact that her enhanced understanding was allowing her to think on her feet in the process of problem solving and coming up with alternatives. Sue eloquently corroborated Molly's increased understanding and confidence level through the following statement:

> It is kind of like she has gone from student to maybe like…she knows she is in charge now. She is not worried about what people are going to think. She's not worried about having it perfect. She puts a lot of time into it but she always has put but it is like she has relaxed her goals and heightened her goals at the same time…She's relaxed the things that need to go on the back burner. She has jumped into the things she needs to do and she does it with such an understanding…it is like a mature attitude. She has been a mature person the whole time but her teaching is maturing and it is really fun to watch how…It was like how do you do this?…How does this connect? And does this go? To let me tell you how I think this connects. And this is how I'm going to do it. And you know, it is like a confidence …it is a security that she knows now. (2nd Interview with Sue, February 3, 2000)

In addition to giving substantive details about her growth so far, Molly was also able to come up with some specific learning goals she wanted to reach before the end of her internship, as illustrated through the following segment of our second interview:

> **Note: G= Gaston and M= Molly**
> G: The last question is about looking ahead. What skills, strategies and knowledge to you still want to acquire before leaving this school? Before the end of the internship?
> M: Weird to go from everything at the beginning of the year to think what do I still want to learn.
> G: Yes, I know.
> M: Maybe being able to pick out books faster, like instead of having to go through and really, Sue can pretty much just sit there, open a book and

say...I mean like I said before, that one book, it was a little bit higher. But maybe doing that so it doesn't take me forever to pick out books. And working actually with my middle to upper students, expanding them, challenging them a little bit more, bringing in Bloom's activities to just broaden their thinking, too. I want to focus on that too. I've done a lot with the lower groups...Middle, I'm pretty comfortable with. Higher kids I'm comfortable with but...that's maybe one of those things, expectations again, If I push them too far. But I know, I mean, as soon as I pick out an activity and try it with them, I'll know. And then I feel comfortable now with if it is not going well, being able to make changes in it to make it work. I really feel like I'm, it's all clicking now actually. <u>But as my lead teaching starts, I'll be able to find really quick what my weaknesses are again, so then I'll let you know again what I want to focus on.</u>

G: How do you think you will be able to acquire those skills?
M: Just by doing it
G: Just by doing it
M: Uh Huh
G: Okay, any other means?
M: I think just, I have to do it, just doing it.

Several points are worth noting from the above segment. To start with, it clearly suggests that Molly was keen on becoming more proficient at selecting books appropriately for students. This is not all surprising, considering Molly's perfectionist nature in wanting to be good at anything she does (see background information discussed in chapter 3). Along the same line, it is also apparent that she did not want to limit herself to learning to teach struggling or lower level students only, which was one of her main goals during the fall semester. Instead, she was keen on being successful at supporting the learning and development of all her students, including the most capable ones. More specifically, she expressed her determination to become more comfortable with respect to making instructional decisions that are developmentally appropriate for high achieving students. This shift toward focusing on high achievers can be explained by the fact that Molly was now feeling good about her skills and abilities to support the learning of struggling students. Finally, given that Molly talked about future weaknesses reinforces

her disposition to continue to grow as a learner by identifying areas to work on. And the fact that she emphasized to me that it is by doing--i.e., teaching--that she would be able to identify more weaknesses to work on reflects her awareness that "problems do not come ready-made; they must be constructed out of a problematic situation" (Dewey, 1933).

Crystallization of Molly's learning

From the above descriptions and discussions it appeared that at the beginning of the spring semester, Molly's knowledge construction was crystallizing in the following areas.

(1) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

- First, Molly seemed to be developing greater insights into the importance of getting to know students in making instructional decisions;

- Second, Molly appeared to be developing a greater awareness of her ability to use instructional strategies that are more developmentally appropriate to the levels and needs of second graders;

- Third, Molly seemed to have developed a deeper understanding of how to match students with books; and

- Finally, Molly's enhanced knowledge of her students' abilities and needs seemed to be allowing her to see more connections, to be able to think on her feet, and support their learning in a more readily fashion.

(2) Dispositions

- Along with enhanced pedagogical subject matter knowledge, Molly's confidence level appeared to be steadily increasing (I shall refer back to this in later sections).

Enabling conditions

The foregoing seemed to have been facilitated by the presence of some internal and external conditions that are discussed below.

Internal conditions

Several internal conditions which were displayed and/or developed during the fall

semester appeared to have prepared Molly to be where she was at the start of the spring

semester, in terms of realizing and talking about her knowledge construction, its sources,

and implications on her teaching. First, chapters 3 and 4 documented in-depth Molly's

ongoing inclination to reflect on her learning and to make connections, and her growing

disposition toward seeing things from the learner's perspective (e.g., realizing the

benefits of learning centers to students development). Second, these chapters also

documented her commitment to helping all her students and her growing awareness of

and ability to use a variety of instructional strategies to scaffold learning, including

modeling good reading and writing behaviors for students. Third, they highlighted

Molly's growing understanding of the importance of assessment and the use of a variety

of authentic assessment procedures to document students' learning and inform

instruction, allowing her to be flexible in adjusting her teaching. Finally, but not the least

important, chapters 3 and 4 documented Molly's remarkable determination to always

seek to understand how things work and to challenge herself for improvement, which Sue

also corroborated as follows:

> I think her strengths have always been in her questioning of herself and me
> and the literature. She is always trying to find out why something is happening
> and I think she sends that message onto the children....I think it is how her
> brain is put together because she wants to know how to do everything and she
> is now kind of transferring that to the kids. She want the kids to know how to
> ask for the information. She does not baby them...I think I baby the kids more
> than she does. And it is like well, they know this, they should be able to do
> this. Okay, you go do this, you figure it out. ...She is also soaking up books
> like a sponge. She just wants to know what other books are there? What else
> can we do with this? (2nd Interview with Molly, February 3, 2000)
> Not only do Sue's comments confirm Molly's internal desire to learn as much

possible, a desire with which she started the internship, but they also reflect her

confidence level in challenging her students to figure out things on their own. Challenging students to figure things on their own is something she probably could not have done at the beginning of her internship, because of her limited knowledge of what was developmentally appropriate.

Considering the similarity between the above-mentioned internal conditions and the knowledge construction Molly articulated during our second interview, the argument can be made that she was beginning to reap the fruit of her fall semester labors. In other words, her insights into teaching were starting to reach a certain level of sophistication in January 2000, which she was realizing and making public to me (see Vygotsky space, Harre, 1986 & Gavelek, 1991). This is an illustration of Dewey's concept of educative experience as enabling conditions (1933) for, Molly was building on her past experiences and making further connections at the beginning of the spring semester.

External conditions: Sue's role

To start with, credit must be given to Sue for allowing Molly to take increasingly work with student s during the fall semester and subsequently early on during the spring semester, prior to the lead-teaching period. Engaging in more teaching during the last two weeks the month of January appeared to have presented Molly with unique opportunities to scaffold students' learning by drawing upon the skills and knowledge she had acquired up to that point in her internship. The more chances Molly had to work with students, the more she was getting to know them and to make use of her knowledge and skills. And in doing so, she became aware of the knowledge she had been constructing and her confidence level increased in the process, as if to say I know how to do this.

In addition, Sue seemed to have, in a unique and effective way, helped Molly

realize the importance of getting to know students in making instructional decisions. As

she put it,

> I think we talked a lot about how much time at the beginning of the year we
> spent getting to know the kids and their families and I think, I don't know if
> every teacher does that but if I don't do it, I don't get to know the needs of the
> children. And I think she is starting to realize that. I think she thought we were
> spinning wheels for the first semester. That it was like why are we doing this
> again and over and all the time? But she has all of a sudden, it is like well I
> really know the kids. She is feeling like I know what they need and it is not all
> written down in test scores and As and Bs and things like that. It is that she
> knows how they read and she knows how they think in math skills. And it is a
> growth that is hard to explain, because it is intuitive. It is empathetic maybe.
> (2nd Interview with Molly, February 3, 2000)

This statement seems to indicate that Sue adopted a long-term developmental

approach to scaffold Molly's learning about the importance of getting to know students.

First, she appeared to have provided Molly with opportunities to observe and possibly to

be involved in activities that facilitate getting to know students during the first few

months of the school year. Sue's statement suggests that the above opportunities were

coupled with reflective conversations during which Molly might have questioned the

need to repeat some activities. Second, the fact that Molly seemed to finally realize the

value of getting to know students in the early part of the spring semester, led me to

speculate as follows. Sue probably gave Molly the space to reflect and was hoping that

over time, she would come to understand the value of using a variety of activities and

repetitions in order to get to know students. Furthermore, the above excerpt seems to

suggest that, during the month of January, Sue also created a conversational workspace

(Denyer, 1987) to engage Molly in taking a retrospective look at some of the pedagogical

moves that were made in order to get to know their students well at the beginning of the

school year. And in doing so, to make Molly realize that such moves pay off later on during the school year.

External conditions: The role of the interview

My second interview with Molly appeared to have provided her with a structure to allow her to systematically do some regrouping, i.e., to look back, as well as to look ahead. In doing so, she was able to step back and take a closer look at her own knowledge construction and make sense of it and make her sense making public--sharing it with me. Although Molly is a reflective novice teacher, I am not sure if, without the above structure, she would have been able to engage in such a detailed and thoughtful analysis of her knowledge construction, after about three and a half weeks into her spring semester internship. The interview appears to have given her the space to articulate her knowledge construction--by making connections and giving meaning to what she was experiencing--and to set up new learning goals.

With an enhanced content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge, and an increased confidence level, Molly appeared determined than ever to establish her own teaching identity throughout the rest of her internship. A good example of this determination is her innovative use of learning centers, which is briefly discussed in the next section.

Deciding to bring back learning centers into the classroom

As mentioned in the opening section of this fifth chapter, after recovering from the flu, Molly came back to the classroom with a stronger determination to take charge, i.e., to learn and teach. In addition to wanting to learn to level books, another step she took was to bring back the use of centers into the classroom. As she told me during our

second interview (February 3, 2000), she felt that there was a gap in terms of using centers in the classroom during the period December 1999 through January 2000. As such, she saw a need to be consistent; "I'm a consistent person kind of," she said. She also felt that there was a need to use learning centers again so that she could have more opportunities to give individual attention to students who needed it the most.

Bringing learning centers back constitutes, by itself, a significant change that Molly brought into her clinical classroom. In addition, in order to ensure that students were staying on task, Molly created learning evaluation forms for them to fill out at the end of each learning station period. According to Molly, she used these evaluation sheets when conferencing with students, so that she would know that they were "not goofing off." I witnessed the first time students used these evaluation sheets, on February 29, 2000. The sheets were framed as follows:

*Writing: Which mitten starter did you choose? Is your story done?
*Math: What was easy for you? What do you need to work on?
*Read Around the Room: List 10 words that you liked reading!
*Listening: Did you like this story? Why or why not?
*Computer: What was one thing that you learned to do at the computer?
*Sentence Building: Write at least 2 sentences you unscrambled!

Although the expression "not goofing around" indicates that Molly was using these learning evaluation sheets as a management tool, it also appears that they were being used as an assessment tool. Indeed, the types of questions Molly asked seem geared toward engaging students in self-reflection upon their learning and/or accomplishments. Furthermore, some of the questions Molly asked (e.g., "What was easy for you? What do you need to work on?"; "List 10 words that you liked reading"; "Did you like this story? Why or why not?") could be effectively used during conference time to help students look back and look ahead.

As discussed above, Molly brought back learning centers into her clinical classroom with a new twist, namely having students fill out a self-evaluation sheet at the end of each learning station period. In reference to the Vygostky space, Raphael & Hielbert (1997, p.17) pointed out that "each time students revisit ideas, concepts, and strategies that they have internalized in one context, they continually refine and expand their knowledge and abilities to apply them in new contexts." This observation helps me to state that about two thirds into her internship, Molly's reexamination of learning centers (appropriated in September) led to an enhancement of understanding; her knowledge construction with respect to learning centers was being refined and leading her to the creation of new ideas.

Enabling conditions

Internal conditions

Molly's disposition to appraise existing instructional practices, including her own, was discussed in chapters three and four. It seems to me that without this disposition she might not have been able to value learning centers to the point of bringing them back into her clinical classroom. Moreover, Molly's increased confidence level, which appeared to have resulted from increased opportunities to work with work with students and get to know them as learners, and being able to have access to readily available set of instructional strategies (see previous section), seems to have played an important role as well. I am not sure if she would have been brave enough to bring the changes discussed above without a fairly solid confidence level.

External conditions

The clinical environment--flexibility on the part of Sue and her trust in Molly--appeared to have allowed Molly to make the decisions discussed above. I'm not sure whether Molly would have been able to make similar decisions while working with a collaborating teacher who was rigid and not open to new ideas. Furthermore, flexibility can also be seen at the level of the MSU TE program, which expects that professional knowledge needs to be used flexibly in relation to particular situations and contexts (this was discussed in chapter 4). It appears to me that Molly's decision to bring back learning centers into the classroom might have been guided by this program expectation.

Molly's decision to bring back learning centers, with some novelty, illustrates how much she had learned to value this instructional structure (during the fall semester of her internship), to the point of owning its usage. It also speaks to the fact that she was confident and comfortable enough to take charge of changing the teaching environment in a classroom that is not "technically" hers. In other words, she felt empowered to control the instructional environment; and in doing so, she was beginning to make her own teaching voice or identity public.

Making her own teaching voice heard was also seen through the development of a keen desire to expand her students' learning. Part of this desire pushed Molly to find out how to get her students to write more. This became her inquiry project to which I now turn my attention.

Becoming a thematic planner: Molly's inquiry project

This section on Molly's inquiry project, which occurred during her lead-teaching period, has three components. To start with, I state the rationale for including it in this chapter. Second, I outline, through self-report, some of the scaffolding strategies Molly

used to enhance her students' creative writing skills. To end, I discuss Molly's learning

from her project and the conditions that appear to have helped her along the way.

Besides the fact that Molly's inquiry project was a major requirement of TE 804

("Inquiry in Curriculum and Teaching"), I decided to focus on it for the following

reasons.

- Molly was frustrated because many of her students were not writing; she felt like some of them were not making any effort to write, as illustrated through the following statement:

   > When I returned from school after the holiday break, I asked my second grades to write a journal entry explaining what they did over the break. When I took the journals home that night, I discovered that almost half of the students wrote less than five sentences in a twenty-five minute period. In addition, several students had doodling all over their journal pages. It was at this time, I knew that I needed to emphasize journal writing in our classroom. (Molly's Inquiry Project Presentation (May 1, 2001)

- In addition to being frustrated, Molly was concerned about how she was going to have students, who despised journal writing, actually sit down and write. As a result, She was determined to find different ways to motivate and challenge them more. This is reminiscent of internal conditions (e.g., disposition to reflect and to doing whatever is necessary to help students move forward) discussed in chapters three and four.

- Finally, similar to the Native American legend, this inquiry illustrates that Molly was still, to some extent, working on synthesizing how writing ties with content materials.

