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Instruction, perception, and reflection : beginning teachers' habits of mind

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The University of San Francisco

INSTRUCTION, PERCEPTION, AND REFLECTION: TRANSFORMING
BEGINNING TEACHERS' HABITS OF MIND

A Dissertation
Presented To
The Faculty of the School of Education
Organization and Leadership Department

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

By
Sandra Fenderson
San Francisco
May 2010

THE UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
Dissertation Abstract

Instruction, Perception, and Reflection: Transforming Beginning Teachers'
Habits of Mind

Graduates from three Northern California private universities K-12 teacher preparation programs were invited to participate in an online survey to share their perceptions of the California Teaching Performance Assessment (CalTPA) as it influenced their K-12 beginning teacher practice. Self-selected respondents further volunteered to discuss their experiences in small, researcher-led focus groups. The survey data and focus group transcripts were analyzed using the framework of Mezirow's (1991, 1997, 2000) Adult Transformational Learning Theory to identify factors most influential to forming beginning teachers' habits of mind.

The focus group conversations provided personal and critically reflective perspectives that added to the knowledge base of how points of view and habits of minds were altered through the completion of the CalTPA. Evidence collected showed the CalTPA was instrumental in developing teacher candidates understanding of students in their classrooms, adaptations needed to encourage

student learning, and the perceived importance of analyzing student work to determine whether students actually were learning what teacher candidates thought they were teaching.

Conclusions drawn from this research indicated (a) the CalTPA became a teaching tool by which teacher candidates cohered prior learning from their teacher preparation course and field work, and (b) through completing the CalTPA many teacher candidates were able to transform preconceived beliefs and assumptions about K-12 classroom teaching.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

Sandra Fenderson
Candidate

April 27, 2010
Date

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April 27, 2010

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Anatole France once wrote that encouragement is nine-tenths of education. I know it was in mine which leaves many people to thank.

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Many thanks to my colleagues, both staff and fellow students, who supported me over the past two and a half years as I moved through this program. Dr. Chris Thomas, in particular, worked diligently to help me earn this degree. These acts of collaboration, guidance, and emotional support reminded me everyday that it takes many hands to complete a doctoral program.

Many thanks to Alison who models through her own actions that life provides humor and joy hidden in the darkness of struggle and it is up to us to find and enjoy it. Thanks to my sons, Ryan and Brandon, whose love and support means everything.

Finally, so many thanks to my husband, Kevin, whose love, support, and encouragement kept me moving. Thank you for all those big and little things you did along the way that allowed me to concentrate on school. I so look forward to having our lives back again!

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Statement of the Problem

“The single greatest effect on student achievement is not race, it is not poverty — it is the effectiveness of the teacher.”

~~ Harry K. Wong (2007, n. p.)

Teacher preparation programs sort through a mixture of institutional goals and state credentialing requirements with an eye toward producing effective K-12 teachers. The output of these programs, better identified as beginning teachers, vary in their individual effectiveness to support and encourage their own K-12 students' learning. Given this variance in teacher efficacy, the State of California has implemented sweeping legislative mandates that take aim at K-12 teacher preparation programs. These mandates, in the form of performance assessments, hold teacher preparation programs and their pre-service teachers more accountable for their respective instructional practice.

Teaching performance assessments are not new to teacher preparation programs but are seen as a resurgence from early 1970's implementations. Though known to take varying forms, at the core of any performance assessment is the ability to measure real-life teaching tasks. Described by Liskin-Gasparro (1997), performance assessments are multi-staged projects that involve reiterative rounds of planning, researching, and producing language that culminate in a

product or a performance. The power behind performance assessments is in the product or performance produced by the teacher candidate. Liskin-Gasparro (1997) likens the difference of performance assessments to traditional tests, like videotaping student learning to a single snapshot. Darling-Hammond (2006) goes a step further by asserting the effects of performance assessments on teacher education programs:

Authentic assessments offer more valid measures of teaching knowledge and skill than traditional teacher tests, and they inspire useful changes in programs as they provide rich information about candidates abilities—goals that are critical to an evaluation agenda that both documents and improves teacher education. (p. 121)

While not all teacher candidates' follow the same path to credentialing, the traditional path routes perspective teachers through university-based teacher preparation programs where competence in pedagogy and theory are practiced and honed in field placements. Feiman-Nemser (1983) questions teacher preparation programs ability to adequately prepare future teachers by asserting:

The list of courses that education students take gives some indication of the knowledge presumed to be relevant to teaching. Unfortunately, we know very little about what these courses are like and how future teachers make sense of them. (p. 154-155)

Regardless of how credentialing is attained, Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) summarizes the goal for perspective teachers is to be able to understand teaching and the need to be able to perform teaching. There is little research to

prove that the completion of teaching performance assessments in California teacher preparation programs connect these links of understanding and performing in beginning teacher practice.

Purpose of the Study

Alliance for Excellent Education (2004) cites one out of every two beginning teachers hired will quit in five years. This shameful statistic reflects upon both the competence of the beginning teacher as well as the effectiveness of their teacher preparation program. If these first years of practice are proven to be the most critical stage influencing teacher turnover than teacher preparation programs must provide pre-service teachers with tools that will assist them to withstand the realities of their early years in teaching. As teacher candidates perform the necessary skills which help them successfully complete their preparation programs and subsequently meet the status of a highly-qualified teacher then their teacher preparation program must hold themselves equally responsible in preparing graduates to put into practice the tools which will assist them to successfully navigate their first years of teaching.

The current preparation beginning teachers receive through the completion of state mandated performance assessments and the resulting impact shown on their teaching beliefs and practice as a key to better prepare pre-service teachers has been understudied. Also under researched was the process of

transformation on beliefs and presumptions teacher candidates undergo through their completion of high stakes performance assessments. The purpose of this study was to examine the role of the California Teaching Performance Assessments (CalTPA) on the transformation of beginning teacher beliefs, values, and perceptions using a mixed method approach.

The Significance of the Study

This study has implications for advancing teacher education and practice by adding to the knowledge base about transformative experiences of beginning teachers. This study was important for two reasons: first, the study provided a better understanding of the CalTPA process of transforming new teachers practice. A better understanding of the transformative experience seen through the completion of the CalTPA can lead to the development of improved training and support programs for pre-service teachers. Teacher educators can use the information obtained in this study to assist in development of teacher preparation programs designed specifically to utilize the skills attained from the CalTPA to meet the needs of new teachers.

Second, the study provides the opportunity for new teachers to share their experiences from pre-service to probationary teacher status. Sharing the educational process allows for self-reflection on the teachers' transformative

experience and helps to facilitate opportunities for curriculum growth in future candidates programs

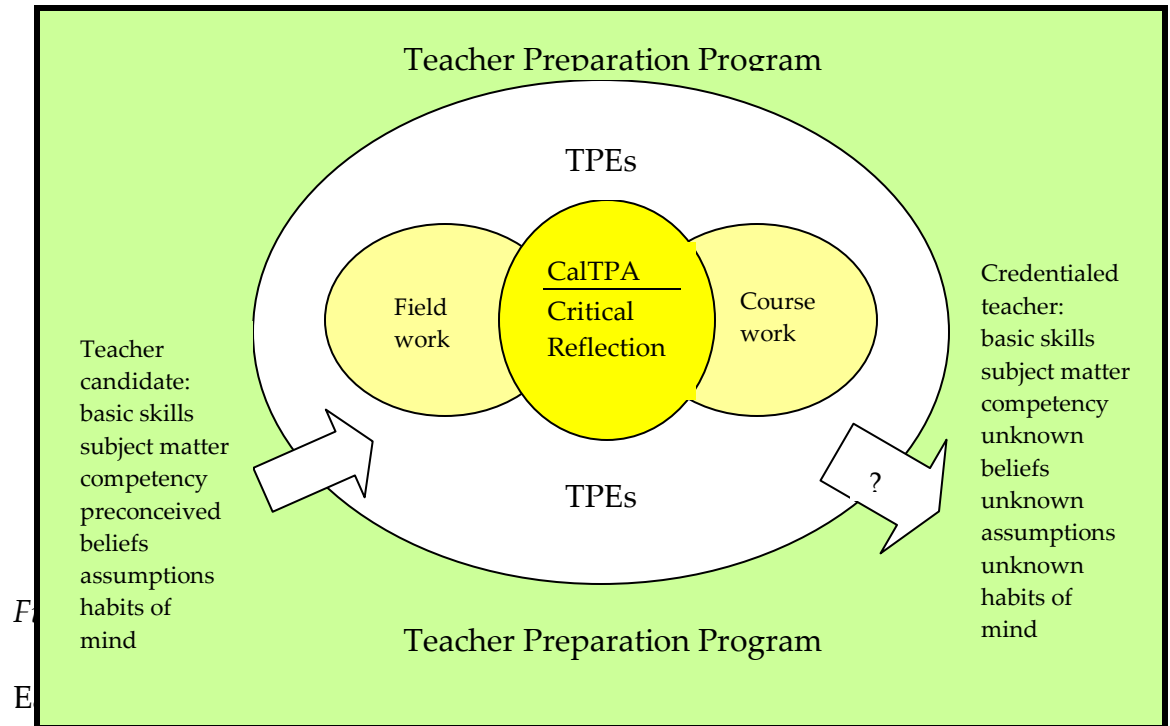
Theoretical Rationale

Individuals who enter teacher preparation programs bring an array of preconceived beliefs about teaching. Some of these preconceived beliefs may be accurate while others may be based on assumptions, yet these beliefs and presumptions help inform the identity of the teacher candidate. As pre-service teachers start their teaching practice in their first student teaching placement, they often find it difficult to bridge the gap between imagined views of teaching and the realities of teaching (Lee, 2007). Feiman-Nemser (2001) describes "...the central task of pre-service preparation to build on current thinking about what teachers need to know, care about, and be able to do in order to promote substantial learning for all students..." while "...fully realizing that the images and beliefs which pre-service students bring to their teacher preparation programs influence what they are able to learn..." (p. 1016). Once credentialed and responsible for their own classrooms, probationary teachers are faced with myriad stressors including the reality that they alone face the students they are entrusted to teach. In the wake of this reality, it has been suggested (Carlile, 2006) that some new teachers resort to the familiar behaviors they themselves received as students as opposed to the theories and strategies acquired from their

preparation programs. To aid in the understanding as to why some teachers revert to these familiar behaviors while others move forward in implementing their program-based strategies, I look to the Transformative Learning Theory introduced by Mezirow (1997).

According to Mezirow (1997), it is through our experiences that we make meaning which helps us to better understand the events in our world. This cycle of meaning making predicts set patterns where the occurrence of events delivers expected results and as a result habits of minds are developed. This expectation of events further develops assumptions and beliefs about how things will continue to unfold. The teacher candidate comes into teacher preparation programs with assumptions, preconceived beliefs, and habits of mind built from prior academic experiences. The connection of these assumptions and beliefs to the current study revolve around how pre-service teachers view teaching and how the inclusion of the CalTPA sets a framework of thought (habits of mind) that serves beginning teachers in their first few years of teaching and throughout their careers.

For clarity, I have included a visual representation (Figure 1) that serves to exemplify the stages of the teacher preparation program through which each teacher candidate moves.



set beliefs, assumptions, and habits of mind toward teaching as they enter into the teacher preparation program. During the program (the square figure), the teacher candidate completes course and field work built upon the requisite skills and competencies (TPEs) required of beginning teachers in the State of California. This study serves to answer whether the teacher candidate's critical reflective experience in completing the CalTPA pulls together all those skills and competencies developed within the teacher preparation program. It is unknown at this point, seen as a question mark within the exiting arrow, whether these teacher candidates leave the program with these beliefs (habits of mind) which will help serve them in their first five years of teaching.

Mezirow's (1997) Transformational Learning Theory identifies individual frames of reference which serve to identify and form attitudes and behaviors. Specifically, there are two frames of reference in this theory which are connected to the current study: habits of mind (ways of thinking formed by an individual's assumptions) and points of view (beliefs which shape our interpretations of events). In this study, beginning teacher attitudes are the points of view encapsulated within this theory and the thoughts about instructional practice are the habits of mind.

In drawing from Mezirow's (1997) framework, it is believed through the completion of high stakes assessments, pre-service teachers encounter a personal and professional transformation of what it means to be a teacher. The combination of their imagined view of teaching brought with them to their teacher preparation programs, the completion of their teaching performance assessments within their program, and their newfound realization of the skills and knowledge needed to be proficient in classroom teaching combine to transform beginning teachers images of teaching and of being a teacher.

During the process of transformation, the preconceived ideas, or assumptions, pre-service teachers bring with them into the teacher preparation program are seen as filters, or barriers, from which they attempt to substantiate the new learning experiences. Feiman-Nemser (2001) suggests that these

preconceived beliefs may prohibit professional growth because they may mislead prospective teachers into thinking that they know more about teaching than they actually do and that will make it harder for them to form new ideas and new habits of thought and action. (p. 1016)

When pre-service teachers are confronted with these assumptions, as seen in this study as the completion of the high stakes assessments, Mezirow (1990) suggests their old assumptions are tested and new levels of understanding emerge. Research (Blair, Rupey, & Nichols, 2007; Stansberry, & Kymes, 2007; Zeichner, & Wray, 2001; King, 1998) describing the experience of transformation for new teachers has focused on teaching strategies embedded within coursework contained within their teacher preparation program. There are, however, no studies examining the process of transformation probationary teacher's encounter as a result of completing high stakes state performance assessments embedded within their teacher preparation program. In this Northern California study, the high stakes test is the California Teaching Performance Assessments (CalTPA). Specifically, this study examined the transformative process beginning teachers underwent as a result of completing the CalTPA.

Background and Need

Throughout the country, K-12 teachers have encountered tremendous challenges provoked by the expansion of school functions and roles (Cheong, Cheng, & Walker, 1997), the necessity to demonstrate proficiency in pedagogical knowledge, skills dispositions, classroom management (Thornton, 2004), and “sensitivity to rapidly escalating demands to engage with diversity of culture, race, ethnicity in their day-to-day teaching practice” (Kawalilak, 2008, p. 308). The thread that weaves among these challenges characterizes the student presence in teaching and connects teacher knowledge of and ability to deliver effective instruction to students.

These everyday instructional challenges are augmented by classroom populations now facing the majority of California K-12 teachers. California’s secondary teachers are responsible for more students than secondary teachers in any other state with 38% more high school students per teacher than the national average. With 46% more middle school students per teacher, “California also has the largest middle school classrooms in the nation and class sizes are likely to rise over the next year with cuts to the states education budget” (CA Ed Report, p. 11).

These challenges of large class sizes and diverse populations, while difficult for seasoned teachers, present even greater struggles for probationary

teachers just beginning their professional careers. The inclusion of reality-based assessments in teacher preparation programs served as a tool to confirm the beginning level skill and ability of credential candidates to maneuver through these challenges. Formed as a highstakes measurement of beginning teacher readiness, the CalTPA, at its core, challenges credential candidates to put into practice the skills and strategies they will soon face as beginning teachers in California.

California Teaching Performance Assessments

Teacher preparation programs, delivered as 5th year post baccalaureate programs in California as a result of the Fisher Act (Sandy, 2006), vary slightly in their course delivery depending upon the philosophical nature of the host university. At the core of each program are state mandated curriculum courses and assessments. The completion of a teaching performance assessment and the resulting impact on teacher effectiveness will be further explored in following chapters. The question surfaces as to how these assessments facilitate the transformational development of teachers to teach in California's diverse and crowded classrooms.

In 2003, the California Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CTC) addressed the need presented by Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) for pre-service teachers to be able to perform teaching quite succinctly through the adopted

California Teaching Performance Assessments (CalTPA). The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) defines a teaching performance assessment as an assessment that requires candidates to demonstrate through their performance with K-12 students that they have mastered the knowledge, skills and abilities required of a beginning teacher, as exemplified in California's Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) (CTC website, 2009).

Historical background

In 1999, California received a three-year \$10.6 million Title II State Teacher Quality Enhancement grant which supported the State's efforts in reforming state licensure and certification requirements. The grant was instrumental in supporting California's teacher education reform effort as envisioned and enacted by SB 2042 (Chap. 548, Stats. 1998). SB 2042 provided the impetus to align all educator preparation programs in California with the Academic Content Standards for California Public Schools, Kindergarten through Grade 12, and also with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP, Appendix A). In addition, the grant assisted in the development of a model standards-based performance assessment, the California Teaching Performance Assessment (CalTPA) (CTC website, 2009).

In 2001, the CTC authorized the Executive Director to enter into a contract with Educational Testing Services (ETS) to develop a prototype Teaching

Performance Assessment pursuant to SB 2042 (agenda link, PSC 7A-13). The beta version was administered to 400 participants, 150 multiple subject and 250 single subject teacher candidates, who progressed through all four tasks requiring responses to be measured against the TPEs. The CTC conceived these tasks initially to be embedded within coursework of teacher preparation program.

The four assessments were initially titled:

- Task 1—Principles of Content-Specific and Developmentally Appropriate Pedagogy
- Task 2—Connecting Instructional Planning to Student Characteristics for Academic Learning
- Task 3—Classroom Assessment of Academic Learning Goals, and
- Task 4—Academic Lesson Design, Implementation, and Reflection after Instruction

A cumulative passing score, 12 of 16 possible points mandated by the CTC, provides evidence of the teacher candidates' knowledge, skills, and abilities required of a beginning teacher in California public schools. As part of the assessment, teacher candidates are prompted through a reiterative set of questions to demonstrate what they know about the students in the class, their academic achievement levels, and their learning needs. Teacher candidates (CalTPA Candidate Brochure, n. d.) then show how well they can use this information to help students succeed by:

- Planning and adapting lessons based on California standards
- Teaching the standards-based lessons to the K-12 students
- Planning and giving student assessments or tests based on the lessons

- Reflecting on the effectiveness of their own instruction by examining student work and assessment results and using this information to help students achieve the standards.

In 2007, the CalTPA Tasks were renamed Subject Specific Pedagogy (Task 1); Designing Instruction (Task 2); Assessing Learning (Task 3); and Culminating Teaching Experience (Task 4). Currently, the CalTPA is used by 52 universities and 4 district intern programs.

Although the CalTPA and its subsequent measured affect on preliminary credentialed teachers was the basis of the study it should be noted in this historical description of California Teaching Performance Assessments that the CTC later approved two alternate performance assessments for teacher preparation programs to utilize. These assessments, Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT) and the Fresno Assessment for Student Teachers (FAST), measure their respective candidates' performances against the CTEs. The formation of these assessments and subsequent CTC approval (PSC 6C-3, June 2009) were implemented in teacher preparation programs in 2007 and 2008 respectively. All three of the CTC-approved teaching performance assessment models share the following characteristics:

- Based on California's Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) for beginning teachers
- Require candidates to perform specified tasks/activities to demonstrate their ability to provide appropriate, effective instruction for all California K-12 public school students

- Include a focus on English learner students and students with special needs
- Use a rubric-based score of 1-4 (different models may require different minimum score levels)
- Require candidate orientation and practice in the TPA tasks/activities
- Embed tasks within the teacher preparation program sequence
- Provide assessor training, calibration, and recalibration
- Scored by trained assessors who must maintain their calibration status
- Require double scoring to maintain scoring reliability
- Provide feedback to candidates
- Provide opportunities for candidates to retake a task if needed
- Provide candidate information useful for induction
- Provide information for program improvement (CTC TPA-tech-assist-meeting.ppt, 2008)

In reviewing the multi-level skills and abilities each beginning teacher must exhibit, a better understanding emerges of the difficult process teaching entails. Horn, et al. (2008) suggest learning to teach is conceptualized as a project that involves constructing a repertoire of practices, along with developing pedagogical reasoning about the deployment of those practices. It is well described by a beginning teacher's own words:

The greatest difference between my expectations and actual classroom experiences has been the arduous task of balancing lessons that target the high achievers and low achievers in the same classroom. . . . During the first six weeks of teaching pre-algebra, I altered my teaching strategies to reach those students who counted on their fingers, those who multiplied and divided on a beginner level, and those who have surpassed all eighth grade objectives.
Lori G. Rich, 8th grade, Texas (Ed.gov archives, 1998)

This study examined the change in practice reported by teachers who completed the CalTPA in their teacher preparation program. There is little

evidence that pre-service teachers actually enact what they report learning in their teaching practice as a consequence of completing a TPA because of a lack of observational data corroborating the impact of such assessments on teacher practice (Chung, 2008). Personal opinions and anecdotal evidence about new teachers practice as it relates to the completion of the CalTPA is also under researched.

Understanding the transformation of teacher beliefs from the perspective of the teacher is important for several reasons. First, teacher preparation programs need to understand the transformation pre-service teachers undergo in planning, supporting, and reflecting on teacher practice. Second, teacher educators can use the information to develop guidelines for evaluating the progress and providing feedback to pre-service teachers during their teacher preparation programs. Third, the teacher candidates can reflect on their experiences to provide possible strategies for reducing teacher turnover and enhancing teacher support during the transition from pre-service to new teacher.

Research Questions

The research will be guided by these questions:

1. What instructional practices during student teaching were modified as a result of completing the CalTPA?

2. To what extent did the CalTPA increase the level of instructional practice in a probationary teacher's practice?
3. To what extent were any preconceived beliefs of being a teacher altered by the completion of the CalTPA?

The minimal research examining the transformative process of probationary teachers directly after their teacher preparation program lends itself to a mixed method design. This study used a quantitative and qualitative approach to explore the movement of adult educators' beliefs about teaching and the subsequent impact on those beliefs as a result of successfully completing the CalTPA. Beginning teachers within their first five years of teaching were sent an email informing them of the study and requesting them to complete an on-line survey. The last page of the survey optioned participants to share contact information which resulted in a follow-up face-to-face interview with the researcher. These small group interviews were conducted at a public site convenient for participants and allowed the researcher to continue the discussion originated from the survey prompts. It also afforded the researcher the opportunity to listen to the connections participants drew from the CalTPA to their first year(s) of teaching.

Definition of Terms

Below is a list of terms and how they are defined in this study.

California Teacher Performance Assessments (CalTPA) is a state mandated written performance assessment that assures teacher candidates have the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of a beginning teacher in California public schools as measured by the TPEs. (CTC website, 2009)

Frame of reference is the preconceived set of beliefs, values, and feelings held by pre-service candidates.

Highly qualified status signifies a teacher candidate who possesses a bachelor's degree and has passed a state certified subject and/or level test in the area of their concentration.

Pre-service teacher is an individual enrolled in a teacher preparation program. Further the terms pre-service and teacher candidate are synonymous and refer to the same group of students enrolled in a teacher preparation program.

Probationary teacher is an individual who has successfully completed a teacher preparation program, earned a preliminary California credential, and is currently teaching in a K-12 grade level classroom. Further the terms probationary, new, and beginning teacher are synonymous and refer to the same

group of individuals who have earned their teaching credential within the last five years.

Performance assessments are rubric-scored written assessments which measure how a teacher candidate applies content and pedagogical knowledge toward real-life classroom situations.

Reflective judgment study, “is the ability to offer a perspective about one’s own perspective” (Mezirow, 2003, p. 61).

Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) are a set of 13 specific skills, knowledge, and abilities every California beginning teacher should be able to demonstrate in their teaching practice (CTC website, 2009).

Transformation is the process of developing specific skills and responsibilities in a gradual way concluding with an awareness of skills and attributes needed to be a competent teacher.

