Utah State University

DigitalCommons@USU

All Graduate Plan B and other Reports

Graduate Studies

5-2019

Work of Heart: Myself as Both Teacher and Learner

Chaille M. Kitchen
Utah State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/gradreports

Part of the Higher Education and Teaching Commons

Recommended Citation

WORK OF HEART: MYSELF AS BOTH TEACHER AND LEARNER

by

Chaille M. Kitchen

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

American Studies

Approved:

_____
Dr. Steven Camicia, PhD,
Major Professor

_____
Dr. Jessica Rivera-Mueller, English,
Committee Member

_____
Dr. Steve Shively, English,
Committee Member

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah

2019

ABSTRACT

Work of Heart: Myself as Both Teacher and Learner

by

Chaille M. Kitchen, Master of Science

Utah State University, 2019

Major Professor: Dr. Steven P. Camicia
Program: American Studies

Abstract: This autoethnographic paper explores my role as a teacher-learner. Who am I as a teacher? How has my past and present shaped me into the teacher that I am and want to become? To address these questions, I examine the cultural context into which I fit as a college instructor of English in a college community. I also examine my memories of my own mentors and students, which emphasize how my most valued learning experiences stemmed from mentors who have seen me as an individual, and when I see my own students as individuals. To explore the conditions that produce effective teaching and learning environments, I will use an autoethnography, which is a form of qualitative research that the author uses for self-reflection to explore their personal experience and connect this autobiographical story to broader cultural, political, and social perspectives. To record my observations, reflections, and actions, I keep a teacher's log which details the data sources I draw upon, including emails and meetings with mentors and students, interaction with students during class time, students' teacher evaluations, and one letter to myself. Thus, the method becomes appropriate to explore my research questions. My autoethnographic journey bridges my personal observations to pedagogical theory. They

discuss what can contribute to the identity of students and teachers (which affects relationship), including race, class, and gender. Woven together, the literature emphasizes relationships between teachers and students, reflecting qualities of the humanizing pedagogy which redefines and rebuilds my continuously developing teacher-learner self. Thus, in changing myself, I can effectively change my own classroom. In knowing myself, I can better know my students and better serve them. Furthermore, while helping me to improve my own teaching, the autoethnography will also help other students and teachers to connect to my stories, perhaps discovering or rediscovering a humanizing pedagogy as I did, to undergo their own process of growth.

(50 pages)

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

Work of Heart: Myself as Both Teacher and Learner
Chaille M. Kitchen

This paper explores my role as a teacher-learner. Who am I as a teacher? How has my past and present shaped me into the teacher that I am and want to become? To answer these questions, I first detail the cultural background that influences my time as a college instructor of English in a college community. I also examine my memories of my own mentors and students, which emphasize how my most valued learning experiences stemmed from mentors who have seen me as an individual, and when I see my own students as individuals. To explore the conditions that create effective teaching and learning environments, I will use an autoethnography, which is like an autobiography, only it uses research and the author's self-reflection to explore personal experience to broader cultural, political, and social perspectives. To record my observations, reflections, and actions, I keep a teacher's log which details the data sources I draw upon, including emails and meetings with mentors and students, interaction with students during class time, students' teacher evaluations, and one letter to myself. Furthermore, my heartfelt journey discusses what I can contribute to the identity of students and teachers (which affects relationship), including race, class, gender, and religion. Woven together, the literature emphasizes relationships between teachers and students, reflecting on qualities of a humanizing approach to teaching which redefines and rebuilds my continuously developing teacher-learner self. Put simply, this humanizing approach to education is a way for people "to become conscious about their presence in the world" (Freire & Betto, 1995, pp. 14-15). Thus, in changing myself, I can effectively change my

own classroom. In knowing myself, I can better know my students and better serve them. Furthermore, while helping me to improve my own teaching, the autoethnography will also help other students and teachers to connect to my stories, perhaps discovering or rediscovering their own teaching identity as I did, to undergo their own process of growth.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

Focusing on myself as a teacher-learner, I use my research to answer the questions, "Who am I as a teacher?" and "How have my past and present shaped me into the teacher that I am and want to become?" My topic has a practical purpose by allowing me to develop a reflection-action approach to my growth and development as an instructor, especially in an English class where I have fewer students and have the opportunity to connect with them more than I would in a large lecture hall. Essentially, I can take my observations and imagine what I want to do or become, thus aligning my conduct with my identity and integrity to engage in goal-setting. The scope of my research includes a study of student-teacher relationships with a focus on my role as a graduate instructor of English 1010 (Introduction to Writing: Academic Prose) and English 2010 (Intermediate Writing: Research Writing in a Persuasive Mode) at Utah State University, acting as both a subject and participant. Thus, my qualitative methodological approach will illustrate a large pedagogy that emphasizes the student-teacher relationship, as well as my memories of my mentors and students to connect all experiences with a cultural framework.

IN THE CONTEXT OF HUMANIZING PEDAGOGY

Many educators have long recognized the need for a new and sound set of values, grounded in the humanization of mankind at large (Danica & Sazhko, 2013). However, if we aim to humanize society, it must first happen through education (Shih, 2018, p. 197). Some years ago, humanistic education grew because of exposure to unfavorable or unhealthy classroom atmospheres (Patterson, 1987). This pedagogy endorsed "the standardization, mechanization and one-size-fits-all model" which stresses quantification, benchmarks, and risky responsibility for everyone in the classroom (Law, 2015, as cited in Shih, 2018, 200). To rectify this, educators recognized that to create humanizing schools and classrooms, they needed to incorporate fundamentals of democracy, including respect for human rights and freedom of expression and belief (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2014). This centers around student-teacher interactions.

Educators have long understood that relationships become vital in a classroom setting. Indeed, these relationships prove central in teaching students, though we can often take them for granted (Nieto, 2006, p. 466). Those relationships should not resemble a hierarchy, with the teacher at the top, distributing information in a "banking" approach. This model, termed by Paulo Freire, compares students to banks where educators "deposit" knowledge (1993, p. 8). Instead, Freire and other scholars (Bartolomé, 1996; Macedo & Freire, 2005; Hooks, 1994, 2003; Nieto, 1999, 2006; Palmer, 1998; Vasconcelos, 2011) say that instructors ought to build relationships with

their students based on horizontal dialogue. For example, with her own students, Vasconcelos describes how she "had to speak their language before they could learn to speak mine" (Vasconcelos, 2011, p. 426). For Vasconcelos, this recognition came as she reflected on her "unforgettable educators" (Vasconcelos, 2011. p 436). For Palmer, this happened as he taught his own students and discovered that in our desire to build relationships through communication, we become at home with each other when we are at home with ourselves. (Palmer, 1998, p. 5). In Freire's case, dialogue became the groundwork for his theories of praxis (Morrell, 2004, p. 91). To participate in dialogue with their students, these instructors had to exercise gratitude, humility, and honesty.

Thus, in sharing our selves openly, educators have the chance to "[live] the difficult but possible and pleasurable experience of speaking to and with students" (Macedo & Freire, 2005, p. 114), and these scholars agree that everyone in a classroom is simultaneously a teacher and a student, all engaged in problem-solving (Freire, 1993, p. 118). Furthermore, it is the teacher's responsibility to step down so that students can step up and bring their own voices to the classroom at their own level and pace (Vasconcelos, 2011, p. 426). In practicing an attitude of quietness and receptiveness—an attitude of listening—instructors can better draw out students' inner teacher that is quite capable of discovering answers in their own time and in their own way (Palmer, 1998, p. 156). Hence, dialogue has the potential to nurture understanding, respect, trust, and ultimately, empathy.

First, it is through honest dialogue that teachers practice vulnerability. Contrary to culture as I have found for myself, vulnerability becomes a gateway to love, connection [through dialogue], imagination, faith, and joy, (Brown, 2010). It thus becomes not a

weakness, but a power. Indeed, good teaching does not come from a method, but from a teacher's selfhood and their willingness "to make it available and vulnerable in the service of learning" (Palmer, 1998, p. 11). Furthermore, teachers who demonstrate vulnerability, consideration, and caring simultaneously demonstrate their willingness or desire to listen to their students—listen to comments and complements as well as criticisms and complaints (Vasconcelos, 2011, p. 434)

It's in such vulnerability and selfhood becomes a feedback loop. Just as they strive to offer their individuality to the pursuit of learning, their willingness to become more vulnerable reveals their identity and integrity. Consciousness is intentional and it comes when teachers dedicate themselves to reflection—to an awareness of their curiosity and even their frustrations (Gentry, 2011). This means that through reflexive vulnerability, teachers dedicate themselves to the course of self-actualization, and through the attention to their own well-being, they can better "teach in a manner that empowers students" (Hooks, 1994, p. 15).

It is through this empowerment that teachers come to recognize where their authority comes from and that of their students. As each person learns, retains, or regains their identity and integrity, acknowledging their sense of purpose, then each can learn and teach "from the depths of [their] own truth" and find connection in the truth we share (Palmer, 1998, p. 34). To disregard or deny the authority of each individual in a classroom as both teacher and learner is to undercut the potential of everyone (Furedi, 2009, p. 7). The key, as Palmer describes, is in the word itself: "author" is at the heart of "authority." Authority is recognized in people who author "their own words, their own

actions, their own lives, rather than playing a scripted role at great remove from their own hearts"—from their own identity and integrity (1998, p. 34).