Since this inquiry project was a requirement of TE 804: Reflection and Inquiry in

Teaching Practice II, Learning From Teaching), it seems relevant to provide some

orientation to the context of this learning episode. The overview of TE 804 is outlined by

in the Elementary Intern Handbook (1999-2000) as follows:

> Staying alive to the challenge of teaching, continuing to develop as teachers who assume a stance of curiosity and interest, who develops a disposition to raise questions, who are restless to know and understand more--these are the aims for interns in this course. Interns will take part in "teacher-research" by examining a question or concern or problem of practice of their choice from their own teaching. Interns will design and carry out a plan of action or an

investigation to address their chosen topic over the semester, adapting and adjusting the plan as hey go. Collaborating teachers and liaisons are important resources for interns in this inquiry process. Final presentations of these projects will take place at a poster session at the end of April (p.9).

Molly's inquiry project was guided by the following research question: *"What strategies can I integrate into our classroom journaling that will enhance my students' creative journal writing"*. During my second interview with Molly on February 2[nd], I had the opportunity to hear her ideas with respect to how she was thinking about pursuing this question. The following excerpt summarizes what she had to say.

> I thought what I'm going to start doing is two days a week have them write in their journals and I'm going to give them a topic, I think. And then we're all going to write, I'm going to write with them and then I'm going to invite them back to the carpet area and I'm going to share with them what I wrote about whatever topic was. Just so, I mean, they might think what I write is silly or whatever and that's fine. Or they, you know, I don't know if I'll plan sometimes to do things that they might think are funny just so they know that it's okay not to be perfect or whatever. And then ask for volunteers to share. And then on Mondays and Fridays when we do writing workshop, you know, I'll say pick an entry that you wrote within the last, you know, week and work on expanding your ideas and things. And I'm also going to bring more writing into science and social studies. Math is a little bit more difficult but I need to find ways to do that.

From the above statement, one gets the sense that Molly was planning to provide students with some modeling and other scaffolding strategies within the writing workshop framework to foster her students' creative writing. It also appears that she was thinking about integrating writing into content areas, particularly into her space unit, which also took place during her lead-teaching period. This notion of integrating writing into content areas seems to be related to the PCK that Molly reinforced during her unit on Native American legends.

Although I witnessed the implementation of some the above strategies, I am unable to give any detailed and meaningful description based on my field notes, which

were sporadic because I did not want to create any distraction by either videotaping or staying too long or too close while observing Molly and students during writing workshops. Therefore, I rely on the following table, which not only provides an outline of the steps and strategies Molly used to enhance students' writing, but also summarizes the findings from her writing inquiry.

Table 4-Summary of Molly's Writing Inquiry Project
Source: From Molly's Inquiry Project Presentation (May 1, 2000

STEPS	STRATEGIES USED
1. Look through prior entries noting problematic areas (lack of writing, excessive doodling, continuous writing on the same topic).	1. Teacher writes at the same time as students
2. Flag end of past journals so there is a "new" start to compare to	2. Teacher gives writing prompts to focus writing
3. Make a list of writing prompts	3. Journal writing time ~10 minutes instead of ~25 followed by a group sharing time for those who want to share their entry (teachers shares also)
4. Develop strategies to meet individual writing styles	4. Modeled constructive feedback
5. Model strategies	5. 1-2 minute reflection time following sharing period where students make changes or additions to their entry
6. Incorporate strategies into writing time	6. Brainstormed by compiling list of both ideas and key words
7. Collect and analyze student entries after strategies were introduced	7. Draw what picture comes to mind when thinking of a topic (~1-2 minutes) and then write on topic
	8. Sequencing ideas by numbering sentences

FINDINGS
• "Having a different writing environment where everyone wrote on the same topic and then having a follow-up discussion ending the writing seemed to be beneficial in creative writing." • "Students who generally had a difficult time with creative writing often need more guidance or strategies. Most importantly when students see their teacher actively engaged in learning, expectations are more clear and relevant."

RESOURCES:
• The Art of Teaching Writing, by Lucy Calkins, 1986. • Guided Reading: Good First Teaching for All Children, by Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell, 1996. • A Fresh Look at Writing, by Donald Graves, 1994.

What did Molly learn from her inquiry project?

Findings outlined in Molly's presentation suggest that her inquiry project was beneficial to her students. By the same token, it seems to have made Molly further realize the importance of providing specific scaffolding strategies (e.g., modeling good writing behaviors, writing along with students, talking about what is being written) to enhance students' learning--in this case, their creative writing skills. In doing so, the project appears to have reinforced some of the concepts (e.g., the importance of modeling and engaging in reading and writing activities along side students), which she began to acquire during the fall semester, particularly during the legend unit. As she put,

> ... I think the whole thing of simple things like taking ten minutes out of the day to write with your children. How silly was that I didn't think of doing that before. That just amazes me that just some students, not all of them, but some of them, just seeing me there and them knowing that Mrs. Molly doesn't want to be, you know, don't interrupt her. This is her writing, too... I think that a lot of teachers distance themselves too much from the kids. (3rd interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

Furthermore, although Molly did not originally plan to teach writing in conjunction with her space unit the two became totally interconnected. As she said, "I wasn't planning on doing it that way. I just was flipping through books and ideas and there was this thing, create your own space and I was like all right. Then I ended up doing other writings." This quote indicates that, although Molly appeared to have developed an increased awareness of and understanding of how content areas such as literature come together (see the unit of Native American legends) she was still working on solidifying her PCK in this aspect of her teaching. Although I did not, unfortunately, get any information on the books Molly explored, it appears that they inspired her to create a fit between her inquiry project and her space unit. Through the process of connecting her

writing project and her space unit, Molly discovered that thematic teaching was her comfort zone. As she stated:

> I've found that it is easier to have like a main theme to be working with and then teach other skills"... I love that [referring to integration]. I'm doing that with weather now, I'm going to because I think it's nice to have a common subject to talk about. And it makes the writing, what I've seen, makes their writing seem more exciting. (Post instructional conversation, March 8, 2000)

This newly found teaching style was also articulated by Molly during an intern study group session (on February 16[th], 2000) which focused on allowing interns to share their questions, concerns, insights after about two weeks of lead teaching. The following exchange between Molly, two of her fellow interns and her Liaison help illustrate this point:

> **[Note: M= Molly; L= Liaison; I1= Intern number one; I2= Intern number two]**
>
> M: I'm seeing my personal teaching style coming through [identity]. I'm doing everything around my science unit. Writing and reading were my concern; it was sporadic; but now kids are really into it. I have never thought about myself as a thematic teacher, but I now this is what I think. I want to do it. I have not really planned but it is just happening.
>
> L: When you have an overall picture you sort of see how it all come together.
>
> I1:   Thematic unit is pretty much what we do in our classroom.
>
> I2:   I feel like I have certain things I have to do for my CT; it is not thematic at all.
>
> M: But doesn't your day feel choppy though?
>
> I2:   Yes it does.

The above excerpts, particularly the questioning of her fellow intern about the choppiness of the day, lead me to believe that Molly was reaching a point--an epiphany so to speak--where she could see the values of thematic teaching, which Myrtle Simpson (quoted by Taberski, 2002) eloquently articulated as follows:

> A child's school day should make sense. It should be about something. Ideally, the various activities of the day should work together, building upon

one-another for some purpose. A teacher's day should also make sense. Teachers who can see wholeness and simplicity in their curriculum have an easier task of organizing their day than those who are frustrated or intimidated by what they interpret as the increasing complexity of the curriculum demanded of them (1990).

Enabling conditions

Internal conditions

Recognizing that students were not doing enough writing and coming up with a focus question to address the issue speak to Molly's dispositions to reflect upon teaching situations and her commitment to finding out what works for students so as to fix what needs to be fixed. These are essential dispositions Molly appeared to have developed and/or reinforced during the fall semester of her internship. Molly's dispositions to reflect seems to have also helped her to make the most out of ideas she came across while flipping through books as she planned her space unit, that is, they allowed her to effectively interact with curricular and instructional ideas she encountered while planning. In doing so, she was able to bring together writing and content areas (in this case science) and to discover thematic teaching as her comfort zone in teaching. Furthermore, it seems reasonable to suggest that Molly's guided-lead teaching experience in working to synthesize how literature and teaching literature and writing come together appeared to have laid down the foundational pedagogical content knowledge she was able to built upon during her lead teaching. To be more explicit, this experience seemed to have helped her to accept the idea of engaging her students in creating their own space unit, and thereby connecting her writing inquiry project to her space unit.

External conditions

Two external conditions appear to have contributed a great deal to Molly's accomplishments and learning throughout her inquiry project. On the one hand, coming across (through books) the idea of engaging students in writing about their own space appears to have played a critical role in helping Molly bring together her inquiry project and space unit; and in doing so, she discovered her teaching style, i.e. thematic teaching. I am not sure if the internal conditions discussed in the previous section would have been enough, by themselves, to help Molly connect her writing inquiry project with her space unit.

On the other hand, the inquiry project structure provided by TE804 seemed to have guided Molly's thinking throughout the formulation and the exploration of her research question. To start with, the project required interns to draw on their experiences and context to identify a question, puzzle or problem of practice they wanted to work on. It also required them to consult a range of resources (people, written materials) to help them think about and explore their question or problem of practice. Furthermore, the project required interns to come up with a plan of action to address the question, to keep track of the process by collecting data, making sense of the data collected, summarizing and reporting the findings. I am not sure if Molly would have focused on finding ways to enhance her students' creative writing skills, the way she did without the above mentioned inquiry structure provided by TE 804. Subsequently, she might not have been able to identify thematic teaching as her teaching style without the same structure. To summarize, it appears that TE 804 provided a framework that allowed Molly to identity a problem of practice and systematically focus on it through observation, analysis and reflection. Without such a framework, Molly might not have explored the question of

finding more effective ways to improve her students' creating writing, which allowed her to discover thematic teaching as her teaching style.

So far in this chapter, I discussed different ways Molly started to make her own teaching voice public during the spring semester of internship. This became also apparent as she was beginning to key more into her students' interests. An example of keying more into students' interests is how Molly went about making Garden Gates reading more interesting, as discussed in the next section.

Making Garden Gates reading more interesting: "The biggest living thing"

Molly was not pleased with the way teaching reading through the Garden Gates basal reader was being conducted and she decided to make it more engaging. Molly's dissatisfaction with Garden Gates reading and her determination to change the status quo are best captured in her own words as follows.

> ...It's always... partner read the story, read it by yourself, read it chorally as a whole group, do the skill pack and it still seems, to me, it seems boring to teach it just because it's so... I mean, they don't really mind but it seems like they're just going through routine so I might try to think of something to make it more interesting or [inaudible]. (2nd Interview February 3rd, 2000)

Clearly, this statement suggests that Molly was at issue with basal readers because of its skill-based and predictable nature. Although Molly did not specifically say so, making reading more interesting seems to refer to finding ways to make it more engaging and exciting for students; which is consistent with the notion of getting kids excited, which she articulated in her teaching philosophy in early November. It is also reminiscent of how she went about redesigning her legends unit in order to make it more creative and exciting for her students.

On March 7, 2000, I had the opportunity to observe Molly when she implemented

a new approach to teaching reading using The Biggest Living Thing by Caroline Arnold,

which is a non-fiction book that fascinates readers with facts about the giant sequoia tree

of the Sierra Nevada mountains in California. Unlike the skill-oriented approach of the

Garden Gates reading Molly referred to earlier, this reading lesson (which started at

1:10pm and lasted about 50 minutes) reflects a shift toward a more interactive approach

to reading instruction, as illustrated below. Molly started the lesson by informing the

students that they would be using a new approach for the reading lesson and by telling

them the title of the story to be read. She then engaged students in some pre-reading

activities (which lasted approximately 18 minutes) ranging from activating their prior

knowledge by having them give examples of trees to going over some vocabulary words

with them, to making predictions. Pre-reading vocabulary instruction was carried using a

four-step approach outlined below.

> Step 1: Having vocabulary words written ahead of time on the board (Molly's idea).
> Step 2: Saying the words to students (Sue's idea).
> Step 3: Discussing meaning of words. Note: Sue's idea for this step is to use flashcards with definition of words on the back although I did not observe Molly using this technique during the lesson.
> Step 4: Having students engage in choral reading of vocabulary words on the overhead projector (Molly's idea).
> (Field notes, March 7, 2000)

The above approach appears to give students the opportunity to hear the proper

pronunciation of words, to see them, to talk about what they mean, and to practice saying

them correctly. In doing so, this approach appears to engage them in stimulating variety

of senses, which is likely to increase learning. As Magnesen (1983) put it, "we generally

retain, 10% of what we read, 20% of what we hear, 30% of what we see, 50% of what we

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see and hear, 70% of what we say and 90% of what we do and say". The following

segment partially and briefly gives a sense of how Molly engaged her students in

discussing the meaning of key vocabulary words and concepts.

> **[Note: M = Molly; S1= Student #1; S2= Student #3; S3=Student #4...]**
> M: Why do you think a sequoia tree is called a giant tree?
> S1:   I cut down a tree and it became a stump. [S1 whose pseudonym is
>   Henrietta is one of the struggling readers in the classroom. Both she
>   and Molly had a smile on their face after her response].
>
> ...
> M: What is another word for soil?
> S2:   Dirt.
> M: So if you come to the word soil and you can't remember what the
>   word is you can think of dirt.
> (Field notes, March 7, 2000).

The above segment suggests that Molly did not simply spend time going over key

vocabulary words, by providing students with definitions. Instead, she actively involved

them in the process of thinking about the meaning of different words. Actively involving

students in learning word meaning and relating words to contexts and other words is part

of effective vocabulary instruction, since students might be more likely to remember

words and concepts they had to think and talk about as opposed to merely memorizing

their definitions. Furthermore, the above segment also suggests that, through explicit

instruction, Molly was attempting to make available to her students strategies they could

use independently to overcome difficulties while reading (e.g., asking students to use dirt

as a substitute for soil. This appears to be an appropriate pedagogical move to help her

students become flexible and strategic readers. As Tompkins pointed out, "strategies are

cognitive tools that students can use selectively and flexibly as they become independent

readers and writers. In order for students to become independent readers and writers, they

need these thinking tools" (1997).

After engaging students in choral reading of all the words discussed and written on the overhead project and showing them on the maps where sequoia trees are found, Molly involved them in a question/answer session, appropriately allocating enough wait time.

> M: I would like for you to take a guess of how tall could this tree (sequoia tree) be.
> S2: Maybe 90-100 feet.
> M: ....They can be 272 feet; almost 273 feet tall....
> M: The author boys and girls is Caroline Arnold. She had to do lots of studies. What do you think she might have done to get the information to write the story?
> S3: Go and see them.
> M: Good.
> S4: Go to California.
> ...
> (Field notes, March 7, 2000).

While the above short segment seems to focus on assessing and building students' background knowledge, the next segment is characterized by engaging them in generating questions about what is being covered in the text.