Transformative learning “is learning that transforms problematic frames of reference—sets of fixed assumptions and expectations (habits of mind, meaning perspectives, mindsets)—to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change” (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58).

Summary

Feiman-Nemser (2001) describes the central task of pre-service preparation is “to build on current thinking about what teachers need to know,

care about, and be able to do in order to promote substantial learning for all students” p. 1016). The manner in which California teacher candidates are assessed these complex, yet vital, abilities has recently changed with the inclusion of a series of teaching performance assessments situated in teacher preparation programs.

This study looked at how one CTC certified performance assessment, the CalTPA, captured the skills, abilities, and content knowledge every beginning teacher needed to possess in order to be an effective K-12 classroom teacher in California. Further, this study looked at whether these skills, abilities, and content knowledge, as defined by the CalTPA,; a) are instituted into beginning teacher practice and b) transform pre-service teachers preconceived teaching beliefs into new habits of mind.

Next, in looking at research focusing on transforming beginning teachers practice, we strive to better understand if, and how, the beliefs, values, and assumptions that teacher candidates bring with them into teacher preparation programs can be altered through strategies which mirror steps and sections embedded within the teacher performance assessments.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The world of teaching has become increasingly complex. Teachers must become proficient in aligning, contextualizing, analyzing, explaining, adapting, instructing, and selecting important content, all while operating within bureaucratic systems that typically do not support collaboration, reflection, planning, or professional growth. Second, accountability has imposed upon teachers the necessity to demonstrate their worth in bringing about learning for *all* P-12 students. These two challenges require the process of teacher preparation to become increasingly sophisticated and systematic. (Girod & Girod, 2008, p. 307)

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a review of the relevant studies which explore pre-service and beginning teachers understandings of effective teaching practices and the resulting impact of those practices on student learning seen through the lens of Mezirow's (1991, 1997, 2000) Transformational Learning Theory. This theoretical rationale frames the role critical self-reflection plays on pre-service teachers presupposed habits, beliefs, and values about teaching and aids in interpreting the knowledge candidates acquire within the completion of state mandated teaching performance assessments. It is currently unknown whether teacher candidates continue with this practice of critical self reflection in their first few years of teaching. To better understand the role pedagogical strategies and teaching assessments play on pre-service teacher's belief's, values, and presupposed habits a review of the limited and dated existing national and state studies (Benjamin, 2002; Carlile, 2006; Selvester, Summers, & Williams,

2006; Thompson, 1999; Vollmer & Creek, 1993) will be reviewed. These studies examined student learning as a result of completing mandated performance assessments concentrated within teacher preparation programs. Research studies (Baumgartner, 2001; King 2004; Merriam & Clark, 1993; Whitlaw, Sears, & Campbell, 2004) revealing the role critical reflection plays on pre-service teacher candidates teaching beliefs, values, and presupposed assumptions will also be reviewed. Finally, a summary of the literature reviewed is presented and establishes a context for the current study.

Teaching Performance Assessments

In the current reform movement where credentialed candidates must prove highly qualified status through the completion of subject specific testing and teacher preparation coursework, one high stakes exam looks at the ability of the candidate to connect effective teaching practice to student learning. In California, the state mandated teaching performance assessments were developed expressly to ensure credential candidates ability to connect practice to student learning (CTC Website, 2009). The following studies (Benjamin, 2002; Brown & Benson, 2005; Carlile, 2006; Morgan, 1999; Selvester, Summers, & Williams, 2006; Tanner & Ebers, 1985; Thompson, 1999; Vollmer & Creek, 1993) examine the development of pre-service teachers' effectiveness to engage all students, in varying degrees, in learning, which speaks to the foundation of the

California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTPs) and the supporting Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs). In turn, it is the CSTPs and TPEs which frame both teacher preparation coursework and performance assessments.

Examining teacher competence through performance assessments is not new to teacher educators. Neither is the controversy of implementing high stakes testing as a means of teacher education reform. In a paper presented to the 1993 Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Vollmer and Creek (1993) investigated the relationship between subjective tests (TPAI) and objective assessments seen in the study as the National Teacher Examination's Education in the Elementary School Specialty Area Test (NTE/EES). The researchers' data suggest that teachers who have the ability to score high on standardized tests may not show the same high scores on practical, performance based tests. The argument made by Vollmer and Creek (1993) is that "higher objective test scores may allow entry into the teaching profession but once there, teachers are evaluated using assessment instruments similar to the TPAI that rely upon observation, interviews, or other performance related variables" (p. 8).

The creation of one teaching performance assessment to validate beginning teacher competence is quite an undertaking. If a group of stakeholders are queried, as many factors as participants would contribute

contrasting views as to what characterizes a beginning teacher. To offer a context for the current CalTPAs, a review of existing assessments which contain similar segments from which to assess pre-service candidate's competence is provided. In an overarching view, many of the characteristics noted in varying forms of assessments comprise the current CalTPA.

Brown and Benson (2005) examined how their students and faculty viewed their Masters of Arts in Teaching capstone coursework as a form of assessment. In a public arena where questioning opportunities from the audience are allowed, 21 pre-service teachers provided a 30 to 50 minute presentation showcasing evidence, often seen through videos, slides, portfolios, and other multi-media tools, of their skills and abilities to become credentialed teachers. This presentation compiles the pre-service teacher's knowledge of subject and pedagogical theory as well as skill attainment and was viewed by the researchers as a "more meaningful assessment because of its ability to promote active learning" (Brown & Benson, 2005, p. 679). A post survey capturing the pre-service teacher participants' perceptions of the capstone event found:

- 1) it provided opportunities for more thoughtful student reflection in contrast to traditional assessment;

- 2) it enabled students to make sense of their graduate program in a systematic way; and

3) it proved to be a meaningful avenue that encouraged students to apply skills and theories acquired in a relevant way.

The Benjamin (2002) study examined the validity and reliability of a different type of performance assessment issued to pre-service teachers in a rural university in Pennsylvania. This study researched the difficulty in creating a valid assessment which would assess pre-service teacher's competence based on Danielson's Framework for Teaching. This framework comprises four domains of teaching responsibility: 1) planning and preparation, 2) classroom environment, 3) instruction, and 4) professional responsibilities. The three assessments, University Supervisor's Evaluation Report (USER), Students Self-Report, and the Cooperating Teacher's Evaluation Report (CTER), all used portions of the domains to assess teacher candidate competence. While this study concentrated on the validity of the three forms to gauge teacher candidate competence within a teacher preparation program, the study shows significant correlation to the CalTPA with distinguishing differences. The study asked 23 participants, students, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors, to evaluate the student's competency in relation to Danielson's four domains and found high construct and content validity and low concurrent validity in using the forms.

Morgan's (1999) study explained the dissatisfaction mentor teachers presented when assessing pre-service undergraduate student teachers by creating a training session comprised of 200 mentors, 6 professors, and 22 pre-service teachers. This body of expertise trained to use a performance assessment instrument developed from Charlotte Danielson's *A Framework for Teaching* work. This instrument gave concrete criteria in the form of a rubric from which the mentor teachers could evaluate pre-service candidates' skills and abilities. The connection to the current study is seen through the current form of evaluation utilized by trained assessors in assessing tasks of the CalTPA.

Thompson's (1999) early study incorporated an oral performance assessment embedded within a mathematics methods class attended by both elementary and middle school pre-service teachers. Thompson (1999) argues "that throughout teacher preparation programs many opportunities for written assessments are provided for pre-service teachers to demonstrate mastery of subject knowledge yet once in a K-12 classroom much of a math teacher's instruction is oral, through questions, answers, demonstrations, discussions, and lectures" (p. 85). To fully assess the candidate's ability to integrate appropriate language and vocabulary in their instruction, the researcher embedded an oral interview exam in her coursework. Pre-service students were given the requirements of the task in advance, encouraged to practice with peers, and

finally meet with the professor for a 20-minute interview. These requirements mirror tasks within the CalTPA. The researcher found the oral assessments provided pre-service teachers the opportunity to stretch beyond surface knowledge to explain math concepts. In some instances, the participant's knowledge lacked depth or was faulty which lead to the researcher's opportunity to clear the misconception or actually re-teach fundamental concepts. Surveyed participant's responses to undergoing an oral assessment stated "it allowed me to talk through a problem and find out if I knew it or not. It also made me think more about what I was doing" while another responded with "we were tested in the same way we are expected to test our students" (Thompson, 1999, p. 88).

Tanner and Ebers (1985) performed a clinical study of 393 beginning Georgia public school teachers to determine the relationship between training and experience variables and beginning teacher performance. This study has similarities to the current research where data measured each teacher's performance based upon 14 competencies. The differences between this study and the CalTPA are significant:

- 1) assessors made individual judgments to include TPAI items;
- 2) interrator reliability was not maintained;
- 3) participant's were established teachers.

Depending upon the strength and focus of local school reform movements, various states have incorporated some variation of a teaching performance assessment as a requirement for teacher credentialing (Hanowar, 2007; Kansas National Education Association website, 2009; Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation, 2009; South Carolina Educator Improvement Task Force, 1982). Many of these emerged in the early 1970's and 1980's and through a series of refinement are still prevalent in teacher credentialing requirements today. California teacher credentialing, the focus of this study and worthy of a separate section, has undergone redefining rounds of requirements within the past few decades and provides insight to the current configuration of the CalTPAs. A brief look at this research follows.

California Teaching Performance Assessment Related Studies

Selvester, Summers, and Williams (2006) took an opportunity to beta test the early version of the CalTPA by hosting a conference day for their cooperating teachers, supervisors, and faculty (n=178) and asked them to review the tasks to determine their adherence to the TPEs. Once reviewed and revised, the CalTPA was given to both multiple and single subject credential students enrolled in their last semester of their teacher preparation program (n=165). Through continued revisions, administration of the TPA, and follow-up surveys the results were presented to the California Council of Teacher Education in October

2004 as well as the 2005 meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Results found a majority of the participants rated the CalTPA 3 out of 5 points for a positive effect on their growth as teachers while faculty believed this assessment would be most powerful if used in conjunction with other sources of assessment.

Carlile (2006) reiterates the concern that pre-service teachers leave coursework behind when confronted with the reality of student teaching by stating [pre-service teachers] “quickly become submerged in every day school culture, and they often resort to non-theory driven behaviors rather than implementing what they learned in methods classes” (p. 21). Attempting to rectify that in her own methods classes, Carlile added a field component which “dovetailed” realistic scenarios, researcher entitled “infused TPA 1”, with the original questions seen in the Subject Specific Task of the CalTPA. Eleven students during their student teaching placements became familiar with the special needs and English Language learners in their classrooms and began to develop lesson plans, units, and curriculum maps which they ultimately taught to the students over a 2-3 day session. These sessions were videotaped which allowed the students to view the tapes and submit reflection essays of their teaching to their professors. The professors and, in some instances, the master teachers also watched the videos using the footage to estimate the pre-service

teachers ability to draw connections between their instruction to the learning needs of the students. The basis of the study was to discuss both the pre-service teachers "perception of the structured fieldwork infused TPA 1 that they had done the previous semester and how they perceived these assessments helped them be more prepared for student teaching" (p. 27). Carlile (2006) found that through readjusting the fieldwork toward a TPA 1 emphasis her pre-service teachers were able to practice their newly learned theories and strategies. Carlile (2006), herself, also reflected on how she had doubted the TPA would encourage her student learning by stating "this state-designed assessment has in fact helped this course become more focused by providing a structure that the course had been lacking" (p. 39).

These studies (Carlile, 2006; Selvester, Summers, & Williams, 2006) are important because veteran professors who instruct in teacher preparation programs have limited knowledge regarding the CalTPA and are often reticent to incorporate or vary their own teaching practice to assist in their pre-service teacher's successful movement through the performance assessments (Carlile, 2006). Often this resistance is based upon two separate issues: 1) a lack of knowledge regarding the development or implementation of the assessment or, 2) the disbelief that the assessment will assist pre-service candidates in linking content and pedagogical knowledge to facilitate student learning (Carlile, 2006).

This resistance from faculty may influence how teacher candidates view the CalTPA and may have a direct influence on teacher candidates' transformation from pre-service to beginning teachers. When the CalTPA was mandated in 2003 the idea was to embed the assessment in teacher preparation coursework. A brief overview of teacher preparation programs is provided below.

California Teacher Preparation Programs

California teacher preparation programs are based on the 5th year model with some universities providing dual degree options to undergraduates who complete their 4 year program and immediately enroll in the 5th year coursework. Typically, all coursework provided by teacher preparation programs must follow the accrediting arm of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the adopted standards of quality and effectiveness. Various universities offer adult-friendly formats which allow students to work during the day and take classes at night where others follow the undergraduate model of offering classes during day hours. The majority of universities offer both the elementary self-contained classroom credential and a single subject credential and some universities offer the opportunity to earn both concurrently. Regardless of the program model, all programs deliver courses which promote student-created artifacts and meet the California Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs).

Teaching Performance Assessment Summary

The foundational knowledge of the development of performance assessments as a teacher reform movement and the obligatory teaching performance assessment studies which followed this implementation have provided insight to past experiences in incorporating performance based tasks in pre-service teacher preparation programs. The studies (Carlile, 2006; Selvester, Summers, & Williams, 2006) have shown the effects performance assessments play on pre-service candidates while still enrolled in their teacher preparation program. As a beginning teacher gains entry into the teaching profession the familiar forms of performance and content assessment seen in teacher preparation programs will diminish, replaced by the professional yearly evaluations by site administrators, the watchful eyes of demanding parents, and, often the hardest to bear, the daily subjective comments muttered by students.

While the current studies (Benjamin, 2002; Brown & Benson, 2005; Morgan, 1999) have shown the connection pre-service teachers make with their performance and the resulting student outcomes, these studies are conducted within the safety of the practicum experience and the supportive eye of master teachers or program faculty. Studies (Carlile, 2006; Grossman, 1990) have also shown that under the stress of independent practice, pre-service and beginning teachers often resort to the techniques and teaching strategies they endured as K-

12 students. It is often the case where in the isolation of the classroom many beginning teachers take the opportunity to hide and deny any current stressors while still others pro-actively reflect upon their practice as a means to better performance. These habits of mind, mirrored within the cycles of the CalTPA, have provided beginning teachers with the practical application to incorporate the plan, teach, reflect cycle back into their practice. These studies have not shown whether beginning teachers continue to incorporate the practices embedded within the performance assessments into daily practice nor have they shown if the effects of completing the performance assessments created a personal transformation of their teaching beliefs or values. To date, there are no studies looking at whether beginning teachers actually do adhere to this cycle reflective of their CalTPA experience.

The theoretical framework which guides this study is based upon Mezirow's (1990, 1997, 2000) Transformational Learning Theory. Mezirow analyzed stages of adult learning and found that adults learn best when they connect experience with real life purpose. When experience and purpose connect, the occasion allows adult learners the opportunity for reflection. Brookfield (1986) identified this connection as learning content and process. In the next pages, Mezirow's Transformational Learning Theory will first be outlined through the context of adult learning followed by research discussing

the process of teacher reflection and ending with a reassessment of student learning. This learning content and process, as noted by Brookfield (1986), provides a context for the current study and the lens in which past research will be reviewed.

Adult Learning Theory

Andragogy, the study of adult learning, compiles the frames of reference accumulated through adult experiences and creates new portals through which interpretation is applied. Most educational institutions, and particularly licensure programs, utilize an instrumental view of learning whereby education is a process of acquiring the knowledge, skills, credentials, or pedigree deemed as prerequisite for attaining a particular status (Diver, 2004). Gilsczinski (2007) believes higher education that fails to develop learners beyond the acquisition of instrumental knowledge contributes to the poverty of American society and further states:

The instrumental curriculum that prevails in higher education is viewed by many to be wholly natural way to learn. The opportunity to consume, compartmentalize, and regurgitate information is, in many cases, all that learners have been taught to expect from school. (p. 319)

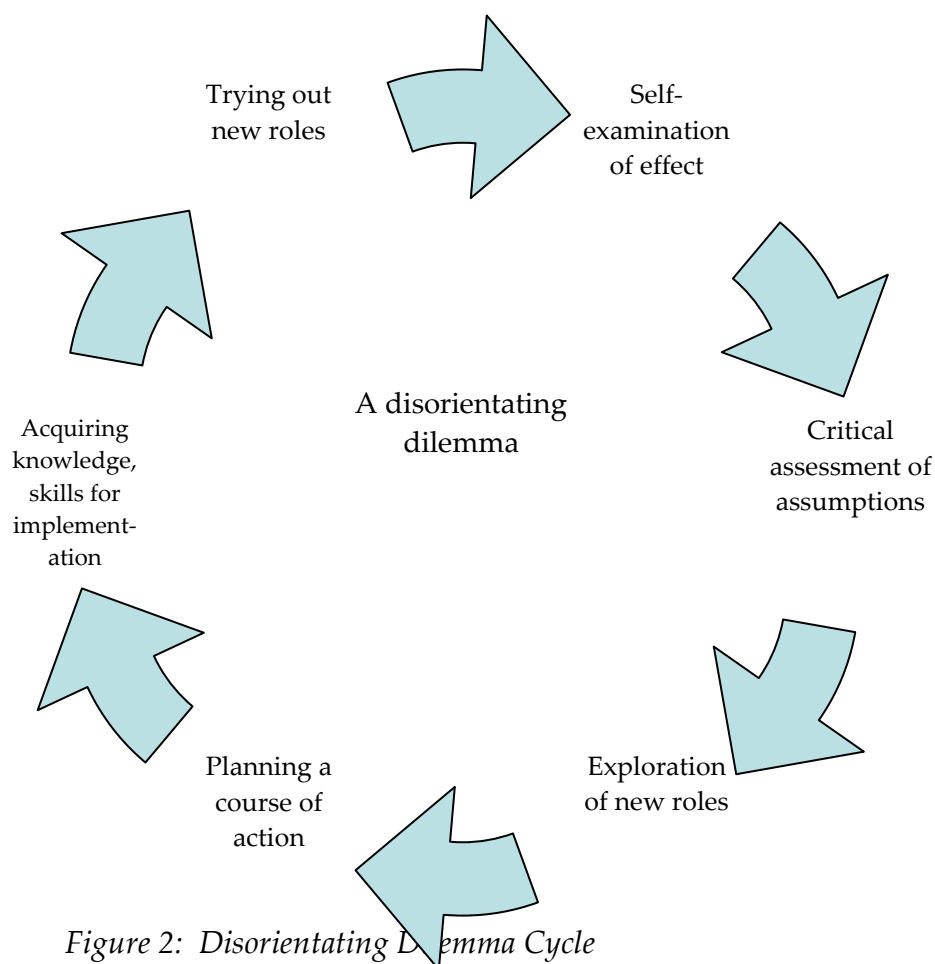
Far afield from this view of instrumental knowledge, transformative learning reflects a particular vision for adult education and a conceptual framework for understanding how adults learn (Dirkx, nd). Paulo Freire (1970)

and Jack Mezirow (1997), prominent educators promoting transformative learning through a constructivist view, situate rational, reflective acts at the core of the learning process. While Freire's work is more focused upon critical consciousness, Mezirow's work takes an individualistic and internal-driven approach where the emphasis is toward making meaning from life experiences through reflection, or more pointedly, critical-self reflection. The perspectives, or sets of belief, values, and assumptions adults have formed through prior life experiences, serve as a lens through which they make sense of new situations. Some perspectives may help in integrating new experiences and, conversely, some may distort what adults are able to understand.

According to Mezirow's (1997) Transformational Learning Theory, individual frames of reference serve to identify and form attitudes and behaviors. Brookfield (2003) believes "transformative learning is learning in which the learner comes to a new understanding of something that causes a fundamental reordering of the paradigmatic assumptions she holds and leads her to live in a fundamentally different way" (p. 142). Specifically, there are two frames of reference in this theory which are connected to the current study: habits of mind (ways of thinking formed by an individual's assumptions) and points of view (beliefs which shape our interpretations of events). In this current study, beginning teacher attitudes are the points of view encapsulated within

Mezirow's theory and the thoughts about instructional practice are the habits of mind.

In psychoanalyzing their progress and generalizing it for any adult faced with a disorientating dilemma, Mezirow (1994) sequenced 7 steps, or stages, an adult moves through during the process of perspective reflection. I have created a chart depicting these 7 stages follows with an explanation geared toward pre-service teachers' experiences during their teacher preparation program.



In this study:

- a disorientating dilemma is the student teaching experience(s);
- a self-examination of affect is the reality shock, surprise, etc., of being in an actual classroom;
- a critical assessment of assumptions is the formation of self directed questions “How do I interpret what is happening in the classroom and what will I do next?”;
- an exploration of new roles is the formation of self-directed questions “How is this different than what I imagined?”;
- planning a course of action is the formation of self-directed questions that ask “What have I learned from my teacher preparation coursework that will help me in these situations?”;
- acquiring knowledge and skills for implementation questions: “What do I need to relearn or better understand for this to work?”;
- trying out new roles is asking “If my assumptions are wrong and I change my way of being, how will I know this is the right way?”;

Although depicted as a continuous process of movement in the diagram, it should be noted that pre-service teachers may revisit stages throughout the course of self reflection. This understanding has lead researchers and theorists of adult learning to assert that in order for adults to internalize and appropriately apply professionally relevant concepts, skills, and strategies, learning must be a

transformational, rather than simply informational experience (Baumgartner, 2001; King 2004; Merriam & Clark, 1993; Mezirow, 1997).

As the pre-service teacher embarks upon her first student teaching placement, she has only an imagined picture of her ideal classroom and past experiences as a student to draw upon. Any student altercation or classroom mishap can lead to a disorienting dilemma and lower her self confidence as a new teacher and lead her to “quick-fix” actions. At this point, typical pre-service teachers skip any reflective behavior in addressing these classroom occurrences or strategies learned from teacher preparation coursework and quickly resort to teacher behavior encountered within their past schooling or even the rules set down by the current master teacher as a safe haven. To facilitate the growth of these skills, Orland-Barak, and Yinon (2006, p. 958) proposed that the acquisition and development of teacher skills is based upon critical reflection. Learning to become a reflective teacher, prospective teachers would ideally acquire competencies that transcend technical thinking about “what to do in the classroom” and engage in trying to establish relevant connections between theory and practice. Exploration of the transformation of new teachers provides additional insight into teacher education practice.

As pre-service teachers encounter opportunities to put into action the instructional strategies learned in coursework a chasm often evolves. It is

believed that through the process of rational discourse a new phase of learning occurs. Mezirow (1997) defined rational discourse as a dialogue in which individuals enter into a cycle of defending current beliefs and examining new evidence that may refute those beliefs. This manner of rational discourse works best when participants set aside their existing beliefs, share experiences with others, and reevaluate their experiences providing a new frame of reference (Mezirow, 1991). In order for these processes to provide transformational effects, the environment must be challenging, safe, and respectful of all participants (Cranton, 2002; Mezirow, 1997).

Whitelaw, Sears, and Campbell (2004, ask how transformative learning theory is connected to faculty and teaching philosophy and practice. Their answer cites Mezirow's belief about learning:

[L]earning occurs in one or more ways: by (a) elaborating existing frames of reference, (b) learning new frames of reference, (c) transforming points of view, or (d) transforming habits of mind.
(p. 11)

In facilitating the transformational learning experience, educators must expose adult learners to other perspectives (Cranton, 2002; Taylor, 2000) and acknowledge the values, beliefs, and feelings related to course content held by students (Taylor, 2000). Understandably, Mezirow (1997) cautions educators not to dictate what learners should think, learn, or feel and use the discourse as a way in which to guide learners to think for themselves. Shlonsky and Stern

(2007) also assert that “teacher preparation programs must teach students how to think critically and conceptually about the information to which they are exposed and how to integrate this thinking into practice (p. 604).