Accordingly, when authority is recognized in this sense, individual freedom abounds. Without the false authority that breeds fear and unfounded compliance, students and teachers have the "freedom to create and to construct, to wonder and to venture" and such freedom involves initiative and responsibility on the part of everyone (Friere, 1993, p. 50). Through the exercise of freedom, students' creativity and individuality has more fertile ground to blossom. With more freedom, students [and teachers] have more opportunity to learn in ways that become meaningful to them (Hutton, 2014). Consequently, liberation becomes a praxis or the action and reflection of everyone to change themselves and their world for the better (Freire, 1993, p. 60).

That is what makes learning less better dialogue or action, but more a matter of becoming. Hence, "commitment to teaching well is a commitment to service" and those who do this work best will always try to meet the needs of their students (Hooks, 2003, as cited in Vacconcelos, 2011, p. 420). To aspire to become a better teacher, one must first become a better servant. Students vary in their learning approaches and abilities, and so it becomes the teacher's responsibility to expand their vision, instruction, and capacity to love to better serve the needs of individual students (Guskey, 2005, p.2). Often, this capacity through trial and error, patience and persistence, so that experience breeds understanding and empathy. As unique individuals in ability, background, beliefs, and cultures, students have the right to expect to be treated with respect and value. To promote diversity with integrity is to promote equality. Warm, compassionate

relationships nurture students' development, and every student needs this (Shih, 20018, p. 198). Even teachers need it.

Ultimately, teaching allows us to become more fully human then. Choosing to teach is much like becoming a parent; it helps one become less self-centered, more responsive to the needs of others, and more conscious of one's responsibility to live for another (Nieto, 2005, p. 167). To express "understanding and empathy, vulnerability and unfinishedness" has remained and will ever remain a fundamental quality of our humanness (Freire, 1998a, p. 59) and education (p. 58). Furthermore, no one can act genuinely human while he or she does not appreciate the humanness of others (Freire, 1993). It is only through this humanistic approach that teachers and students can strive toward an idyllic learning atmosphere (Zucca-Scott, 2010). With active engagement in the classroom or course, "students and teachers hope to become better people" (Nieto, 2005, p. 72). It is this hope that is another vital characteristic of being human, and while the classroom remains the most revolutionary "space of possibility" in schools (Hooks, 1994, p. 12), there remains hope for change (Vasconcelos, 2011, p. 430).

Thus, drawing from the above scholarship, I define humanizing pedagogy as a context in which individuals become more than just students in classrooms; they become students of life. My focus centers on students in my writing courses. They have interests and activities, which they often check at the door, then resume at the end of a class period. The challenge then: to welcome and encourage those identities back into the realm of education. This means that having the courage to keep one's heart open will encourage teacher, students, and subject to come together in a community, both in the classroom and in life (Palmer, 1998, p. 12).

In this study, humanizing pedagogy manifests itself as I allow myself to become vulnerable to my students. As I became vulnerable and allowed myself to make the journey of self-discovery and self-improvement—allowed my self to find and develop my identity and integrity—I learned where true authority comes from, for it stemmed from my identity and integrity. Furthermore, while my vulnerability took me through periods of nervousness, fear, and heartache, it also helped me practice openness and empathy with my students in talking with them and listening to them. Through my own discontent, my inner teacher led me to imagine a better reality that aligned more closely with my identity and integrity, to engage in a process of reflection-action (which I will discuss in further detail later in this study).

METHODOLOGY

Autoethnography

An autoethnography becomes part ethnography and part autobiography, utilizing the researcher's own awareness and reflections as data (Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008, p. 8). As an indistinct genre (Geertz, 1983), autoethnographies relate autobiographical writing with the practices of narrative writing. Autoethnographers convey their self-study as a short story, essay, novel, poem, play, performance work, or other investigational text presenting "concrete action, emotion, embodiment, self-consciousness, and introspection portrayed in dialogues, scenes, characterization, and plot" (Ellis, 2004, p. xix). Hence, autoethnography "claims the conventions of literary writing" (p. xix) and "overlaps with, and is indebted to, research and writing practices in anthropology, sociology, psychology, literary criticism, journalism, and communication . . . to say nothing of our favorite storytellers, poets, and musicians" (Jones, 2008, p. 208).

Accordingly, an autoethnography involves different elements than an autobiography or memoir, as it performs and exhibits research. It becomes a means of self-analysis, while placing identity in the context of sociocultural development. In other words, autoethnographers always analyze and discover the self; they create conversations with themselves as well as others (in my case, this becomes internal with other teachers and students). Although autoethnography has progressively become the means to define research and methods that inspire personal and cultural dialogue, (Ellis & Bochner,

2000), the differences that separate the personal experiences and cultural theory become vague, because autoethnographies present multiple levels of human experience, allowing the writer and reader to transition between personal, political, and cultural components (Ellis, 1999, p. 673).

I chose an autoethnographic method because I recognized that if I hoped to answer the questions that inspired me (Who am I as a teacher? How have my past and present shaped me into the teacher that I am and want to become?), I needed to explore my self, to expand sociological understanding concerning teaching and learning, and teacher identity creation. Like Humphreys, I find that an autoethnographic approach empowers me as a researcher to examine myself to create a natural dialogue with the readers of this work, in the hope that the values rooted in my life stories might connect to other teachers' and students' memories, experiences, and habits (2005, p. 853). This becomes another purpose of autoethnographic work: to open the "nexus of self and culture" hoping to establish relation — the "me too" moments for readers (Pelias, 2004, as cited in Leavy, 2009).

In essence, autoethnography means "setting a scene, telling a story, weaving intricate connections among life and art, experience and theory, evocation and explanation . . . and then letting go, hoping for readers who will bring the same careful attention to your words in the context of their own lives" (Jones, 2008, p. 208). Carolyn Ellis demonstrated that she speaks to teachers and students "risking writing their stories for the first time . . . those who seek out autoethnography to better understand themselves and the world they live in and who desire to change it for the better" (2009, pp. 373-374). As a graduate instructor, I see myself as one of those teachers and students. I also share

Ellis' aspiring but central purpose "to try to [connect to] . . . hearts and minds through stories" (p. 374) — my own.

Data Collection and Analysis

To develop these stories, I determined to keep a teacher's log. From these weekly entries—observations, reflections, goals, and achievements— I would identify reoccurring themes and use these defining moments to tell my story as a graduate instructor. At minimum, I determined to write in this teaching/learning journal after every class I taught (2-3 times a week), though entries also came at random, such as when I interacted with students during class time, met with a them in my office, saw them on campus, corresponded with them through electronic messages, or reviewed their feedback in my teacher evaluations at the end of each semester. I also wrote about conversations I had had with my own mentors, whether past or present; one of these even involved a story about one of my high school teachers and a letter to myself that she mailed me. Generally, these writing sprees would take up a page's worth of notes, though in the more spontaneous, instinctive writing moments, I filled several pages. In everything, I aimed to use my narrations to find personal meaning in my two-year experience.

Data Type	Time Frame	Frequency	Amount
Email Correspondence with Students	August 2017-May 2019	Several times a day or week	Several impactful emails a semester (about 100+ even a few email chats; only a handful, color-coded entries

			made it into my journal)
Email Correspondence with Mentors	May 2017-May 2019	One to several times weekly or monthly	One paragraph to several paragraphs (25+ times) and attachment feedback (about a dozen, color-coded entries made it into my journal)
Interaction with Students During Class Periods	August 2017-May 2019	Twice or thrice a week	Fifty minutes or eighty-five minutes
One-on-one Conferences in my Office	August 2017-April 2019	At least twice a semester (required), if not one or more occurrences	Ten to Fifteen minutes (required) to an hour
Students' Teacher Evaluations	December 2017-May 2019	One at the end of all four semesters	Three pages of statistics and three pages of comments
Meetings with Mentors	May 2017-May 2019	One to several times a month	Fifteen minutes to over an hour
Letter to Myself	Written in May 2013, Received June 2018	One-time occurrence	One hand-written page
Teacher's (and Graduate Studies) Log/Journal	June 2017-May 2019	Generally, two to three times a week (sometimes more)	Generally, one page (could range up to several pages)

Table 1: Types of Data Used
This table shows the types of data used in this study with the period, occurrence, and quantity of each.

In analyzing these diverse data types, I primarily follow an intuitive process.

When I first began chronicling my teaching experiences in my teacher's log, I just wrote

about anything that had happened that day as it related to my role as a graduate instructor.

Then as I began to read more literature recommended by mentors or included in

bibliographies, I began to connect to the stories of other teachers and researchers, because

of what I had experienced in class, in my office, or through emails. I included the most

meaningful quotes in my journal entries and began to include explanations that linked the sources to these experiences. Other times, I talked about my days with a mentor and this helped me to identify common themes. Taken together, these times became my "ah ha" revelations or epiphanies, especially in a crisis or defining moment (Denzin, 2014, p. 4) (see "Process of Progression" in the conclusion for further insight).