> M: Before we start reading, I want to let you know that there are four things that sequoia tree needs to grow. So I want you to try to figure out what the four things sequoia trees need are. [Molly wrote 'Four things sequoia trees need to grow on the board]. I also want to know if any of you are wondering. Do you guys have any questions? If you're saying I wonder...I wonder how long it takes them to grow [a student provided the word grow) 272 feet. As I am reading with you, you might be listening for that.
> S5: I wonder how big their roots are.
> M: Wow! Great question! [Excitement on Molly's face]
> S1: I wonder how it would feel.
> M: To touch it?
> S1: Yes, [nodding her head]. And we might learn about that, hopefully.
> [Several students raised their hands].
> M: For those of you who have a question, share with members of your group.
> [Molly's prompt was followed by a very lively discussion at different tables].
> (Field notes, March 7, 2000)

The above segment illustrates the use of a variety of instructional strategies by

Molly. First, she gave her students some hints of what to look for (e.g., telling them that

there are four things that the sequoia tree needs to grow and that they should figure them

out as they read). In doing so, Molly was helping the students to set up clear goals in

mind for reading, which is one of the most important things that good readers do (see

Pearson & Duke, 2002) in enhancing their understanding of text. Second, Molly actively

involved her students in asking themselves questions about various aspects of the story,

which according to the literature, is one of the types of instruction with a solid scientific

basis for improving comprehension in non-impaired readers (National Reading Panel,

2000). Having students share their questions with each other also showed good judgment

on the part of Molly--her ability to think on her feet. The idea of sharing seemed not only

to promote learning through discussion among students, but also appeared to manage

time effectively; it seemed to have saved Molly from listening to all those who raised

their hand, which could have taken quite a bit of time. Third, she seemed to engage her

students in making connections between reading and writing, specifically in reading as

writers to make them think about some of the activities that writers such as Caroline have

to do as they engage in the writing process. Helping students to make connections

between reading and writing is important because the two are parallel processes that

influence one another (see Tierney, 1983, Smith, 1983 & Tompkins, 1997). Finally, after

attempting to provide students with some explicit description of what it means to wonder

about a text, Molly did some modeling of the strategy in action, as recommended by the

literature (see Pearson & Duke, 2002).

Before she started reading of the story aloud, Molly appropriately provided students with some explicit remarks about what she expected from them.

> M: You need to take your book to p.256. Today I will be reading to you and tomorrow you'll be partner reading. I'm going to be reading to be reading to you and I want you want you to follow along. If you would like to use your fingers to follow along, go right ahead. I'm going to be asking some questions so you need to listen...Show me your ready signals. (Field notes, March 7, 2000)

These remarks--which appeared to give students a sense of purpose for learning, the importance of which Molly seemed to have realized during her legends unit--were followed by bringing to students' attention the illustration (pictures of sequoia trees) on the first page. While reading aloud, Molly walked around the room to different tables asking comprehension questions at different stages of the story, as illustrated in the following excerpts.

> M: When people found the sequoia tree what questions did they have about it?
> S6:   I forgot. [S6 whose pseudonym is Sheila is one of the struggling students in the classroom]
> M: Everyone, look at the paragraph that starts with people.
> M: Casey, what is one thing they wanted to know?
> C5:   How big they were
> M: Yes! What is another thing they wanted to know Sheila?
> S6:   How they were.
> M: There is another thing they wanted to know. [At that point, Molly came and asked Sheila to read a specific paragraph. Once Sheila reached the information Molly was looking for, she asked her to read it aloud for everyone.
> S6:   How old they were.
> [The reading lesson ended with the following exchange].
> M: I really like how the author ended the story. Do you know why?
> S7:   That's the title.
> M: You did a wonderful job!

The above excerpts illustrate Molly's use of question answering, where readers answer questions posed by the teacher and receive immediate feedback, a strategy that,

according to the literature, is one of the types of instruction with a solid scientific basis for improving comprehension in non-impaired readers (National Reading Panel, 2000). While using this strategy at various points in the story, there is evidence that Molly provided some scaffolding to help students locate information. For instance, she asked students to locate the paragraph starting with people; she even came and pointed the paragraph to a struggling student who could not do so on her own. Such scaffolding moves seem to speak to Molly's awareness and understanding of the need to assist students, specifically struggling readers, with strategies they can use to identify information while reading. In addition, she never gave up on Sheila (a struggling reader) to whom she gave several opportunities to participate by providing her with constructive feedback--i.e., asking her to and assisting in finding further information about what people wanted to know when they discovered sequoia trees. This reinforces Molly's sensitivity toward and commitment to meeting the needs of all students, particularly struggling ones, as discussed in chapters 3 and 4 and previous sections of chapter 5. Finally, Molly's last question and comment about how the author ended the story seems to be another illustration of how she was appropriately trying to help her students see the connection between reading and writing and to read like writers.

What did Molly accomplish and/or learn?

During a science lesson debriefing session the day after Garden Gates reading lesson, Sue had nothing but praises for Molly, as summarized by the following statement: "the reading lesson was so good yesterday." As pointed at the outset of this learning episode, Molly was determined to make the use of basal readers, in this case, Garden Gates, more interesting and more engaging. She appeared to have made progress toward

that goal, if one considers the high level of interaction and students participation from the beginning to the end of reading <u>The Biggest Living Thing</u>. For example, she spent a great deal of time engaging her students in pre-reading activities (for about 18 minutes). As the literature suggests, the preparation stage plays a crucial role in enhancing students' comprehension of what they are reading. Not only can the preparation stage of reading help build and/or determine students' background knowledge and overcome text problems, but also it can motivate students to want to read (Richardson & Morgan, 2003). In addition, the fact that Molly spent a considerable amount of time using a new approach to go over some key vocabulary words seems to underscore her awareness and understanding that teaching the vocabulary of a selection can improve students' comprehension of that selection (Beck, Perfetti, C.A., & McKeown, 1982). Furthermore, the fact that she engaged students in answering several content and comprehension-related questions, at different points in the story, speaks to her understanding that comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading. Finally, the fact that she provided students with a variety of reading strategies prior to and during the reading appears to underscore her commitment and ability to enhance students' reading skills.

Enabling conditions

Internal conditions

First of all, recognizing that the skill-based and predictable nature of basal readers might be routine-like and boring to students seems to reiterate Molly's disposition to appraise existing instructional practices and materials, a disposition that was discussed in both chapters 3 and 4. Moreover, it further illustrates Molly's disposition to seeing

teaching from the child's point of view, a disposition, which was also discussed in chapters 3 and 4.

Secondly, Molly's decision to bring a new twist to basal readers--i.e., using Garden Gates in a more engaging manner--could be attributed, to a large extent, to her growing confidence in her knowledge and ability to teach reading using a variety of strategies. As discussed in previous sections, Molly's confidence level appeared to be growing as a result of her expanding knowledge of teaching, allowing her to take more initiative and to make her own teaching voice public.

Finally, Molly seemed to be building upon previously acquired pedagogical capital throughout her internship, by interweaving it into new teaching situations. That it to say that she was constructing her practice by weaving together past knowledge and experiences. This is a further illustration of Dewey's concept of educative experience as enabling conditions (1933) (see similar observation in sections discussing Molly's second interview and her decision to bring back learning centers). For instance, during the pre-reading stage, Molly set up a purpose for students learning; the importance of which she seemed to have realized during her legends unit. Another example of prior knowledge being built upon and woven into Molly's practice has to do with how she provided students with some strategies they could use during the reading process. These strategies might have stemmed from some of her previous experiences, namely: observing Sue leading literacy (both reading and writing) groups, working with students, the in-service on leveling books and guided reading, and gaining insights from the guided reading book by Fountas and Pinnell (see 2[nd] interview with Molly, February 2, 2000).

External conditions

The external conditions discussed when referring to what enabled Molly to bring back learning centers with some novelty appeared to have played a similar role in helping her make Garden Gates reading more interesting. Indeed, the clinical environment--flexibility on the part of Sue and her trust in Molly--appeared to have encouraged her to bring about some instructional changes to the basal reader being used in the classroom. I'm not sure if Molly would have been able to make similar changes while working with a collaborating teacher who was rigid and not open to new ideas. Sue appeared to have created a environment within which Molly felt comfortable and empowered enough to interact with existing curricular and instructional ideas and materials, to the point of making changes to them--in a classroom that is not "technically" hers. Furthermore, flexibility can also be seen at the level of the MSU TE program, which expects that professional knowledge needs to be used flexibly in relation to particular situations and contexts. It is possible that Molly's decision to make changes might have been guided by this program expectation.

So far in this chapter, I examined several episodes illustrating Molly's engagement in appropriating and/or synthesizing knowledge, with the help of internal and external conditions. In the first episode, I discussed how, after encountering some difficulties during a guided reading session, Molly went about learning to match kids with books, by taking advantage of a professional learning opportunity. In the second episode, I discussed how (during our second formal interview) she went about taking stock of knowledge she had constructed up to the beginning of the second semester of her internship. In doing so, she revealed her disposition to reflect on her construction of her teaching practice and to set up new learning goal for the rest of her internship. In the third

episode, I discussed how Molly brought back learning centers into her clinical classroom, with some novelty. The discussion suggested that Molly's reexamination of learning centers (appropriated in September) appeared to reveal a refinement of her knowledge construction with respect to learning centers, leading her to the creation of new ideas. In the fourth episode, I looked at how--in an effort to enhance her students' creative writing skills and through synthesizing how writing and content fit together--Molly discovered thematic teaching to be her comfort zone and teaching style. Finally, in the fifth episode I discussed how, as a result of being at issue with basal readers as the mode of instruction, Molly went about making teaching reading through "Garden Gates' more interesting and engaging for her students. In doing so, this episode further illustrated Molly's ability to interact with curricular ideas and materials in order to bring about changes to enhance students' learning.

Having examined the above episodes during the second semester of Molly's journey, I now discuss the conceptions of literacy instruction, particularly reading instruction, with which she ended her internship by contrasting those conceptions with the ones that she articulated after two months into her internship. Noticed changes are discussed in relation to some of the conditions that might have enabled them. In doing so, I make references to some of the learning episodes discussed in this chapter as well as in chapters 3 and 4, to the extent that they might have might have contributed to shaping Molly's construction of knowledge with respect to reading instruction, as articulated at the end of her internship experience.

Molly's late conceptions of literacy instruction

Examining some conceptual changes

In the third chapter I discussed how Molly's conceptions of literacy instruction showed a significant conceptual change just during the first two months of her internship journey. At the end of the study, I was able to engage her in re-articulating her conceptions of literacy instruction, particularly reading instruction. While some of her early conceptions remained same, others did change as outlined in table 5.

Table 5. Summary of Molly's conceptions of Literacy
--as revealed in the first and third formal interviews--

1st Interview (11/11/99	3rd Interview (5/30/00)
Literacy is: .Reading; Writing; Speaking; Listening; .Comprehension .Interpretation **(Based mostly on Sue's Definition)**	**Literacy is:** Same as Interview # 1 However, "I can say how I Feel about literacy." **(Deeper and Enhanced Understanding)**
Characteristics of good readers: .Fluency/Good decoding skills .Reading With expression .Good Comprehension Skills .Confidence	**Characteristics of good readers:** Same as Interview # 1
Characteristics of poor readers: .Lack of fluency/Low decoding skills/Low Sight words recognition/ .Reading in a monotone .Lack of confidence .Lack of comprehension skills	**Characteristics of poor readers:** Same as Interview # 1
Most Effective Strategies to accelerate Reading Performance: .Individual instruction--to work on decoding skills or comprehension .Positive reinforcement .Appropriate reading materials	**Most Effective Strategies to accelerate Reading Performance:** .Determining reading level first .Using appropriate materials .Small group & partner reading .One-on-one instruction .Making students realize where they're and where they want to be **(More Refined, Sophisticated and Elaborated Ideas)**
Least Effective Strategies to accelerate Reading Performance: .Whole class engaged in basal reading .No time for individual instruction	**Least Effective Strategies to accelerate Reading Performance:** Same as Interview # 1
Molly's Literacy Program: [Note: This topic was not addressed during the first interview].	**Molly's Literacy Program:** An integrated approach to literacy instruction.

As suggested in the above table, Molly's definition of literacy and what she identified as the characteristics of both good and poor readers did not change. And similar to early conceptions, her definition of literacy at the end of the internship did not make any reference to visual literacy--visual representation and viewing. However, there were some subtle changes in terms of some of her initial ideas taking on a deeper meaning. First of all, Molly indicated that although her definition of literacy has remained the same, it had more meaning to her.

> A lot of my ideas were from Sue because she was my, and is still my strongest role model in literacy...But through her, I've been able to develop my own ideas, too. Not that they're so drastically different but I have a clearer understanding...Where before she kind of led me through my thinking and now I can honestly say how I would feel about, you know, what is literacy...So other than that, I don't know if I would add anything. (3rd Interview May 30, 2000)

From the above statement it appears that at the end of her journey, Molly no longer felt that her ideas were from Sue--i.e., ideas she had memorized from her collaborating teacher and was merely reciting them whenever needed. Instead, she felt that she had earned them and was able to articulate them, using her own voice. This seemed to be the result of seeing ideas being enacted, revisiting them, leading to an enhanced understanding and/or appreciation of their meaning and values. As Raphael & Hiebert, (1997, p.17) pointed out "each time students revisit ideas, concepts, and strategies that they have internalized in one context, they continually refine and expand their knowledge and abilities to apply them in new contexts". For instance, Molly's unit on Native American legends seemed to have given her a deeper appreciation for the connection between reading and writing; a connection which she talked about during our first interview in November 1999.

A second subtle change had to do with one of the key concepts that Molly

highlighted during the first interview with regard to characteristics of good and poor

readers was their confidence or lack of confidence when reading. This came up in the

form of a re-enlightenment or re-enforcement during the third formal interview. Molly

attributed this to the opportunity she had to teach 5th graders. This is how she referred to

that experience:

> I was just going to say and, and you said it. The whole confidence thing; I've
> noticed that even more in 5th grade because you have certain students when you
> ask for volunteers to read aloud, it's always the same, same kids that want to read
> aloud. And you have the ones who just try to avoid looking at you and so I try not
> to call on them but you can definitely tell when I'm reading one, one on one with
> those students…You know, they tend to just kind of get over the word or they'll
> mumble something. You're like repeat the word again for me or whatever. So I
> think the confidence thing is the main thing. (3r Interview with Molly, May 30,
> 2000)

From this statement, it appears that working in a different context with different

students had reinforced Molly's initial belief about the importance of confidence in the

learning process. Most importantly, it appears that Molly had realized that being

confident becomes more visible and more critical when dealing with older children. In

order to make further sense of the subtle changes just described, I cannot help but use the

analogy of a soccer player learning to dribble with two legs. When learning to dribble

with two legs, a player has to, among other things, learn to control the ball, protect

himself/herself, and practice dribbling with one foot first and then the second one. These

skills are learned both individually and collectively (e.g., with a partner, or in teams).

However, it is only in a real game--when the player is faced with dribbling an opponent --

that dribbling takes on its real meaning for him/her. Similarly, it is in the context of

practice that Molly developed a deeper understanding of the impact of confidence on

students' reading behaviors; an impact that tends be become more visible with upper grade students. I am not sure if Molly would have been able to have such an enhanced understanding without the opportunities to work with students at different reading and grade levels.