Adult Learning Theory Summary

To employ critical reflection as a partner with action in developing pre-service and future probationary teachers is at the forefront of this study. Course work within teacher preparation programs promote theory and procedural knowledge critical to developing teachers yet, as Chung (2008) and others suggest (Carlile, 2006), there is little evidence that pre-service teachers actually enact what they report learning in their teaching practice.

The multiple steps situation within Mezirow’s Transformational Learning Theory (1997) connects the causal integration of new information, perspectives, or practice on existing world views. This integration of learning provides adults an opportunity to evaluate their existing beliefs, assumptions, and values. While some adults will find this evaluation provides a reconfirmation of these beliefs, assumptions, and values others may develop new ways of understanding. Those adults who, through this evaluation, develop new ways of understanding realign those existing frames of references. It is through that realignment when transformational learning has occurred. Adult teacher candidates who travel through this transformative cycle of exploration and realignment of beliefs,

values, and assumptions are the focus of this study and provide the lens, categorized by the themes of teacher reflection and student learning, which guide the next section of this research.

Teacher Reflection

Today's teachers work in increasingly diverse schools with various social and educational issues which allow them the opportunity to be reflective practitioners (Moore & Whitfield, 2008). While many beginning teachers may agree to the need, many cite the lack of time as a reason they do not reflect on a regular basis. Veteran teachers, having survived the trials of their first few years, know that taking time to reflect formally or informally is part of being a good teacher (Andrew, 2009). The process of reflection is embedded within many steps and sections found in state performance assessments and may provide the vehicle for teacher candidate transformation. The following studies mirror steps described earlier of Mezirow's (1997) Transformative Learning Theory as participants navigate the learning to teach process.

Like Eisen (2001), King (2002) examined transformational learning in the context of professional development for practicing educators and pre-service education students. Specifically, this mixed-methods study explored how educators enhancing their skills in technology could also experience changes in their perspectives teaching practices. The importance of this study was in how

the participants, through critical reflection, noted changes in their teaching practice and the affect of those changes in their own K-12 student's learning. The enhancement of their skills in technology was secondary. Participants numbered 175 teachers and pre-service educators enrolled in educational technology courses. The results of this study indicate that participants experienced other ways of knowing how to utilize common pedagogical strategies through technology which altered their self confidence in how their actions impacted their K-12 student's learning. The result of their critical reflection brought a perspective transformation (Mezirow, 2000).

Wang (2009) studied the effect of learning and reflection had through the act of collaboration on portfolio projects among pre-service teachers. The researcher indicated that the opportunity for the pre-service teachers to work together challenged them to move past their current beliefs about themselves. Wang (2009) states "through collaborative work, more and deeper meaningful learning and reflection on learning and instruction were likely to occur among the pre-service teachers" (p. 65). In this study, participants entered into a rational discourse (Mezirow, 2000) with fellow teacher's narrowing to self-examination of evidence promoting their individual teacher competence.

Slepkov's (2008) study, constructed through a GrassRoots project, examined authentic professional growth of 26 teachers through the acquisition of

new technology strategies linked to their classroom practice. GrassRoots, as Slepkov (2008) describes “was a program organized by SchoolNet, a semi-autonomous governmental agency fully funded by the Canadian federal parliament fulfilling the mandate to ensure that every school in Canada had an internet access point and designed to motivate schools to learn how to use Internet access point in the service of student growth”(p. 87). The participants performance task was the creation of a web page through the researcher’s lens of authentic teacher professional development. Through the multi-level struggle with new technology, the requisite demand of acquiring different skill sets of instructional abilities, and the redirection of perceived abilities to connect technology to student learning, these participants reinforced the cyclic perception of intentional instructional practice and the resulting impact on student learning. This transformative cycle of experimental instructional strategies and reflection moved participants from their existing beliefs and assumptions (Mezirow, 2000) toward developing new avenues to promote student learning.

Understanding that the process of transformation is reflective of the participant’s ability to connect past beliefs, values, and assumptions (Mezirow, 2000) , Darling-Hammond, Chung and Frelow (2002, p. 286) queried if the path to teaching influenced teacher preparedness through the research question,

“Does teacher education influence what teachers feel prepared to do when they enter the classroom?” Their survey study of 3,000 New York City beginning teachers researched various pathways pre-service teachers may take to begin a career in teaching and found that those who entered teaching through alternative programs or without preparation felt less prepared than those who entered through teacher preparation programs. The findings pertinent to the current study were based upon participants’ responses to the main categories of preparedness, and the ability to promote student learning and teach critical thinking.

The study suggested that graduates of teacher preparation programs do perceive a higher feeling of preparedness in many areas of teaching. After variables were controlled (age, gender, teaching experience, credential type, teaching within area of certification, ethnicity) the researchers’ found “a sense of preparedness is by far the strongest predictor of teaching efficacy” (Darling-Hammond, Chung & Frelow , 2002, p. 294). This transformation in the teachers’ perception of their teaching ability (Mezirow, 2000) as a result of better teacher preparation showed an increase in their abilities to handle classroom problems, teach all students, and be a factor in the lives of their students.

Schmidt and Knowles (1995) suggested after conducting a 4 teacher case study that students perceived failure in becoming a teacher stems from a “lack of

connected, collaborative styles of supervision and a lack of helping individual beginning teachers validate and give educative meaning to their own experiences" (p. 442). These failures may be linked to characteristics of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 2000). While arguably this is a dated study, the cycle of teaching and those who partake in the exercise to become teachers extends through time. The researchers' findings have ties to the current study assertion that through the process of critical reflection, pre-service teachers have a supported process in which to understand their own teaching evolution. The researchers found (Schmidt & Knowles, 1995) that through the period of classroom practice all four women were:

1. unable to reconcile perceptions of themselves with the behaviors they believed were required to maintain order in the classroom.
2. quite surprised to discover the extent of the mental and emotional effort required to establish sufficient order in their classrooms to sustain what they felt were "fun" and "interesting" teaching and learning experiences.
3. unable to intellectualize the discontinuities between their own understandings of their experiences and their mentors' responses.
4. able to identify and validate who they were and who they hoped to become as teachers.
5. unable to conceive appropriate instructional techniques and management routines.
6. lacking in experiential understandings necessary to effectively implement their mentors' advice. (p. 441)

Through the process of critical reflection and perspective transformation (Mezirow, 2000) these women determined they were unable to continue in the teaching profession. In revisiting the seven steps outlined earlier that depicted

how adults travel through perspective transformation, it would appear the women stalled in acquiring the knowledge or skills needed to assist them in understanding their new reality and the action this new knowledge imposed in order to continue in their role as a teacher.

Lee (2007) examined the effect of teaching and reflective journal writing on second language pre-service teachers enrolled at two Hong Kong universities and questioned whether the inclusion in coursework would encourage her students to develop into reflective practitioners. The two groups of pre-service teachers, all preparing to become English teachers, participated over two semesters with differing writing requirements and opportunities to dialogue with the professor. Lee found “when pre-service teachers reflected through writing journals they became more aware of the changes in their own values, beliefs, etc. and their self-development” (p. 328). This critical reflection, as seen by Mezirow (1990), is imperative to their development as a teacher.

Ostorga’s (2006) study looked at the relationship between open-mindedness and reflection through the use of journal writes. She suggests the open-minded teacher, a trait necessary for transformation (Mezirow, 2000), must continuously question routines and practices. The multiple case study collected data from participants and determined their reflective growth developed through four stages of knowing: absolute, transitional, independent, and

contextual. The researcher found (Ostorga, 2006) that “reflective thinking can not be taught through a few simple techniques but requires education that transforms the pre-service teachers’ ways of knowing, their views about knowledge and the roles of teachers and students” (p. 19).

Lee and Wu (2006) and Pedro (2005) both utilized time and reflection as a means to evaluate transformational growth in graduate level credential students. In charting participants’ thoughts around curriculum matters, class activities, social, and personal matters during their final teaching practice, Pedro found (2005) that “the participants used reflection as a conceptual device to help them think about their knowledge and better their teaching skills, link their personal values to educational theories, and develop their practical experience through their fieldwork” (p. 62). Lee and Wu (2006) reported the process facilitated their reflecting on their teaching and is the basis for perspective transformation (Mezirow, 2000).

Yost (2006) conducted a technology-driven longitudinal study of 10 classroom teachers who graduated from the same undergraduate teacher education program with a dual certification in Elementary and Special Education. Participants were predominantly White (7), all female, and within the age range of 22-25 years of age. The first phase of research, where participants were interviewed and video taped teaching, was conducted during

their second year of teaching and the second phase of research was completed 5 years after participant's graduation from the program. Six major themes emerged: learning, practice, personal qualities, first year, values, and administration. The second phase, conducted 5 years later, utilized a questionnaire requesting updated information regarding the participant's current teaching position, activities, and graduate program pursuits. Yost (2006) found that "critical reflection as a problem-solving tool empowers teachers to cope with the challenges that they encounter in their first few years of teaching" (p. 67)". In revisiting Mezirow's (1994) seven-step cycle perspective transformation cycle earlier noted, the participants' traveled through all steps and were able to see, over the 5 year time span, that the critical reflections, assumptions, and action they took evolved into their current teaching practice.

Encouraging the transformation of pre-service teacher's beliefs and assumptions about themselves as teachers is not constrained to traditional pedagogical strategies. Tepper (2004) chose an alternative authentic assessment model which utilized art as a mode to help students articulate their understanding of teaching, learning, and community. In individual sketchings used as the course's final exam, pre-service teachers drew their interpretation of the teaching cycle. Weber and Mitchell (1996) used similar art strategies as a springboard for pre-service teachers to reflect on preconceived images that

influence teaching practice. Both studies show the cycle of perspective transformation allows for different venues for critical reflection (Mezirow, 1994) and the importance for teacher educators is to continue to differentiate the venue to aid in developing pre-service teachers teaching practice.

Carson and Fisher's (2006) study analyzed the process of critical reflection in economic and business undergraduate students enrolled in an internship program. During the 40 day program, 25 students worked with a mentor and were expected to complete various assessment tasks which included project plans, oral presentations, and a reflexive report from which the researchers examine "the participants' writings for indicators of critical reflection and transformative learning" (p. 700). The researchers identified these key themes in the students' writings as indicators of critical reflection and transformative learning: (a) identifying values, beliefs, and assumptions, (b) changing and/or reassessing values, beliefs, and assumptions, (c) making connections with cultural, social, and political realities, and (d) acting differently from habituated responses and/or taking on new behaviors. All themes related to Mezirow's cycle of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1994). The researchers found that the use of journals allowed participants to more accurately log their reflective process of moving from description to a deeper process of reflection. The opportunity for participants to dialogue with fellow participant's, termed critical

friends, guided conversations to points where beliefs and viewpoints were challenged and refined. Through this process, the participants were not only able to complete the cycle of perspective transformation but also had the process modeled for them for future use.

The reflective strategies presented in these studies (Carson & Fisher, 2006; Lee, 2007; Lee & Wu, 2006; Ostorga, 2006; Pedro, 2005; Tepper, 2004; Weber & Mitchell, 1996; Yost, 2006) mirror the steps embedded within the CalTPA which require pre-service teachers at a minimum to design instruction that meet diverse learners' needs, provide rationale for those decisions, and empower pre-service teachers to develop better teacher questioning strategies. Together, these steps of the learning-to-teach cycle provide pre-service teachers opportunities to reflect upon how these segments connect to improve all student learning. Although it has been noted that the incorporation of these pedagogical strategies has promoted a transformation of beliefs, values, and assumptions held by pre-service teachers and created new habits of mind, none show the transformational affects teaching performance assessments have on probationary teachers. Also, it is not known if beginning teachers take these newly found habits into their first few years of practice and implement them with the diverse student population they are surely to encounter.

Reassessment of Student Learning

Just as teacher preparation programs throughout the State of California grapple with the charge to help pre-service teachers attain highly qualified status, pre-service teachers also struggle to intertwine the theoretical knowledge learned from their programs with the skills and abilities needed to comprise their daily practice. Added to these concerns, Carlile (2006) posits that what pre-service teachers demonstrate and believe while they are taking coursework is sometimes erased the moment they spend full days in the school. Grossman (1990, p. 10) describes this disconnect further by stating that teachers' knowledge of the content becomes confounded with their knowledge of instructional strategies, since what prospective teachers learned is tied to how they were taught. However, Grossman (1990) further argues, "prospective teachers are likely to remember aspects of the curriculum without knowing the reasons behind their teachers' curricular choices" (p. 11).

With this disconnect in mind, the overarching responsibility for teacher preparation educators is to deliver the skills, abilities, and curricular viewpoints along with the perceptive understanding of how those decisions impact student learning to their pre-service candidates. Sexton (2008, similarly views this responsibility by when she states the need of teacher education is to move student teachers "from their largely personal, incoming understanding of

teaching to a more balanced, professional view of their roles as educators” (p. 86).

All stated the transformation of pre-service candidate’s beliefs, values, and assumptions toward teaching and themselves as teachers is at the center of this study. The following studies look to various pedagogical strategies to aid in the perspective transformation formulated by Mezirow (1990). These four steps,

- 1) self examination
- 2) critical assessment
- 3) recognition
- 4) building of competence and self-confidence in new roles

while non-linear in process, are contained within a seven step process outlined by Mezirow and most closely describe the movement of teacher candidate’s beliefs, values, and assumptions about student learning seen in the following studies.

Girod and Girod (2008) explored the usage of a web-based simulation to advance pre-service teachers ability to link theory to practice. Using the Cook School District web-based simulation, the researchers conducted three rounds of quasi-experimental pilot study with participants from a small, public university in the Pacific Northwest. Similar to the current study, the participants were enrolled in the Master of Arts in Teaching program and self selected their

participation in the simulation. The simulation and non-simulation groups were contained in the third term of their four term licensure program at the five week mark and started with a pre assessment analyzing a fictional teacher's practice as he/she prepared to teach a unit. Their focus was to analyze the actions taken by the teacher and reflect upon what was done well and what could use improvements. A post assessment paralleling the pre assessment was completed at the seven week mark of the same term. At the end of the term, participants were interviewed to find if the simulation aided in their understanding and if it helped develop their practice as a teacher. One student stated:

My work in the simulation helped me to realize there is no necessary correlation between English Language Learner's (ELL) and poor performance in the classroom. In fact, it helped me understand what role I can play in helping all kids learn. (p. 325)

Similarly, another wrote,

The main thing my work in the simulation drove home for me was the importance of alignment between context, instruction, adaptations, and assessment. The link between each of these is essential for learning—I don't think I really understood this before. (p. 326)

King (2003) utilized WebQuests to determine pre-service teacher's ability to integrate technology into classroom instruction. He cultivated two groups of 30 each pre-service science teachers and divided them into control and experimental sections. King's research question was to determine any changes in efficacy or outcomes expectancy resulted from using technology. His findings

suggested the teachers' beliefs were challenged about their views of how technology affects student learning and provided a transformation of those preexisting views and beliefs. This challenging of views is a critical component in Mezirow's (1994) perspective transformation cycle and sets a reflective cycle for beginning teachers to utilize when in their own classrooms.

Swan's (2007) design research study explored the difference in the teaching perception of 16 United Kingdom mathematic teachers. Through a series of professional development events where differing strategies to teach math were explored, teachers then returned to their classrooms for instruction. Swan categorized each teacher's willingness to adjust his/her teaching practices and compared them to student learning advances. When the teachers moved away from a teacher centered to a student centered approach, noticeable changes occurred. For the teachers who put into play the professional development strategies, Swan (2007) notes "they expressed surprise and delight at the change in the engagement and attitude of their students. This caused them to reflect and accommodate new beliefs. For these teachers their practices changed first and their beliefs followed" (p. 230). In noting how adults move through the perspective transformation cycle (Mezirow, 1994), it would appear that these participants prove the notation that adults many times will move from one stage to another in varying order. The importance to be noted is that these participants

did move through the stages and through critical reflection and understood, to their surprise (Swan, 2007), that their own students were impacted by their changes in practice.

Gorrell and Capron (1990) examined 93 undergraduate pre-service teachers ability to connect with underperforming students. Their task was to teach a child to find the main idea of a paragraph through two differing tactics: direct instruction or cognitive modeling. Pre-service teachers were first asked to estimate their abilities to teach the student and were grouped by self-efficacy percentages. After viewing an instructor lead demo and a video, the pre-service teachers were given a student based scenario and asked to describe through written format the teaching strategies they believed would help the student find the main idea of a paragraph. The strategies were coded and assigned to two categories: teacher activity strategies and student activity strategies. Researchers found pre-service teachers with low estimates of their abilities to teach the student significantly increased when they were shown how to incorporate cognitive modeling strategies into their instruction. Through imagining new strategies to promote student learning, these pre-service teachers transformed their feelings of competence and self-confidence. In reviewing the stages of Mezirow's (1994) perspective transformation, it is suggested that the participants of this study found, through critical self examination and action on imagining

new roles, they were able to make new pedagogical connections to improve their K-12 students learning and as a result transformed their own personal beliefs about their ability to teach and impact student learning.

Lindgren and Bleicher (2005) looked at a different approach to teaching science to students. In this study, 83 undergraduate pre-service elementary teacher education students with varying levels of science knowledge were introduced to a student-centered learning strategy called The Learning Cycle (TLC). TLC can best be described as exploration, introduction, and application to new material. The students, classified by their interest in Science, worked in cooperative groups through each phase of the cycle. Completion of the pre-post TLC test, informal writings during the process, and dialogue presented the researchers with interesting results. Those students who were classified as Successful were found to be disequibrated by TLC. Some reported a reverse or backwards-type approach to learning and required a change of mindset to this more student centered instruction. The researchers found the confidence to teach science increased through utilizing TLC especially in those participants grouped into the Disinterested science learners category. Pre-service teachers perceived a sense of efficacy in teaching science after completing this study that demanded stages of preparing, planning, and teaching and within each phase the opportunity to reflect and connect teacher actions to student learning. Through a

critical self-examination of their own abilities (Mezirow, 2000) and a variance in the approach to teaching Science, these pre-service teachers aided in their own personal transformation.

Abell (2009) utilized audio tapes with her pre-service teachers to promote their understanding of student learning. Each pre-service teacher tape recorded, transcribed, and then analyzed classroom discussions once at the beginning and once at the end of the semester and found that the process promoted pre-service candidates awareness of how they questioned and responded to students. After transcription of the tapes, Kucan (2007) noted “pre-service teachers moved away from questions that asked students to retrieve information and moved toward questions that asked them to think about text information”(p. 231). In reflecting on their progress through the semester, the pre-service teachers commented on how their instruction changed for the better. These comments provide evidence how critical reflection (Mezirow, 2000) develops pre-service teacher’s self-confidence and feelings of competence. The researcher (Abell, 2009) acknowledges the transcript analysis allowed pre-service teachers to be more thoughtful of the types of questioning strategies and responses they utilized in classroom discussions further validating the process of self-examination in pre-service teacher transformation.

A major concern of many teacher preparation programs is the degree of knowledge integration retained by pre-service teachers over the course of their program and to what extent they actually used what they learned. Abell (2009) reviewed various research studies and found the importance of metacognition instruction. Through metacognition instruction, teachers use differing techniques like concept mapping, self-interrogation, and questioning strategies to support their own learning through self-monitoring and reflection. In a control group of Science students, Abell (2009) found “those instructed using metacognition activities where students were questioned on their beliefs prior to instruction and then asked to verify them after instruction outperformed the control group eight months later” (p. 57). This opportunity for critical discourse (Mezirow, 2000) elevated participants’ prior beliefs and transformed their ways of integrating new strategies to promote both their own learning and the learning of their K-12 students.

Curran and Murray (2008) used a mixed-method approach to studying pre-service teachers enrolled in a special education undergraduate course. The researchers enrolled students into two different sections; one section was taught in the traditional method using case studies and strategies, while the other section was co-taught by parents of special needs children who used the same type of instructional strategies. Curran and Murray (2008) found through survey

and small focus group data that “the non-traditional classroom co-taught by the parents helped students think, evaluate, learn, and act with insight into the experiences of parents of children with disabilities” (p. 115). The researchers further noted that consistent with Mezirow’s (1990) theory, “the non-traditional teaching took students out of their comfort zone of the traditional classroom and into an environment where students could begin question previously held beliefs and values.”

Summary

Pre-service teacher candidates progress through their teacher preparation coursework with the goal of becoming K-12 teachers. As these pre-service teachers complete coursework and performance assessments embedded within their teacher preparation programs proving mastery of teaching performance expectations, often it is their prior experiences and personal beliefs about teaching which carries them through the rough patches in their early years of teaching.

Research (Abell, 2009; Curran & Murray, 2008; Girod & Girod, 2008; Gorrell & Capron, 1990; King, 2003; Kucan, 2007; Lindgren & Bleicher, 2005; Swan, 2007) has shown the opportunity for pre-service teacher transformation through the completion of various pedagogical strategies embedded within teacher preparation coursework. Further, Eisen (2001) and King (2002) examined

how enhancing pre-service teachers' technology skills had a residual impact on their teaching practices. Wang (2009) examined how pre-service teacher collaboration in creating portfolios challenged participants to envision new beliefs about themselves as teachers. Slepkov (2008) utilized a form of electronic professional development as a means in which teachers were required to connect and document current instructional materials to student learning.

These studies (Abell, 2009; Curran & Murray, 2008; Eisen (2001); Girod & Girod, 2008; Gorrell & Capron, 1990; King, 2003; King (2002); Kucan, 2007; Lindgren & Bleicher, 2005; Slepkov (2008); Swan, 2007; Wang (2009) provided opportunities for pre-service and credentialed teachers to compile subject matter competency and pedagogical knowledge with teaching points of view to form new understandings about how students learn and teachers teach. Through out the teaching performance assessment studies cited, (Benjamin, 2002; Brown & Benson, 2005; Carlile, 2006; Morgan, 1999; Selvester, Summers, & Williams, 2006; Tanner & Ebers, 1985; Thompson, 1999; Vollmer & Creek, 1993) it is still unknown if pre-service teachers take what they have learned from their teacher preparation coursework and what they have applied in completing teaching performance assessments and connect these skills, beliefs, and abilities to current practice. There is a need to focus on how beginning teacher's combine these pedagogical skills and preconceived beliefs to facilitate these newly acquired

habits of mind and whether they are sustained through their first years of teaching.

In the next section, the researcher will describe the methodology and procedures she utilized in her pursuit of understanding how beginning teacher practice was, or was not, influenced by the completion of the CalTPA.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The description of the methodology used in this study is divided into seven sections. The first section is research design and describes the overall design of this study and the participants selected. The second section is instrumentation and describes the formation of the researcher developed teacher questionnaire and the collection of teacher's beliefs toward current teaching practice and the CalTPA. The third section entails procedures and describes how data was collected. The fourth section is human subjects and describes the research safeguards that guaranteed the well being of the participants. The fifth section is data analysis and describes how the data collected was reviewed. The sixth section is the timeline and describes the plan used for data collection, analysis, and final write up. The seventh, and final section, is limitations which describes the weaknesses of the study.