I had one such instance where a mentor encouraged me to ramble in his office; eventually, I would intuitively recognize patterns in what I chose to share. I remember that one time I went to see him feeling very overwhelmed and confused about how to navigate my feelings of inadequacy with meeting all the needs of my students. I talked until I cried. In the end, he used a metaphor to compare my students and my classrooms to flocks and fields respectively (Alma 34:20, Book of Mormon). This calmed me because it shed significant light on my situation. I even remembered that I had read a suggestion to use a metaphor to interpret myself and my experiences as a teacher (Palmer, 1998, 152). Earlier, a friend of mine had even compared me to a "mother bear" when it came to my relationship with my students. Between the discussion of these two metaphors, I came to understand my identity and goals a little more. I wanted to get to know my students and their names, as I wanted them to know me. I didn't want to forget a single student. I cared for my students and wanted to protect them (probably getting a little overprotective at times). Plus, they related to the themes I'd already identified, such as "love," "courage," and "authority." More than just appreciating the metaphors, I appreciated that my mentor knew me well enough to know that I "spoke metaphors." He spoke my language and in so doing, I was better able to understand his (Vasconcelos, 2011, p. 426).

Other times (when I had the time), I would take a walk in some natural setting which provided a welcome period or reflection, as well as healing; each time I would reflect, I would have some theme or literature with which to guide my thoughts (Palmer, 1999, p. 9). During one such instance, I thought about the "mother bear" analogy my friend had told me in connection with a paragraph I had recently read in a book that contrasted the outcomes of parenting versus teaching (Nieto, 2005, p. 167). Not long afterwards, I spoke with a student in my office, whose comment resonated with me and with what had remained on my mind for a while. He asked a rhetorical question: "Authoritative parents know their methods work, so why don't teachers use the same methods more in classrooms?" This led me to take subsequent walks while reflecting on what I had read and experienced regarding "authority" and "love."

I even had moments where I realized that what I emphasized in the classroom proved the same themes I had discovered in my writings, such as 'vulnerability' and 'compassion'. One time after showing a TEDtalk in my class on vulnerability (Brown, 2010) during the 2018-2019 school year, I remembered that during the summer of 2018, a mentor had spoken to me about my own vulnerability as a teacher, while in his office. During that time, he also suggested that I watch a different TEDtalk on introversion and extroversion (Caine, 2012); I ended up sharing that video with a student who I thought would benefit from it and later to my classes during my last semester. In other words, I taught what I practiced (Palmer, 1998, pp. 2-3), and in exposing myself, teaching allowed me to discover who I was and better serve my students (Freire, 1998a, p. 87).

Threats to Validity

Because of this research method, threats to validity include construct variability and generalizability, as other people may define terms differently or demonstrate varying connection with my experiences. Therefore, I will provide working definitions for concepts within my study, including teacher identity and teacher integrity. I acknowledge that these terms will evolve over time with my increasing understanding of them and I have taken steps to track this accordingly. Also, my recollections may vary with time, so that I can only recognize these variations and interpret their meaning on my evolving identity and integrity. To achieve validity, I utilize a variety of different data types that cover the same time period and experiences. Lastly, though the experiences of students and teachers are different, the process of discovering one's identity and integrity is one that everyone goes through, consciously or unconsciously at various times in their academic journey.

Cultural Framework

Before I could think about the space of my own classroom, however, I had to consider the cultural and historical context in which that space arose. In saying this, I'm not referring to the larger influences that have shaped myself, but the influences that have shaped the academic arena at Utah State University into which I enter as a new teacher.

The university is a land grant institution. It came to serve its thousands of students here today because of the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862, the time when colleges

expanded their evolving objectives to include the institutionalization of practical fields of study, which fused fields with liberal education. It first opened in 1888 as the Agricultural College of Utah (UAC) (Parson, 2009) and by the time I enrolled as a freshman, it came to serve numerous other degrees beside agriculture. When I entered graduate school, the use of graduate instructors in the English department had become long-established. This custom of using graduate students as teachers unified graduate study with a budding faculty career, placing graduate instructors in both the arena of teaching and of studying (formally), and creating a unique bridge with students regarding the general closeness in age and cultural familiarity. This similarity sometimes provides a basis for connection that might not otherwise exist.

MY STORY

My Positionality

Reflecting on this humanizing pedagogy, I recognize that these phenomena have complexities, change over time, and resist exact definition. Their influence seems apparent at times, though it's more often subtly revealed in beliefs, expectations, and behavior. So, "Where do I fit in with this historical and cultural mountain? Why ought I to care? More importantly, what can I do because of it?"

In considering the "mountain" of higher education, historically (often currently), when students walk into a classroom, they have the presumption that the instructor sits on the top of the class's hierarchal structure. In my classes, I have striven for a softening of this viewpoint. When I teach, when I email, or when I conference with students, I have found that I endeavor to encourage situations in which everyone is both teacher and student, equal in the journey of learning—of listening. As a graduate instructor, I must remind myself that I teach students, not subjects, and I serve people, not a practice. To make the most of these efforts, I find that I must first know and improve myself, because without a clear and positive reformation of myself, I cannot hope to reform a clear and positive reformation in my classroom (or any other interconnected system).

First, I must gain an understanding of my own identity and integrity, for that's where my best teaching comes from, as Palmer says, not from any method or material I can employ (1998, p. 4). That isn't to say that any questions about "what" in the

classroom are not significant, it only means that the "who" questions should play the primary role. If I cannot answer "who am I?" then I cannot answer "who are my students?", for I will have no ground to build a foundation of trust and empathy. Furthermore, the trust my students have in me reflects the confidence I have in my students (Freire, 1993). If I do not address either question, I will not bridge self and subject, because if the material and my own stories don't connect with my students' identity and integrity then our lesson will not become a part of them. As Palmer reasoned, "Deep speaks to deep, and when we have not sounded our own depths, we cannot sound the depths of our students' lives" (1998, p. 33).

Hence comes the necessity to examine the intricacies of my own life—my own positionality. To weave together the threads of my self, I can explore what factors have influenced my experiences. These factors can include (but are not limited to) religion, class, race, and gender. How has one of these, such as religion, impacted who I am and want to become? How has it impacted the way in which I view my class, race, and gender? These are just a few questions which I can answer in my journey of self-reflection. Moreover, I ought to consider how my students regard each aspect of my self to discern where we can better see each other for who we are, not view each other for what we are. Indeed, "gender, race, and class has become a litany in the attempt to transform Eurocentric patriarchal studies into multicultural, nonracist/sexist, nonelitist education" (Joy, 1991, p. 9). So, how can I use race, class, gender, religion, etc. in creating and enlightened and open space in my classrooms?

To begin with, I will consider my class. Coming from a middle-class family, I can understand the broad financial background of most of my students. To attend an

institution like Utah State University, I recognize that no one (in my experience in one-on-one conferences) has come from an elite class. Through family support, financial aid, or their own jobs, my students have paid college expense to enroll in classes. They've come from middle-class backgrounds. However, I have had instances, where my students have grown-up at a lower-class level, and so, they have experienced a vastly dissimilar beginning than most of their classmates. Though I cannot always connect with a student's experience, I can listen to the stories they have to tell. In listening to them, I acknowledge that in my classroom, it doesn't matter to me where they have gone, but where they want to go.

In one instance, I had a student who came from a poor community and was the first in his family to attend college. From where he grew up, he'd always used to refer to the trials of a lower-class neighborhood as "a disease," and to him, his choice to leave his hometown was a choice to escape that disease. He chose to improve his life opportunities through the acquisition of education. At the end of the year, he told me that he appreciated that I had not "judged a book by its cover," and I felt eager to see where he would go in a year or five years.

Second is my gender. When I first began teaching, I had more positive responses and reception from my female students than I my male students. However, the more I taught, I wondered whether the different responses I received from male and female students had less to do with me as a young woman instructor and more to do with the class; in general I had more female students major in the humanities field and more male students major in the mathematic and scientific field (which reflects an inequality in the respective fields). At times, this difference in academic and career interests reflected in

student responses and attitudes. Though this seemed to have a large influence on gendered responses, it was not the only factor I noticed. Another insight I gained through experience and the counsel of a mentor happened after a power struggle incident I had with one of my male students (I didn't recognize it as such until after I spoke with this mentor and she mentioned the frequency with which my own experience happens with other female teachers, especially younger ones). Through this experience, I learned how to better establish healthy boundaries. Lastly, in the full two years that I taught college English, I never saw a disparity of male versus female students who came to me for help.