In addition to the subtle changes mentioned above, there were some significant changes related to what Molly considered to be the most effective instructional strategies to be used to accelerate students' reading performance. Here is what she had to say:

> What I would do, I would first of all, find the level of where they're at, where their reading level is at. And then from there, I would present them with different texts that would be appropriate for the level that they were at...I would have them probably...partner reading with someone about the same level. I would try two things. First of all, have them in a small group with other students who are at the same level so I could work with them all, on the same common difficulties that they're facing. I would also maybe pair them up with someone who is more advanced reader. You have to be very careful to partner them up though because you wouldn't want someone who would be boastful of their strong ability as a reader. But someone that could be like an encourager and maybe help them... Other students, you might be able to set them with and they might be able to say well, remember how you did this or whatever... Presenting them with as many different ways to understand maybe where their weaknesses are. I think it's important that they realize where they want to be--Not necessarily where the teacher wants them to be but where they want to be and then kind of help them along so eventually they're getting to where kind of you want them to be but not staying, not right away but what's your goal? Okay, let's make this even if it's a small, minute goal. Okay, well, how long do you want to take before you get to reading this book or whatever. (3r Interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

The most striking point in this statement has to do with the level of sophistication in Molly's articulation of her ideas. First, although in early November Molly talked about getting to know each child as a learner and reader in terms of strengths and limitations, and using appropriate materials, she seemed more specific in May about what that entails. For instance, she talked more specifically about determining students' reading levels. In addition, Molly did not simply make a laundry list of ideas and strategies; instead, she

carefully sequenced their order. She recognized that the most important step after

determining students' reading level is to select appropriate materials for them; before

thinking about devising instruction (e.g., partner reading, small group reading). There is

also a connection to the notion of using a variety of representations--PCK--in her ideas.

The level of specificity in Molly's ideas might be attributed to the different opportunities

she had, throughout her internship, to work with students, to try out different ideas and

strategies, and reflect on what works best for them. In other words, it seems that it is

through the context of practice that she constructed an elaborated and situated knowledge

of how to scaffold students' reading skills.

Second, she had developed a dominant concern for the learner. For instance, her

words suggest that she is aware of the fact when grouping students one needs to take into

consideration not only their ability levels, but also their personality. In other words,

Molly had worked long enough with her students to know that not all ways of grouping

work. Another illustration is the fact that Molly is now talking about setting goals not

only *for* students but also *with* them, i.e. making them realize where they are and where

they want to go. Her dominant concern for the learner discussed above, seemed to have

resulted from her disposition to see teaching from the learner's perspective. It also might

have stemmed from some external conditions--for instance, being exposed to and

learning to implement learning centers and observing Sue leading literacy groups--which

I discussed in previous sections.

One final point worth mentioning here is that there is an apparent difference in the

voice Molly used at the end of her internship, compared to the one she used at the

beginning. Indeed, in early November, when Molly talked about effective reading

instructional strategies, she used a more distant and neutral voice, referring so to speak, to what good instruction would be. However, through the way Molly expressed herself in May, one could hear more of her own voice--e.g., "first I would do" "I could work", "I think" I don't think"--coming through. To put it differently, she sounded more personally connected to what she was saying, and more confident so to speak. This could be seen as an indication that, throughout her clinical journey, Molly did find her own teaching identity; she was gradually defining herself and being viewed by others (Sue and Gaston the researcher) as a competent and confident beginning teacher, during the spring semester.

Besides the above-mentioned significant changes, the detailed-oriented nature of what Molly had to say about her own literacy program, seems to also give a good indication as to how she had gained a deeper understanding of reading instruction. It is to such understanding that I now turn my attention to.

Molly's future literacy program

By the end of my third interview I had the chance to engage Molly in looking ahead. I wanted to gain a sense of how a literacy or reading program would look like in her classroom. Her response to that query was intimately related to her emerging conceptions of literacy instruction. This is what Molly had to say, with confidence, in response to the question, "What would I see in terms of literacy or reading instruction, if I were to visit your second or third grade classroom next year for an entire week, for instance?"

> You would see everything. You'd see as much integration of literacy into any possible minute of the day as possible...Like I said before, whole group activities, you'd see shared writing, shared reading, read aloud activities, partner reading activities, silent reading activities like a DEAR situation where everyone's

reading silent reading. You'd see students at centers where they'd be listening. You'd see kids interacting with each other, listening to each other. Obviously, they're listening to me but having more like discussion-based things. Speaking, opportunities where I would emphasize their speaking skills and learning to communicate their ideas with other people so that people can understand them. I think, what else? I think that's... I might add more to that--Can I add something really quick? ...You would have writing, I would still have journals weekly. I'm not sure, it would be, it would be dependent on how I set up my room next year, what group, what age students I had to work with whatever, but creative journal writing, informational writing. I just wanted to add that, too. I just thought of that, too. (3rd Interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

Clearly, the above description illustrates that by the end of her internship, Molly developed a vision of an integrated approach to literacy instruction. It is interesting how in her early definition of literacy Molly talked, in general terms, about the four language arts, whereas at the end of the study she became more detailed-oriented in terms of what it entails to have an integrated literacy program. In addition, it is worth pointing out that the list of strategies (e.g. shared reading and writing, partner reading, centers, DEAR time) that Molly came up with appeared to be ideas and concepts she was exposed to throughout her internship (e.g., the learning centers experience, the legends unit, and Garden Gates reading) and possibly during her course work. Furthermore, Molly's reference to the use of weekly journals seems to be, in part, the reflection of the success she had had with her inquiry project, which was discussed earlier in this chapter.

As discussed above, Molly talked about her conceptions of literacy instruction, particularly reading instruction, with more details and confidence at the end of her internship. This increased confidence level was corroborated when I engaged her in reflecting on her journey with respect to learning to teach reading, as illustrated in the next section.

Molly's reflection on her journey: "I feel fine, I mean really confident"

This section has three components. The first component is related to Molly's satisfaction with learning about teaching reading and her experience working with students at different reading levels, over the course of the internship. The second component deals with her satisfaction regarding her take on her students' reading achievement. This also includes data on students' achievement. The third component examines Molly's reflection on what could have been done to enhance her internship experience.

Molly is pleased with her learning

In order to engage Molly in reflecting on her clinical journey, I asked her to create a timeline to represent her learning. On the one hand, Molly characterized her pre-internship experience with respect to learning to teach reading as filled with "little teeny steps, teeny, teeny steps and occasionally have like a jump...but mostly like question marks around." On the other hand she was very pleased with her internship experience, as illustrated below:

> I think I made 100% gains and whatever. You know, I feel more confident that I'm all set for starting my own program like that so, I am very pleased. I feel, like I said, I don't feel like I have any, I mean, there's things I want to work on, you know, and of course, being, experiencing it and actually doing it in my own classroom. I'm going to keep learning on that but I feel fine. I mean, really confident... I came in not feeling like I was very competent in this area anyway so anything that I have learned, I've felt that it's been awesome that I've had the opportunity to have learned it. (3[rd] Interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

Molly's increased confidence level makes sense given the MSU teacher education program structure. In a way, it supports the logic of the program, which stipulates that "the lead teaching period is an opportunity to put the pieces together in a way that builds confidence and experience for the intern, while demonstrating competence to others" (Team One Elementary Intern Handbook, 1999-2000, p. 27). It also makes sense given

the determination--in becoming a confident and competent reading teacher--with which

Molly started her internship.

Furthermore, Molly was pleased with the fact that she was given the opportunity

to work with different reading levels. She told me that working with students at different

reading levels was "a wonderful challenge" simply because she could not just have

everyone doing the exact same thing. As she stated:

> You have to be able to key into what each individual student can do. I think it's important, I've felt that it's important that I know where I want each of my students to be, not necessarily by the end of the year but... you know, at a certain length of time, at a time. You know, for instance, the next marking period, I'd really like to get so and so up to this level. Or work with them on this. Working with such a diverse ability range, was very interesting. Like I said, it's kind of nice to be able to do whole group things. In the same sense, you have to have activities that are going to challenge the upper level students and ones that aren't going to be too hard for the lower level students. I think the whole guided reading/literacy circle play into that. (3[rd] Interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

Molly is pleased with her students' progress

Molly had nothing but positive things to say about the progress made by her

students throughout the year. The following quote clearly illustrates her satisfaction in

this regard:

> I'm very pleased with it. And it, I became more pleased,... because of different things. For instance, the journal, my inquiry on journal writing, creative journal writing, I found that when I take time to specialize on something, to key into something that my students put, it seems like I get more of a reward back from them, like harder work or something. I think it's because if you take the time to actually make authentic learning tasks or whatever, then it really does pay off and your students really do get into it more. So I think I'm very pleased. Some of my lower students at the beginning of the year, oh, my goodness. You would not even know. I think they're, it's phenomenal, the changes that they have made. (3[rd] Interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

Sue corroborated Molly's satisfaction with her students' performance as follows: "lots of kids got up to grade level. Nobody was retained" (Phone conversation with Sue, May 4th, 2001). Molly's satisfaction was corroborated by data on students' writing samples (February 14, 2000) as illustrated in Appendix E. The appendix shows individual drawing of a spaceship and substantive writing of a corresponding story by students, some of whom, according to Molly, could barely write at the start of the school of year. In addition, it was supported by a pre-test and post-test summary table--on students' phonemic awareness as well as their sight vocabulary--that Sue gave me almost a year after the 1999-2000 school year (see Appendix F). The results of these tests show that, on average, only 7.4 out of 22 students knew beginning consonant blends, short vowels, and ending consonants in September, as opposed to 19.8 students in May. This suggests that about 12.4 students, i.e. more than half (56.81%) have made progress in their phonemic awareness. The result from the 2nd grade High Frequency List also indicates considerable gain. While 14 out of 22 students knew less than 50% of their sight words in September, only 2 students were below 50% sight word recognition in May. This indicates that 12 students, more than half (54.54%) of the student population, made significant progress in sight word recognition. Given the developmental progress of Molly and Sue's positive influence on her, it is safe to say that they are both responsible for the above students' growth.

Molly wished she had a better exposure to the use of guided reading

Despite Molly's satisfaction with the knowledge and skills she acquired, there is one aspect of learning that she believes could have been structured. Indeed, Molly wished that more could have been done on guided reading, as illustrated below.

The whole literature groups. Just to have more of a definite plan of action and more of a follow through. I don't think we really followed through it and I need to have that sense of finishing something or... having the students feel like they've, you know, all of a sudden, pull out your books from three weeks ago. (3rd Interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

Although one does not get a sense of which aspects of guided reading Molly wanted to learn more about, it appears that she felt that there was a lack of consistency in using it as an instructional framework. The notion of continuity is not surprising at all, given that Molly considered herself to be consistent and very scheduled and that she now had a more sophisticated 'big picture' of where she was heading. It is also worth noticing for two other reasons. First, it might also say something about the fact that in order to assist preservice teachers and possibly beginning teachers construct their practice, they need to be given ample opportunities to see any new instructional approach or strategy being implemented from beginning to end. This could be the most reliable way to make sure they have a full grasp of the scope and sequence of ideas in action. Second, the fact that Molly was also referring to the lack of continuity in terms of her students--guided reading was used during the fall but was somehow neglected during the spring--further reinforces that she was looking at teaching from the learners' perspective, a disposition that was discussed in previous sections and chapters.

Summary and conclusion

This chapter illustrated a noteworthy appropriation and synthesis of knowledge with respect to learning to level books, still working to fit writing with content areas, gradually creating a teaching identity by taking bigger steps, such as keying more into students' interests by trying out new instructional approaches, and modifying existing instructional materials to make learning more engaging. There is also evidence of Molly

ending up her internship with an integrated conception of literacy instruction, as a result of the different teaching and learning situations she interacted with while constructing her practice.

All the five episodes discussed in this chapter brought light to three important points in Molly's knowledge construction about teaching in general, and literacy instruction, in particular. First, they illustrated that Molly was building on her past experiences and making further connections throughout the second semester of internship. As she built on previous experiences, she seemed to be enhancing her understanding of ideas, concepts, and strategies. Second, these episodes further exemplified Molly's commitment to doing whatever it takes to help students succeed (learning to level books, scaffolding their creative writing skills, being at issues with curricular ideas and materials and keying more into students' interests). Finally, they illustrated how Molly was gradually starting to make her own teaching voice public, as a result of an increased confidence in her ability to use a variety of strategies to scaffold students' learning.

In addition, a comparison of Molly's early and late conceptions of literacy along with how she portrayed her own literacy program seemed to reveal both some conceptual and practical changes with respect to her journey in learning to teach reading. These changes are evidenced by an ability to be more articulate about specifics rather than simply talking in global terms. It seems that the internship allowed her to situate her conceptions of literacy, to see how they work. She was learning to teach reading in the context of practice by enacting ideas she had encountered either prior to or during the internship. Being able to articulate her ideas with specifics could be seen as sign that

Molly had succeeded in linking theory to practice. That is to say that her conceptions were no longer standing by themselves, abstract and somehow lacking pedagogical considerations; instead, they were grounded in practice.

The nature of Molly's knowledge construction with respect to reading instruction can be characterized by the reinforcement and/or development of some her content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge (see section on conceptions of literacy) and dispositions, as summarized below.

(1) Content Knowledge (CK)

- A deeper and enhanced understanding of what literacy is.

(2)Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

- An increased and situated understanding of literacy, as revealed in the discussion of a conception of an integrated approach to literacy instruction in general, and reading instruction in particular.

- An increased awareness and understanding of ways to integrate writing and content instruction. Molly's reflection on her inquiry project and the way she described her future literacy program both seemed to indicate that she ended the internship with a strong foundation for fitting writing into content areas.
- An increased awareness and understanding of the need to get to know students in order to better meet their learning needs.

- An increased awareness and understanding of the use of a variety of strategies to scaffold students' writing and reading skills, as illustrated by her inquiry project and Garden Gates reading.

(3) Dispositions

- An increased awareness and sensitivity toward helping all students, particularly struggling students, and her commitment to find whatever is needed to help them move forward, as illustrated by her determination to learn to level books, her inquiry project and Garden Gates reading.

- A stronger move from a dominant concern for the teacher to a dominant concern for the learner, as illustrated by the different episodes discussed as well as her concern about the fact students were not exposed to guided reading consistently.

- A highly increased confidence with respect to reading instruction and excitement in having her own classroom and literacy program.

As discussed throughout this chapter, the reinforcement and/or development of the above content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and dispositions seemed to have resulted from interactions between some internal and external conditions. On the hand, it was apparent that Molly was able to make use of some of the essential knowledge and dispositions (e.g., being able to reflect and to see teaching from the learner's perspectives, and a commitment to doing whatever is necessary to enhance students' learning) with which she started the second semester of her internship. These internal conditions constituted a key piece of information that helped me to make sense of how she went about constructing her practice through the spring semester. On the other hand, the discussions illustrated the prominent role of some of the external conditions--Sue's flexibility in giving Molly space to try out her own ideas, professional opportunities at her internship site to attend an inservice, as well as the structure of TE 804, which guided her thinking as she developed and pursued her inquiry project.