Research Design

In this descriptive study, probationary teachers who have completed teacher preparation programs within the last 5 years and who have 5 or less years of teaching experience were surveyed to examine the critical reflection on teaching habits incorporated in their teaching practice as a result of completing the CalTPAs. Critical reflection, as determined by Mezirow (1990), is the

“assessment of the validity of the presuppositions of one’s meaning perspectives, and examination of their sources and consequences” (p. xvi). Teaching habits are classified as those which influence daily teaching practice as seen in (a) understanding students, (b) lesson planning, (c) adaptations for English Language Learners (ELL) and Special Needs (SN) students, and (d) assessments. These habits are grounded in the California Standards for the Teaching Profession in which each probationary teacher has proved competency to their individual preparation program through the completion of coursework and the CalTPAs.

This study was designed to examine the critical reflection on teaching habits incorporated into the daily practice of probationary teachers. A survey developed by the researcher was administered to probationary teachers from three independent universities who were graduates of California teacher preparation programs which administered the CalTPA. Surveys are typically used to gather information in an attempt to better understand the characteristics of a population (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Prompts throughout the survey guided the participants to reflect upon their teaching habits as seen through their completion of the CalTPA. It is believed that by capturing the experiences of the targeted participants a better understanding of the CalTPA and teacher practice was developed. The survey prompts reflect a combination of skills and abilities

exhibited by classroom teachers and are mirrored in prompts embedded within the CalTPA. These prompts will assist in answering the following research questions:

1. What instructional practices during student teaching were modified as a result of completing the CalTPA?
2. To what extent did the CalTPA increase the level of instructional detail in a probationary teacher's practice?
3. To what extent were any preconceived beliefs of being a teacher altered by the completion of the CalTPA?

As the participants from each of the three university teacher preparation programs neared the end of the survey, they had the option to provide contact information for a face-to-face meeting with the researcher. During this qualitative inquiry (Glesne, 1999), the researcher was able to ask follow up questions which provided a richer understanding of the answers these participant's provided within the survey which answer Research Questions 1 and 2. Due to the variety and narrative-type responses received from Research Question 3, the researcher determined the survey was not the best instrument for data collection and chose instead to hold focus group meetings to collect answers to this question. This mixed method approach to answering the research questions strengthens the validity of the study and reduces researcher bias.

Responses gathered from the participants at the face-to-face meetings were recorded, transcribed, analyzed, and kept safely locked in the researcher's office. The transcripts from the interviews were uploaded to a computer software program which then coded and organized the data into meaningful themes. The themes from the transcripts were linked with the survey results and both sets of data were then further analyzed in relation to the research questions and theoretical framework. Outside experts provided feedback to the researcher's analysis and interpretations which aided in the validity (Johnson & Christensen, 2008) of the study.

Participants

A sampling of credentialed probationary teachers who graduated from three different private Northern California university teacher preparation programs from academic years 2004-2008 and who had completed the CalTPA within their teacher preparation program were surveyed. Researcher access to graduates of the universities was granted through the respective chairs of the teacher education departments. Throughout the year, each of the selected private universities annually graduate a small population of credentialed teachers resulting in a relatively small pool of participants. This pool is conservatively estimated to be somewhere between 550 and 650 credentialed teachers. Selection of the participants was dependent upon the participants

completion of the CalTPA and receipt of a regular California probationary teaching credential. The exclusion of Special Education probationary teachers was due to the fluctuation in required completion of the CalTPA at their respective university.

Once selected, the potential participants were contacted through email addresses provided by the teacher education program staff at each institution. The initial email contained information detailing the purpose of the study, information about the researcher, and a link to the on-line survey. Seven days after the first email request, or roughly the half way point of the active three week survey window, participants from University C teacher preparation program were sent one additional request to complete the survey. While the CalTPA Coordinators from University A and B were sent requests from the researcher to send one additional email to their graduates it is unknown if they did.

The last screen of the survey prompts participants for follow-up contact information which lead to a face to face interview with the researcher. While it was anticipated that 10 participants from each university would agree to the interview far fewer actually did participate from University A and no respondents participated from University B. University C credentialed teachers comprised the bulk of the respondents. The researcher contacted each

participant and scheduled a convenient time to participate in a group interview. These interviews were conducted at a public location convenient for the participants' and were audio-recorded for transcription. The procedures for analysis of this data are described more fully in a later section.

Instrumentation

A researcher designed survey instrument with three sections of four questions each was developed to examine the teaching practices of probationary teacher's seen through two lenses: their reflection of their current teacher practice and their reflection of the influence of the CalTPA on their student teacher practice. The on-line instrument included the following:

1. an introduction for the participants informing them of the researcher, the nature of the research study, the research questions, and the participants options to participate in the study/survey.
2. check boxes to indicate demographic information as well as credential type, and current school setting.
3. drop down boxes to denote age, gender, years teaching, and university teacher preparation program.
4. a series of questions with a four point Likert scale answer set used for respondents to indicate their current teaching habits toward creating weekly lesson plans, learning environments, student engagement, classroom

assessments, teacher reflection, and transformation. The scale was aligned to levels of occurrence of teacher behavior as seen during their teaching practice as well as a reflection of their teacher practice as a result of their completing the CalTPA.

5. a fill in the blank area was provided for respondents to leave contact information for researcher follow up.

The final page contained the researcher's appreciation to participants for their completion of the survey.

The instrument was designed to prompt probationary teachers through questions to reflect upon the extent to which their beginning and current teaching practice was informed by the experience of completing the CalTPA. The questions were uploaded to an on-line survey instrument. The participants were emailed a cover message which detailed the following information:

- overview of the research study
- research questions
- respondent's options as a participant in the research study
- researcher's contact information
- researcher's advisor contact information
- link to the survey.

Researcher created survey instruments typically go through a validity process to assure the researcher that the instrument is measuring what it is intended to measure for the particular people in a particular context and that the interpretations based of the results are correct (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). This instrument was initially reviewed by CalTPA content experts to establish content validity and their comments and suggestions were chronicled through a researcher provided form. This form contained the information the researcher used to amend the initial survey. Through deliberations with the researcher's advisor, the on-line survey was altered to reflect the current status seen in Appendix G.

The experts who were selected to review the initial on-line survey were professional educators with varying degrees of expertise with the CalTPAs (See Appendix D). Five were trained CalTPA assessors, one was a private school principal, two filled a dual role as a CalTPA assessor and university supervisor in a credential program, and two completed the CalTPA as part of their credential program. Six of the nine experts responded with feedback. Of the three who didn't respond, one was on medical leave, one failed to respond to the initial contact, and the final respondent communicated outside the timeframes requested by the researcher. Based on the feedback from the experts, the instrument was modified to include the complete spelling of the credential

choices and one minor punctuation alteration. Upon additional modifications by the researcher's advisor and the researcher herself, the questions were further tailored to more concisely reflect the research questions.

Qualitative research questions

The collection of data from the on-line survey formed a base of understanding of participants' beliefs about their current teaching practice and how they viewed the influence of the CalTPA upon that practice. By further interviewing participants, through follow-up face to face sessions, the researcher was able to draw on a collection of data that provides richer and more believable findings (Glesne, 1999). Through a triangulation (Johnson & Christensen, 2008) of data collection to include audio taping participant's responses to researcher qualitative questions, observations of participants during the questioning period, and the existing quantitative survey data, the research study provides a more complete look at current beginning teacher's views of their experiences and the influences of the CalTPA. This triangulation also increases the generalizability of this research study.

The qualitative questions posed to small groups of participants who agreed to meet with the researcher through the completion of the contact fields within the on-line survey were linked to each research question and are detailed below:

1. What instructional practices during student teaching were modified as a result of completing the CalTPA?
 - a. In thinking back to when you were writing any task within the CalTPA, did you change your existing instructional strategies to accommodate the CalTPA requirements?
 - b. In thinking back to when you were writing any task within the CalTPA, did you alter your teaching practice to accommodate the requirements?
2. To what extent did the CalTPA increase the level of instructional detail in a probationary teacher's practice?
 - a. As a newly credentialed teacher, when faced with teaching a new lesson for which you have no materials, how do you plan for instruction?
 - b. Currently, are there components of a lesson plan that you consistently maintain from lesson to lesson? What are they and why?
3. To what extent were any preconceived beliefs of being a teacher altered by the completion of the CalTPA?

- a. When you first enrolled in a teacher preparation program, how did you imagine teaching? What did you believe teaching looked like for you?
- b. Did any of the tasks within the CalTPA alter that belief?
- c. What are your current beliefs about teaching?

Procedures

In mid-October 2009, Teaching Performance Coordinators from University A and University B were notified by the researcher confirming the launch of the research study and their timelines for compiling possible graduates to be included in this survey. The researcher was tasked to mirror these same procedures of contact collection at her host university because the researcher's university CalTPA Coordinator was currently out on medical leave. The Teaching Performance Assessment Coordinators from University A and University B acted as gatekeepers of their respective graduate information and solely communicated with their survey participants in the initial survey launch. A miscommunication between the CalTPA Coordinator at University B and the researcher resulted in a premature notification to the graduates of that program. As a result it is believed, and the number of responses from University B would suggest, that when the survey was activated the perspective participants erroneously believed they had already responded and the email was a duplicate

request. As a result the number of graduates from University B participating in the study was small.

The researcher's home university, University C, initially had 392 graduates representing the years 2004-2008. This number represented the pool, with contact information, pulled by the university data coordinator. The initial email to participate in the researcher's study was sent to these 392 graduates. All survey information included the researcher's e-mail address from a common email provider and was checked and responded to daily by the researcher. Forty-seven failure notices resulted from that initial email. Those failure notices were checked against the university data coordinators table for possible inputting error and, when no error was found, the emails were deleted from the overall list of possible participants. While it was not communicated from the University A and University B's Teaching Performance Coordinators, it is surmised the same routine was conducted to indicate their final numbers. Table 1, seen below, indicates the university program graduates from years 2004 – 2008 who were qualified to participate in this study, the number of actual participants and the corresponding percentages.

Table 1
University Participation Rates

University Programs	2004-2008		
	Graduates	Pool	%
A	187	26	14.0
B	53	2	4.0
C	345	97	28.1
Total and overall percentage	585	125	21.4

The survey was activated the second week of November 2009 and continued through the first two weeks of December 2009. It should be noted that the researcher managed the second wave of requests only to University C program participants. A second wave request was made to the remaining two university Teaching Performance Assessment Coordinators who were managing the survey for the researcher but it is unknown if those second wave requests were issued.

After the active four week survey window was completed, the researcher instituted a strategy for assembling meetings with respondents who were willing to engage in focus group meetings. It was through this round of email with respondents that the researcher realized not all respondents who filled out the contact information were actually willing to become part of a focus group. Once those respondents were purged from the pool, the remaining participants were categorized by area code and placed into the corresponding regional campus location group. Emails were then sent to each of the four area code groups

requesting respondents to meet at a predetermined date and time. Those respondents who could not make the initial meeting were invited to a subsequent meeting which better fit their schedule. If the time suggested was still not appropriate due to after school activities, lack of transportation, or other work/personal demands of the participants the researcher offered the opportunity for phone interviews. It should be noted that the respondents were eager to speak with the researcher regarding the CalTPA and when mutual times could not be rescheduled they were quite disappointed and offered other dates which were outside the researcher's timeframes. To illustrate this point, four of the 17 final participants rushed from their school sites mid final semester grading to speak with the researcher; two additional participants involved in sporting functions found replacements so they, too, could meet with the researcher.

Once the schedule was completed, the researcher conducted 11 focus groups and two phone interviews with the participants. Focus groups, as described by Glesne (1999), are used when the researcher is conducting interviews with more than one person and the topic is conducive to a small group discussion. Each focus group started with the researcher asking the participants to state their name, current school, grade level and subject (when appropriate) they were teaching, and the number of years since leaving their credential program. The researcher then began with these supporting questions

which set the context for understanding the answers to the research questions:

(a) before entering into the teacher preparation program, how did you imagine teaching would be (b) how does that compare/contrast with the reality of your daily teaching practice and (c) how do you account for that difference?

In order to focus each participant on the academic language and requirements of the CalTPA, the researcher handed each participant a descriptive paragraph downloaded from the CTC website (Appendix H). The researcher read the description for the two respondents who were participating via phone. After the paragraph was read, the researcher inquired about how the participant's teaching practice both during student teaching and currently was altered, if any, by completing the tasks of the CalTPA. Subsequent supporting questions to further describe respondents' answers were asked by the researcher.

The last two researcher questions asked respondents to reflect on their first year of teaching, post credential program, and compare it to their current year practice. They were then asked to account for the differences/sameness in their practice.

These meetings convened in late January 2010 and concluded in mid-February 2010. The transcripts were dated and cataloged both by regional site, which corresponded to the local area code, and participant(s) for organizational purposes. The transcripts were transcribed and analyzed using the Ethnograph.v6

software with attention to themes correlating to the research questions and the theoretical framework. Once dated and cataloged, the transcripts were kept securely in the researcher's office.

Human Subjects

The use of human subjects as research participants was approved by the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS #09-056) on August 3, 2009 (Appendix C). This decision was based upon a review of the study aim, background and design, a description of the subject population and research procedures, as well as assurances of subject anonymity. Upon request from the Review Board, the two universities to be surveyed other than the researcher's own university included within this pilot study provided their approval via email.

Data Analysis

The survey data collected from each of the three independent university programs were stored and analyzed through the SurveyMonkey extended features package purchased from the on-line survey software site. The procedures and rationale for analyzing the qualitative data is described below.

The qualitative and quantitative parts of the study were conducted sequentially (Johnson & Christensen, 2008) with content analysis of the audio transcripts compiled from the face to face interviews conducted at each of the

regional campus sites conducted through the researcher's home university. To aid in the external validity of this study, participants from three different universities were solicited. Participant's who experienced the CalTPA from differing university teacher preparation programs gave depth to the current study and allowed the researcher to collect multiple perspectives about the experience of completing the CalTPA and the resulting impact this teaching performance assessment had on their beginning teacher practice. Each interview was dated, cataloged by site and participants name, and securely stored in the researcher's office. Internal validation (Johnson & Christensen, 2008) was achieved through referral of the transcribed portions of the interview back to the participants for verification of intended meaning. This incorporation of member checks (Creswell, 1998) was used as a technique to aid in establishing validity of the participant's experience. The data was further analyzed using a computer software program, Ethnograph.v6, which aided in coding the qualitative data. The utilization of the computer software program in coding and analyzing qualitative data aided the researcher in organizing the data and also helped bring meaning to the data.

Once the qualitative data was verified by the participants and categorized by themes via the Ethnograph.v6 software program, the identified themes were clustered around the research questions contained in the current research study

allowing for further analysis and interpretation. As was previously indicated, to complete a triangulation of data the researcher also provided interpretations of participant(s) behaviors during the face-to-face meetings. While answering questions posed by the researcher, the participants were observed by the researcher for visual cues which provided further insight into the participants' responses. The researcher's intention was to be as unbiased as possible in the interpretation of the participants' visual cues and requested outside feedback in this interpretation. It is hoped that the inclusion of these visual cues from the participants adds an extra depth to the data. The qualitative data acquired from meeting with the participants was then analyzed with the quantitative survey data. The researcher solicited feedback and consulted with outside experts when analyzing the quantitative and qualitative data derived from this study providing trustworthiness (Johnson & Christensen, 2008) to the researcher's data analysis and interpretations.

Timeline

Data collection began during the Fall 2009 semester with requests going out to the universities in late October. Initial data collection was planned for 4 weeks, but was extended to accommodate the need for additional prompting to complete the survey as well as the scheduling of face-to-face interviews of willing participants. Data analysis began in late February 2010. The concluding

chapters were drafted and finalized in mid Spring 2010 semester. The dissertation will be defended in late April 2010.

Subjectivity

The role of qualitative research embeds the researcher's interpretations or personal assessment of the data derived from the study. (Creswell, 2008) It should be noted as a CalTPA assessor, teacher preparation program instructor, and teacher education program administrator this researcher comes to this study with a set of biases and personal experiences developed from a history of experiences with students who moved through a teacher preparation program.

Limitations

Six limitations to the study are identified. First, securing current contact information from participants who graduated from their university programs hampered participation rates. Second, the proposed participant pool was small and access to two of the three university graduates was not controlled by the researcher. The three private universities which provide the respondents for this study feature small teacher preparation programs in comparison to the neighboring state university programs. This population was further limited due to the absence of participants from one of the three private universities. This absence and the inability of the researcher to conduct second waves to two of the three university participants led to even smaller survey completion rates. Three,

the researcher was not able to randomly select survey participants. Those participants by responding skewed the survey data. Further, many of those who did complete the survey declined individual interviews given the researcher timeframes. Unintentionally, the focus groups were held during the close of many K-12 school activities which included both academic and sports programs. The lack of qualitative data restricted the depth and richness to support the quantitative data. Fourth, the self-selection of survey respondents to be included in focus group conversations skewed any findings of the researcher. Although all survey respondents were invited to participate in the focus group, only 17 did participate. Fifth, the survey serves to find out whether the beginning teachers report there was an impact on their teaching practice as a result of the completion of the CalTPA. The purpose of the study was not to find the extent of this impact but rather if there was an impact. Sixth, the role of the researcher serves as the final limitation.

Summary

Teacher candidates enter teacher preparation programs with a predisposed view of teaching (Carlile, 2006; Francis, 1995; Ottesen, 2007). While some views may be an accurate depiction of teaching, others may not. Yet these views impact the beliefs and habits each teacher candidate carries into instructional practice and forms their identity as a teacher. This study served to

examine beginning teacher beliefs and habits of mind, seen through the model of critical transformation described by Mezirow (1990), as they transition through the experiences of the CalTPA situated in their teacher preparation programs to their first few years of teaching.

It is within the scope of this research study to better understand the affect one high stakes test, the CalTPA, played upon the formation of beginning teacher's instructional practices and beliefs toward teaching. Through a triangulation of data compiled from both quantitative and qualitative sources, this research study looked to better understand the impact of the CalTPA on beginning teacher practice. This information serves to inform teacher educators of the influence teaching performance assessments have on the transition of pre-service teachers preconceived teaching beliefs and habits of mind to beginning teacher status.

The next chapter, Chapter IV, describes the respondents through information obtained in the demographic section of the online survey as well as the respondents who participated in the researcher lead focus groups. The participants' responses to the survey questions and focus group questions as they relate to the three overarching research questions will be detailed. The chapter will end with a summary of the responses from both the survey and focus group questions.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study examines the role of the California Teaching Performance Assessments (CalTPAs) on the transformation of probationary teacher beliefs, values, and perceptions and the resulting impact on their beginning teacher practice. This chapter describes the findings and insights acquired as a result of 125 online surveys and 11 focus group interviews comprising 17 beginning teacher participants. The research questions which guided this investigation were (a) What instructional practices during student teaching were modified as a result of completing the CalTPA? (b) To what extent did the CalTPA increase the level of instructional practice in a probationary teacher's practice? (c) To what extent were any preconceived beliefs of being a teacher altered by the completion of the CalTPA?

This chapter describes the findings from the data reported from the online survey and the dialogues with the focus group participants. For ease in analyzing the qualitative and quantitative data, the chapter is divided into three sections. The first section provides a description of the survey and focus group participants. The second section examines the responses to the research questions from the survey participants. The third section describes the themes

that were generated as a result of the focus group conversations as they relate to the research question. A summary of all responses concludes this chapter. The triangulation of data from the survey, conversations with focus group participants, and researcher observations during focus group conversations contribute to the accuracy and validity of this study's findings.

CalTPA Questionnaire Information

The CalTPA Questionnaire survey was open to graduates of three Northern California private university teacher education programs from mid-November to early December 2009. The following section describes the demographic data of the survey respondents.

Demographic Data

The demographic breakdown, illustrated in Table 2, depicts the participant's responses contained in the six categories. Each of the categories is numerated by Survey Item which mirrors the layout presented within the CalTPA Questionnaire. The category heading and choices are presented in the next column. The frequency (*f*) column depicts the number of respondents choosing the selection and the corresponding percentage is displayed in the far right column.

The formation of the Race/Ethnicity and Credential type and teaching placement categories allowed participants to make multiple choices that best

represented their demographic or the opportunity to opt out of answering any or all categories. One respondent chose to opt out of this section of the survey and 7 respondents who held both Multiple and Single Subject credentials actually selected all three identifiers.

The format of the table describing the demographic characteristics of survey respondents is later replicated when identifying the focus group participants. The focus group demographic table, Table 3, will include the survey item, demographic characteristics, frequency, and percentage categories as was found in the survey demographic Table 2.

Table 2
CalTPA Questionnaire Demographic Characteristics (n=125)

Survey Item	Demographic Characteristics	<i>f</i>	%
1	Race/Ethnicity		
	Asian	11	8.9
	Black or African American	3	2.4
	Hispanic or Latin (of any race)	9	7.3
	White	94	76.4
	Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	1	.8
	Two or more races	10	8.1
	Some other race	1	.8
2	Credential type and teaching placement		
	Multiple Subject	68	54.8
	Single Subject	62	50.0
	Both	7	5.6
	BCLAD	9	7.3
	Private school setting	16	12.9
	Public school setting	62	50.0
3	Years teaching post credential program		
	One	31	25.6
	Two	32	26.4
	Three	19	15.4
	Four	10	8.1
	Five	6	4.9
4	Age		
	21-29	49	39.8
	30-39	39	31.7
	40-49	19	15.4
	50-59	10	8.1
	60-69	6	4.9
5	Gender		
	Female	90	72.6
	Male	34	27.4
6	University teacher preparation program		
	University A	26	20.8
	University B	2	1.6
	University C	97	77.6

Note. In some cases frequencies did not equal 125 and percentages were less than 100 due to non-reports from participants.

The following paragraphs provide a descriptive narrative of the demographic survey data. Each narrative paragraphs links back to the order presented to respondents in the CalTPA Questionnaire.

Race/Ethnicity.

Ninety four of the 125 responses, or 76.4%, were centered within the White category followed distantly by Asian and Two or More Races with 11% and 10% respectively.

Credential type and teaching placement.

As seen in Table 2, Multiple Subject credential teachers held a slight majority of the 124 reporting participants with 68, or 54.8%. Single Subject credentialed teachers held 62 or nearly 50% of the responses. The 7 respondents who marked Both also marked the Single Subject and Multiple Subject choices. Nine respondents marked the BCLAD endorsed credential selection.

The CalTPA Questionnaire solicited participants to describe their current teaching placement and 62 of the 125, or roughly 50%, responded with Public school placements while 16, or 12.9%, marked Private school setting. Forty seven respondents, or 37.6%, did not make a selection.

Years teaching post credential program.

Participants were asked to describe the number of years post their credential program. The First and Second year out participants were in the clear

majority with 63, or 52%. Third year out participants numbered 19, or 15.4% followed by 10 Four year out teachers, or 8.1%. Six respondents identified themselves as fifth year out teachers. It is important to understand that these years may not represent the actual teaching experience afforded to some respondents. The survey data confirms that 16 of the respondents have been teachers of record in private school settings. For the sake of the survey and the focus group discussions, participants were asked to gauge their responses to those years and experiences which followed the completion of their credential program.

Age.