Next, I have my race and nationality to regard: Caucasian and American. This is the privileged race and nationality of the area. Thus, I do not gain regular exposure to minority cultures. Firstly, in my own classes, have had more international among my students of color students I teach. I have not had many international students to gain a broader understanding. However, by interacting with these few students, I have appreciated other cultures more than I would have otherwise. I always feel at a disadvantage with these students, because while I can get to know their traditions and unique experiences, I still feel I am only scratching the surface. I could never really understand the racial or national background as those students knew it. I want to allow every voice in my classroom, yet at the same time, I recognize that I am teaching and facilitating a culture that may not connect as deeply with my students in the minority. On the other hand, I connect culturally more with my White students, or contrastingly, with students who have lived in the same culturally similar area. Like with students of different class backgrounds, I may not understand where students of a different race or

nationality have come from, though I can listen to their stories and find the form of empathy that connects us (such as vulnerability, isolation, etc.).

One time, I listened to an Arab student of mine talk about the different ways in which she did research and wrote papers in their country of birth. Because of her privilege in coming to the U. S. to seek an education, she had more depth of gratitude and of hard work. Through discussions with this student, I better appreciated education not for the sake of obtaining a degree to commodify skills and experience, but to better serve people. A large part of this appreciation came because I saw how in the experiences she described, she witnessed lack in the quality of life and thus wanted others to feel the rights and privileges that many of my White, American students took for granted because they didn't have to work for it like she had had to.

These desires to create and explore the highest level of equality in my classrooms stem not from a national culture, but from my religion—my membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. More than anything else, I feel that's what shapes me as a graduate instructor. It is also the dominant religion of this area, which has also helped me to develop a deeper bond with many of my students, sort of like an unspoken understanding. This shared religion impacts members' familial, communal, political, and cultural lives, like expanding ripples in a pond. For me, it helps the concept of humanizing pedagogy to connect with my beliefs and behaviors as a teacher. "Problem-posing education affirms men and women as beings in the process of becoming" (Freire, 1993, p. 65), and I believe that every individual in my classroom has immeasurable worth and a greater potential than they can currently imagine; each person can choose their own path that will lead them to their potential.

By reflecting on my class, gender, and race through my deepest, core values, I'm better able to see myself as both a teacher and a student (see Figure 1) and see other positionalities with greater perspective. In this way, I can take the time to listen and respond to my students not only as my pupils, but as unique people who have something equally significant to contribute to our learning experience as I have. Through this discovery, I'm also better prepared to connect backgrounds and connect the community of our class to some larger whole, whether at a local, national, or global level. By striving to "see" my students instead of merely "viewing" them, I strive to put forth the lesson as a problem or question we work out together to address whenever I can. This practice will undoubtedly take time to nurture, but because of it, we can endeavor to become more aware of historical limitations, segregations, and stratifications. We can engage each other's souls and thus glimpse the person behind the comment, paper, or lesson.

Thus, in seeing myself and seeing my students, I'm in a better situation to help build and mold mountains in an academic arena instead of watching my work crumble when my students walk out of the classroom. My students and I can move mountains, but we will do it one rock at a time. That is when teaching can become more than just a pedagogy, evolving and continually outstripping itself to become a praxis. After all, to me, the creation that will transcend barriers such as class, race and gender is, as they say, when teaching becomes a work of heart.

My Own Visible Experiences

In considering my own work, I will first provide a working definition of the

aspects defining my heart, namely my own identity and integrity. By identity I mean a

developing interconnection where all the forces that comprise my life unite in the

ambiguity of self: my genetic makeup, the character of my parents, the culture I grew up

in, the support and hurt I have received, the good and bad I have done others and to

myself, the experience of love and pain—and much, much more. By integrity, I mean

whatever authentic completeness I can discover within that interconnection as its paths

form and re-form the course of my life (Palmer, 1998). Furthermore, in utilizing this

theory of identity, I use three modes of identification in exploring the landscape of my

teacher-learner self: imagination, engagement, and alignment (Farnsworth et al, 2016, p.

157; Palmer, 1998; Vasconcelos, 2011). In other words, I imagine the goals I have for

myself as a teacher, identify or align the requirements I need to take to achieve that goal,

and then describe my engagement in the practice of becoming my identity. Additionally,

this practice mirrors the philosophy of theorist Etienne Wegner-Trayner and extends to

my approach in educating my students: "[exploring] what a classroom can become when

[I] focus on identities in becoming, rather than simply a focus on the transmission of

school curriculum" (Farnsworth et al, 2016, p. 157).

When I first began teaching English 1010 or Introduction to Writing: Academic

Prose three days a week, I hardly considered my identity and integrity as an instructor. I

just felt happy if I survived the first day and the first week without literally or

metaphorically running into a wall. That's to say nothing of my own studies as a graduate

student. I can still remember that initial Monday as both student and teacher, too. I stood

behind my desk at the front of my classroom, clutching the wood so I wouldn't fall over.

In my own graduate classes, I selected a seat in the back of the room where I hoped I

could fulfil my greatest object for the day: remaining invisible. Later in the week, when I

held ten-minute one-on-one conferences with all forty-six of my students, I couldn't say

who felt more nervous during the meeting, them, or me. I felt like a fish out of water or a

bird without wings.

Throughout the conferences, I wondered how I could possibly remember

everyone's name in my goal of six class periods. As the weeks progressed and I got to

know my students, I found that a good number of them surprised me. Beyond learning

distinguishing characteristics about them, I discovered that they opened up to me far

more than I expected. Some of them even seemed eager to talk, sharing experiences from

high school, pulling out their favorite book to show me, and expressing appreciation for a

chance to talk individually. It became our first shared experience of vulnerability, and

one student even struck me in a special way that I could not understand at the time. I only

found out that she wanted to write fiction, and since I had self-printed several stories, I

offered to send her instructions for how she could do the same. She got a funny look as

she was leaving my office, thanking me, and saying how much writing meant to her; I

can still hear and feel the depth in her short response.

Thus, after my last one-on-one conference for the day, I sat back in the chair and

tried to unwind. I felt as if I had just had dozens of people parade through my office. The

ten minutes that I had allocated for each meeting did not seem adequate. Yes, I knew my

students more than I had in the classroom, but I felt as if I had only scratched the surface. I wanted more—*so much more.*

As I reflected on the day, I thought of the website I would send the girl who had expressed so much interest in writing. Other students had asked me to send them the same instructions for self-printing, though this particular student reminded me of one specific high school teacher in a very personal way.

Early in my writing habits, I had one very special lady who encouraged her class to write fifty-thousand words by the end of the semester. In doing this, we could self-print our work on a website, creating our own cover and interior. My teacher even encouraged me in some short, but meaningful feedback she gave me on one of my papers. This little note sparked an ongoing dialogue between us, both in and out of class. Because of this challenge, I finished my first full-length novel toward the end of the year and became an amateur writer thereafter. Now I wanted to give my own student the same opportunity. I saw something in her because someone had first seen it in me.

Then the second week came. The fear of the first week had begun to settle, or perhaps compassion replaced it as I saw it reflected at me in some of my students. Friday rolled by before I knew it, and I had my first batch of papers to grade. At the time, I thought I'd never had a more traumatic experience. How could I possibly assign a number and a letter to students who I had spoken to in my office? How could I evaluate them on such an imperfect, subjective scale? Careful and concerned, I began arranging the hard copies by performance. I felt I had started to develop a system, but that's when I read her paper: the student who'd left me with such a strange impression during conferences. She had chosen to write her personal essay about her parents who had

recently passed away and especially about her father, whom she hoped to emulate as a writer.

Forget about organization. Forget about grammar and mechanics. It all broke down, and so did I. Between what I had read and what I had happened in our conference, I cried for an hour. I had observed her in our meeting, but right then, it felt as if I was seeing her better. Because of her influence on me, I responded more to the person, not the paper. Because of her, I lost sleep that night, but in changing me, I changed my lesson the following Monday to keep the focus on my students as individual learners; like Carolyn Ellis, I'd learned a little bit more about myself and this led me to make a change in my corner of the world (2009).

I walked into my classroom and did not stand behind my desk. I sat on the tabletop at the front of the room. Earlier, I reviewed the list of favorite songs and artists my students had mentioned in conferences, so I could play them in the background as my students and I worked on a freewrite. Small things made a big difference in this instance, and that half hour transformed the lesson and the atmosphere. I felt lighter as I saw students perk up when their song began playing over the speakers, or else I smiled when other students would bob their heads while lip-syncing the words. Nothing could have brought me down that day.

By the next week, I left my perch on the table to sit on the top of empty desks or kneel beside my students as I went around to small groups and individuals. Increasingly, through the reflection-action of my autoethography, I began to discover my identity and integrity as a teacher (Ellis, 2009). I wanted to employ a "problem-solving" lesson instead of a "banking" lesson, as I had read in Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

(1993). At the front of the classroom, I viewed my students more, but when I came beside them, I aimed to see them, and in seeing them, I saw myself. I could learn alongside them. Specifically, and most especially, I could remember my younger self and rediscover what took me into the field of teaching in the first place.

This remembrance happened because of the same student who wrote such a personal paper about her parents. As the semester progressed, she took opportunities to use essays and freewrite to express her thoughts and feelings about her father and mother. As I communicated with her in my office, after class, in emails, and in feedback, I recognized that she still had a lot of trauma to work through. Just when I needed it most, I recalled a memory one of my former teachers once again.