Chapter 6

FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

At the outset of this dissertation, I raised three questions that guided my

analysis. An overarching question: *How did a preservice teacher learn to teach*

reading--especially to teach struggling readers--during an internship experience?

And two subsidiary questions, namely: *(1) What enabling conditions facilitated*

her knowledge construction? and *(2) What did she actually construct?* My analysis

of Molly's internship journey has enhanced my under- standing of these questions.

Thus, in this chapter, there are first some general comments about what was learned

with respect to each question. This is followed by discussion --using more

interpretive comments--of the implications the study for improving teacher education

practices with respect to effectively preparing elementary preservice teachers to teach

reading. Finally, in keeping with the spirit of improvement of teacher education,

teaching, and learning, I raise new questions for further study.

Summary of findings

Research Question 1: How did a preservice teacher learn to teach reading-- especially to teach struggling readers--during an internship experience?

The analysis shows that Molly's knowledge construction with respect to teaching

reading, especially struggling readers, occurred through two processes. First, she learned

through appropriation, i.e. learning ideas, concepts, and strategies about reading

instruction that are similar to ways of thinking and acting of more knowledgeable

members of the literacy teaching culture. The analysis shows that this appropriation took

place through, for instance, direct observation and appraisal of teaching situations, talking

with Sue (her collaborating teacher). Second Molly's knowledge happened through

synthesizing knowledge, which involved her taking a stock of knowledge being appropriated, weaving together existing knowledge and in the process enhancing her understanding of appropriated knowledge and/or creating new ideas, concepts, and strategies. The analysis also shows that while appropriation appeared to be the dominant process of knowledge construction in the fall semester, especially during the first two months, synthesizing knowledge seemed to take over during the spring semester.

Through Molly's conceptions of literacy instruction, particularly reading instruction, and three learning episodes (the learning center experience, the spelling activity, and the math lesson debriefing session) chapter three illustrates a noteworthy appropriation of concepts, ideas and strategies during the first two months of Molly's internship. Throughout all three episodes, Molly encountered opportunities to observe and/or work with her students and to reflect upon her experiences, in collaboration with Sue who provided sustained and worthwhile scaffolding. For example, the fall learning center episode illustrated Molly gradually appropriating concepts and strategies related to learning centers. This appropriation involved participating in and talking about the behind the scene work--organizing together, with Sue, the center chart, and talking about and reflecting upon the rationale and what goes in during center time--observing the implementation of learning centers, and facilitating learning centers. Molly also engaged in synthesizing knowledge in terms of taking stock of what she was appropriating (e.g., journal reflection on learning centers), revealing that she had come to term with the use of learning centers because of what they have to offer.

Chapter four provides a noteworthy example of appropriation and synthesis of knowledge with respect to developing and teaching a literacy unit during the fall guided

lead-teaching period. There is evidence of knowledge appropriation and synthesis through the discussion of how Molly redesigned her unit, in collaboration with Sue, in order to make it more exciting and engaging. The chapter also discusses instances of Molly working on synthesizing how use of literature, teaching literature content, and writing all fit together. In addition, there is illustration of Molly appropriating (e.g. direct observation of Sue during writing conferences with students) and synthesizing knowledge about how to scaffold students' writing, with Sue's help.

Chapter five exemplifies Molly's appropriation of knowledge with respect to learning to level books (e.g., attending a workshop on leveling books and guided reading) and reflecting upon her experience. It exemplifies her synthesis of knowledge by still working to fit writing with content areas, keying more into students' interests by trying out new instructional approaching, modifying existing instructional materials to make learning more engaging (e.g. making Garten Gates reading more interesting). The chapter also shows that Molly was synthesizing knowledge by building on her past experiences (from the fall semester) and making further connections throughout the second semester of the internship. While Molly was building on past experiences to construct her teaching knowledge, she was at the same time gradually starting to make her own teaching voice public--her teaching identity was under construction (Danielewicz, 2001)--as a result of an increased confidence in her ability to use a variety of strategies to scaffold students' learning.

As Molly was constructing her knowledge with respect to teaching in general and teaching reading in particular, she engaged in the process of synthesizing knowledge in terms of weaving past experiences into new experiences. As Molly engaged in weaving

these different experiences, she seemed to be enhancing her understanding of ideas, concepts, and strategies, as further discussed in the section dealing with the knowledge she constructed. Indeed, she was building on past experiences for later experiences of a deeper, more expansive quality (Dewey, 1938). She was refining and expanding her ideas and strategies with respect to teaching in general, and teaching reading in particular in new learning situations. As such, throughout her journey, she illustrated the usefulness of Dewey's concept of educative experience as enabling conditions. This leads me to summarize, in the next section, what I learned about conditions that facilitated Molly's knowledge construction.

Research Question 2: What enabling conditions facilitated her knowledge construction?

The analysis shows that Molly's knowledge construction with respect to teaching reading, especially struggling readers, seemed to have been facilitated by a variety of enabling conditions. As Dewey pointed out, the learner brings some "internal conditions"--i.e., personal dispositions such as needs, desires, internal capacities and purposes, along with past experiences--to any learning situation (1938). Molly started off her internship with some internal conditions, which are summarized in the next section.

Internal conditions

As a matter of fact, Molly came into her internship with some internal conditions, which seemed to have played a critical role in facilitating her knowledge construction during the course of her journey. These conditions included Molly's eagerness to learn teach reading, since she considered reading instruction to be her weakest area. In other words, Molly had a personal interest or value-triggered interest--due to actualized opportunities for need involvement (Reeve, 1996), i.e., having to teach reading during the

internship, and skill development, i.e., recognizing her weaknesses in reading instruction at the start of the internship. Molly's eagerness to learn was reflected during the course of her internship, especially during the fall semester to absorb as much possible and to be open to constructive feedback--which is an MSU program expectation.

Another internal condition Molly brought into her internship has to do with her emerging interest in struggling students, i.e., her fascination with and satisfaction in teaching them, as discussed in chapter three. This fascination seemed to have predisposed Molly to make sure that all kids experience success and joy with the learning process. This disposition was translated, early on at the start of the internship, into her determination to get to know her students developmentally as learners, and to appropriate the use of a variety of scaffolding strategies to improve their reading and writing skills. As the internship progressed, she continuously strived toward making her lessons more interesting and engaging for her students and asking good questions (e.g. Garten Gates reading). In addition, the above internal condition appeared to have predisposed Molly to start, early on in her internship, to look at teaching from the child's viewpoint (Van Mannen, 1991).

Molly also seemed to have come into her internship with the disposition to reflect --another MSU program expectation and a standard of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium. This disposition allowed her, early on, to reflect upon and appraise existing instructional practices her own (e.g., the math lesson debriefing session). Although Molly started her internship eager to learn as much as possible, she did not simply embrace any ideas she came across. In fact, thanks to her disposition to reflect, she even questioned some of them (e.g., the learning centers, and

the spelling episode), by analyzing their strengths and limitations. Furthermore, the above internal condition seemed to have contributed a great deal to enhancing Molly's disposition to look at teaching from the learner's point of view and to be willing to go the extra mile to find what works for her all students. It is also her disposition to reflect that allowed her to make sense and take a stock of what she was appropriating and to refine and expand her understanding of concepts, ideas and strategies.

The internship context as external conditions

To start with, Molly appeared to have benefited a lot from Sue, who provided her with some scaffolding, which ranged from reflective conversation (Schon, 1987), modeling, to a gradual release of responsibilities (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). Furthermore, Molly was very satisfied with her collaborating teacher who provided her with the necessary guidance and support to learn to teach and to reflect on her practice, as described below.

> My CT was wonderful and because we were very open with each other at the very beginning and I was, I would just tell her, why did you do that? Why, how did you do that or whatever? She was very helpful. Taking me to different conferences, giving me different resource books to look at, talking with me after lessons. Talking with me even during lessons when she would be done teaching and we'd go over to the corner and she'd talk. (3rd Interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

In addition, the presence of struggling readers in Sue's classroom seemed to have allowed Molly to draw upon her sensitivity toward meeting the needs of all learners. It also seemed to have presented her with an opportunity to gradually learn to look at teaching from the learner's point of view--being able to realize the benefits of specific instructional approaches or strategies (e.g., learning centers, breaking out sounds) for students.

Finally, the structure and requirements (e.g., the need to be flexible and to become a reflective practitioner) of the internship program, particularly the requirements of TE 802 and 804 played an important role in facilitating Molly's knowledge construction. For instance, TE 802 and 804 provided her with a structure that allowed her to design and implement a literacy unit during the fall guided lead-teaching, and to undertake an inquiry project on her own teaching during the spring lead-teaching. I made the point that without such a structure, she likely would not have been able to engage in the kind of thinking and teaching she did.

Interaction between internal and external conditions

Throughout Molly's journey, the above internal and external conditions interacted in meaningful ways, allowing her to construct her knowledge with respect teaching in general, and teaching reading in particular. In chapter three, the data analysis illustrates some meaningful interactions between external and internal conditions as she was constructed her knowledge during the first two months of her internship. Throughout all three episodes (the learning center experience, the spelling activity, and the math lesson debriefing session) discussed, Molly encountered opportunities to observe and/or work with her students and to reflect upon her experiences, in collaboration with Sue who provided sustained and worthwhile scaffolding. Molly's reflections acknowledge her ability to not only appraise instructional practices she had been exposed to, but to analyze the strengths and limitations of her own teaching, and reinforced her commitment to learning absorbing as much as possible in order to find what works for her students.

In chapter four, I discussed instances of interactions between internal and external conditions, as summarized below. On the one hand, it was apparent that Molly was able

to make use of some of essential knowledge and dispositions (discussed in chapter three) with which she started the legend unit. These internal conditions constituted a key piece of information that helped me to make sense of how she went about constructing her unit during the fall guided lead-teaching period. On the other hand, the discussion illustrated the critical role of some external conditions--Sue's ongoing support as well as the structure of TE 802, including the guidance provided by the course instructor during the various stages of designing and implementing the legend unit.

In chapter five, the analysis revealed that Molly's knowledge construction was facilitated by interactions between some internal and external conditions. On the one hand, it was apparent that Molly was able to make use of some of essential knowledge and dispositions (e.g., being able to reflect and to see teaching from the learner's perspectives, and commitment to doing whatever is necessary to enhance students' learning) with which she started the second semester of her internship. On the other hand, the discussions exemplified the prominent role of some external conditions--Sue's flexibility in giving Molly space to try out her own ideas and take risks, professional opportunities at her internship site to attend a workshop as well as the structure of TE 804, which guided her thinking as she developed and pursued her inquiry project.

As discussed in the previous section on the process of constructing knowledge, Molly was consistently and continuously building on her past experiences, which became internal conditions in new learning and teaching situations. The dispositions with which she entered the internship with were present and even reinforced (as discussed in the next section on what was constructed) throughout her entire internship journey. As such,

throughout her journey, she illustrated the usefulness of Dewey's concept of educative experience as enabling conditions (1938).

Finally, during the conceptualization stage of the study, one of my hopes and goals was that it would serve as an educational intervention for the participants, especially the intern. I hoped that the study would push the Molly to examine some of her own assumptions, and doing so, it would prompt her to reflect on how she was learning to teach reading in new and challenging ways, and also on her instructional practices. My data analysis suggests that the study might have done just that. In addition, Molly's own reflection on her participation in the study seems to be the best evidence for such an intervention. As she stated during our third and final interview,

> ...at the beginning of the year, if you asked me which subject I felt the least confident in would definitely be literacy, all around literacy and I do not feel that way at all. And I was going to say that I'm glad you focused in on this issue with me because it made me kind of analyze things in my own head and interpret things, why I do things. That was a good, a positive experience for me... At first, I was like do I really want to get myself into this and how much of my time is this going to take? And I am so glad because I don't think I really would have emphasized on it as much. And I think that says, kind of says something about myself also, recognizing a weakness I had and then going through and doing whatever. ...

The fact that Molly accepted to participate in the study, even though she was not sure about what was in it for her, speaks to her disposition--eagerness to learn and willingness to participate in professional activities that are available. Furthermore, the idea of the study and its focus on literacy seemed to have reinforced and rekindled Molly's personal desire to become better at teaching reading. And she appeared to have value the opportunity to think more deeply about her learning as further revealed through the following portion of her reflection.

And to actually have talked with you and so you, you know, you out of

anyone have been able to listen to my ideas and how they've changed or grown or gotten worse or whatever about literacy. So I think that I would encourage anyone to do this....Just because it makes you kind of step out, step back and kind of think the questions you ask aren't going to be the same questions a CT is going to ask or another intern is even going to think about asking. The time that you put into thinking or creating these thoughtful questions are truly thoughtful and that they require thoughtful answers. You know what I mean? (3rd interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

The above statement suggests that Molly seemed to have valued the structure and opportunity to engage in substantive conversations with the researcher, about her thinking and learning--the structure of the study appeared to have provided her with the space to be listened, do some regrouping and thinking. She also seemed to have appreciated the challenge of reflecting on thoughtful questions over the course of the internship. The thinking she engaged in throughout the study appeared to have contributed to her learning and growth as illustrated below.

It's just… you have to be able to, I think my thinking about literacy is totally different than it was before…So thank you, Gaston… I think because of the time that I've put into keying into this because of your study and stuff and that really brought me into… I don't know what…[Gaston smiling]. I'm being serious. If you wouldn't have done this study, I don't know… I mean, I knew that coming into it, this, that I had a, I felt like I had a weakness in literacy but I don't know if I would've given it as much attention. I don't know. I guess I don't really, I can't really say. (3rd interview with Molly, May 30, 2000)

The above statement seems to indicate, on the part of Molly, a sense of accomplishment, which I believe is critical in any learning process--feeling or knowing that your ideas have changed in. In addition, there is a sense that Molly's commitment to issues addressed in the study paid off--reinforcing the common adage that the more effort you put in, the more you get back. Furthermore, Molly's reflection reminds me of the Hawthorne Effect--the Hawthorne Studies conducted in the 1920's at the Western Electric Hawthorne Works in Cicero, Illinois, led professor Elton Mayo to the conclusion

that productivity increased every time he paid attention to workers, making them feel important (see Maher, 2003). The psychological stimulus of being singled out and involved in the study--I deliberately took time to listen to Molly's ideas and to challenge her to think about issues related to her learning with respect to reading instruction--might have made her feel special, leading her to devote more attention and thought to learning to teach reading.

Through the above discussion on Molly's reflection, one can see that the study served as an educational intervention. As indicated earlier, going into the study, I had some hunches that there was a potentiality for this to happen. However, the degree to which it happened is not something I could have predicted.

Research Question 3: What did she actually construct?

Evidence from the study shows that Molly's processes of appropriation and synthesis facilitated by the internal and external conditions, discussed above, resulted in a great deal of knowledge construction, conceptually and practically speaking. To start with, the analysis has revealed that Molly's ideas and beliefs about literacy were for the most part reinforced. A comparison of Molly's early and late conceptions of literacy along with how she portrayed her own literacy program revealed both some conceptual and practical changes with respect to her journey in learning to teach reading. These changes were evidenced by an ability to be more articulate about specifics rather than simply talking in global terms. It seems that the internship allowed her to situate some of her conceptions of literacy, to see how they work. She was learning to teach reading in practice by enacting ideas she had encountered either prior to or during the internship. Being able to articulate her ideas with specifics could be seen as a sign that Molly had

succeeded in linking theory to practice. That is to say that her conceptions were no longer standing by themselves, i.e. abstract and somehow lacking pedagogical considerations; instead, they were grounded in practice.