In reviewing the age spans of beginning teachers shown in Table 2, those in their 20's and 30's were clearly in the majority of respondents with 88 of the 125, or 71.5%. In further analysis and to satisfy a bit of the researcher's curiosity, a refinement of the data filtering the participants who were in their third year of teaching showed 5 participants for each of the age years 20's and 30's, 1 in their 40's, 2 in their 50's and 2 in their 60's. Ten respondents, or 8.1% identified themselves as Four year out teachers and 6, or 4.9% of the total respondents, identified themselves as Five year out teachers.

Gender.

The gender of CalTPA Questionnaire participants reflected in Table 2 describes the overwhelming dominance of Females who participated in this survey. Of the 125 participants, 90, or 72.6% identified themselves to be Female and 34, or 27.4%, marked the Male selection.

University teacher preparation program.

The final category, illustrated in Table 2, describes the percentages of graduates from the three Northern California private university teacher preparation programs who participated in the study. These demographic characteristics are included to shape the readers understanding of who participated in the study. Other than this occurrence, no further analysis of this data was completed in this study.

The final page of the CalTPA Questionnaire elicited survey respondents to lend their “voice” to the collection of data obtained by the researcher. This opportunity, in the form of a focus group, allowed the researcher to better understand survey responses.

Focus Group Participants

The focus group participants were self-selected as a result of completing the CalTPA Questionnaire and chose to detail their experiences in completing the

performance assessments. The following narrative provides a breakdown of the demographic data, also displayed in Table 3, of these focus group participants.

Demographic Information

Race/Ethnicity.

Thirteen of the 17 responses, or 76%, were centered within the White category followed distantly by Two or More Races and Asian with 18% and 6% respectively.

Credential type and teaching placement.

As seen in Table 3, Multiple Subject credential teachers held a slight majority of the 17 reporting participants with 8, or 47%. Single Subject credentialed teachers held 7 or 41% of the responses. Two respondents marked the Both choice. No one identified themselves as a BCLAD teacher.

The participants were asked to describe their current teaching placement and 11 of the 17, or 65%, responded with Public school placements while 6, or 35%, marked Private school setting.

Years teaching post credential program.

Participants were asked to describe the number of years post their credential program. The First and Second year out participants were slightly in the majority with 8, or 48%. Third year out participants numbered 6, or 35% followed by 2 Four year out teachers, or 12% of the respondents. Only one

respondent was identified as a Fifth year out teacher. The researcher honored the 6 private school teacher's previous teaching experiences and asked that they limit the reflections of their teaching experiences to those years occurring post credential program.

Age.

In reviewing the age spans of beginning teachers shown in Table 3, those in their 20's and 30's were in the majority of respondents with 10 of the 17, or 58%. There were 4 participants in their 30's and 3 participants in their 50's. There were no participants in the 60-69 age bracket involved in any of the focus groups.

Gender.

Of the 17 participants, 11, or 65% identified themselves to be Female. Six participants, or 35%, identified themselves as Male.

University teacher preparation program.

Fourteen focus group participants, or 82.4%, were from the researcher's home university. Three participant's, or 17.6% were from University A. No participants from University B joined any of the focus groups.

Table 3
Demographic Characteristics of Focus Group Participants (n=17)

Survey Item	Demographic Characteristics	<i>f</i>	%
1	Race/Ethnicity		
	Asian	1	6
	White	13	76
	Two or more races	3	18
2	Credential type and teaching placement		
	Multiple Subject	8	47
	Single Subject	7	41
	Both	2	12
	Private school setting	6	35
	Public school setting	11	65
3	Years teaching post credential program		
	One	4	24
	Two	4	24
	Three	6	35
	Four	2	12
	Five	1	16
4	Age		
	21-29	5	29
	30-39	5	29
	40-49	4	24
	50-59	3	18
	60-69	0	0
5	Gender		
	Female	11	65
	Male	6	35
6	University teacher preparation program		
	University A	3	17.6
	University B	0	0
	University C	14	82.4

The following paragraphs provide a descriptive narrative of the responses provided by the survey respondents. These responses served to answer the overarching research questions pertinent to this study.

CalTPA Questionnaire Responses

The CalTPA Questionnaire contained 12 different inquiries which supported two research questions found in this study. A copy of the survey is listed in Appendix G. The two research questions are: (a) What instructional practices during student teaching were modified as a result of completing the CalTPA? (b) To what extent did the CalTPA increase the level of instructional practice in a probationary teacher's practice?

The next segment of this chapter reveals the supporting survey questions which serve to answer the two research questions. Each supporting question will be categorized by the corresponding CalTPA theme it represents: students, teacher practice, teacher reflection. From there a statistical and narrative description of the responses for that question will be detailed. To assist the reader in determining the correlating survey question to the two main research questions, the following graphs are offered and help detail the question and analysis rationale.

Table 4
Analytic Breakdown of Survey Question 1

Research Question 1		
What instructional practices during student teaching were modified as a result of completing the CalTPA?		
CalTPA Theme: Students	CalTPA Theme: Teacher Practice	CalTPA Theme: Teacher Reflection
Survey questions: 9, 11, 12, 14	Survey question: 8	Survey questions: 10, 13

Table 5
Analytic Breakdown of Survey Question 2

Research Question 2		
To what extent did the CalTPA increase the level of instructional practice in a probationary teacher's practice?		
CalTPA Theme: Students	CalTPA Theme: Teacher Practice	CalTPA Theme: Teacher Reflection
Survey question: 17	Survey questions: 15, 16	Survey questions: 7, 18

The focus group responses which serve to answer the remaining research question will follow in the last section. The following graph simulates the framework for analysis utilized in understanding focus group responses to the research question. While the purpose of the focus group meetings was to answer Research Question 3, conversations naturally led to experiences and reflections which help to confirm or contradict survey responses listed in Research Question's 1 and 2. These conversations are analyzed within the focus group

conversation section. A summary of the responses to the three research questions will end this chapter.

Table 6

Analytic Breakdown of Focus Group Responses to Research Question 3

Focus Group Conversations				
Research Question 3:				
To what extent were any preconceived beliefs of being a teacher altered by the completion of the CalTPA?				
Theme: Collaboration	Theme: Academic Language	Theme: Curriculum	Theme: Interpersonal skills	Theme: Reflection

The CalTPA is one of three state adopted teaching performance assessments and serves as a benchmark to determine the beginning skills, abilities, and knowledge levels every newly credentialed teacher in the state of California should possess. This research study serves to study the participant's viewpoints of how those skill sets which encapsulate the CalTPA impact their beginning daily instructional practice. Knowing that without randomization one cannot equivocally state significance the following analysis for all survey questions is based on a P factor of 95%.

Likert Scale

In order to measure the extent to which the CalTPA impacted beginning teacher practice, the researcher created a set of four, forced choice Likert item

response options for each of the 12 survey questions. The respondents indicated the frequency with which the CalTPA influenced either their student teaching or beginning teacher practice. These choices ranged from (a) Very Much, (b) Somewhat, (c) Very Little, and ended with (d) Not at all. These response choices are consistent throughout the survey and serve as analytic descriptors.

Research Question 1: Findings

What instructional practices during student teaching were modified as a result of completing the CalTPA?

Theme: Students (Survey Questions 9, 11, 12, and 14).

Supporting Question 9: To what extent did the CalTPA refine your ability to plan subject specific lessons?

When the Gender variable was tested, a weak correlation coefficient between Males and Females was indicated.

Table 7
Question 9 ANOVA

		df	F	Sig.
Gender	Between Groups	3	2.207	.091
	Within Groups	120		
	Total	123		

In analyzing a breakdown of the Gender data seen in Table 8, Female 2, 4, and 5 year post credential program completers marked Very Much or Somewhat 51.8%, 52.9% and 44% respectively while 4 and 5 post credential program Males responses in the Very Little and Not at all categories were 55.5% and 57.1% respectively.

Table 8

Question 9

To what extent did the CalTPA refine your ability to plan subject specific lessons?

Gender Post program	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Females								
1 (n=25)	1	4.0	7	28.0	10	40.0	7	28.0
2 (n=27)	1	3.7	13	48.1	8	29.6	5	18.5
3 (n=9)	1	11.1	3	33.3	3	33.3	2	22.2
4 (n=17)	5	29.4	4	23.5	5	29.4	3	17.6
5 (n=9)	0	0.0	4	44.4	2	22.2	3	33.3
Males								
1 (n=6)	1	16.7	2	33.3	1	16.7	2	33.3
2 (n=5)	0	0.0	3	60.0	0	0.0	2	40.0
3 (n=6)	4	66.7	1	16.7	0	0.0	1	16.7
4 (n=9)	3	33.3	1	11.1	4	44.4	1	11.1
5 (n=7)	0	0.0	3	42.9	3	42.9	1	14.3

This analysis suggests the CalTPA did not influence respondent's ability to plan subject specific lessons.

Supporting Question 11: The next question within the student category looked at how respondents perceived their usage of assessments and the corresponding link to the CalTPA. In testing the Gender variable, the ANOVA analysis

suggests there was no significance in determining the CalTPA influence on using assessments.

Table 9
Question 11 ANOVA

		df	F	Sig.
Gender	Between Groups	4	1.849	.124
	Within Groups	115		
	Total	119		

When looking at Table 10, third year teachers, both Males (83.3%) and Females (88.9%), indicated strongly that the CalTPA influenced how they thought of assessments. In surveying the analysis, the grouping of participants who did not feel the CalTPA influenced their ability to use assessments, by marking Very Little or Not at all, were 4th year Male teachers (55.5%).

Table 10

Question 11

To what extent did the CalTPA influence how you think about the use of assessments?

Gender	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Females								
1 (n=25)	3	12.0	12	48.0	8	32.0	2	8.0
2 (n=27)	7	25.9	11	40.7	7	25.9	2	7.4
3 (n=9)	2	22.2	6	66.7	0	0.0	1	11.1
4 (n=17)	4	23.5	6	35.3	4	23.5	3	17.6
5 (n=9)	0	0.0	5	55.6	1	11.1	3	33.3
Males								
1 (n=6)	0	0.0	3	50.0	2	33.3	1	16.7
2 (n=5)	1	20.0	3	60.0	1	20.0	0	0.0
3 (n=6)	3	50.0	2	33.3	0	0.0	1	16.7
4 (n=9)	1	11.1	3	33.3	4	44.4	1	11.1
5 (n=7)	0	0.0	5	71.4	1	14.3	1	14.3

In querying the Credential variable, Multiple Subject respondents (69.1%) were more likely to select Very Much or Somewhat as an indication of the affect the CalTPA had on their thinking about assessments than Single Subject respondents (61.2%). This information indicates that seven out of 10 Multiple Subject respondents perceived the CalTPA as having a positive affect on their thinking about assessments. Single Subject respondent's data suggests they are less likely to perceive the CalTPA had an affect on their thinking about assessments when compared to Multiple Subject respondents.

Table 11

Question 11

To what extent did the CalTPA influence how you think about the use of assessment?

Credential	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Multiple (n=68)	14	20.6	33	48.5	14	20.6	7	10.3
Single (n=62)	11	17.7	27	43.5	14	22.6	10	16.1

Supporting Question 12: To what extent did the CalTPA encourage your ability to learn about students in your classroom?

In performing the ANOVA, the Age variable was selected and indicated the CalTPA had a significant affect, $<.05$, in challenging respondents to learn about students in their classrooms.

Table 12

Question 12 ANOVA

		Df	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	3	2.877	.039
	Within Groups	119		
	Total	122		

This analysis was confirmed through focus group conversations reported later in this chapter.

Supporting Question 14: To what extent did the CalTPA refine your ability to analyze student work?

In performing this ANOVA, the Age variable showed statistical significance, ($<.05$), in suggesting the CalTPA helped refine the respondent's abilities to analyze student work.

Table 13
Question 14 ANOVA

		df	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	3	3.188	.026
	Within Groups	118		
	Total	121		

In a further breakdown of the survey statistics, Table 14 indicates 1, 2, 4, 5 post credential program Females responded more positively (combining Very Much and Somewhat categories) to the affect the CalTPA had on their abilities to analyze student work. Fourth (66.6%) and fifth (57.2%) post credential program Males were more likely to state the CalTPA had Very Little or Not at all affect on their abilities to analyze student work.

Table 14

Question 14

To what extent did the CalTPA refine your ability to analyze student work?

Gender Post Program	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Females								
1 (n=25)	1	4.0	12	48.0	9	36.0	3	12.0
2 (n=27)	8	29.6	13	48.1	4	14.8	2	7.4
3 (n=9)	1	11.1	2	22.2	5	55.6	1	11.1
4 (n=17)	3	17.6	7	41.2	3	17.6	4	23.5
5 (n=9)	0	0.0	5	55.5	1	11.1	3	33.3
Males								
1 (n=6)	0	0.0	3	50.0	1	16.7	2	33.3
2 (n=5)	0	0.0	3	60.0	1	20.0	1	20.0
3 (n=6)	1	16.7	3	50.0	1	16.7	1	16.7
4 (n=9)	2	22.2	1	11.1	3	33.3	3	33.3
5 (n=7)	0	0.0	3	42.9	2	28.6	2	28.6

In a line analysis of this data, it is suggested that all respondents perceived the CalTPA refined their ability to analyze student work.

Theme: Teacher Practice (Survey Question 8).

Supporting Question 8: To what extent did the CalTPA develop your abilities to adjust your teaching practice to the students in your classroom?

When asked if the CalTPA was instrumental in developing the teacher candidate's ability to adjust their teaching practice to the students in their classrooms, the ANOVA analysis reveals no statistical significance in the Post credential program or Age variables.

Table 15
Question 8 ANOVA

		Df	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	3	2.250	.086
	Within Groups	118		
	Total	121		
Post credential program	Between Groups	3	2.379	.073
	Within Groups	116		
	Total	119		

When analyzing the Gender variable in Table 16, both Females and Males of all years marked the Somewhat and Very Little choices with the exception of 3rd and 4th year out Males.

Table 16
Question 8

To what extent did the CalTPA develop your abilities to adjust your teaching practice to the students in your classroom?

Gender		Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
		<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Post program									
Females									
	1 (n=24)	0	0.0	11	45.8	11	45.8	2	8.3
	2 (n=27)	2	7.4	12	44.4	7	25.9	6	22.2
	3 (n=9)	1	11.1	4	44.4	3	33.3	1	11.1
	4 (n=17)	4	23.5	6	35.3	5	29.4	2	11.8
	5 (n=9)	0	0.0	4	44.4	2	22.2	3	33.3
Males									
	1 (n=6)	0	0.0	4	66.7	0	0.0	2	33.3
	2 (n=5)	0	0.0	4	40.0	4	40.0	1	20.0
	3 (n=6)	3	50.0	2	33.3	0	0.0	1	16.7
	4 (n=9)	3	33.3	3	33.3	3	33.3	0	0.0
	5 (n=7)	0	0.0	3	42.9	3	42.9	1	14.3

This analysis suggesting the lack of development in respondent's ability to differentiate instructional practices gained through completing the CalTPA was not confirmed during focus group conversations.

Theme: Teacher Reflection (Survey Questions 10, 13).

The last section of questions from the survey which reflected Research Question 1 was centered on teacher reflection. One question looked at the act of reflection while writing the CalTPA while the second question looked at teacher reflection in practice.

Supporting Question 10: Participants were asked to what extent the CalTPA shaped their teaching knowledge through the completion of the written rationale. The written rationale plays a sizeable role in requiring the teacher candidate to "explain" the why's of instructional decisions as they complete tasks within the CalTPA. In analyzing the responses shown in the next ANOVA, there is statistical significance when the Age variable was chosen.

Table 17
Question 10 ANOVA

		df	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	3	4.535	.005
	Within Groups	118		
	Total	121		

The strong significance suggested, ($<.01$), testing with the Age variable is a negative indication of perceptions that the CalTPA helped shape their teacher knowledge through written rationale. This analysis is further noted in Table 18. All post credential program Females and 1, 2 and 5 year out Males were more likely to indicate the CalTPA had Very Little or Not at all affect on the shaping of teacher knowledge through the completion of the written rationales. Females show a decrease in the negative impact (Very Little) each consecutive year out from the credential program. Males in their second and third years out of a teacher preparation program responded favorably when asked if the CalTPA shaped their teaching knowledge through the completion of the written rationales.

Table 18

Question 10

To what extent did the CalTPA shape your teaching knowledge through the completion of the written rationale portions?

Gender Post program	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Females								
1 (n=25)	0	0.0	8	32.0	11	44.0	6	24.0
2 (n=27)	3	11.1	7	25.9	12	44.4	5	18.5
3 (n=9)	2	22.2	2	22.2	4	44.4	1	11.1
4 (n=17)	1	5.9	8	47.1	4	23.5	4	23.5
5 (n=9)	0	0.0	6	66.7	1	11.1	2	22.2
Males								
1 (n=6)	0	0.0	2	33.3	1	16.7	3	50.0
2 (n=5)	0	0.0	3	60.0	1	20.0	1	20.0
3 (n=6)	3	60.0	1	20.0	0	0.0	1	20.0
4 (n=9)	3	33.3	1	11.1	5	55.6	0	0.0
5 (n=7)	0	0.0	2	28.6	2	28.6	3	42.9

Supporting Question 13: Participants were asked to what extent the CalTPA had on shaping their habits of reflection. Table 19, seen below, indicates there was no statistical significance in how the CalTPA helped shape the beginning teachers' habits of reflection.

Table 19
Question 13 ANOVA

		df	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	3	1.307	.275
	Within Groups	118		
	Total	121		

When reviewing each year post credential program, the data suggests Males in years 2-5 indicated the CalTPA had a greater impact on shaping their habits to reflect upon their teaching. First year post credential program Males indicated Very Little or Not at all (67.7%). Females tended to indicate Very Much or Somewhat responses with the exception of 3rd year teachers who showed a combined 62.5% for the Very Little or Not at all responses.

Table 20

Question 13

To what extent did the CalTPA shape your habit to reflect upon your teaching practice?

Gender	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Females								
1 (n=25)	5	20.0	9	36.0	7	28.0	4	16.0
2 (n=27)	6	22.2	12	44.4	5	18.5	4	14.8
3 (n=9)	2	25.0	1	12.5	4	50.0	1	12.5
4 (n=17)	5	29.4	6	35.3	2	11.8	4	23.5
5 (n=9)	1	11.1	4	44.4	1	11.1	3	33.3
Males								
1 (n=6)	0	0.0	2	33.3	3	50.0	1	16.7
2 (n=5)	0	0.0	4	80.0	0	0.0	1	20.0
3 (n=6)	4	66.7	1	16.7	1	16.7	0	0.0
4 (n=9)	2	22.2	4	44.4	2	22.2	1	11.1
5 (n=7)	0	0.0	5	71.4	1	14.3	1	14.3

Research Question 2: Findings

Research question 2: To what extent did the CalTPA increase the level of instructional practice in a probationary teacher's practice?

Theme: Students (Survey Questions 17).

Supporting Question 17: In your current practice, to what extent do you think the CalTPA influenced your analysis of student work to inform instruction?

In testing the ANOVA Age variable, analysis reveals no significance in determining the CalTPA influence on the current practice of respondents to analyze student work.

Table 21
Question 17 ANOVA

		df	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	3	2.528	.061
	Within Groups	117		
	Total	120		

The responses ranged from a low of 66.6%, first year Male teachers, to a high of 85.7%, 5th Male year teachers who stated their instruction was not influenced by what they learned through the CalTPA experience when analyzing student work to inform instruction. Females indicate a statistical increase in the Not at all category per each year out of the program and a statistical decrease in the Very Little category.

Table 22
Question 17

In your current practice, to what extent do you think the CalTPA influenced your analysis of student work to inform instruction?

Gender	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Females								
1 (n=25)	1	4.0	10	40.0	10	40.0	4	16.0
2 (n=27)	4	14.8	7	25.9	11	40.7	5	18.5
3 (n=9)	1	11.1	3	33.3	3	33.3	2	22.2
4 (n=17)	3	17.6	6	35.3	4	23.5	4	23.5
5 (n=9)	0	0.0	4	44.4	2	22.2	3	33.3
Males								
1 (n=6)	0	0.0	2	33.3	2	33.3	2	33.3
2 (n=5)	0	0.0	3	60.0	1	20.0	1	20.0
3 (n=6)	1	16.7	2	33.3	2	33.3	1	16.7
4 (n=9)	2	22.2	2	22.2	3	33.3	2	22.2
5 (n=7)	0	0.0	1	14.3	5	71.4	1	14.3

Theme: Teacher Practice (Survey Questions 15, 16).

There were two survey questions which inquired about participants teaching practice. These two questions are notable in that the responses are statistically significant.

Supporting Question 15: This question asked to what extent the CalTPA influenced their current practice.

In testing the Age variable, there is a negative statistical significance ($< .01$) in suggesting the CalTPA influenced their current practice. This negative significance is seen in all years of Females and Males with the exception of the 3rd year Males.

Table 23
Question 15 ANOVA

		df	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	3	4.609	.004
	Within Groups	118		
	Total	121		

In detailing the Gender variable in Table 24, outliers are produced in the Very Much response of both Females and Males in the third and fourth years post credential program.

Table 24

Question 15

In your current practice, to what extent do you think the CalTPA influenced your current practice?

Gender Post program	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Females								
1 (n=25)	0	0.0	5	20.0	10	40.0	10	40.0
2 (n=27)	0	0.0	9	33.3	10	37.0	8	29.6
3 (n=9)	1	11.1	2	22.2	5	55.6	1	11.1
4 (n=17)	2	11.8	5	29.4	7	41.2	3	17.6
5 (n=9)	0	0.0	3	33.3	3	33.3	3	33.3
Males								
1 (n=6)	0	0.0	1	16.7	3	50.0	2	33.3
2 (n=5)	0	0.0	2	40.0	2	40.0	1	20.0
3 (n=6)	3	50.0	1	16.7	1	16.7	1	16.7
4 (n=9)	2	22.2	1	11.1	4	44.4	2	22.2
5 (n=7)	0	0.0	2	28.6	4	57.1	1	14.3

While both genders in their first and second year post credential program see little influence from the CalTPA on their current practice, Males in their third year indicate a 50% response in the Very Much category. Males also show a statistical decrease in the Not at all category suggesting they perceived an effect on their practice as a result of completing the CalTPA.

Supporting Question 16: In your current practice, to what extent do you think the CalTPA influenced collaboration with other teacher when faced with an instructional challenge?

This question was included within the survey because it is the researcher's experience as a CalTPA assessor that a large amount of candidates note peer to

peer collaboration as a means of both guidance and professional growth when completing sections of the CalTPA. In the following ANOVA, the statistical significance for both Age and Gender variables does not suggest a carry forward of those credential candidate comments as seen in their current practice.

Table 25
Question 16 ANOVA

Variable(s)		df	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	3	.923	.432
	Within Groups	116		
	Total	119		
Gender	Between Groups	3	.385	.764
	Within Groups	117		
	Total	120		

Theme: Teacher Reflection (Survey Questions 7, 18).

Supporting Question 18: In your current practice, to what extent do you think the CalTPA influence your habits of reflection?

Participant responses indicated no statistical significance when the Age variable is tested.

Table 26
Question 18 ANOVA

Variables		df	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups		3	2.520
	Within Groups	117		.061
	Total	120		

In a further breakdown of these Gender and Post credential program responses to this question, Table 27 indicates Males in their third and fourth year post program were more likely to mark that the CalTPA had an influence on their habits of reflection while Females in their first two years out were more likely to respond that the CalTPA had little or no effect on their habits of reflection.