Unlike most of my teachers I have had throughout my life, this one cared about me outside of the classroom. He knew every student by name, and more than just a willingness to listen to us, he demonstrated an eagerness to do so. He had a way of helping anyone to open up and share what they might not otherwise share. Such became the case with me.

It seemed like any other class, only when I sat down in my desk, my heart felt as heavy as my pack. I went in there not expecting anything out of the ordinary, yet as the lesson progressed, my teacher said some things that resonated with me, influencing me to the point where I lingered in the room after my peers had left. While I waited for everyone to file out into the hall, I experienced a jumble of nerves and second-thoughts. *Was I doing the right thing? Would my teacher understand? Could he really help?*

In the end, my feet remained rooted to the floor. As my teacher waved to the last student at the door, I had the impulse to make a run for it, but I convinced myself that if I

could get through the first twenty seconds, I could go through with what I had to say. So, when my teacher came back, I said his name, soft and a little shaky. He brightened and asked what he could do for me. Rather uncertainly, I asked if I could talk to him. More than amazing me, he startled me by saying he'd had a feeling I needed to see him. That simple acknowledgement and the fact that he came over to sit in a desk near me encouraged me to speak up.

I began a little hesitantly, but as I went on and he just listened, I let it all spill out, including the tears. Having explained what had compelled me to say anything at all, I told him of my personal situation, and of the heartache and distress I could not escape. When I finished, I felt as if a burden had lifted off me or as if I had stepped from a dark room to a light one—one where someone could finally see me. I just sat there, emotionally spent, and waited to see how my teacher would respond.

To my immense relief, he asked me a few clarifying questions and validated the pain of my situation. Then he asked whether I would agree to let him make a phone call to someone who could help better than he could. Further overwhelmed by his caring and aid, I agreed to let him speak with this other person. He left me with assurances that everything would work out and that he would handle everything "with golden gloves." Without his intervention, I don't think I ever would have gone to a trauma counselor and gotten the help I so desperately needed.

To this day, I'm so grateful that this teacher saw me more than a student, but as a person. As the weeks passed, he continued to support me, becoming a valued confident and guide. He opened my eyes to what the calling of a teacher can become. Indeed,

without him, I don't think I could have responded to my own student the way I did. I wouldn't have found that sense of empathy with my student.

When I first read her paper, my heart broke and my eyes opened. As time went on and I learned more about her and her life, I came to share my own experience with a trauma counselor and how much the person had helped me heal. I could give her resources that could get her through the turbulence in her life, just as my own teacher had done for me. We stayed in close contact throughout the rest of the semester, and on the last day, I felt more pride in her as a student, yes, though I felt greater pride in her as a person—in the growth she had undergone in the short six months I knew her. Hence, she'd gone from someone who'd remained partially invisible to me, to someone I could more clearly see (Vasconcelos, 2011).

My Own Invisible Experiences

Not all the memories I have of my instructors and students provided a chance to talk, though. In high school and in college, I remember I had classes where the teacher only used my first name at the beginning of the semester during roll call. After that, my name got lost in the endless stream of numbers and letters found in scores and grades. I grew to consider this the custom of my education and came to prefer to fade into invisibility rather than have an instructor view me the entire four to nine months without ever seeing me. The irony become that from these experiences, I learned what not to teach in my own time as an instructor.

Still, some circumstances always lay beyond my control each semester. Mentors would remind me that like themselves, I could not reach every student, and I certainly couldn't help those who didn't wish for help. Communication could never exist on a one-way street. We could not carry on a conversation that refused to go anywhere, and in the end, we'd all have to make peace with that silence. In saying this, I am not referring to my quieter students who preferred not to talk in class but opened up to me outside of class. Rather, I refer to those students who would come to class, but then suddenly drop off in attendance. Sometimes, when this happened and I would send email after email in hopes of reaching out to them, I would never receive a response, and the student would end up withdrawing from the class or else I could do nothing else but fail them in the class and hope that they'd have a better semester in the future (in one case, I actually saw one such student the following semester and she reported that she had managed to stay more caught up on her school work). Hence, connections only happen between willing parties, and in remembering my conviction to the humanizing pedagogy, I realized that reconciliation lay in the word itself: we are all human after all.

Overdrawn and Overrun

Like my experiences with a lack of communication, I also had to accept that sometimes, I could hardly do anymore then what I'd already done. Just like a well, I would feel overdrawn with precious little left to give. Just like in a dream, and no matter how much I wanted to, I could not run any faster than I had the strength to do. During one particularly turbulent and heartbreaking semester, I felt I had barely made it to the

end. I repeatedly relived an experience I would have rather left behind; in all my semesters teaching up to that point, nothing had hurt as bad. By the last day of class, I wondered whether I had not just finished with teaching, but rather had come back from battle, and come back with not one, but many scars. Not all wounds had healed either. It took mentors and close friends and family to remind me that tokens of pain also became tokens of love—the deeper the pain, the deeper the love.

During this intermission, I came to understand my past and current teachers more than I ever had before. I grew to recognize those same veiled expressions of exhaustion and strain that I had taught myself. Only then did I wish I had taken the time to see them as some of them had taken the time to see me. Only then did I commit to the effort of trying to see the person behind the instruction. Just like with my students, I wanted to look past shortcomings to individual needs. Once again, I wanted to dispel the idea that in a classroom, help can only go one way.

This determination didn't only blossom because of what I discerned in my own teachers, but because of what I experienced with my students in the spring of 2019 and what I read in my IDEA evaluations in the fall of 2018. Beginning that final semester of my graduate studies, I wondered how I'd ever make it to April, since I'd gone into January already burned out. Then to my immense relief and gratitude, I had several students go above and beyond to make their classmates feel known and welcomed, and to put forth extra effort into class. In helping their peers, they helped me, and at the end of classes, I made a point of thanking them for that, so that in exchanging meaningful dialogue, we made another "deposit", not in knowledge, as Freire detailed (1993), but in emotional connection. That became the "deposit" that mattered. The more conversation

or correspondence we shared, the stronger our bond generally became. Also, around the same time, I read the comments from the previous semester that also gave me the extra boost and heart I needed to keep putting one foot in front of the other. More than this, I found that in attempting to listen to what my own teachers didn't say and trying to do what I could to lighten their load, I found my own process of healing sped up.

Lessons I Learned

I couldn't believe it: the spring semester of 2018 had ended, and I'd gone through withdrawals weeks before my students walked out the door for the last time. Not long afterwards, I received my course evaluation comments from my students. Some of their notes touched me deeply, to the point of another hour of tears, while I made note of common areas to improve on. Below is just a sample of the remarks I read, both affected me more than the others:

1. *"She's very vague and her instructions for assignments or class activities are unclear. I feel like this teacher has potential to become a great English professor, because she cares about her students, but we have no idea what she wants out of us."*
2. *"I cannot say that I have ever had a teacher that genuinely cared as much as Professor Kitchen cared about her students in this class. It was amazing, she would send us emails over breaks hoping that we were enjoying ourselves, she cared about how we were doing and feeling, and I never for one second felt unsupported by her. Honestly the best Professor I have ever had the privilege of taking a course from."* (Utah State University, 2017)

Okay, I thought. *So, most of my students know I have a high love for them.* But then I recalled something I had once heard from a religious teacher I greatly respected. He said

that a classroom in which the teacher had high love but low expectations for students

would resemble "a fraternity," but when a teacher had high love and high expectations

for students, then students had a greater chance of "experiencing miracles"—of creating

their own positive change. That's what I really wanted for them.

High Love

Miracles	Fraternity
Deviance	Rebellion

High Expectations (left) Low Expectations (right)

Low Love

Table 2: Love and Expectations in the Classroom
This table demonstrates the degree of love and expectations that a teacher has for their
students, and the potential resulting consequences within the classroom setting (Bryan,
2018).

After reviewing all the comments, I went to one of my mentors on campus to discuss

ways I could demonstrate less vagueness in my classes. I explained this had proven a

dominant theme in the feedback I received. He laughed and said his own evaluations

always include comments of the same nature. Because of this, he said he might not give

me much advice, but he did suggest letting my students know at the very beginning of the

semester that I believe in academic freedom. He told me that he lists his core

expectations, but beyond that, his students cannot go wrong.

So, I tried something new the following semester. I outlined the basic skills that I wanted students to concentrate on: genre content, purpose and evidence, audience awareness, organization, sentence appropriateness, and citing and formatting. This has not only clarified my emphasis on a students' ideas more than their grammar (which tends to stress us all out) but has allowed me to focus my entire feedback on the person behind the paper. If a student had a question regarding a specific skill area, I encouraged them to come see me in my office. Now, as another semester is ending, I am happy to see that this experiment has yielded more one-on-one meetings with my students than last semester. I'm anxious to see if anyone comments on this experiment in their survey evaluations, so that I can continue to evaluate and improve the ways in which I engage my students to keep bridging the distance between my heart, and my conduct as a teacher. Sometimes, this happens in large ways, but most times, it is the small, simple acts that make the biggest difference.