Discussing the different learning episodes throughout her internship revealed that Molly's content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and dispositions were all reinforced. Although Molly made some steps forward in each of the above areas, pedagogical content knowledge is by far the area where she gained the most, suggesting that perhaps learning to teach reading during the internship is more a matter of developing a repertoire of instructional strategies as opposed to acquiring subject matter ideas and concepts.

Table 6. Summary of what Molly constructed

Content Knowledge (CK)	Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)	Dispositions
• Molly developed a deeper and enhanced understanding of literacy	• By the end of the internship, Molly developed a conception of an integrated approach to literacy instruction, which is very much in line with a reform-minded vision of good literacy instruction, particularly reading instruction (see review of the literature in chapter 2).	• Molly discovered thematic teaching to be her comfort zone because she recognized its values for both her students and herself (see inquiry project in chapter five).
• Molly developed an increased understanding of the writing process-- recognizing that writing is a complex process, which requires time and practice--and the critical connection between reading and writing.	• Molly developed an increased awareness and understanding of how writing and content (e.g., literature) fit together (see the legend unit in the fall and the inquiry project and the space unit in the spring).	
	• Molly expanded her teaching repertoire of instructional strategies to meet the various needs of her students--strategies for writing conferences, scaffolding strategies to increase students' understanding of texts, and modeling good reading and	• Molly increased her commitment to do whatever is necessary to help all students, particularly struggling readers, make progress.

	writing behaviors. • Molly realized the importance of making teaching more interesting-- exciting and engaging--for her students, and increased her ability in this area (e.g., legend unit).	
• Molly broadened her knowledge of children's literature (e.g., the legend unit).	• Molly developed an increased understanding and ability to take issue with existing curricular materials and instructional procedures and to make the necessary adjustments (e.g., the learning center experience and making Garden Gates Reading more interesting).	• Molly increased her disposition to reflect in and on action as well as to appraise particular instructional practices and curricular materials. • Molly's increased her disposition to be flexible
	• Molly realized the value of individualized and small group instruction changed her view of instructional time (e.g., learning centers). • Molly developed an appreciation for and understanding of using assessment tools to get to know students as learners--one of her goal in the early part of the internship--in order to better meet their needs (e.g., the legend unit). • Molly developed an increased understanding of how to match kids with books.	• Molly went from a dominant concern for teaching (the teacher being in charge of instructional time) to a dominant concern for learning (the learner having some control over his/her learning, e.g., learning centers, spelling activity, making her lessons more exciting and engaging for students).

The study also portrays a gradual increase in Molly's confidence, as she became

more and more competent with respect to teaching in general, and reading instruction in

particular, throughout the semester. Molly's teaching became more sophisticated as her

repertoire of instructional strategies increased; and in the process her confidence also kept

increasing. In other words, the more competent Molly became, the more confident she

seemed to have felt in making her teaching voice public, i.e., in her ability to trust and try

out her own ideas, suggesting that there is a dialectical relationship between competence

and confidence. Indeed, the more confident we feel inside, the more decisive we appear when performing a given act.

As the analysis showed Molly started her internship feeling inadequate and unprepared to teach reading and ended up her journey feeling competent and confident as a literacy teacher. The increase in her confidence level speaks to the fact she was feeling more prepared--knowledgeable as a result of the various experiences she had over the course of her clinical journey. As indicated in chapter five, her increased confidence level makes sense given the MSU teacher education program structure, which views the internship as a "true developmental apprenticeship" (Team One Elementary Intern Handbook, 1999-2000). In a way, it supports the logic of the program, which expects interns to demonstrate competency and confidence in their knowledge and teaching by the end of the internship journey. It also makes sense given the determination--in becoming a good reading teacher--with which Molly started her internship.

Limitations of the study

As Creswell (1994) pointed out, the 'uniqueness of a (qualitative) study within a specific context mitigates against replicating it exactly in another context' and generalizing its findings. The uniqueness of the present case study is partially described as follows. Molly was a strong preservice teacher, who was recommended because, throughout her coursework and pre-internship fieldwork, she had shown signs of a successful career in teaching. In addition, she started her internship with recognition of her weaknesses in reading instruction and a remarkable determination to become an effective reading teacher by the end of her clinical journey. My own experiences working with intern teachers tell me that not all of them have similar internal conditions at the

start of their internship. Finally, Molly did her internship under the guidance of a reform-minded collaborating teacher with a strong background in literacy instruction, who was learning to make guided reading a part of her instructional practice. Again, my experiences working with school-based teacher educators tell me that they don't all share these attributes.

However, as Yin (1989) advocated, this study provided a detailed protocol for data collection and analysis procedures (see description of research design and methodology in chapter 2) which can be replicated in another setting. In addition, because this dissertation presented a vivid picture--based on concrete evidence--of Molly's internship journey in learning to teach reading, its findings give us some images of what is possible and could be partially generalized to similar populations (Creswell, 1994; Myers, 2000; Yin, 1989). Furthermore, findings from the study raises some issues significant to teacher education in general, and to the preparation of preservice teachers with respect to teaching reading, and the need for further research. It is to these issues that I now turn my attention.

Implications of the study

Implications for teacher education: Toward a continuun of learning to teach reading

To start with, evidence from this case study shows that learning to teach reading, especially to teach struggling readers, involves two ongoing processes of appropriating and synthesizing knowledge, and reflecting upon her experiences. In light of these processes which characterized Molly's knowledge construction, my study supports the claim that learning to teach, and particularly to teach reading is a complex enterprise. Furthermore, the study specified some particular internal and external conditions that

were salient throughout Molly's appropriation and synthesis of knowledge. These

conditions included:

- First, the personal dispositions--including eagerness to learn, being able to work effectively with a collaborating teacher, being able to reflect upon the clinical experience and being open to constructive feedback--with which the intern starts and goes through the internship;

- Second, the nature of the content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge with which the intern starts the internship, might determine how much more knowledge she is able to appropriate and synthesize;

- Third, the existence of a collaborative reform-minded learning environment where innovative instructional ideas are being promoted;

- Fourth, the collaborating teacher's conceptions and expectations of how best to help preservice teachers learn the craft of teaching reading. These conceptions and expectations are translated into:

  (1) The extent to which the collaborating teacher allows the teacher candidate to have access to his/her practical knowledge (not only through modeling, but also through the creation of conversational workspace, whereby both parties engage in substantive educative conversations grounded in instructional practices.

  (2) The match between personality and the extent to which the preservice teacher is seen as a colleague, since the beginning of the year.

  (3) The extent to which the collaborating teacher gradually releases responsibilities, giving the intern the space to increasingly engage in independent practice, to try out ideas and take risks.

  (5) The extent to which the preservice teacher is guided by the collaborating teacher to take advantage of learning opportunities at the larger school level.

- Finally, but not the least, the extent to which the preservice teacher is guided in his/her thinking and action by the structure of and support provided by the teacher education program. As such, the study supports calls for engaging teacher education students in guided field-based opportunities for experiential learning, reflection, and self-examination (Kaufman, 1996; Kroll & Labosky, 1996).

The study showed that these are all important conditions to pay attention to, if one

wants to understand the learning to teach process. While all of the above conditions were

pertinent in Molly's journey, the study suggests that the motivation to learn seemed to have played a unique role in her knowledge construction with respect to reading instruction. As such, the study supports the literature according to which it is the "predisposition of teachers to change that makes change possible" (National Reading Panel Report, 2000).

In addition, analyzing different learning episodes throughout Molly's internship and examining her late conceptions of literacy instruction, particularly reading instruction, in relation to the IRA standards and the knowledge base outlined by Snow et. Al (1998) for beginning reading teachers, has led to the conclusion that her journey was a success story. Evidence was provided to support that she made a lot of progress both conceptually and practically and her confidence level was reinforced all along. Over the course of her internship, Molly developed a conception of an integrated approach to literacy instruction, which is very much in line with reform-minded vision of good literacy instruction, particularly reading instruction (see review of the literature in chapter two). The analysis has revealed that Molly's ideas and beliefs about literacy were for the most part reinforced. Although she hardly gave any credit to her teacher education coursework, Molly appeared to have started her internship year with some initial ideas and beliefs, allowing her to try them out, to enact them so speak, and/or to embrace similar ideas. As such, this study supports the idea that "if preservice teachers failed to develop certain beliefs, it would be hard for them to learn to practice what was not on their mind" Wang (1998).

It was also indicated that the study served as an educational intervention for Molly. This also seems to have guided her in reflecting on her own ideas, practices and

learning. This leads me to conclude that having the right dispositions is good but not necessarily enough for growth to take place. Preservice teachers might benefit from a structure that allows them to systematically take stock of what they are constructing. Such structure could be part of assessment systems that are in place in teacher education programs. For example, the MSU teacher preparation program engages interns in an assessment conference, at the end of the first semester, in collaboration with each intern's collaborating teacher and MSU Liaison. In light of my study, it is necessary for these assessment conferences to give intern a chance to regroup as well as to look ahead to the spring semester internship with new goals as they continue to learn the art of teaching specific subject areas, such as reading. Furthermore, in light of my study, it might be necessary for each intern to start the clinical journey with a structured conversation giving him/her the opportunity to systematically do some self-reflection with respect to strengths and weaknesses and look ahead to the internship with some specific learning goals in mind, in specific subject areas such as reading. These learning goals could be articulated along a developmental continuum for the internship. They could also be revisited at different points throughout the internship, i.e. halfway through the first semester, end of the first semester, halfway through the second semester, and at the end of second semester. In doing so, while goals are being examined, they might be reformulated or new goals might be articulated for future learning.

Moreover, since Molly's internship showed a developmental progress both conceptually and practically, the question now is *"how do we ensure that all preservice teachers experience a successful internship?"* In an effort to start addressing this question, this study supports recent calls to teacher educators to turn the idea of a learning

to teach continuum into a reality (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). With respect to the preservice component of learning to teach, my study also expands the above idea by suggesting the need to develop a learning continuum for specific subject areas, particularly for reading during the internship year.

Having a continuum would make it easier to assess at different levels (teacher educators and teacher candidates themselves) through the use of some key turning points with respect to what interns should know and be able to do at different point in time during the internship. The MSU teacher preparation program, for instance, has a continuum of development during the internship year. Although this is a useful framework, it is generic in the sense that it addresses standards in a general sense; it is not connected to specific subject areas. This also seems to have some implications for creating similar continuum of learning to teach prior to the internship year. Such a continuum could help assess preservice teachers learning with respect to reading theories and instruction. It could also help preservice teachers engage in some self-assessment while taking coursework and also during their internship. Furthermore, as indicated in chapter 1, there is tremendous variation in the content and experiences provided across teacher preparation programs in the United States. As such, having a continuum of learning to teach reading would make available some national standards serving as guide at the local level (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) that would help to reduce discrepancies in content and experiences.

Based on Molly's learning and in an effort to make the idea of a learning to teach continuum a reality, I propose the following as a likely continuum of learning to teach reading during the internship year for teacher educators to try out.

Table 7. A continuum of learning to teach reading during the internship

TIME PERIOD	CK	PCK	DISPOSITIONS
Late August-Early September	• Opportunity must be given to interns to examine critically their beliefs about reform-minded reading instruction	• Opportunity for interns to examine critically their beliefs about reform-minded reading instruction. • Opportunity for interns to have conversations with the CT's about her conceptions of teaching, especially reading instruction.	• Opportunity for interns to examine strengths and weaknesses and to set goals with respect to reading instruction.
September-October	• Opportunity for interns to • broaden their knowledge of children's literature. • Opportunity to read professional texts related to reading instruction.	• Opportunity for interns to work with struggling readers. • Opportunity for interns to read aloud to students. • Opportunity for interns to appropriate concepts and strategies about small and large group reading instruction, and assessment, through observation, interaction with students and conversation with the CT. • Opportunity for interns to witness the integration of writing into other content areas. • Opportunity for interns to assess students' reading strengths and weaknesses in one-on-one settings.	• Opportunity for interns to reflect on knowledge being constructed--through journal writing and conversation with the CT, Liaison...
Mid-October	• Opportunity for interns to broaden their knowledge of children's literature. • Opportunity to read professional texts related to reading instruction.	• Opportunity for interns to work with struggling readers and to assess their progress. • Opportunity for interns to do some co-planning with the CT for the lead-teaching period.	• Opportunity for interns to do some regrouping—take stock of what has been constructed-- and to set new goals, especially for the guided-lead teaching period.
November	• Opportunity for interns to broaden their knowledge of children's literature. • Opportunity to read professional texts related to reading	• Opportunity for interns to work with struggling readers and to assess their progress. • Opportunity for interns to engage in more independent reading-related instruction. • Opportunity for interns to integrate writing into other content areas.	• Opportunity for interns to reflect on knowledge being constructed—through journal writing and conversation with the CT, Liaison...

	instruction.		
December	• Opportunity for interns to broaden their knowledge of children's literature. • Opportunity to read professional texts related to reading instruction.	• Opportunity to work with students with different reading abilities and to assess their progress. • Opportunity for interns to integrate writing into other content areas.	• Opportunity for interns to reflect on knowledge being constructed—through journal writing and conversation with the CT, Liaison... • Opportunity for interns to do some regrouping—take stock of what has been constructed-- and to set new goals, in the light of previous ones, for the spring semester.
January	• Opportunity for interns to broaden their knowledge of children's literature. • Opportunity to read professional texts related to reading instruction.	• Opportunity for interns to work with students with different reading abilities and to assess their progress. • Opportunity for interns to do some creative and independent planning for the lead-teaching period. • Opportunity for interns to integrate writing into other content areas.	• Opportunity for interns to reflect on knowledge being constructed—through journal writing and conversation with the CT, Liaison...
February-March	• Opportunity for interns to broaden their knowledge of children's literature. • Opportunity to read professional texts related to reading instruction.	• Opportunity for interns to work with students with different reading abilities and to assess their progress. • Opportunity for interns to independently enact ideas and strategies related to reading instruction. • Opportunity for interns to take risks with innovative reading instructional ideas--including to adjust existing curricular materials and activities. • Opportunity for interns to integrate writing into other content areas.	• Opportunity for interns to reflect on knowledge being constructed—through journal writing and conversation with the CT, Liaison... • Opportunity for interns to do some regrouping—take stock of what has been constructed-- and to set new goals, in light of previous ones, for the spring semester.
April	• Opportunity for interns to broaden their knowledge of children's literature. • Opportunity to read professional texts related to reading instruction.	• Opportunity for interns to work with students with different reading abilities and to assess their progress. • Opportunity for interns to revisit reading instructional ideas, concepts and strategies they struggled with early on, and to fine-tune their understanding and teaching.	• Opportunity for interns to reflect in and on action. • Opportunity for interns, at the end of the internship, to reflect on their learning and to set new reading instructional goals for first year of teaching.