Table 27
Question 18

In your current practice, to what extent do you think the CalTPA influence your habits of reflection?

Gender	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Females								
1 (n=25)	3	12.0	9	36.0	8	32.0	5	20.0
2 (n=27)	4	14.8	8	29.6	9	33.3	6	22.2
3 (n=9)	3	33.3	0	0.0	5	55.6	1	11.1
4 (n=17)	2	11.8	8	47.1	3	17.6	4	23.5
5 (n=9)	0	0.0	5	55.6	1	11.1	3	33.3

Gender	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Males								
1 (n=6)	0	0.0	2	33.3	1	16.7	3	50.0
2 (n=5)	1	20.0	1	20.0	2	40.0	1	20.0
3 (n=6)	3	50.0	1	16.7	1	16.7	1	16.7
4 (n=9)	1	11.1	4	44.4	2	22.2	2	22.2
5 (n=7)	0	0.0	2	28.6	3	42.9	2	28.6

Supporting question 7: The final question within this section on teacher reflection asked participants to measure the extent the CalTPA challenged them to reflect upon their beginning teacher practice.

As indicated in Table 28 where Age and Post program variables are tested, the analysis suggests there is no significant affect the CalTPA had on beginning teacher practice as perceived by survey respondents.

Table 28
Question 7 ANOVA

Variable(s)		df	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	3	2.136	.099
	Within Groups	119		
	Total	122		
Post program	Between Groups	3	2.373	.074
	Within Groups	117		
	Total	120		

In analyzing the responses by Gender in Table 29 below, this data suggests higher clustered responses were marked in the Very Much and Somewhat categories for all variables with the exception of 5th year Males. Respondents, both Male and Female, in their second, third, and fourth years out of the credential program were more likely to indicate the CalTPA influenced their current practice. First and fifth year Males indicated the highest percentage of marks within the Very Little or Not at all columns.

Table 29

Question 7

To what extent did the CalTPA influence your current practice?

Gender Post program	Very Much		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at all	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Females								
1 (n=25)	4	16.0	14	56.0	6	24.0	1	4.0
2 (n=27)	6	22.2	14	51.9	5	18.5	2	7.4
3 (n=9)	1	11.1	7	77.8	1	11.1	0	0.0
4 (n=17)	7	41.2	5	29.4	4	23.5	1	5.9
5 (n=9)	3	33.3	4	44.0	0	0.0	2	22.2
Males								
1 (n=6)	0	0.0	4	66.7	1	16.7	1	16.7
2 (n=5)	1	20.0	3	60.0	1	20.0	0	0.0
3 (n=6)	4	66.7	1	16.7	0	0.0	1	16.7
4 (n=9)	5	55.6	2	22.2	2	22.2	0	0.0
5 (n=7)	1	14.3	3	42.9	3	28.6	1	14.3

This data indicates that participants generally concluded the CalTPA had a more favorable influence on their current practice. The highest concentration

of respondents marking Very Much is seen in 4th year Females and 3rd year Males.

Summary of Survey Data

The survey generated for this study sets baseline data detailing the perceptions of beginning teachers' beliefs in relation to completing the tasks within the CalTPA and served to answer Research Question 1: What instructional practices during student teaching were modified as a result of completing the CalTPA and Research Question 2: To what extent did the CalTPA increase the level of instructional practice in a probationary teacher's practice?.

Each of the four tasks within the CalTPA required candidates to demonstrate their acquired knowledge, skills, and abilities to teach to the diverse populations of students in California's K-12 classrooms. The 12 survey questions asked respondents to gauge the effect the CalTPA had on developing those beginning teacher's skills and abilities. The responses were categorized by these themes: students, teacher practice, and teacher reflection which are consistent with the themes presented within the CalTPA.

The CalTPA had a significant effect on the first and second year post credential program respondent's abilities to learn about and work with students in their classrooms. Third and fourth year post credential respondents were more likely to credit the CalTPA for challenging how they looked at assessments

and the influence perceived on their current practice while Fifth year post credential program respondents did not believe the CalTPA assisted them in planning lessons or adjusting their teaching practice to students in classrooms. There was a negative distance impact seen in all Females the further are out from their credential program when asked if the CalTPA assisted in analyzing student work. A more positive distance impact was seen in all Females when asked if the CalTPA influenced their current practice.

When asked about collaboration with other teachers when faced with an instructional challenge, all respondents showed the CalTPA had no significant affect on their current practice. With a .432 significant rating from the Age variable and a .764 rating from the Gender variable it is suggested that collaboration was not one of the skills encouraged by the CalTPA. The respondents did note the CalTPA had a significant affect ($<.01$) on their current teaching practice. With a significance rating of .06, respondents noted the CalTPA slightly influenced their habits of reflection.

The survey questions served to support the first two research questions. The next section of this chapter details group narratives that serve to answer Research Question 3. To further validate the findings of the study, the first two research questions will rejoin this section with narrative responses which serves to confirm, contradict, or explain survey question data.

Focus Groups Responses

The purpose of the focus groups was to give a “voice” to the data collected by the survey as well as address Research Question 3: To what extent were any preconceived beliefs of being a teacher altered by the completion of the CalTPA. Each of the focus groups was conducted at four different campus sites within the researcher’s home university setting. All but two of the 17 participants answered researcher’s questions in a face to face setting while the remaining two participants’ interviews were conducted over the phone. Table 30 depicts participants’ names, pseudonyms were used for all focus group participants’ names, and their corresponding number of years post credential program.

Table 30
Focus Group Participant's Name and Years Post Credential Program

Name	Years Post Credential Program
Steve	1
Pammy	1
Jackie	1
Greg	1
Patrick	2
Wendy	2
Roxanne	2
Harry	2
Sonya	3
Roy	3
Alison	3
Denise	3
Sally	3
Cary	3
Susan	4
Rita	4
Troy	5

Before the researcher began asking questions, many of the participants opened the focus group discussion with their feelings of dislike for the CalTPA. Roy, a third year teacher, best summed up the collective feelings when he stated, "You're going to ask me about the TPA, right? Oh, I hated that thing! I thought it was a terrible, terrible waste of my time." More often than not, the assembling participants upon hearing these comments would smile, nod heads or outright laugh. Often the transcripts of focus groups, whether the participants knew each other or not, detailed numerous occasions where sentences were completed or thoughts confirmed by participants other than the original speaker. These types

of interaction between participants and researcher set the stage for alternating moments of lively and contemplative interchanges.

Emerging themes from the beginning teachers' dialogues with the researcher were recognized during discussions and verified after transcription. These developing themes were divided into five categories: curriculum, collaboration, reflection, academic language, and interpersonal skills. A visual representation, shown in Graphic 2, depicts the beginning teacher at the hub of the five emergent themes. All equally represented, no one theme has precedence over another.

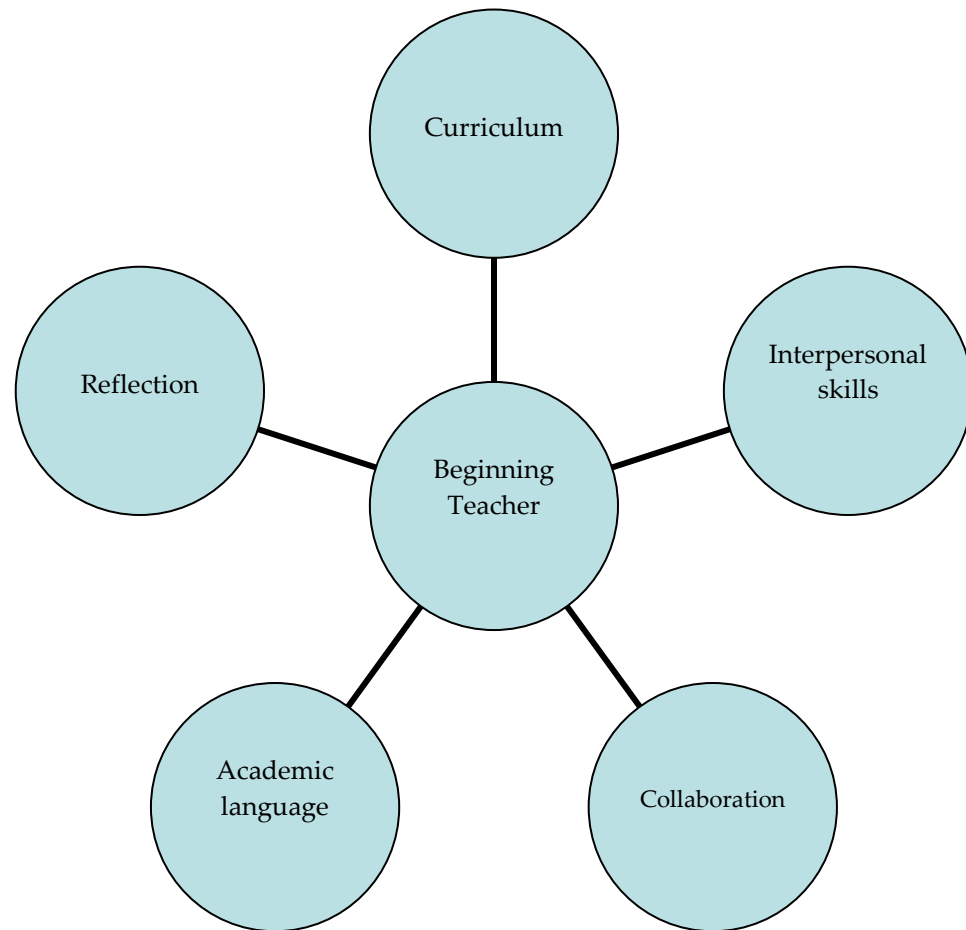


Figure 3 Beginning Teacher Themes

A definition of the five themes revealed during the focus group conversations is presented for clarity:

1. Interpersonal skills. Defined as a set of organizational and behavioral skills used by beginning teachers to help facilitate and grow professional relationships.

2. Academic language. Defined as sets of common vocabulary describing specific actions, skills, or instruments used in instruction.
3. Collaboration. Defined as a process where peer to peer relationships work together toward a common goal.
4. Teacher Reflection. Defined as a cognitive process considerate of preconceived beliefs when addressing issues or conflict.
5. Curriculum. Defined as subject specific sets of teaching, learning, and assessment materials situated within the grade level participants currently instruct.

These themes are listed initially and help form the framework to analyze the participants' responses to Research Question 3. This question asked: To what extent were any preconceived beliefs of being a teacher altered by the completion of the CalTPA.

In order to better understand how the CalTPA impacted the preconceived beliefs of beginning teachers, one needs to establish what preconceived beliefs were held by these participants upon entry into the teacher preparation program. While not common to the other universities in this study, as an admission requirement to the researcher's university, prospective students must write letters of intent which describes, among other things, why they wish to enter into the teaching profession. Often applicants will cite experiences from their own K-

12 educational experiences, their wish to share their love of learning, and/or their desire for service or to give back to society.

In speaking with the focus group participants, the preconceived ideas shared were in alignment with those of perspective students. Cary, a third year middle school teacher, imagined “going in and making a difference in kid’s life. Making school fun and making them excited to come to school and learning.” Susan, a fourth year high school teacher, reflected back on her own schooling where she imagined “teaching would be much like I saw in college classrooms or I remember from high school classrooms. Teachers would stand up and lecture. You would have field trips.” Sonja, a third year elementary school teacher, thought:

Teaching would be engaging students in reading and writing. I am really passionate about reading and writing and I thought my love of that would transfer to the students. So I came into it very passionate and very motivated to inspire students. Those were my missions.

What wasn’t anticipated from these participants was the scope of the work and work related skills necessary to function as a teacher. These commonly held presumptions centered within a researcher created category entitled Interpersonal and are discussed first.

Interpersonal.

In exploring the narratives of these focus group participants, interpersonal themes began to emerge. In particular, a general misunderstanding of the work of a teacher became salient. "I thought it was going to be easier than it is", stated Denise. Roy also concluded "I thought it would be totally fun and not as much work". Even seasoned private school teachers laughingly disclosed their initial beliefs about teaching: "I just imagined that they would all be sitting there and I would give the lesson and that would be it" (Rita).

Cary also spoke to the behavior of students when she added:

I was amazed that kids can't sit still and be quiet. That was just a total shock to me. I mean, it's like a three second window! And I mean, I don't expect them to sit there all day but I did expect them to be able to sit for 10-15 minutes and pay attention!

When Patrick was asked his preconceived beliefs about teaching he recounted:

I always admired teachers growing up. With that I think that I completely misread the profession. I just had this concept where you always hear where teachers work a lot but I didn't imagine it would be so time consuming as it is. When I envisioned it, I envisioned a nice job. I envisioned it a little less stressful and just going about your day teaching. I never had a concept of where the ideas and lesson plans came from.

Many of the respondents also remarked how surprised they were in discovering the need for self-organizational skills in their daily teaching routines.

Denise, a third year public elementary school teacher, stated: "To be honest,

there's so many other things you have to do. All the administrative things; all the checks you have to keep track of—field trip checks and this check and that check." Rita concurred with "I never realize there would be such an issue of organization. You really have to be well organized otherwise it can completely overwhelm you."

While others tended to see the interpersonal side of teaching centered solely upon the teacher's role, Roxanne, a multiple subject private school teacher, imagined "teaching to be a two way street where I would be able to share my knowledge and gifts and talents with the students but in my work with children and my appreciation of what they have to offer that they would be adding so much to my life and my satisfaction of my job as well." Steve reflected back to his teacher preparation program:

Every single professor said the same thing. "Well, this is the way things are supposed to be or should be or this is the ideal way in the real world." I was shocked to find that the number one difference between the classes I took and the reality of the teaching world is, there's so much that has to do with interpersonal skills. Being able to work with the students, that really can't be taught.

Others observed classroom issues "I anticipated a lot of discipline issues and was nervous that I wouldn't know the answer to the questions" (Jackie) while another "imagined it to be an environment where students would understand the basics concepts of social and academic behavior (Troy, inner city public high school teacher). Troy continued with

I worked in the corporate world and the corporate world is a business environment where there's not a lot of emotion. There's not a lot of really getting to know a person—caring for a person. It's all about driving the dollars. In teaching, and this is my biggest thing I found, in teaching you really give. What I mean by giving is that you really put your heart out there and these kids will, well, some of them will take it and some will whack your heart off. When I come home, I am not physically drained, I am emotionally drained.

Interpersonal skills, that showcased work roles and teacher specific relationships, were but one category that held respondents' answers to the research question. The following paragraphs, categorized by headings academic language, collaboration, teacher reflection, and curriculum, detail the remaining categories which also serve to answer the research question.

After describing their imagined views of teaching, the researcher questioned participants how these beliefs were altered by completing the CalTPA. The responses moved away from general interpersonal competencies to more education-specific skills; specifically, the beginning teacher's usage of academic language.

Academic language.

Academic language, seen by Krashen and Brown (2007) is the special language used in schools and the profession. Roxanne says:

[W]hen I am speaking with my colleagues we are speaking the same language, using the same acronyms. I am able to look at

children and assess them differently about their learning differences.

Rita agreed and noted that she has “a better understanding all the different kinds of learners in my classroom”. Susan moves beyond the academic language demands of her local school site and brings in subject specific academic language:

I have also understood the validity of being more current research based. So every time a new newspaper article comes out or a new magazine article is published or something from the scientific journals, I always make it a point to teach it to them even if it takes a day simply because I want them to see what I teach them in class impacts their lives for sure.

A veteran private school teacher, Rita, combined academic language with pedagogical strategies in her response:

A lot of the times, I ask the students who do understand it, would you mind putting it in your own words and explaining it to the class. Often times you will find that when a peer student explains it other students will understand it much better than you can ever say it. And then you can piggy back onto that. Now do you get it? And explain it a little bit using the academic language.

As these teachers demonstrate, they pulled specific language found in the CalTPA to adjust their teaching practice. In doing so they changed how they previously envisioned themselves as a teacher, realized the change was positive for themselves and their students, and consequently altered their habits of mind.

As they began to see changes in their own instruction, they realized the roles of colleagues around them and the impact of these peers on their instruction. This influence, seen through both the positive and negative interactions shown below, began to take them into new phases of being. Mezirow (1990) asserts that through dialogical interactions presumptions are either validated or altered and in the following narratives we see how these changes not only impacted beginning teachers but also those around them.

Collaboration.

Collaboration, or collegial interaction (Grossman, 1990), aided beginning teachers with opportunities to learn from their veteran peers. When the researcher asked if there were other types of skills worthy of mention, the respondents confirmed how the various acts of collaboration often aided in their instruction and impacted their own stance as an educator.

If there's ever an activity that I am not sure of how to teach or enrich that activity with my kids, there are several teachers that I have come to depend on that have been teaching for 20 or 30 years and they have 5 things that I can pick that would work best with my kids. (Pammy)

Susan sees the collaboration more interactively;

I am able to collaborate as an educator with my peers and we reflect on teaching. We do curriculum maps and constantly update them and reflect on what worked and what didn't and analyze

benchmarks and assessment—did that teach them the standards, yes or no.

Not all participants were able to utilize school site mentors. Alison, (3rd year public dual credential urban school teacher) is the lone dance teacher at her school so she seeks collaboration outside her school walls. She states “I also feel really fortunate to be connected with the California Institute for Dance Learning (CIDL)”. Sonja used both in house and community as routes for collaboration.

I did observing of the Spanish teachers because they have a way of teaching language and I was used to teaching English. I went to a workshop at the county offices. I did things that would make my self more effective in the class.

Not all focus group participants were greeted by positive interactions with colleagues. For many veteran teachers, new teachers joining existing faculties bring competencies that often challenge their own beliefs about instruction. One participant, Cary, met indifference or as she perceived it, subtle forms of hostility, to her teaching strategies:

The first year they didn't think I was getting the kids prepared for 7th grade because I did things different than before. And, after that went through, they just realized I did things different and maybe they should too.

This sentiment was shared by Greg, (1st year out, private middle school teacher) who started sharing his experience with a disclaimer:

I love where I'm at and I love what I do but it's like, “You're new and you don't know what's going on so don't even say anything.”

In being the new guy, sometimes they aren't ready [for] what you bring in and they will go straight to the principal.

"Part of it is politics and part is administration", Sally said, "It seemed like the latest information given in our credential program wasn't relevant in the real world." In asking her to elaborate she stated, "You encouraged us to do hands on, get away from lecture and it was like, No, No, No! We are going strictly by the letter."

Often the way of being a K-12 student is altered when new instructional practices are exhibited by beginning teachers. Student's own presumptions and beliefs about school and the act of being taught can also change when teachers alter how they view students and student learning. In this case, this resistance was encountered and overcome by this beginning teacher's statement:

Yeah, they had enough trouble with me sliding my desks together so they touched. Yeah, they were all in individual little rows but now mine touch and they are used to that now. (Cary)

Trying to incorporate what they had learned in their teacher preparation programs and maneuver through school site politics, scenarios equating to Mezirow's (1990) disorienting dilemmas, propelled these beginning teachers to utilize a different strategy. Some beginning teachers were able to reflect on their assumptions and beliefs and consciously begin to make new meanings or ways of being in their jobs. The following narratives show how these beginning teachers used

reflection; earlier survey data suggesting it to be a skill honed by completion of the CalTPA, to move their practice to different levels of instructional capacity.

Teacher reflection.

Teacher reflection, at the core of this study, is best described by Mezirow (1990) as the examination of one's beliefs primarily to guide action. Greg, a private school teacher nearing 3 years of being a teacher of record before completing the teacher preparation program, spoke about how he seldom encountered issues in getting students attention. The difference he currently sees in his own practice is in the level of student attention he acquires:

I had to get kids attention and I had to think all the various ways and the CalTPA helped me out on that. I already thought I could get attention. I can get them all looking at me but I have to go back to the CalTPA. I have to remember that just because I have their attention does not mean they are learning it. They are just playing the role in paying attention.

Alison referenced her growth when she states, "I certainly think my relationship with the students has changed. I am more comfortable in the curriculum and in school climate—reflection is a huge part of that."

These beginning teachers linked their reflexive moments to the role of curriculum and their feelings of efficacy. Next we look at how curriculum plays a key role in beginning teacher practice.

Curriculum.

Curriculum, or the content offered in school settings, became a predictor of beginning teacher efficacy. Roy referenced how curriculum aided his instruction in becoming a more relaxed, confident teacher:

I have the history of the first year behind me. I have my library stocked; not only books, but I am talking about handouts, dittos, work sheets, cheat sheets, art projects. I know how the curriculum works now. I know how the school works so it's a more comforting, relaxing feeling. I feel like I don't need to look at the teacher's manual; I do, but I don't need to look at it because I have it memorized now.

Denise also stressed the importance of the role curriculum played in her daily instructional practice:

You know your curriculum, you know your teaching, and you don't have to prep as much. You still have to prep but at least I know what the math lesson will be about or I know what the social studies or science is going to be about and anticipating the kids, problems, questions.

Rita best sums up the important role curriculum played in beginning teacher practice when she states:

I think once you know the curriculum your mind is much freer to anticipate those other issues that come with teaching and then you can focus on that because at the beginning you're just scrambling to get the knowledge that you have to transmit to them. Otherwise it's too much.

For some beginning teachers understanding the content in the curriculum they taught played a pivotal role in their feelings of efficacy.

For some beginning teachers we have seen this was a central theme for their success. For others, it played a secondary role. Steve, a first year teacher, felt he had content mastered and his bigger concern centered upon developing instructional strategies to enforce or encourage student learning:

The content is not an issue for me. I feel like I'm an expert in the content that I am teaching. I am not worried about that. I am concerned with the technique and how to go about getting the attention of the students and their interests and to make sure that one disruptive student doesn't prevent the rest of the class from learning.

This concept of connecting content to effective teaching strategies, a central component of the CalTPA, was but one of the CalTPA themes respondents often referred to in focus group conversations and serves to answer Research Question 3. The remaining themes of interpersonal skills, reflection, academic language, and collaboration all represent general skill sets clustered within the various tasks of the CalTPA. It is essential to remember that beginning teachers are individuals who are relatively new to the world of education. Many within this study are older and have work experience outside the four walls of academia and struggle to merge their preconceived ideas of teaching with the realities of daily practice. Those younger beginning teachers seen in this study while having a more recent memory of classroom activities struggle with

organizational work related concepts their older colleagues have already mastered.

The next section discusses specific skills and abilities that are instrumental to the beginning teacher's instructional practice. These discussions serve to support Research Questions 1 and 2 and help to confirm, contradict, or explain the study's survey data. This next section begins with the respondent's conversations in answering Research Question 1.

Focus Group Responses to Research Question 1

During focus group conversations, participants were asked if they could link any of the skills they were required to prove their competency in the CalTPA to those skills required of them during student teaching. The responses below detail their connections, specifically with survey question 12—learning about students, and serves to confirm the statistically significant rating, recorded for this question, by the survey data.

Yes, there is. There are things that all teachers should do anyway so the whole process of getting to know your students; getting to know their backgrounds, getting to know their needs and planning your instruction to meet those needs. There are just things that everybody should do but the TPA really makes you stop and think about it. (Pammy)

As the researcher spoke with participants, it was clear that these beginning teachers realized the rationale behind knowing their students and how that knowledge impacted their instructional decisions:

I definitely see a link. I think one of the biggest things the TPA helped me do was look at students and determine what their needs are and then make the different instructional decisions and strategies based on those needs. That was something you have to do everyday in your classroom. (Wendy)

While beginning teachers realize the importance of knowing their students, they also have taken that understanding and applied it to their instructional demands.