At the beginning of each semester, I assure my students they can call me Ms. Kitchen, Professor Kitchen, or Chaille—whatever they are most comfortable with. Usually, I had just signed emails and announcements with "Ms. Kitchen" because I certainly didn't feel like a professor, most people called me by that address, and "Chaille" often proved more troublesome to remember, as least for a while. When I first started teaching, most all my students addressed me by the first and second options. However, during my second year of teaching, right after I had held one-on-one conferences, I had not one, but multiple students call me "Chaille"—just a simple first name, but its use had a far deeper significance for me, especially given the timing it happened. After conferences, I just sat back in my chair and reflect on my students' use of my first name

and how it made me feel. The more I thought about it, the more I enjoyed it. Indeed, to me, it reaffirmed the trust and bond we'd developed between us.

This bond proved consequential in my writing classes, especially after I started having more students come to my office. With targeted learning mastery skills, they would come to me with more specific questions and I could spend up to an hour with them in my office, discussing that skill in personalized detail that I couldn't in the classroom with everyone. When I got them one-on-one, I could better work at an individual's own level and pace. Consequentially, those who communicated with me in my office, email chat, or asked for more written comments showed better writing skills and improvement in general. I appreciated that our small class sizes gave me this opportunity to create a safe environment where everyone in the class could be more known and receive more individualized feedback, as did several of my students in IDEA evaluations in the fall of 2018:

1. *I really thought that the people, teacher and over all atmosphere of the class was really a breath of fresh air. I was glad that the class was only like 30 students because I felt safe to let them read my material because then they could better help me develop my writing skills.*
2. *My professor genuinely cared about us as students and about our writing skills. She put forth significant effort to help us on our assignments and give us good feedback* (Utah State University, 2018).

Once again, I thought about the diagram of a teacher's love and expectations. If I loved my students greatly, then I had to keep high expectations for them to better see what I wanted for them. This love, when manifested in higher one-on-one support, typically led to increased cooperation and learning on the part of both my student and I. I

found that sometimes, our best efforts as both teacher and learner came out when we communicated one-on-one.

I realized then that these insights have yielded several themes or labels that capture the essence of the relationship between teacher and students in the scenes portrayed, most of which mirror the qualities of the humanizing pedagogy (Bartolomé, 1996; Freire, 1993; Macedo & Freire, 2005) that I have come to embrace. My journey has mirrored that of Vasconcelos, albeit the individual experiences are unique to me, and that as a teacher, I wish to see everyone in my class as a person before I see them as my student. We are all students in some form or another, and this ideology I have found and strive to develop can be diagramed as follows:

```
        ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
        │   Teacher-Student Relationship  │
        │    (I = teacher; you = student)  │
        └─────────────────────────────────┘
```

"I can't see you."   "I can see you."

"I can see you, but I   "I can see you and I
will not listen to you."   will listen to you."

"I will take strides to see you grow."

"I am willing to face   "I will step down so you
what you have to say."   can learn and grow."

"I am as vulnerable and unfinished as you are."

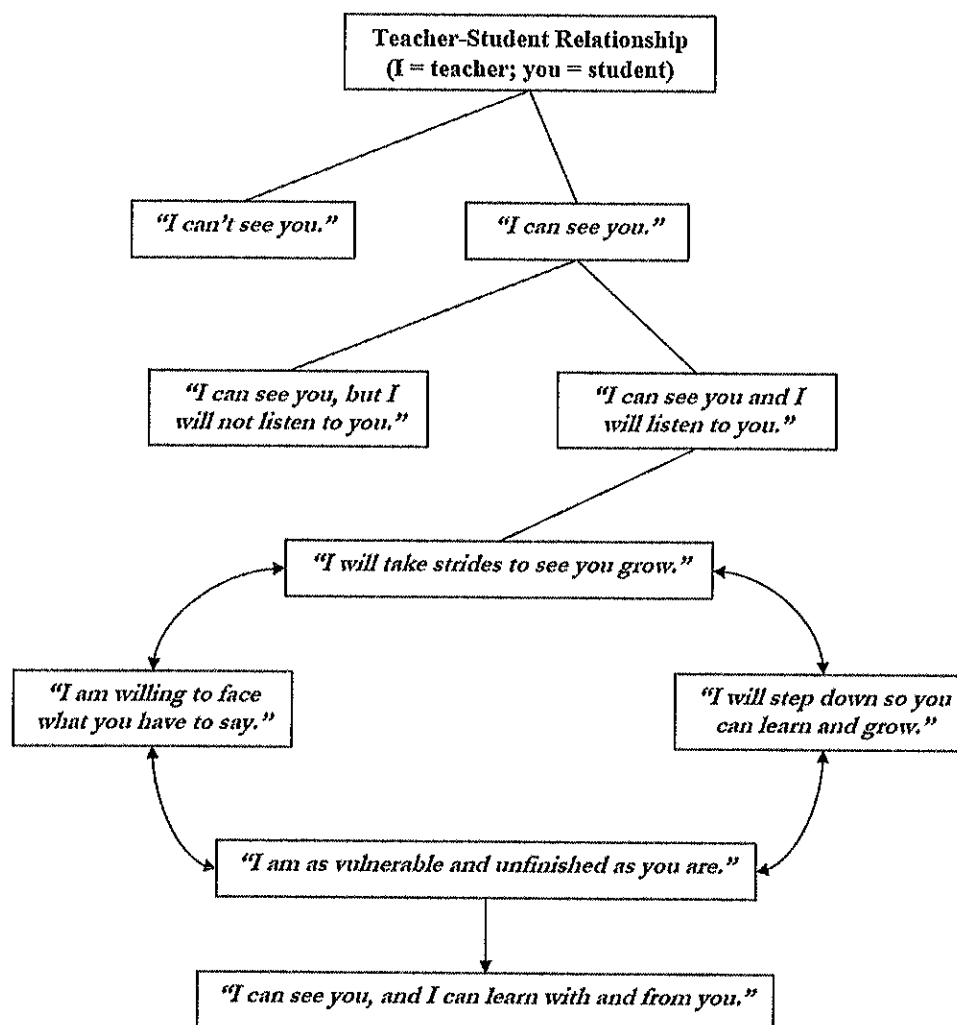"I can see you, and I can learn with and from you."

Figure 1. Teacher-Student Relationship
The diagram offers a translation and representation of the teacher—student relationship
as conceptualized by Freire and others (Bartolomé, 1996; Macedo & Freire, 2005; Hooks,
1994, 2003; Nieto, 1999, 2006). It is derived from Vasconcelos, 2011.

In this diagram, the teacher, myself, has only one of two options for establishing a

two-way relationship with a student. If I do not acknowledge the student as a person with

a voice equally as consequential to the process of learning as my own, then I cannot have

an increase in my own growth and development as an instructor and as a person.

Throughout the semester or trimester, the teacher-student relationship remain static. That

is, the instructional environment within the classroom will resemble that of Freire's

banking approach to education (1993). Students cannot feel that I see their impute as valued and necessary.

Contrastingly, if I make the effort to see them as people—to empathize with them— then I have the chance to hear their insights on the subject we are discussing in class. However, it is my choice whether I acknowledge those voices from my students or whether I ignore them. If I ignore them, once again, then I have no chance to create a dynamic relationship between them and me. On the other hand, if I have the humility to really listen to then with my heart and not just my ears, then I have a wonderful opportunity to get to know them and their needs. In doing this, I further take steps to meet them on their individual learning level and pace. I begin to teach students more than a subject, for the subject becomes adapted to connect with their inner selves. Indeed, "part of teaching is helping people create themselves" (Gentry, 2011). A teacher becomes an artist, yet no artist can "make the profile, can shape the students", but only enable "the students to become themselves" (Horton, 1990, p. 181).

Similarly, I chose to take what they have to say and internalize it—decide how it will impact my identity and integrity as their teacher. In seeing a larger world, then I will recognize my own vulnerability. Through this recognition, I can afford my students the space they need to grow and discover an understanding for themselves. In practicing vulnerability, I can learn alongside them and with them as I recognize that knowledge is not rigid, but fluid, and that we all have just a portion we contribute to the whole.