Implications for further research endeavors

Because case studies cannot be generalized to larger populations, it is necessary

that similar research be carried out studying preservice teachers who are not as strong or

promising as Molly, and who do not have some of the dispositions she had at the start of

her clinical journey. It is also important for further research to be carried out at different

grade levels in an effort to develop a continuum of learning to teach reading, grounded in

both theory and practice. By developing a continuum of learning to teach reading, the

question of assessment also needs to be addressed, as outlined below.

- What are the implications for testing the continuum with other interns?

- How do we go about assessing for whether interns are progressing satisfactorily?

In addition, it is necessary to look at the type of standards with respect to reading

instruction that should be expected of preservice teachers to meet before starting teaching

in their own classroom. This seems to require examining the following questions:

- How do we ensure that all preservice teachers enter the internship year with the type of dispositions that Molly had? What type of knowledge, skills, and dispositions are needed when entering the clinical experience or internship year in order to make the most out of it? In other words, what can be specifically done to better facilitate the learning (to teach reading) of interns in the context of practice?

- Given the integrated nature of the type of literacy program Molly envisioned, how do we ensure that she is able to transfer the knowledge she constructed during her internship, and turn them into enabling conditions for future educative learning experiences (Dewey, 1938)? What kind of support would novice teachers benefit the most from in order to build on the prior knowledge, skills, and dispositions they developed during their preservice teacher education?

Furthermore, this case study portrayed a success story of an intern who developed

the knowledge, skills and dispositions which are, to a large extent, in congruence with the

standards of the International Reading Association (1998) and the knowledge base

outlined by Snow et. al (1998) for beginning reading teachers. And the study has shown that interactions between a variety of internal conditions and external conditions enabled Molly to have a successful internship. This raises the question as to whether or not all preservice teachers can be realistically required to meet these standards and knowledge base. If yes, it seems imperative for the teacher education community to make sure that all preservice teachers meet these minimal standards before they are given the key to open their first classroom door. If the answer is no, then the question that needs to be answered could be formulated as follows:

- What minimal standards can we expect novice teachers to meet at the start of their teaching career?

Finally, but not the least, the fact that the study made a noticeable difference for Molly's growth in reading instruction raises the following research question:

- How do we go about building activities similar to the ones used in my study into a teacher education program and researching their impacts?

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

Appropriating Knowledge: the process of internalizing through different means--e.g., direct observation and appraisal of teaching situations, participation in given tasks, talking with the mentor--instructional ideas, concepts, and strategies that are similar to ways of thinking and acting of more knowledgeable members of the teaching culture.

Enabling Conditions: in order for any experience to occur, there needs to be some interaction between internal conditions and external conditions.

> *Internal Conditions:* the personal dispositions such as needs, desires, internal capacities and purposes (e.g., intrinsic motivation) along with past experiences, that the learner brings to any learning situation.

> *External Conditions:* the environment's "objective conditions" such as what the educator says and how s/he says it, the materials used and the social situation that the learner interacts with.

> *Educative Experience as Enabling Condition:* the concept according to which an educative experience leads to growth in the right direction, the desire to go on learning, and prepares the learner for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality. As such, a given past experience turns into an enabling condition in a new learning situation, i.e., it becomes an internal condition that the learner brings to a new situation, allowing him/her to have a successful experience of a refined quality.

Scaffolding: a temporary structure provided by the teacher to support learning. This instructional assistance can take several forms such as modeling desired learning behaviors, thinking aloud while modeling, questioning that leads the learner to new understandings (guided practice), offering explanations and clarifications, identifying noteworthy sources for the learner. The amount and type of support provided should vary according to the learner's skill level or ability to perform a task.

Synthesizing Knowledge: a continuum of evolving thinking ranging from regrouping, i.e., taking stock of knowledge being appropriated, to transforming knowledge or weaving together existing knowledge; leading the learner to refined and enhanced understanding or the creation of new ideas, concepts and strategies related to teaching.

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD): the sphere of activity between what the novice (e.g., child, intern) can do alone and what s/he can only do with the assistance (see scaffolding) of more knowledgeable others (e.g., teacher, mentor).

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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Interview #1 with the Intern

Thank you for participating in this study. In this interview, I will be asking you a series of questions about your educational/professional background, your ideas regarding literacy/reading instruction and learning, and finally your ideas about your clinical experiences in our teacher education program. If at any time you think you'd like to make a comment about something that I haven't asked about, or that we've already talked about, just speak right up. I have some general guidelines that I'll be following, but I am also interested in anything that you think might be relevant to the learning and teaching of reading, and/or your learning about how to promote students' learning to read.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Part one: Professional/educational information (source: NCRTL, 1993-1; Cadre 9 Learning Community Questionnaire-Summer 1990)

1. I would like to start out by learning a little bit about what brings you to teaching. When did you first start thinking you might want to teach? Why are you interested in teaching?

2. You are planning to teach elementary school, is that right? When you think back to your own experience in elementary school, what stands out to you? (Probing for specificity: What do you mean? Can you give me an example of that? Is there anything else that you remember?)

3. What do you remember about learning to read/write in elementary school? (Probing for how the intern's parent's -mother, father, and etc, affected his/her interest in and /or participation in reading/writing). [Think back on your years in elementary and high school. List four types of reading you remember doing as a student. Rank them, according to frequency, with 4 being the most frequent and 1 being the least frequent.]

4. What do you remember about reading/writing in high school? (Probing for how the intern's parent's -mother, father, and etc, affected his/her interest in and /or participation in reading/writing).). [Think back on your years in elementary and high school. List four types of reading you remember doing as a student. Rank them, according to frequency, with 4 being the most frequent and 1 being the least frequent.]

5. Which of the following English courses did you take while in high school (circle all that apply).
   a. American literature b. English literature   c. advanced placement English
   d. composition/expository writing   d. drama   e. journalism   g. creative writing
   h. other English courses (Please specify) :

6. Did you study a foreign language in high school?   YES NO
   a. What language?_____
   b. How many years?_____

7. Did you study a foreign language in college?   YES NO
   a. What language?_____

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b. How many years?_____

8.   List any courses you have taken in child development, psychology, or related areas that have taught you about how language is learned.

       List any English courses you have taken at MSU.

       List your major and minors (if you have two):

       a. major -

       b. minor(s) –

9.   Which subject (e.g. language art, math, science, social studies) is/would be your favorite and least favorite to teach?

       *Is there any particular reason you feel this way?

       *Are there some subjects or topics you feel more confident and less confident about teaching?

Part two: Your Reading (Source: Cadre 9 Learning Community Questionnaire Summer 1990)

Tell me about yourself as a reader.

Probe for specificity:

1. How often do you read? (Circle the one that best describes you.)
   a. every day
   b. once or twice a week
   c. only when required (school assignments)
   d. never
2. What do you read for recreation? (Feel free to include magazines, newspapers, books, etc.)
3. What kind of reading do you like best?
4. What keeps you from reading?
5. When you read, do you talk to anybody about what you read? What do you talk about?
6. Do you consider yourself a good reader? Tell me more about it.

Part three: Questions on teaching/learning (Sources: adapted from Early Literacy Project, Summer 1993; Salish I Research Project, 1997)

Questions about beliefs

1.   How would you describe yourself as a classroom teacher? (What are your beliefs about teaching and your teaching role?) Another version: If you had to describe your philosophy of educating the children in your classroom, what would you say?
2.   What role model do you have for yourself as a classroom teacher?
3.   Describe a well-organized classroom. When you have your classroom running the way you want it, what is it like?
4.   How would you describe your beliefs about learners who perform well in school?
5.   How would you describe your beliefs about learners who do not make progress in school?
6.   What kind of students would you like to teach?

7. While parents, politicians, and teachers all seem to agree that it is important for children to become literate, they differ in the ways they define literacy. As a novice, what does the word literacy mean to you?

8. Have your beliefs about literacy instruction/learning changed over the year (s)? If so, how/why?

Questions about students and instructional approaches

1. What would you say are the characteristics of good readers?
2. What about struggling readers?
3. What do you believe to be the major problems or barriers inhibiting the progress of struggling readers?
4. What do you think are the most effective strategies or approaches that teachers should use to accelerate the performance of struggling readers? What would be the least effective strategies/approaches?

Questions about your classroom curriculum and instruction

1. In the classroom in which you are currently working, what would you say are some of the most important goals for reading instruction that you and your CT have been trying to support?
   Probe for specificity: What specific skills or strategies in reading do you think your Collaborating teacher (CT) is trying to promote in your classroom? How is s/he doing that?
2. To what extent is your reading teaching similar to or different from your collaborating teacher's teaching?
3. What learning in language arts do you think will be valuable to your students outside the classroom environment?

Part four: Questions on your learning

1. What do you think is most important for an intern to learn about teaching reading? Why?
2. Think back to August1999. What were some of the questions or concerns you had as you looked ahead to learning to teach reading during your internship? [very much connected to question #2]
3. Think about your clinical experience so far. How would you describe its contributions to preparing you to teach reading? (or to addressing the questions or concerns mentioned earlier?)
   Probe for specificity: Can you give me an example?
   Can you describe to me how you work with your collaborating teacher?
   If you could choose your collaborating teacher, what kind of collaborating teacher would you like to work with?
4. Do you think this school is a good place for you to learn to teach reading? And why?
5. Do you think the state language arts exams have any influence on your planning and teaching reading in this school? How?
6. Do you think your TE courses helped you learn to teach reading in your internship or not?
7. What would you say about your TE 801 seminar?

Probe for specificity: Can you give me an example?
8. What would you say about your TE 501 (your study group)/Liaison?
   Probe for specificity: Can you give me an example?
9. What would you consider to be your strengths in helping children become readers?
10. What are some of the questions or concerns you have now as you look ahead to teaching reading during the guided lead teaching and the rest of the semester?
11. What specific skills/strategies/knowledge with respect to teaching reading do you want to learn before having your own classroom? How and where do you think you can learn them? [The framing of this question will depend on question #10]

Interview #2 with the Intern
(Source: adapted from NCRTL, 1993-1)

It has been several weeks since our first formal interview and I know you have been busy. I am interested in hearing about your thinking about what you have been doing/learning.

1. Think back to a time recently –in the last few weeks or past few months- when you have done something, or something has happened to you that has been particularly important to you in thinking about teaching reading?
   Tell me about this.
   Anything else?
   Where were you?
   When did this happen?
   Why/How was it important?
   (What difference did this make to you?)
2. During our first interview, you mentioned that you wanted to learn more about…before having you own classroom next year. Have you accomplished anything in this regard?
3. Think about your clinical experience so far. How would you describe its contributions to preparing you to teach reading or to addressing the questions or concerns mentioned earlier?
   Probe for specificity: Can you give me an example?
4. What would you say about your TE 801 seminar?
   Probe for specificity: Can you give me an example?
5. What would you say about your TE 501 (your study group)?
   Probe for specificity: Can you give me an example?
6. During our first interview you mentioned … to be your strengths in helping children become readers. Would you add anything to that at this point?
7. What are some of the questions or concerns you have now as you look ahead to teaching reading during the lead teaching period and throughout the rest of the semester?
8. What specific skills/strategies/knowledge with respect to teaching reading do you want to learn before having your own classroom? How and where do you think you can learn them? [The framing of this question will depend on question #7]

Interview #3 with the Intern
(Source: adapted from NCRTL, 1993-1)

It has been several weeks since our first formal interview and I know you have been busy. I am interested in hearing about your thinking about what you have been doing/learning.

1. Think back to a time recently –in the last few weeks or past few months- when you have done something, or something has happened to you that has been particularly important to you in thinking about teaching reading?
    Tell me about this.
    Anything else?
    Where were you?
    When did this happen?
    Why/How was it important?
    What difference did this make to you?

2. During our last interview, you mentioned that you wanted to learn more about…before having you own classroom next year. Have you accomplished anything in this regard?

3. Think about your clinical experience so far. How would you describe its contributions to preparing you to teach reading or to addressing the questions or concerns mentioned earlier?
    Probe for specificity: Can you give me an example?

4. What would you say about your TE 802/3 seminar?
    Probe for specificity: Can you give me an example?

5. What would you say about your TE 502 (your study group)?
    Probe for specificity: Can you give me an example?

6. During our last interview you mentioned … to be your strengths in helping children become readers?. Would you add anything to that at this point?

7. Overall, how do you feel prepared to be teaching reading in your own classroom next year?

8. What are some of the questions or concerns you have now as you look forward to teaching reading in your own classroom next year? [The framing of this question will depend on question #7]

9. What specific skills/strategies/knowledge with respect to teaching reading do you want to learn before as you move into your own classroom? How and where do you think you can learn them? [The framing of this question will depend on question #8]

Pre-Instructional Conversation with the Intern

1. Tell me about what you will be teaching:
    - How long is this unit (lesson)?
    - What are your intended outcomes(i.e., goals/purposes/objectives of the unit (lesson)
    - How does this lesson contribute to your goals for this unit?
    - What activities/materials are you planning to use?
    - What assessment methods are you planning to use?

2. What knowledge, skills, attitudes, etc., did your students have prior to the lesson? How did you determine this?

3. How did you plan this unit (lesson)?
4. What did your CT do in helping you plan this unit (lesson)?
5. Do you think your students (in this class) influenced your planning? How?
6. What are some of the questions or concerns you have as you look ahead to teaching this unit (lesson)?

Post-Instructional Conversation with the Intern

1) What were the most important concepts in this unit (lesson) your
students needed to learn? [To be asked in case I don't have the time to engage in a pre-observation]
2) What were the most difficult things to teach in this unit (lesson)?
3) Can you tell me how you planned this unit (lesson)?[To be asked in case I don't have the time to engage in a pre-observation]
4) Did you make any change(s) from what you planned during your teaching of this unit (lesson)?
5) What did your CT do in helping you teach this unit (lesson)?
6) Did your CT talk to you about your teaching after you finished this unit (lesson)? [To be asked in case I don't have the time to talk to the intern before the CT does]
7) How did you feel the unit (lesson) went?
- Were you able to reach your objectives?
- What made you fail to reach your goals?
- What do you think students learn from this unit (lesson)?
- How do you know that students learned what you wanted them to?
8) What were the important things you learned from this unit (lesson)?
9) If you were to teach this unit (lesson) again is there anything you would do differently and why?