I see one link and that was having to answer questions on how I was going to modify curriculum for Special Ed and ELL students. That was part of the TPA that I had to really focus in and figure out how I was going to translate what I'm doing so I could cast a wide net for all these new people in a classroom of 20 – so that I had everybody. (Alison)

In Susan's, a 4th year teacher, reflection on how learning about her students during student teaching connects to both the academic processes housed within her school day and the academic language found within the CalTPA:

Definitely! I can remember doing the TPA where we had to analyze our classroom; what are the different students; what is the demographic; what are the nationalities; what are the English language learning levels, IEPs, 504s and all of that.

She goes onto state:

And, you had to analyze how you would modify or alter a lesson for each one of these students. That is 100% accurate in what you have to do as a teacher day to day. The report was 25 pages and it was on just one lesson for one thing and you have to do that on a day to day basis. The TPA is a very long format version of what you have to do everyday.

Roxanne, a private school teacher, also makes the connection between the skills required of the CalTPA and those in student teaching. But like Susan, Roxanne reflects on her own instructional practice and makes the connection that the skills within the CalTPA are skills deployed within a regular teaching day:

Yes, there is a connection. The one that I can think of most significantly and perhaps because this is the one that I didn't know so much about when I came into the credential program but through the completion of the TPAs was the TPA on assessment.

Roxanne was asked by the researcher to expand on how completing this particular task within the CalTPA influenced her current practice:

Using it in multiple ways and understanding the differences between formative and summative assessment and then analyzing that and not just grading the papers and handing it back to the kids and assigning a grade which was what I did my first couple of years teaching because I did not understand the significance.
(Roxanne)

The critical reflection capacity of the next three responses from 2nd, 3rd, and 5th year post program beginning teachers speaks to and enforces

not only the survey data but also Mezirow's (1990) cycle of critical reflection.

For me it was good to have that analysis of student work and the connection or the observing ELL and special needs students and what not; there's that. (Patrick)

Roy conditionally concurred with this statement:

I totally see the link but at the time we were doing it I think it was not "use less" but it wasn't as "useful" as it could have been. So, I do see the link and I do understand that it was helpful. I also learned a lot from how I had to think about it and why I was doing it. (Roy)

While the first two responders do indicate reflection, it appeared almost begrudgingly. The last responder indicates how time has changed his thoughts.

The answer is yes. When I went through the program I didn't quite understand it. In the past, I didn't realize how much thought needs to be given to lesson plans and one of the biggest things University C has taught me is how to reflect as a person and not to reflect upon me but to reflect on who I am teaching, who my audience is and that's a big thing.

Troy summarized his thoughts with:

So, the TPA has helped me quite a bit. I turned my answer around and if you had asked me a year ago or my first year teaching I'd go, 'Naw, it's probably not worth it.' But as I go through learning how to be a teacher I always come back to that. (Troy)

Through reflecting on their experiences in student teaching, these beginning teachers confirm the survey data which suggests that the

CalTPA had an influence on their abilities to learn about students, differentiate instruction, and reflect on their practice. In the next section, responses which serve to confirm or contradict the survey data supporting Research Question 2 will be discussed.

Focus Group Responses to Research Question 2

Conversations with focus group participants naturally flowed to current instructional habits and if any could be linked back to their CalTPA experiences. Not surprisingly, participants first pointed to their relationships with students as one segment of instruction they felt strongly was influenced by the CalTPA:

I definitely see a link. I think one of the biggest things the TPA helped me do was look at students and determine what their needs are and then make the different instructional decisions and strategies based on those needs. That was something you have to do everyday in your classroom. I feel like that was a turning point. (Wendy)

Troy, a 5th year inner-city teacher, gives a haunting description of his classroom and how that knowledge impacts his teaching:

A lot of it is personal knowledge knowing where students come from and their background. The students I teach are in gangs, violence is a normal part of their life where it shocks you and I. It's just part of their life. So you have to understand the student from where they are. I have 4 students pregnant right now at the age of 13. I have several in jail. So you have to know that. You have to understand who they are and that's [been a large] part of my success.

The work of learning about students found in the CalTPA lays the foundation for work beginning teachers will be required to complete during their Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) induction years. Wendy, a 2nd year teacher, describes how the work of the CalTPA not only assisted her in this induction requirement but also carried over to practice:

I felt like the TPA really prepared me for BTSA because you have to do similar activities—there's a class profile and I thought, Oh I know exactly how to do that because I already did that in my TPA. So that really transferred over. But for me it kinda helps me to take a step back because it's easy to get so overwhelmed with just teaching a lesson and it helps me to remember to take a step back and look at your kids and see what their needs are and adjust your teaching to that.

As these teachers became more acclimated to their surroundings and the teaching routines of their school sites, reflective opportunities to assess their efficacy arose:

I just feel much more capable and confident about what I can do. You know when you first start out you say, "Oh my gosh, what am I doing? And I finally feel like I am at a point where I think I may actually be able to do this. I feel like I can plan my instruction better. I am constantly learning and bringing in new teaching strategies and trying new things. I feel like I am figuring out my teaching style. (Pammy)

Unlike Pammy, Alison appears to better understand her teaching style and attributes that to having her own physical space within the school:

When I am reflecting I am looking for a few things. From a curricular standpoint it's totally evolved. I am also in a different space now. In the school community I finally have a classroom so that changes the way that I teach. It's not in the hallways when it's raining and that sort of thing. So that allows a sense of comfort where I am more relaxed and that allows me more presence and I can be more helpful to students. I think reflection is a huge, huge part of that.

Roy also uses teacher reflection to analyze how and why he feels his teaching practice has progressed:

For me, I think the first year from the second year you almost cannot compare the two. I think the biggest difference is my instruction now is very thought out and focused. Whereas before it was all over the board, in terms of what I taught and when I taught it and if there were connections, now it's much more synced and planned out.

Susan completes this section on reflection with a very important observation about practice that evades more veteran teachers:

I want to say I am still a work in progress. Just to give an example, the first year I taught I really focused on I want to teach this lesson on this day and this day and this day and as 4 years have gone by I have learned you can't really plan that far ahead because you never know where the kids are going to be. Sometimes I had to learn that I had to give up a day just so I could teach or reteach something that they didn't understand because it's more important that they understand the concepts than I move on.

Teaching is a very complex profession where multiple variables influence how lessons are taught and received. Earlier we have seen how beginning teachers have taken the components instrumental to the CalTPA and incorporated them into their daily instruction. Yet, at the

crux of teaching is the solitary act of the teacher influenced by beliefs, presumptions and values about themselves as individuals and those of their students. Roy's summation, when asked about his practices of reflection, embodies the personal characteristics exhibited by many in this profession and how the plan, teach, reflect cycle instrumental of the CalTPA informs their daily practice:

Yeah, I do that everyday, because I will think about what lesson I did or something that I said and I think about how I could change it or make it better. This is part of the job that drives me nuts, too, because I am a perfectionist and I am always trying to make it better or make something more perfect about something that I have already done.

Focus Group Summary

During the 11 focus groups comprising of 15 participants and 2 phone interviews, five constructs emerged around their instructional practice. These themes depicted the interplay of the tasks performed in their daily instruction with those core tenets contained within the CalTPA: (1) interpersonal skills (2) collaboration (3) reflection (4) curriculum, and (5) academic language.

The progression through the first two years of teaching is so inundated with learning experiences, Gilcszinski (2007) states that beginning teachers have not yet fully realized the effects of these years. This statement was proved through both the survey data and narratives from focus group conversations. As

beginning teachers move from probationary to permanent status, their focus moves to higher levels of instruction and reflection.

Beginning teacher's movement through phases of critical reflection has been depicted in various respondents' narratives. While evidenced by Sonja: "I went deeper as a teacher and learned more and was more effective in those classes" not all teachers move to critical reflection to improve practice by themselves. Evidenced by 52.1% of the respondents when asked if they believed the CalTPA influenced their current habits of reflection replied either Very Little or Not at all. Mezirow (1990, p. 364) posits that a perspective is transformed by exposure to alternative perspectives and participation in critical discourse with others to verify ones new reality. Roy exemplifies this collaborative process, "You are giving [me] the opportunity now to think back on the TPA and TPEs and stuff." Kitchenham (2008) sees this process of critical reflection to involve the learner who not only looks back on something that occurred but also examines the assumptions or presuppositions that were involved in the reflection process.

Summary

This study generated baseline data regarding the perceptions of 125 beginning teachers currently teaching in northern California public and private K-12 schools. These perceptions included their preconceived beliefs of teaching

as well as their perceptions of how completing the differing tasks within the CalTPA affected both their student teaching placements as well as their current instructional practice. Their reflections of how the requirements of the CalTPA linked to both their student teaching and current placements also confirms the roles of critical discourse and reflection depicted by Mezirow's (1990) Transformational Learning Theory. It is through this process of critical discourse and reflection that beginning teachers altered their preconceived beliefs, presumptions, and values of teaching to those found in this chapter. As an example, the data suggested credential candidates altered their presumptions about students when they marked positively, 68.8%, how the CalTPA encouraged their abilities to learn about students.

As is consistent with Mezirow's theory, all of these entities worked together to take students out of their comfort zone of the traditional classroom and into an environment where students could begin to question previously held beliefs and values. This movement was evident in speaking with participants regarding assessments. Roxanne explained how she now understands the uses of formative and summative assessments and how to analyze their results for more effective teaching. Roxanne was one of the 64.8% respondents who stated the CalTPA influenced how they thought about assessments. Susan was another

when she asserts, "I have started realizing punishing students for not doing their work is not an affective approach."

The next chapter, Chapter V, offers the researcher's interpretation of these perceptions and compiles them as major findings of the study. Chapter V will then conclude with implications and recommendations for future research and practice. Given the theoretical rationale situated within this work, the study concludes with the researcher's own critical reflection.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This mixed method study was conducted as a means to ascertain beginning teacher's perceptions of the affect the CalTPA had on their instructional practice. The process used to analyze this study involved 125 participant's completion of an online survey and 17 participants' involvement in 11 focus groups. The online instrument, *CalTPA Questionnaire*, was administered to graduates of three northern California private university teacher preparation programs. Survey respondents were further encouraged to lend their "voice" to the questionnaire through researcher-led focus groups.

This study revealed the differing levels of impact the CalTPA played upon beginning teachers practice and how, through the reiterative process of critical reflection, these teachers envisioned themselves as practitioners. The researcher's observations and analysis discovered the pros and cons of the CalTPA as seen through the respondents' comments that were situated in different years of beginning teacher practice. The combination of the survey, focus group interviews, and researcher observations contributed to the implications and recommendations for this study. The discussion of the findings for each of the three research questions follows.

Discussion

Beginning teachers bring into classrooms a range of skills and abilities which are built upon academic and content knowledge and their own K-12 educational experiences. More often than not, these personal experiences define these beginning teachers' actions when faced with instructional dilemmas (Carlile, 2006). These instructional dilemmas, seen as disorienting dilemmas (Mezirow, 1997), faced by beginning teachers provide an opportunity to study their learning process using the theoretical lens of Mezirow's Transformational Learning Theory. Transformational learning takes place when this process leads us to open up our frame of reference, discard a habit of mind, see alternatives, and thereby act differently in the world (Mezirow, 2000). It is through this lens that the following discussion of the research questions is viewed.

Research Question 1: What instructional practices during student teaching were modified as a result of completing the CalTPA?

For many credential candidates, student teaching is the first foray into the classroom and provides the initial context to teaching. Because many student teachers bring with them preconceived ideas, beliefs, and assumptions about teaching it is not surprising that responses to this question were varied. While some focus group respondents gave literal translations like Jackie when she stated: "Bluntly, I just wrote what I thought they wanted to hear" others stated

how overwhelmed they felt in attempting to create a learning space that differentiated instruction for all learners. In viewing all years of beginning teacher practice, the survey data suggests ($p < .05$) participants valued how the CalTPA influenced both their ability to learn about students and analyze student work.

Those who reported that their abilities to learn about students were enhanced through the completion of the CalTPA also acknowledged the importance this skill played on their instruction. "I think the part that was significant for me was getting to know my kids better; really get to know each of the personalities and what they are all about very well." (Jackie) This perceived ability to understand their students better because of their work in the CalTPA also influenced beginning teachers understandings of how better to use assessments in their classrooms. Generally, it appeared first and second year teachers were more likely to share literal memories of using assessments to fulfill CalTPA requirements during student teaching, "As far as just making it fit [in the course of her student teaching planning] like something I needed to do that I wasn't planning on doing like; 'Oh darn! I need a test.' We are going to have a test tomorrow, guys!" (Jackie) while third through fifth year post credential program teachers were much more contemplative in explaining how they view and utilize different applications of assessments in their classrooms.

The first years of beginning teacher practice sees newly credentialed teachers learning about their students, their school community, and most importantly their curriculum. Once these teachers become comfortable in these areas, the act of reflection becomes possible and allows them to view the “whole picture” of their daily practice. This confirms how vital it is that beginning teachers have the opportunity to work consistently in the same setting for more than two years so their opportunities to reflect and grow in their practice have the chance to evolve. We see in the survey data and focus group conversations that assessments and reflective practice become key areas where beginning teachers acknowledge growth in their practice.

Overall, the survey data and focus group conversations suggested the CalTPA did very little or nothing to refine beginning teacher’s abilities to plan subject specific lessons. Interestingly, when reviewing the data, first and second year post credential program teachers were more likely to state this emphatically while those three through five year teachers were not as absolute. This change serves to confirm the process of reflective practice seen in the more veteran teachers. As first and second year post credential program graduates struggle to keep ahead in their planning, it is not surprising that the connection to how they go about completing this need is not made. The confirmation of this skill set is

seen in those three to five year out teachers who have had made it “over the two year hump” and can now sit back and see their practice in a less harried fashion.

The marked choices of third and fourth year post teacher preparation program respondents when asked about the written rationale aspect of the CalTPA acknowledged that the CalTPA did shape their teaching knowledge. What is of interest is that fifth year teachers do not acknowledge this same shaping. Conjecture from the researcher suggests this phenomenon could be a reflection of the infancy of the CalTPA in teacher preparation programs five years ago, the participants’ predisposition to reflect, or a combination of these factors. The distance out from credential programs combined with current practice could also overshadow how beginning perceive the shaping of their teaching knowledge. What is clear is that Females in all years were more likely to acknowledge the CalTPAs influence on their habits of reflection while Males were more inconsistent in their beliefs that the CalTPA helped shape their habit to reflect. Females also were more likely to admit the affect the CalTPA had on their abilities to analyze student work than their Male counterparts. This may signal a correlation between gender and academic courses that facilitate analytical skills.

Research Question 2: To what extent did the CalTPA increase the level of instructional practice in a probationary teacher’s practice?

While participants valued the student centered instructional practices realized during their student teaching practicum, their current instructional practices showed a much different picture. Survey data concluded ($p < .01$) that the CalTPA did very little, or in some cases, nothing at all, to aide them in working collaboratively in schools. Conversely, focus group conversations recorded many participants reflecting on the curricular materials their colleagues shared during their first years of teaching, professional learning communities (PLC) they were asked to join, and resumed contact with fellow credential program cohort members which serve as artifacts that collaboration does exist and has a positive impact on instructional practice.

When questioning respondents about the affect the CalTPA has on their current practice, the survey data revealed negative responses from all sub groups but third and fourth year post credential program Males. Contrasting those responses to the focus group conversations, one sees marked differences. While it is presumed that survey respondents marked responses individually, focus group conversations were typically group settings where conversations encouraged reflections and may contribute to this finding. Mezirow (2000) concludes critical reflection comes from critical discourse and this was certainly seen in these settings. Stemming from these conversations was a strong theme

that once grade level curriculum was understood and materials accumulated the actual practice of teaching flowered and made reflection more possible.

Perhaps an interesting side note and worthy of notation in this discussion section is the unexpected outcome of the CalTPA as a resource by beginning teachers in current teaching positions. One such participant noted that her CalTPA, all four tasks, are printed, catalogued, and contained in a notebook in her classroom. When other teachers are faced with an instructional challenge, they converge in this teacher's room and read strategies she employed in answering the prompts of the various tasks. What follows is a conversation between these teachers around the current instructional need. The CalTPA became, in this situation, a reference point which begins a pedagogical and critical discourse for the betterment of their students. If attention is refocused upon the cycle of critical reflection, it can be suggested that the vehicle that became the CalTPA has moved into lanes of opportunity for beginning teachers to come together, collaborate, and reflect upon the art of teaching.

Research Question 3: To what extent were any preconceived beliefs of being a teacher altered by the completion of the CalTPA?

Focus group conversations began with participants detailing their imagined views of teaching as they entered into teacher preparation programs. Often participants were bemused and somewhat embarrassed as they described

their views of this profession they have worked hard to join. Many encountered organizational issues once they entered into their own classrooms while others were surprised at the workload. But throughout the conversations, each respondent in their own way conveyed the joy they felt while teaching. As one participant stated, when she opens her classroom door at the beginning of the day she finds herself smiling. This passion emanated from these participants even as they recounted times of great stress while teaching. To work through these areas of stressful practice, participants employ various tactics. One that stood out for this researcher that embodied the plan, teach, reflect cycle so embedded in teacher practitioners:

I do come back and reflect on what the TPAs were trying to teach me. I see it as something valuable and this is 5 years out. It's a foundation that I always drop back to and if I didn't have that I don't think I would have anything to fall back to say "Am I going in the right direction", or, "Where do I go?" (Troy)

In listening to focus group respondents it became clear that the CalTPA provided the opportunity for beginning teachers to reflect on some component of their daily practice. This component of practice, seen by these beginning teachers, fluctuated dependent upon the year of service, age, and gender of the respondents and covered areas of students, assessments, curriculum, and teacher reflection. What became increasingly clear to the researcher was that the CalTPA pooled a

seemingly love/hate relationship with beginning teachers. This relationship was best exemplified by this respondent's statement:

The TPAs were kind of like the soft concrete for me. They were painful to go through and I really didn't want to do it but it is something that I keep falling back to. I don't necessary go look at my writings but I know they are there and they helped me start my first year and they're something I keep going back to. (Troy)

Connection to Transformative Learning Theory

Mezirow's (1997) Transformative Learning Theory identified how personal experiences create opportunities for adults to better understand (make meaning) the events in our worlds. This cycle of make meaning (Mezirow, 1991) serves to identify frames of reference that form attitudes and behaviors. In this study, the researcher connected these frames in the forms of habits of mind (ways of thinking formed by an individual's assumptions) and points of view (beliefs which shape our interpretations of events). Specifically connected to this study, the researcher has shown how beginning teacher attitudes (points of view) and thoughts about instructional practice (habits of mind) were influenced through the completion of the CalTPA. The following chart serves as a visual to the reader in conceptualizing the transformation of focus group participant's points of view.

Points of View	
Program Entry	Program Exit
I just imagined that they would all be sitting there and I would give the lesson and that would be it. (Rita).	[I have] a better understanding all the different kinds of learners in my classroom. (Rita)
[I] imagined it to be an environment where students would understand the basic concepts of social and academic behavior. (Troy)	So you have to understand the student from where they are. I have 4 students pregnant right now at the age of 13. I have several in jail. So you have to know that. You have to understand who they are and that's [been a large] part of my success.
I went from growing up there was this idea of always becoming a teacher. There was something romantic about it to me. And it was noble and all that, too (Roy)	It takes a lot of organization; it takes a lot of interpersonal skills. I think I'm very, very intellectually stimulated at my job figuring out new programs or discussing theories with coworkers or focusing on case study students or how to reach ELL populations. (Roy)

The following chart serves as a visual to the reader in conceptualizing the transformation of focus group participant's habits of mind.

Habits of Mind	
Program Entry	Program Exit
I seldom encountered issues in getting students attention. (Greg)	I have to remember that just because I have their attention does not mean they are learning it. They are just playing the role in paying attention. (Greg)
They (peers) knew things that I did not about how our students learn. (Roxanne)	When I am speaking with my colleagues we are speaking the same language, using the same acronyms. I am able to look at children and assess

	them differently about their learning differences. (Roxanne)
I think there's all these things that comes with teaching but until you really do it, you have no real concept of what that is. (Pammy)	I feel like I can plan my instruction better. I am constantly learning new strategies and bringing in new teaching strategies and trying new things. I feel like I am figuring out my teaching style. (Pammy)

Conclusions

Teaching is about relationships (Cranton & Roy, 2003). Throughout the focus group discussions, participants noted how their beliefs and assumptions faded when they learned more about their students and turned to the task of teaching each child in a more authentic manner. Cranton and Roy (2003) posit that part of this journey [teaching] is understanding how others are different from us without attempting to make them into our own image. Through informal conversations with participants, the idea that teaching involved scenarios where they envisioned students would be sitting in formal rows of desks and lessons would be delivered has transformed, through work in the CalTPA, to understanding that instruction is complex and students learn in ways outside the experiences of the beginning teacher. This transformation showcases the altering of prior beliefs and reflects new habits of mind. In questioning previously uncritically assimilated assumptions or perspectives and beliefs

(Cranton & Roy 2003) these beginning teachers became more open, permeable, and better able to learn the art of teaching.

In reviewing the survey data suggested in Chapter VI, the respondents confirmed that the CalTPA was beneficial during student teaching in the following categories described next.

Learning about students. Evidenced through Survey Question 12 data and by focus group members Pammy who stated “getting to know your students; getting to know their backgrounds” and Wendy who stated “the TPA helped me was look at students and determine what their needs are.”

Thinking about assessments. Evidenced through Survey Question 11 data and by focus group member Roxanne who stated “using it in multiple ways and understanding the differences between formative and summative assessment.”

Adjusting instruction to meet student needs. Evidenced through Survey Question 8 data and by focus group member Wendy who stated “the TPA helped me look at students and determine what their needs are...that was a turning point.”

Shaping habits of reflection. Evidenced through Survey Question 13 data and by focus group member Roy who stated “I learned a lot from how I had to think about it [teaching] and why I was doing it.”

Analyzing student work. Evidenced through Survey Question 14 data and by focus group member Susan who stated “we had to analyze...different students; what is the demographic...what are the learning levels.”

Shape teaching knowledge through completing the written rationale. Evidenced through Survey Question 10 data and by focus group member Roy who stated “I ..think about what lesson I did...and how I could change it and make it better.”

The respondent’s further confirmed, in their current practice, the CalTPA did not assist in the following categories described next.

Abilities to plan subject specific lessons. Evidenced through Survey Question 9 data and focus group member Troy who stated “I didn’t realize how much thought needs to be given to lesson plans.”

Collaboration with peers. Evidenced through Survey Question 16 data and by focus group member Cary who stated “they [her peers] didn’t think I was getting the kids prepared for 7th grade....they just realized I did things different and maybe they should too.”

Current analysis of student work. Evidenced through Survey Question 17 data and by focus group member Patrick who stated “it was good to have that analysis of student work and the connection.”

Current habits of reflection. Evidenced through Survey Question 7 and 18 data and focus group member Pammy who stated “I just feel much more capable

and confident about what I can do” and by member Alison who stated “ I am more comfortable in the curriculum and in school climate—reflection is a huge part of that.”