Thus, vulnerability has allowed me to open myself up to the larger said world and open myself up to improvement and progression. When I first started teaching in the fall of 2017, I concentrated on learning the curriculum and learning how to use the

technology available to me. As I developed as a graduate instructor, taking lessons from

myself, my students, and my mentors, I came to see that no tool or method could replace

my character and honesty. Just like Palmer, I found that authority comes from within—

from a place of genuineness and goodness (1998). Because of a student who broke my

heart, I found myself set on a path to discover where my authority came from: within my

identity and integrity (Palmer, 1998). More than this, the dialogue between my students

and me does not situate us on the same professional level, but it does give birth to and

nourish the democratic thinking between us (Freire, 1998b, p. 116). Thus, a candid

attitude of respect is suggested on the part of both teacher and student, allowing "the

authority of the teacher and the freedom of the students" to claim conduct of conscience

and principle (Freire, 1998a, p. 86). Another way to conceptualize this involves the

diagram below:

Content Identify Understand Feel Apply
& Context
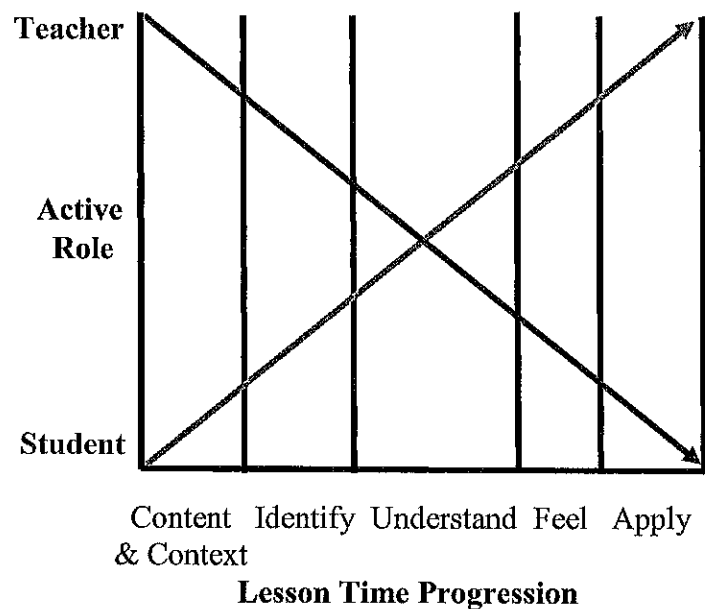**Lesson Time Progression**

Figure 2. Teacher-Student Interaction

The diagram is another representation of the teacher—student relationship in relation to the lesson, as I learned it from my same religious teacher who taught me how students can "experience miracles" (Bryan, 2018).

When he showed us this diagram, my religious teacher said that as a lesson period progresses, the teacher should play a diminishing role in the lesson, while the student plays an increasing role. So, at the beginning of the lesson, the teacher does most of the talking as they provide the content and context for the day's topic, as well as identify essential concepts or principles. By the end of the lesson, students should have the dominant voice in the lesson as they feel the importance or relevance of the lesson to them and apply what they have learned or discovered to their own lives. Then they have become their own teachers.

However, reality is rarely, if ever, this linear. More accurately, the process of teaching and learning proves more vigorous and complex, where the lesson continually evolves as my students and I continually evolve. Once more, we are not pigeonholed as solely a teacher or a student. Like so many before me, I have teachers training me how to be a teacher. Like so many before them, many of my students learn they have something significant to share to our collective understanding. As a result, "teaching [becomes] learning and leaning [becomes] teaching" (Love, 2006, p. 117).

Thus, I find myself asking not, "How can I change the lessons," but rather, "How can the lessons change me?" Just like Palmer, I internalize the vital relationship between the "who"—my students—and the "what"—the lesson. We're all here to learn and it becomes pivotal to ask the question of how we learn best to meet this objective. Why care

about developing and nurturing the teacher-student relationship? To me, the results speak

for themselves:

1. *I feel like Ms. Kitchen really dedicated her time to us. I could tell that she cared about us and was always trying to have good lessons, good comments on our homework, and she took time to try to get to know us personally and see what we needed as a class and individually . . . Even though English isn?t my major, I feel like this class did help me in ways that do apply to my major and everyday life.*
2. *The professor obviously put effort into her lessons everyday. It helped me to be able to want to work harder.*
3. *over all i really liked this class. i usually really struggle in English because i don't feel inspired, or i just don't feel the motivation to write something quite my best. in here I really wrote some essays that i was proud of. Thank you* (Utah State University, 2018.

It is simple: my students cared because I cared. Though I could not reach everyone,

just as teachers in general cannot reach all their students, I could not deny the strong

connection between humanizing pedagogy and the academic performance of specific

students. They came to me for individualized help because they trusted me. More than just

English, they learned life lessons, as did I, and these lessons tended to resonate with all of

us better in the presence of love.

Beyond the Classroom

It happened in the summer of 2018: I had just finished another semester of teaching

English 1010 when I received that special letter in the mail. The return address indicated

that one of my English teachers from high school had sent it. In astonishment, I

remembered that this teacher had asked my fellow classmates and me to write a letter to

our future selves, which she had promised to mail years later. The envelope couldn't have come at a better time. I felt disheartened as a teacher and dissuaded as a student, yet as I read what my younger self had written, I felt awed and encouraged. My eyes poured over the letter and sentences jumped off the page at me:

> *You have had to travel rough roads . . .. Now your passion and determination have paid off . . .. One door has shut, but a new one is opening up. Face your future with faith, just as you did when you graduated from high school .*
> . .. (Kitchen, Chaille M. Letter to Self. May 2013)

I couldn't help but smile. I'd spent a full academic year learning from my own students and suddenly, I now found myself learning from a younger me. It reinforced my teacher-learner relationship with myself. After tucking the folded paper away into a journal, I sat down and wrote a letter to my former teacher, thanking her for what she did and how it impacted me as a teacher. When I had finished, I decided I wanted to try the same approach with my own students from the English 2010 classes I would teach in the 2018-2019 academic year, in which I started teaching twice a week. I would ask them to reflect on the semester and write a letter to their future selves, which I would then mail to them at the end of the summer of 2019, just as some of them would be starting another semester of school.

First, I had to decide how to create the prompt. In the letters, I decided to ask students to think about what they had learned over the past few months, what they wanted to remember, how they had grown, and what goals or advice they wanted to give to their future selves. In doing this exercise with my students, I wanted to encourage them to through the same process of learning that I had visualized in Vasconcelos' diagram (2011, p. 433) and in my religious teacher's diagram. I had taken a small stride to encourage

growth and now I had to step down as their teacher so that they could personalize their experience in they ways they understood it and felt it, thus applying the lesson in a way which would reflect the identity and integrity of their inner teacher. I chose not to restrict the letter to the classroom only but encouraged students to consider other aspects of their life and how they could apply what they had taken away from the semester to other situations.

After I tried this exercise for the first time on the last day of class, I gathered up all the envelopes and put them in a bag for safe keeping. In thinking about everything we all had gone through during the course of the semester, I once again recognized that although the course had ended for all of us, we still remained students. We still remained teachers. Learning hadn't ended just because we'd walked out the door. For me, come the following spring semester, I would begin afresh—would face it all again: the joy, the pain, the laughter, and the tears. At that moment, I connected more strongly with the words of Parker Palmer in his own book on teaching from the heart:

> As good teachers weave the fabric that joins them with students and subjects, the heart is the loom on which the threads are tied, the tension is held, the shuttle flies, and the fabric is stretched tight. Small wonder, then, that teaching tugs at the heart, opens the heart, even breaks the heart—and the more one loves teaching, the more heartbreaking it can be. The courage to teach is the courage to keep one's heart open in those very moments when the heart is asked to hold more than it is able so that teacher and students and subject can be woven into the fabric of community that learning, and living, require. (1998, p. 11)

That was it, and it meant more to me than perhaps all other quotes I had accumulated throughout my time as a graduate instructor. Education [had thus become] an act of love, and thus an act of courage" (Freire, 1973, p. 38). Just as I had so often listened

to my students' stories of heartache and struggle, happiness and triumph in my office or read it in their papers, I felt I had fallen into a tirade of emotion, albeit that overflow of feeling bled out on paper more than it did anywhere else. These entries also included moments from my time as a graduate student. In those moments, I rediscovered my vulnerability and in so doing, my gratitude increased.

During this thankful period of reflection, I remembered something one of my mentors (the same one who said he might not give the best advice for demonstrating less vagueness during class sessions) told me in his office. Once, while we met to talk, he told me to try using the same vulnerability in other areas of my life that I had used in my teaching capacity, for the vulnerability, he told me, had made me a good teacher. When I pondered on this statement later, I recognized that opening myself up to my students had allowed my empathy and understanding towards them to deepen. Just as times got emotionally trying for my students, it also got emotionally trying for their teacher (Hooks, 2003, pp. 18-19). I may not have had the same experiences as my students, but I could still emphasize with their feelings. Pain is pain. Joy is joy. As both teacher and student, I learned to better appreciate the best and the worst of both worlds; oftentimes, I had to understand and accept that between semesters or even class periods, I had little time to heal. In valuing these commonalities, I had the wonderful and privileged opportunity to look back on the student-teacher relationships that I'd established and nurtured to the best of my abilities with every individual who walked into the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The Process of Progression

Throughout my reflection-action experiment as a graduate instructor and student, I came to recognize a process of development. The experiences and growth may vary from person to person, but any teacher and/or student who so desires has the opportunity to benefit from a similar method of inquiry and change (Ellis, 2009). Thus, each person's story becomes not only a chapter to read, but to create and revise.

For me, when I first started my autoethnographic project, I sat down with my good friend and mentor in his office and described my current teaching experiences, as well as my teaching goals. Having done this, I asked him what type of literature he'd recommend, according to my interests. He supplied me with a list of ample resources to consult. I read each of them in conjunction with my experiences as a young teacher. Every time that I taught a class or had some meaningful experience with a student, I would write it down in a journal that I kept as a teacher's log. In these entries, I would detail my observations, along with my thoughts and feelings about them. I would try to search for readings that I could connect with or that shed light on my own chronicled stories and gave them new meaning. As I did this, I noticed themes begin to develop: "empathy," "vulnerability," "integrity," "identity," and more. These ideas became my guiding threads as I moved forward in my research, my writing, and my improvement. In all the experiences that mattered most to me, I realized they each represented a defining moment in my career and my roles.