Interview #1 with the Collaboration Teacher

Thank you for participating in this study. In this interview, I will be asking you a series of questions about your educational/professional background, your ideas regarding literacy/reading instruction and learning, and finally your ideas about mentoring novices. If at any time you think you'd like to make a comment about something that I haven't asked about, or that we've already talked about, just speak right up. I have some general guidelines that I'll be following, but I am also interested in anything that you think might be relevant to the learning and teaching of reading, and/or mentoring.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Part one: Professional/educational information

Check all that apply

- *Your professional background*: General education (classroom) teacher; Reading Specialist; Special Education Teacher; Bilingual/ESL Teacher; Other (describe)
- *Number of years teaching at current grade level?*
- *Number of years at your current school?*
- *Total number of years teaching in grades k-8?*
- *Total number of years mentoring?*
- *Your education:*

- BA;   BA+15;   Med/MA;   MEd/MA+;   Ed specialist;   PhD

Part two: Questions on teaching/learning
Questions about beliefs
1. How would you describe yourself as a classroom teacher? (What are your beliefs about teaching and your teaching role?) Another version of this question is: if you had to describe your philosophy of educating the children in your classroom, what would you say?
2. What role model do you have for yourself as a classroom teacher?
3. Describe a well-organized classroom. When you have your classroom running the way you want it, what is it like?
4. How would you describe your beliefs about learners who perform well in school?
5. How would you describe your beliefs about learners who do not make progress in school?
6. While parents, politicians, and teachers all seem to agree that it is important for children to become literate, they differ in the ways they define literacy. As an experienced practitioner, what does the word literacy mean to you?
7. Have your beliefs about literacy instruction/learning changed over the year (s)? If so, how/why?
Questions about characteristics of readers and instructional approaches
1. What would you say are the characteristics of good readers?
2. What about struggling readers?
3. What do you believe to be the major problems or barriers inhibiting the progress of struggling readers?
4. What do you think are the most effective strategies or approaches that teachers should be used to accelerate the performance of struggling readers? What would be the least effective strategies/approaches?
Questions about your classroom curriculum and instruction
1. Is there a cannon of good books that children should be exposed to?
2. Can you tell me a little bit about the school's language arts/reading curriculum?
3. What do you think about the state language arts/reading exam and its influence on your reading teaching?
4. What are the most important goals of reading instruction in your classroom?
5. What specific skills or strategies in reading do you think your students should learn before they leave your room at the end of the year?
6. What learning in language arts do you think will be valuable to your students outside the classroom environment?
7. When you plan a language arts/reading unit, what factors do you pay more attention to?
8. When do you teach reading? Can you briefly describe to me the teaching method(s) you often use in your reading class?

Part two: Questions on mentoring
Questions about your mentoring beliefs and practices
1. Could you tell me why you decided to become a collaborating teacher?
2. How do you define your mentoring role?

3. What do you think are the most important things for an intern to learn about teaching reading? Why?
4. What is your role in helping your intern learn these things?
5. What do you usually do in helping your intern plan a language arts/reading unit (lesson)?
6. What do you usually do during his or her teaching?
7. What do you usually do after his or her teaching?
8. How do you usually assess your intern teachers' learning?
9. Have your beliefs/practices with respect to mentoring changed over the years? If so, how/why?

Questions about your intern's teaching and learning

1. What would you consider your intern's strengths in helping children become readers?
2. Is there any difference between you and your intern in thinking about reading instruction?
3. What specific skills/strategies/knowledge with respect to teaching reading do you want him/her to learn before s/he leaves your room at the end of the year? [Will depend on question #1]
4. Could you comment on his/her knowledge of and attitudes toward kids who are struggling in learning to read?

Interview #2 with the Collaborating Teacher

It has been several weeks since our first formal interview and I know you have been busy. I am interested in hearing about your thinking about what your intern has been doing.

1. Think back to a time recently –in the last few weeks or past few months- when he has done something, or something has happened to him and the two of you had a conversation about it (it had been particularly important to him in thinking about teaching reading?
   Tell me about this.
   Anything else?
   Where were you?
   When did this happen?
   Why/How was it important?
   What difference did this make in his/her work with your students afterward? What difference did this make in the way you have been guiding him/her afterward?
2. During our first interview, you mentioned that you wanted him/her to learn more about…before leaving your classroom. Have you noticed any accomplishment in this regard?
3. Is there anything else you would like to him/her to learn more about before having his/her own classroom? How or where do you think s/he can learn it?
4 During our first interview you mentioned … to be his/her strengths in helping children become readers. Would you add anything to that at this point?

Interview #3 with the Collaborating Teacher

It has been several weeks since our last formal interview and I know you have been busy. I am interested in hearing about your thinking about what your intern has been doing.

1. Think back to a time recently –in the last few weeks or past few months- when he has done something, or something has happened to him and the two of you had a conversation about it (it had been particularly important to him/her in thinking about teaching reading?
Tell me about this.
Anything else
Where were you?
When did this happen?
Why/How was it important?
What difference did this make in his/her work with your students afterward?
What difference did this make in the way you have been guiding him/her afterward?

2. During our first interview, you mentioned that you wanted him/her to learn more about...before leaving your classroom. Have you noticed any accomplishment in this regard?

3 During our last interview you mentioned ... to be his/her strengths in helping children become readers. Would you add anything to that at this point?

4 Are there specific skills/strategies/knowledge with respect to teaching reading you think s/he needs to focus on as s/he moves into your own classroom? How and where do you think he can learn them?

5 Overall, how do you feel the internship experience has prepared him/her to teach reading in her own classroom next year?
Probe for specificity: Can you give me an example?

Interview with the MSU Liaison

Thank you for participating in this study. In this interview, I will be asking you a series of questions about your educational/professional background, your ideas regarding literacy/reading instruction and learning, and finally your ideas about mentoring novices. If at any time you think you'd like to make a comment about something that I haven't asked about, or that we've already talked about, just speak right up. I have some general guidelines that I'll be following, but I am also interested in anything that you think might be relevant to the learning and teaching of reading, and/or mentoring.
Do you have any questions before we start?
Part one: Professional/educational information
Check all that apply

- *Your professional background*: General education (classroom) teacher; Reading specialist; special education teacher; Bilingual/ESL teacher; Other (describe.)
  - *Number of years teaching in elementary school? (Specify grade level)*
  - *Number of years teaching in middle school? (Specify grade level)*
  - *Number of years teaching in high school? (Specify grade level)*
  - *Total number of years teaching in grades k-12?*
  - *How many interns are you supervising in this school?*
  - *Number of years supervising at your current school?*
  - *Total number of years supervising?*
  - *Your education:*

BA/BS;   MEd/MA (Emphasis area?);   Ed specialist (Emphasis area?); PhD (Emphasis area?)

Part two: Questions on mentoring

Questions about beliefs

1. What are your beliefs about mentoring and your mentoring role?
2. How would you describe your mentoring practice?
3. How do you typically evaluate your student teachers?
4. Have your beliefs/practices with respect to mentoring changed over the years? If so, how/why?

Questions about your current intern

1. What would you consider his/her strengths in helping children become readers?
2. What specific skills/strategies/knowledge with respect to teaching reading do you want him/her to learn before the end of the internship year?
3. Could you comment on his/her knowledge of and attitudes toward kids who are struggling in learning to read?
4. Think back to a time recently –in the last few weeks or past few months- when he has done something, or something has happened to him and the two of you had a conversation about it (it had been particularly important to him in thinking about teaching reading?)

   Tell me about this.
   Anything else?
   Where were you?
   When did this happen?
   Why/How was it important?
   What difference did this make in his/her work with students afterward?
   What difference did this make in the way you have been guiding him/her afterward?

5. Are there specific skills/strategies/knowledge with respect to teaching reading you think s/he needs to focus before the end of the internship year? How and where do you think s/he can learn them?

Interview with the Course Instructor

1. Tell me about the philosophy you are trying to promote in this course.
2. How do you organize/structure activities and assignments to promote this philosophy? (Pedagogical strategy)
3. What goals, if any, do you have for your students' development of knowledge of how to work with students who are struggling (to learn to read)?
4. In terms of what your students might have learned/accomplished, is there anything that you are particularly pleased about this semester? (Please specify.)

MOLLY'S JOURNAL ON LEARNING CENTERS AND LEARNING CENTERS SHEET

<u>TE 501 Journal for 9/22/99</u>

At the beginning of the year, Sue [Collaborating Teacher's Pseudonym] reminded me about the learning centers she incorporates into her classroom each year. She usually sets up the centers about 3 weeks into the school year – after the students get a handle on correct classroom behavior and routines. I liked her ideas about what the centers had to offer the students (practice skills, group work, independence, etc.), but I was hesitant on if this is something I would actually pursue in my own classroom in the future. Why? Well it simply just seemed like such a lot of work to put into something and what if the kids really didn't get much of a benefit from it? Wasn't this taking away from teacher instruction that they <u>all</u> need? Wouldn't there be too much commotion in the room with people going from center to center? I think those questions made me think that centers weren't "for me."

Friday after school, Sue and I stayed after to get the center chart on the black board. Once again, I supported centers for Sue's room, but not completely for my future classroom. We began organizing the chart and started talking about what would be going on during center time in the mornings. I came to find out that during these times, Sue meets with individual reading groups. How wonderful... After all, it has become quite obvious to me that there is a wide range of reading levels in our room and how can we all read the same thing each day and accommodate to all of the various learning needs? Sue's reading program provides opportunities for students to work at a pace that is comfortable to them. We all read the basal together, but in the separate reading groups, they may actually read more difficult literature or less difficult literature based on their reading needs.

My opinion of centers has now changed. Yes, they do require a lot of work to set up and change, but if they can help a student understand something, it <u>is</u> worth it! In addition, I spent a lot of the weekend contemplating on the whole idea of centers and came to the conclusion that I was being selfish of my time. I didn't think that centers were "for me" and I was right... They <u>aren't</u> for me. They are for the students who deserve every possible opportunity to learn and if working at a center makes that connection for them, then I should make it happen. I also realized that not every student will need the same amounts of teacher instruction. Hence, during center time, I can meet individual needs by working one-on-one with the kids. What about the commotion? If centers are introduced after the students know the classroom routines, the only commotion there should be is that of learning taking place, and who can disagree with that?!

I know that a new teacher may not be able to "jump" into things like centers and that a need for more control may be desired at first. Understanding this, I feel that I am very fortunate to be interning in a classroom where things such as centers are used. Hopefully in one year from now, someone will walk into my classroom and see my students working away from their desks and collaborating with each other.

My writing is focused around centers today, but my beliefs hold true for any activity in the classroom that is not the "norm." As teachers, we must try new things in an attempt to help our students grow.

Learning Centers (Feb. 28-March 30

Writing: (Which mitten starter did you choose? Is your story done)?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Math: (What was easy for you? What do you need to work on?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Read Around the Room: (List 10 words that you liked reading!

_____
_____
_____
_____

Listening: (Did you like this story? Why or why not?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Computer: (What was one thing that you learned to do at the computer?)

_____
_____
_____
_____

Sentence Building: (Write at least 2 sentences you unscrambled!)

_____
_____
_____
_____

YOUNG AUTHOR'S CHECKLIST
(Created by Molly, November 1999)

Skip every other line as you write your first draft. Use a pencil.

Editing Checklist:

		Author	Friend	Teacher
C O N	1. Read the story to yourself.	1.	1.	1.
T E N	2. Point out things that don't don't make sense.	2.	2.	2.
T	3. Show where ideas or words are missing.	3.	3.	3.
S P E	1. Circle words you're not sure of.	1.	1.	1.
L L	2. Write correct spellings over misspelled words.	2.	2.	2.
G R A	1. Check for Capitals.	1.	1.	1.
M M A	2. Check for punctuation (. , "" ! : ?)	2.	2.	2.
R	3. Check for plurals, too many ands, contractions.	3.	3.	3.

Write your title here. _____

Put your story and this paper in your writing folder and sign up for conference.
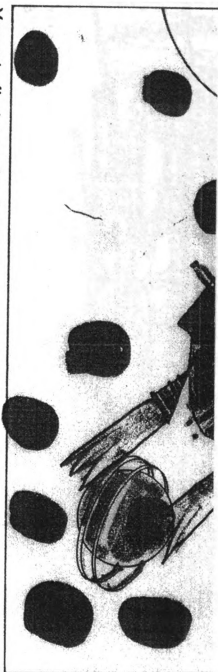
APPENDIX E

SAMPLES OF STUDENTS' WORK

You win first prize for designing a spaceship. Draw the spaceship and write a story about

I am a spaceship and my ship black's like BiiRuchu.
He's a type of a Rat. He is made of Lutghing.
He is yellow and black. I will go to Saturn.
and it will take fourteen years.

Sheila's Spaceship story, 2/14/99

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You win first prize for designing a spaceship. Draw the spaceship and write a story about it

It's a circle and small so it's fast. It has lazers on it and it's made of metal. It can go in to hyper space too. It's the color gray. I sit in the front of the ship. There are ten windows on it. Fifty people can go on my ship. My ship can go 90,000 miles perhour.

Sam's spaceship story, 2/14/99

You win first prize for designing a spaceship. Draw the spaceship and write a story about it.

I made a robot fly man space
ship. It is made out of licorice
and sticky candy to it will
take me to the sun and a
tree in instead of a sun bathe
I got a sun burn so my se
ashia got a sunburn. So my se ashei
brought me home. We do both the
bus of the richhr

Hannah's spaceship story. 2/14/99

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APPENDIX F

SECOND GRADE PHONEMIC AWARENESS RESULTS

22 Students	September #correct	May #correct
Beginning consonant blends, short vowels, ending consonants		
1. bl-u-m	8	19
2. pl-i-t	9	20
3. fl-e-z	8	19
4. dr-a-t	12	21
5. tr-o-p	11	20
Beginning consonant blends, long vowels, ending consonants		
6. gr-i-ve	5	17
7. sk-a-me	6	19
8. sp-e-te	8	19
9. st-o-pe	6	18
10. sm-u-ke	7	16
H Brothers with short vowels and ending consonants		
11. th-op	8	20
12. sh-ap	7	19
13. ch-im	9	21
14. wh-ab	5	17

2nd Grade High Frequency List
14 students below 50% correct in September.
 2 students below 50% correct in May

Comprehension Test Questions Missed	Sept. # Students	May # Students
0-1	5	13
2	4	4
5	4	0
6-9	6	3
10+	3	2

APPENDIX G

TE 301 CHILD STUDY GUIDELINES AND RESOURCES

Thinking Like a Teacher: The idea behind the child study is to start you on habits of mind--studying your students and their learning--that will deepen and develop as you go through this program and beyond. The habits of mind you cultivate--curiosity, observing, precise describing and wise interpreting, the art of developing and asking good questions, strategies for getting at a kid's mind and feelings, talking to a child, getting comfortable hanging around with kids, digging below the surface, sharp noticing, a keen eye for a kid's strengths, and a lively appreciation for how we humans are much alike and yet very different--are all part of the toolkit you will develop for "thinking like a teacher." Another big idea is that we don't just learn by experience alone, but by developing ways to reflect on experience. Direct field work plus this kind of reflection early in your program will help you become a teacher who is able to reflect on experiences and learn from them. Studying a child involves gaining access to the child's ways of seeing, feeling, thinking, communicating. How is this child making sense of and learning in this environment? Looking at the child whole, what can you say about how this kid sees the world? How does he or she engage with it? Can you say anything in general about the child's "stance," or her "world view?" What, above all, are the strengths in this child that are the growing points for further learning? And what are some ways to make this child come alive for the reader?

The work in literacy and the short "learning encounter" in literacy you design for your child late in the semester will help you get started in making the link between child study and curriculum--what can you learn about yourself and the child from one effort to support the child's learning and build a bridge to lively and worthwhile subject matter? Can you begin to move from an appreciation of one kid's thinking to strategies for ways of teaching that incorporate ongoing child study? How do teachers tailor the curriculum to groups and individuals? These last two topics only start in TE 301; they will be central to TE 401-402.

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