Influencing their current practice. Evidenced through Survey Question 15 data and by focus group member Ben who stated “I can get them all looking at me....but I have to go back to the CalTPA...[and] remember that just because I have their attention does not mean they are learning it.”

Knowing that the skills and abilities required of credential candidates to prove their competency are encapsulated within the CalTPA, it is disquieting to form a picture using the survey data beginning teachers provided. Through the focus group conversations, the researcher gained a much clearer picture of beginning teachers’ perceptions of the CalTPA. This difference seen by the researcher could be attributed to unclearly written survey questions. More likely the difference the researcher sees is the ultimate proof of Mezirow’s (1997) assumption that through critical discourse beliefs and assumptions are shared, conversations are had, and new understandings emerge.

A concern of the researcher is that the data suggests those habits of reflection that are formed during the process of student teaching are not continued into beginning teachers’ practices. During student teaching, respondents marked that the CalTPA had a Very Much or Somewhat (74.4%)

affect on their practice of reflection. When this question is situated to their current practice, respondents marked Very Much or Somewhat 33.9%. Considering that just over 52% of the 125 survey respondents were in their first two years of practice, this low 33.9% rating infers beginning teachers are not carrying forward this reflective practice. Because teaching is a solitary action which often times allows beginning teachers to close their classroom doors and work in isolation, it becomes imperative that beginning teachers have the resources available to encourage critical reflection which aids them through the tough early years in this profession.

This research study could be beneficial in the teacher preparation program coursework planning to incorporate the benefits and weaknesses of the CalTPA for credential candidates and help them bridge to post-credential agencies that further the development of beginning teachers. These and other implications follow in the next section of this chapter.

Implications

Findings in this study implicate the entire cycle encountered by individuals who desire to become teacher educators. The following discussion centers on the areas of teacher preparation programs, BTSA induction providers, school site administrators, and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Teacher Preparation Programs

Through their teacher preparation coursework, credential candidates are inundated with pedagogical skills, theory, and educational law. Much less time is given to the why's of instructional practices and how those are connected to content and the prompts within the CalTPA. By doing so, credential candidates would not question, to the extent found in this study, why they were required to complete this teaching performance assessment.

What was also found was the beginning teacher's lacking ability to integrate subject matter knowledge with grade level curriculum in their first two years of teaching. While it is impossible to predict where and what grade level these newly credentialed teachers will ultimately teach, it is critical that teacher preparation programs make connections that assist beginning teachers in implementing strategies which connect curriculum, regardless of grade level, to best practices. By doing so, this affords beginning teachers more time to get acclimated to their school site, students, parents, and their burgeoning role as a first time teacher of record.

Teacher educators would be better prepared to complete this step if they had intimate working knowledge of the CalTPA which could aid them in drawing connections for teacher candidates. This working knowledge would also filtrate down to the teacher preparation classrooms where teacher educators could anticipate and be able to answer teacher candidates' queries as to why and

for what purpose they are to complete the CalTPA. Professors need to be better connected to the workings of the CalTPA, the rationale behind the cyclical prompts, and how the entire process serves to encourage credential students to think about instruction.

BTSA Induction

Once beginning teachers secure employment, the clock starts on the processes of clearing their credential through state mandated induction programs. During this two year induction program, beginning teachers are mandated to provide artifacts which certify their competencies as a teacher. These competencies are linked to the same expectations resulting from the CalTPA and teacher preparation coursework and typically require new teachers to start all over again in proving their competencies. A bridging document, indicating the strengths of the beginning teacher seen from the completion of the CalTPA, to the induction program provider indicating “next steps” will better aid the beginning teacher’s progress. This document would allow for more concentrated energies in the areas of need seen by both the induction provider and the beginning teacher.

Commission on Teacher Credentialing

A significant construct resulting from the focus group interviews was the impact collaboration had on beginning teachers practice. Currently, there are no

prompts within the CalTPA which requires credential candidates to consider how collaboration with colleagues may influence instruction. There is also no prompt within the CalTPA which requires credential candidates to gather strategies that will aid them in working with parents, community influences, and school site administrators. These amendments could easily be instituted within the areas of the tasks where credential candidates are required prove their abilities to learn about their students.

Knowing the home and community situations that have come together to form the identify of the student(s) sitting in beginning teachers classrooms further aids developing instruction that enhances student learning and builds teacher efficacy. Beginning teachers need to realize that they cannot separate the academic and personal needs of students and hope to increase student achievement; one cannot happen without the other. This realization, lost to many veteran teachers who underwent typical credential programs, must be developed through prompts within a high stakes test early on in a candidates learning.

School Site Administrators

One conversation strand within a focus group setting settled upon the need for school site administrators to learn about the skills required of beginning teachers developed through the CalTPA. Sonya stated, "I think, that if

administrators had to do the TPA or something that was geared toward them then the whole unit could work as a team towards the same goal.” In sharing knowledge of the skills and abilities required of beginning teachers who have completed the CalTPA with school site administrators a level of conversation is developed that informs and guides instructional practice. Administrators can then better understand the decisions made by beginning teachers and create a working context for developing teachers.

The importance for beginning teachers to stay in their content and grade level areas during their first two years of practice cannot be understated. Often budget or personnel cuts create the need for site administrators to move teachers around to better meet the larger school need. This practice of movement seems ingrained in K-12 education and will more than likely not change in the next years. The awareness of how that practice of movement impacts beginning teachers longevity in this profession needs to be heightened for site administrators and strategies suggested to alleviate beginning teacher attrition shared.

Recommendations for Future Research

Data generated from this study generated findings regarding the perceptions of beginning teachers in K-12 classrooms as a result of completing the CalTPA. This study also generated implications of the findings of these

beginning teachers regarding their perceptions of their instructional abilities resulting from completing the CalTPA. The following recommendations for further study are now proposed:

1. Replicate the methodology and analysis procedures found in this study with the other two state mandated teaching performance assessments to determine if comparable results would be discovered.
2. Pursue different research methodologies utilizing the same research questions of this study to extend or deepen the understanding of the findings. Other methodologies to be considered:
 - a. Case study of teacher in residence programs utilizing both the CalTPA and other state mandated teaching performance assessments;
 - b. Participatory research to observe congruence between classroom realities and teacher perceptions;
 - c. Qualitative research to understand individual beginning teacher viewpoints that may impact perceptions of the CalTPA.
3. Pursue the same research questions of this study from the perceptions of school site administrators and BTSA induction providers.
4. Investigate collaborative opportunities for beginning teachers;

5. Conduct a longitudinal study to examine the instructional components found in the CalTPA and the perceived affects on teacher's instructional practice and longevity.

Recommendations for Professional Practices

The findings of this study suggest the following recommendations:

Teacher Preparation Programs

1. Teacher preparation programs require all teacher educators working with credential candidates to complete the CalTPA Foundations/Orientation workshops;
2. Teacher preparation programs require all teacher educators working with credential candidates to train and calibrate as a CalTPA assessor in at least one of the four independent tasks situated within the CalTPA;
3. Teacher preparation programs require all teacher educators working with credential candidates to incorporate information in their coursework that assists and informs the credential candidates understanding of the CalTPA;
4. Teacher preparation programs set the foundation for collaborative practices between teacher candidates and:
 - a. colleagues
 - b. parents/guardians of students

- c. community
- d. site administrators.

BTSA Induction Providers

1. Work with Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs) to develop a bridging document that aids in beginning teachers transition from the CalTPA to the BTSA provider;
2. Acknowledge the competencies beginning teachers proved through the completion of the CalTPA and the correlating standards required in the induction program;
3. Encourage collaborative relationships between the beginning teacher and stakeholders at the school site;
4. Provide opportunities for beginning teachers to develop critical discourse and reflective habits.

School Site Administrators

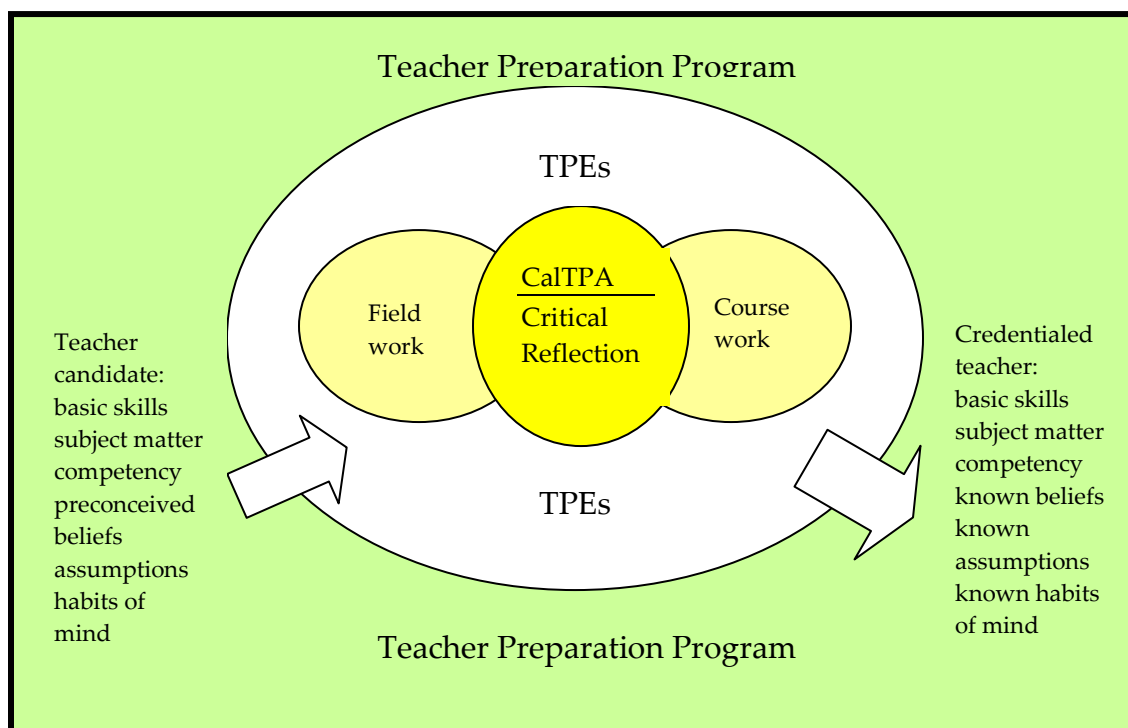
1. Acknowledge the skills and abilities required of beginning teachers garnered through the completion of the CalTPA;
2. Allow beginning teachers to remain in the same grade level or subject area consistently until the induction program is completed.
3. Provide and encourage opportunities for beginning teachers to develop critical discourse and reflective skills.

4. Encourage beginning teachers to affiliate with parents and community leaders which provide beginning teachers resources to enhance awareness of students;
5. Encourage collaborative opportunities for beginning teachers within grade level or subject specific areas;
6. Encourage beginning teachers to familiarize themselves with current or on-going practices which serve to support student achievement.

Reflections of the Researcher

As a first step in encouraging critical reflection, educators have to “see the world as their learners see it” (Brookfield, 1990, p. 180). When teacher candidates enter into teacher preparation programs many come with varied academic and professional life experiences. Through the richness of these experiences teacher candidates frame their own presumptions and beliefs about teaching. It becomes the work of teacher educators to assist teacher candidates to “recognize the assumptions underlying our beliefs and behaviors” (Mezirow, 1991, p. xvii) about teaching and learning. This ability to recognize preconceived beliefs and assumptions sets into motion the groundwork which begins the cycle of critical reflection.

My study served to examine if the CalTPA promoted these acts of critical reflection in beginning teacher practice. Through this diagram seen in Figure 5,



we see the teacher candidate enters into the teacher preparation

program with a base level of skill and subject matter competency as well as individual preconceived beliefs and assumptions about teaching. As the teacher candidate moves through the teacher education program, s/he encounters learning experiences which include field work and course work. The teacher candidate, through the lens of the CalTPA, is able to focus these learning experiences and demonstrate what was learned in a coherent and purposeful fashion. It is my belief, reinforced through the online survey data and focus group conversations, that the CalTPA brings

together these learning experiences for these teacher candidates and assists them in assimilating new understandings about what it means to be a K-12 teacher.

Mezirow (1991) has shown us that the process of critical thinking is framed through reflection. The opportunity for developing this process of critical reflection is exhibited throughout the CalTPA tasks but is seen specifically in the cyclical teacher rationale writing prompts. These writing prompts shape and encourage teacher candidates to think about the multi-levels of instructional practice. Evidence was collected to show that the CalTPA was instrumental in developing teacher candidates understanding of students in their classrooms, adaptations needed to encourage student learning, and the importance of analyzing student work to determine whether students actually were learning what teacher candidates thought they were teaching.

In this sense, the CalTPA became a teaching tool by which teacher candidates cohered prior learning from their teacher preparation course and field work. Horn, Nolen, Ward, and Sunshine Campbell (2008) suggested learning to teach is conceptualized as a project that involves constructing a repertoire of practices, along with developing pedagogical reasoning about the deployment of those practices. It is my belief,

evidenced by conversations with many of these beginning teachers and the online survey data, the CalTPA was fundamental in assisting teacher candidates to conceptualize what they learned in their teacher preparation coursework and thereby transform those preconceived beliefs and assumptions about K-12 teaching.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) are organized around six interrelated categories of teaching practice. The six standards are for:

- engaging and supporting all students in learning
- creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning
- understanding and organizing subject matter for student learning
- planning instruction and designing learning experiences for all students
- assessing student learning
- developing as a professional educator

Together these six standards represent a developmental, holistic view of teaching, and are intended to meet the needs of diverse teachers and students in California.

Retrieved August 9, 2009 from <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/CSTP/CSTP.pdf>

Appendix B

The Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs) were developed from the California Standards for the Teaching Profession and are the criteria used to measure the California Teaching Performance Assessments (CalTPA) Tasks.

TPE 1: Specific pedagogical Skills for Subject Matter Instruction

TPE 2: Monitoring Student Learning during Instruction

TPE 3: Interpretation and Use of Assessments

TPE 4: Making Content Accessible

TPE 5: Student Engagement

TPE 6: Developmentally Appropriate Teaching Practices

TPE 7: Teaching English Learners

TPE 8: Learning about Students

TPE 9: Instructional Planning

TPE 10: Instructional Time

TPE 11: Social Environment

TPE 12: Professional, Legal, and Ethical Obligations

TPE 13: Professional Growth

CalTPA Tasks	Subject Specific Pedagogy	Designing Instruction	Assessing Learning	Culminating Teaching Experience
TPE 1	✓	✓		✓
TPE 2				✓
TPE 3	✓		✓	✓
TPE 4	✓	✓		✓
TPE 5				✓
TPE 6	✓	✓	✓	✓
TPE 7	✓	✓	✓	✓
TPE 8		✓	✓	✓
TPE 9	✓	✓	✓	✓
TPE 10				✓
TPE 11				✓
TPE 12				
TPE 13		✓	✓	✓

Appendix C

August 3, 2009

Dear Ms. Fenderson:

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS) at the University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your request for human subjects approval regarding your study.

Your application has been approved by the committee (IRBPHS #09-056). Please note the following:

1. Approval expires twelve (12) months from the date noted above. At that time, if you are still in collecting data from human subjects, you must file a renewal application.
2. Any modifications to the research protocol or changes in instrumentation (including wording of items) must be communicated to the IRBPHS. Re-submission of an application may be required at that time.
3. Any adverse reactions or complications on the part of participants must be reported (in writing) to the IRBPHS within ten (10) working days.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRBPHS at (415) 422-6091.

On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success in your research.

Sincerely,

Terence Patterson, EdD, ABPP
Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

IRBPHS University of San Francisco
Counseling Psychology Department
Education Building - 017
2130 Fulton Street
San Francisco, CA 94117-1080
(415) 422-6091 (Message)
(415) 422-5528 (Fax)
irbphs@usfca.edu

<http://www.usfca.edu/humansubjects>

Appendix D

Validity Panel Members						
Name	Title	Education level	Email	Employer	Experience in K-12	Experience with CalTPA
Bridgit McGarry	Principal	Masters	bridgit.mcgarry@gmail.com	SJ Nativity School	yes (private)	yes
Jennifer Howard	MS Teacher	unknown	jenhoward75@hotmail.com	SFUSD/USF	yes	yes-- assessor
Margaret Burns	MS Teacher	Masters	msmkburns@hotmail.com	SFUSD/USF	yes	yes-- assessor
Maria Martinez	Preservice teacher	Masters	mlmartinez@usfca.edu	USF	no	yes-- completed
Marlina Teich	USF Assessor	Masters	jazzmo07@aol.com	USF	yes	yes-- assessor
Mary Jane Pearson	USF Instructor	Doctorate	Mjtpearson@aol.com	Chartwell Education	yes (SpEd)	yes-- assessor
Pennie Trafton	USF Instructor	Masters	ptrafton3@comcast.net	USF/CSUEB	yes	yes-- assessor
Rachel Gonsalves	Teacher	Masters	rachel.gonsalves@comcast.net	St. Johns	yes (private)	yes-- completed
Susan Yoo	TPA Coordinator	Masters	skyoo@usfca.edu	USF	yes	yes

Appendix E

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, July 21, 2009 12:58 PM
To: Sandra Fenderson
Subject: RE: IRB Application #09-017 - Additional Elements Requested

Dear Sandra,

I am happy to assist you with the recruitment of Dominican University credential completers for your research regarding the TPA and teacher retention.

Please note: [REDACTED], our departmental assistant can provide you with the data you need to conduct your survey.

Best,

[REDACTED]
Associate Professor
Single Subject Credential Program Director
School of Education
[REDACTED] University A [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Appendix F

Dear Sandra:

This is to let you know that the Dean of the College of Education, [REDACTED], gave his consent for you to work with our credential students. An introductory email by myself was sent with your email and survey to all our Multiple and Single Subject Students on 7/29/2009.

[REDACTED]
Credential Analyst
TPA/Field Placement Coordinator
University B
College of Education

[REDACTED]

Appendix G

Introduction

Welcome!!

All California credential programs require teacher candidates to complete a Teaching Performance Assessment. The California TPA was designed to measure each teacher candidate's knowledge, skills and ability with relation to California's Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs). In completing the four assessments of the CalTPA, each teacher candidate demonstrated his/her ability to appropriately instruct all K-12 students in the Student Academic Content Standards. The CalTPA centered on the teacher candidate's ability to create lesson plans, course assessments, adaptations for differing learners, analysis of student work and professional reflections.

During your teacher preparation program, you were introduced to the California Standards for the Teaching Profession through your credential coursework. The purpose of this questionnaire is to measure to what extent the completion of the CalTPA influenced your current teaching practice.

Next steps:

Before you begin the questionnaire, please take a moment to read the following material from the University of San Francisco's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects which includes the terms of this research, and indicates your voluntary consent by your clicking "Next" at the bottom of the page.

You are being asked to participate in a research project conducted by Sandra Fenderson, a doctoral candidate in the University of San Francisco's School of Education, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117. Ms. Fenderson may be reached at 415-422-5639, or teachersurvey09@yahoo.com. The project is being completed under the direction of Dr. Christopher Thomas, USF School of Education. Dr. Thomas may be reached at 415-422-2042.

The risks associated with this study are minimal to none and there are no direct benefits to you from taking part in this study. Indirect benefits to you include the opportunity to reflect on your own teacher preparation, and the opportunity to contribute to what is currently known about teacher retention and the CalTPA.

You have the right to withdraw your consent or stop participating at any time. You have the right to refuse to answer any question for any reason.

Every effort will be made to maintain the privacy of your data. Your responses to this questionnaire will be completely anonymous, unless you choose to share contact information with the researcher at the end of the questionnaire. Participants names, if known, will be replaced with pseudonyms in any future publications. All data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office and only she will have access to the data.

Authorization: I have read this information about the study or it was read to me. I know the possible benefits and risks and that being in this study is voluntary. By clicking "Next" I choose to be in this study. I know that I can withdraw at any time and that I may print out a copy of this document for my records.

If you consent to participate, the researcher extends her grateful appreciation!

Demographics

1. Please indicate your demographic information.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American | <input type="checkbox"/> Two or more races |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino (of any race) | <input type="checkbox"/> Some other race |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White | |

2. Please indicate credential type and current teaching placement setting.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple Subject | <input type="checkbox"/> Private school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Single Subject | <input type="checkbox"/> Public school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BCLAD | |

3. How many years have you been teaching since earning your credential?

4. Age

5. Gender

6. University Teacher Preparation Program

Directions

The following pages contain questions which are reflective of your current teaching experiences which may, or may not, have been affected by the completion of the CaITPA.

Please answer with the response which most closely mirrors your experience as a result of completing the CaITPA.

Thank you for your participation in my study.

1. To what extent did the CaITPA challenge you to reflect upon your beginning teaching practice?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

2. To what extent did the CaITPA develop your abilities to adjust your teaching practice to the students in your classroom?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

3. To what extent did the CaITPA refine your ability to plan subject specific lessons?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

4. To what extent did the CaITPA shape your teaching knowledge through the completion of the written rationale portions?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

These survey questions are renumbered 7, 8, 9, 10 for analytical purposes.

1. To what extent did the CalTPA influence how you think about the use of assessment?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

2. To what extent did the CalTPA encourage your ability to learn about students in your classroom??

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

3. To what extent did the CalTPA shape your habit to reflect upon your teaching practice?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

4. To what extent did the CalTPA refine your ability to analyze student work?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

These survey questions are renumbered 11, 12, 13, 14 for analytical purposes.

1. In your current practice, to what extent do you think the CaITPA influenced your current practice?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

2. In your current practice, to what extent do you think the CaITPA influenced collaboration with other teachers when faced with an instructional challenge?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

3. In your current practice, to what extent do you think the CaITPA influenced your analysis of student work to inform instruction?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

4. In your current practice, to what extent do you think the CaITPA influenced your habits of reflection?

Very much

Somewhat

Very little

Not at all

These survey questions are renumbered 15, 16, 17, 18 for analytical purposes.

Thank you for your participation!

1. If you would be willing to participate in an individual meeting with the researcher conducted on your university site, or a mutually agreed upon public spot, please fill in the contact information you see below. The short 20 minute interview will add a richness and depth to this data and will give a "voice" to the CalTPA experience. This session will be audio recorded and the participants will have the opportunity to review and correct transcripts of conversations. The final transcripts will not contain the names of participants but will contain dates of conversations.

Name:
Email Address:
Phone Number:

Appendix H

As of July 2008, California statute (Chap. 517, Stats. 2006) requires all candidates for a preliminary Multiple and Single Subject Teaching Credential to pass an assessment of their teaching performance with K-12 public school students as part of the requirements for earning a teaching credential. This assessment of teaching performance is designed to measure the candidate's knowledge, skills and ability with relation to California's Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs), including demonstrating his/her ability to appropriately instruct all K-12 students in the Student Academic Content Standards. Each of the three approved teaching performance assessment models requires a candidate to complete defined tasks relating to subject-specific pedagogy, designing and implementing instruction and student assessment, and a culminating teaching experience or event. When taken as a whole, teaching performance assessment tasks/activities multiply measure the TPEs. Candidate performances are scored by trained assessors against one or more rubrics that describe levels of performance relative to each task/activity. Each model must also meet and maintain specified standards of assessment reliability, validity, and fairness to candidates. All candidates who start a Commission-approved multiple and single subject teacher preparation program as of July 1, 2008 must meet the teaching performance assessment requirement.

Retrieved January 5, 2010 from <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/TPA.html>