So, I returned periodically to talk to my trusted mentor, and other ones. I talked through my reflections about the literature and about how I connected with them as a graduate instructor. These sessions proved beneficial to me, as I express thoughts and feelings, while my mentor would tease out my own interpretations of them. He offered no judgement, only allowed the inner-teacher within me to process a lesson or lessons from my day-to-day and month-to-month deliberations. Once I'd identified a lesson, he would then ask me what I wanted to do then because of what I had learned. I would give an answer and he'd encourage me to write it down. By writing it down, I become accountable to the goal. In realizing a goal, I revealed my identity and strengthened my integrity as a teacher-learner.

The process of progression did not remain linear, however. Sometimes, in the middle of accomplishing a goal, I would gain some new insight from either the literature, a mentor, or one of my students, and I would have to modify that goal. Other times, I would feel discontent with the goal I had and would search for an answer to improve it, so that it aligned with my inner truth. Through making this practice more than a set-in-stone checklist, but a dynamic approach, I discovered that I hadn't only affected what I said and did, but continually shaped my journey of becoming someone different.

In this way, my experience has mirrored that of other scholars. Like Parker Palmer, I agree that a teacher's authority does not come from grades or scores (1998). To this idea, I would also add that a students' authority does not or should not come from grades or scores. To me, I have felt most satisfied when one of my students sees the intrinsic value of their work regardless of the score that they receive from me. Our authority does not come from what we bring into the classroom, but what we bring within us. It's nothing we

hold in our hands, but what we hold in our hearts. Like Palmer, Freire, and Vasconcelos (three scholars I consistently connected with the most), I have taken pleasure in communicating with my students, whether verbally or through electronic message. In doing this, I find I often learn greater lessons than what we discuss together in our room, for while we are students in a class setting, we are first and foremost, students of life.

Other lessons I've learned have come in hindsight: recognizing only after my project is complete what I would have done differently. First, when I started reading my mountain of articles and books, I thought I could barricade myself in my room or office all winter and I still would have more material to read. Every time I thought I'd gotten close to finishing my literature review, I'd find another source. More reading. Less time. I often thought that if only I had more in my pocket, I could spread out my education to accommodate the vast amount of reading I had to do in connection with my own writings about my personal experience. I wanted to read more about some of the themes I had incorporated and discovered in my writing, such as empathy and vulnerability, though I never seemed to have enough time. I suppose, in the end, I shouldn't try to learn everything I can in one short period; that's what the rest of my life's for.

Secondly, in writing nearly every day that I taught, my task sometimes grew tedious. I wrote just because I had to, and in those moments, I didn't come up with anything useful or productive. Rather, I wrote longer, freer entries when I felt the need to write. Often, those instances also proved the times when I experienced a defining moment realization about myself. I learned I couldn't force learning or speed it up any more than my students could. We're on a different track or ladder of life, and none of us run or climb at the same pace. Doing this process again, I would have allowed myself the same

considerations I gave to my students: I would have awarded myself brownie points for effort.

The last change I would make relates to the type of writing I did about my experiences of the course of these two years, or rather the boundaries I would clarify about what I included in my autoethnography. Most of the time, I used one journal to record my reflections, goals, and actions. However, during the fall of 2018, when I felt through the most traumatic experience of my teaching career thus far, I started using a separate journal in which I wrote a stream of thoughts, not in organized paragraphs or even in complete sentences. Much of what went into those pages reflected the more impactful transformation I had undergone as a teacher. It showed me that the greatest change came to me not when I dipped my big toe in the water, but when I dived head-first into the deep end. However, I knew that even though that experience had affected me deeply, it would never get told in my authoethnography, and should never get told either. I included a part of that time in my original journal but regretted it afterwards. Fortunately, I had someone who recommended that I use a separate log to work out my thoughts, feelings, and actions regarding that incident. In the end, I burned this journal, and this became a better healing step for me than if I had allowed those pages to remain. So, if I went through those months again, I would set clearer boundaries on where I kept my writings and what I did with them, because people are at the heart of my project, not a thesis. People have needs. People take priority.

Similarly, my belief in focusing on students' writing ideas first and grammar last has become strengthened as a result of teaching college English. When they knew they had an audience (me) who cared what they had to say and showed eagerness to learn about them, then their voices came through their essays much more naturally, especially when

they had the freedom to think creatively. Then they became primarily concentrated on the considerations of living, breathing individuals—themselves and their audience— rather than getting blindsided by the conventions of a subject. When they did this, they had a better chance of not just learning about writing but learning *from* their writing, which I considered more important to their education.

Thus, I conclude a period of growth, though when I close this chapter of my graduate teaching, I will start a new chapter with a blank page. Further research may involve contrasting my reflections and goals as a teacher with student responses that target the themes I have come to identify and the skills I strive to develop. How do they view me and how do they see me? What are their perceptions of identity, integrity, authority, courage, vulnerability, freedom, teaching, learning, and love? How do these themes influence their view of the teacher-student relationship and their efforts to develop it? These questions also apply to my mentors and I. In the end, the change must reside with me. Like anyone, I listen to various voices; it is my identity and integrity that determine what I chose to incorporate into my process of growth (Palmer, 1998). In other words, I have found that stories enable us to find meaning in life and connect with one another, yet only we can dictate and interpret the words that time transcribes on our hearts.

Continual Change

So, I return to where I began. Who am I as a teacher? How has my past and present shaped me into the teacher that I am and want to become? Having completed this investigation in this short stage of my life, the answers to these questions, as in other similar studies (Barone, 2001; Vasconcelos, 2011), are far from straightforward and complete.

Consequently, instead of focusing on rough answers, I choose to underscore the defining lessons I have discovered in this roller-coaster journey (Ellis, 1999): my greatest teachers who had diverse personalities, came from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, and utilized a range of teaching approaches.

When transferring instruction during class, these mentors and teachers might demonstrate an inclination for complete expository, participatory classes, or somewhere on the continuum. No two come from the same city, not even the same county; one of them still keeps up contact with me from a great distance. Some I haven't even met, only read their works. Still all my unforgettable educators, "lived the difficult but possible pleasurable experience of speaking to and with students" (Macedo & Freire, 2005, p. 114), even if it occurred only in writing; they all shared the quality of establishing and nurturing the teacher—student relationship. They opened dialogue to foster a horizontal relationship "founded upon love, humility, faith, and trust" (Freire, 1993 as cited in Vasconcelos, 2011, p. 436) with me. They encouraged the positiveness of my vulnerability by first setting the example of vulnerability themselves, simply by talking to me—staying open with me. By these actions, they transcended the false division between serious teaching and the manifestation of caring and did not decline to give their "wholehearted and loving attention" (Freire, 1998a, p. 128) to my fellow classmates and me. To me, their quality of teaching greatly outweighs the quantity of poor teaching, for their examples have left a lasting mark upon me.

Day by day, those mentors inspire me to keep searching for the next step in my process of developing the potential of my teacher-learner identity and integrity (Palmer 1998). I teach because others have taught me. I see the calling of a teacher as more than a

profession because of the many guides I have had throughout my education. Their admirable teaching has opened my eyes to three ways of knowing: in one's head, heart, and soul. They have engaged me in deep learning—learning that rears personal freedom: "autonomous individuals who have the capacity to imaginatively shape their own lives by having the courage to write their own stories" (Siegesmund & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008, p. 224). More than that, through approaching education in a humanistic way, I have come to better recognize teaching as a process and a vision for life in schools and beyond—not only for students, but for all of us (Price, 2014), and I see teaching as a unifying endeavor that requires student-teacher interaction (Shih, 20018, p. 197). Yesterday, I reflected on myself as both a teacher and student. Today, I tell my story to esteem my teachers and to encourage my students to tell their own stories. Tomorrow, I begin anew to honor us all.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, T. E., Jones, S. H., & Ellis, C. (2015). *Autoethnography*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Angen, M. J. (2000). Evaluating interpretive inquiry: Reviewing the validity debate and opening the dialogue. *Qualitative Health Research*, 10, 378-395.

Austin, J. & Hickey, A. (2007). Autoethnography and teacher development. *The International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences*, 2. Retrieved from http://eprints.usq.edu.au/3287/.

Barone, T. (2001). Touching eternity: The enduring outcomes of teaching. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Bartolomé, L. (1996). Beyond the methods fetish: Towards a humanizing pedagogy. In P. Leistyna, A. Woodrum, & S. A. Sherblom (Eds.), *Breaking free: The transformative power of critical pedagogy*, pp. (229-252). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review.

Bochner, A. P.; Ellis, C. (1999). Which Way to Turn? *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 28(5): 485–99

Brown, B. (12 June 2010). *The Power of Vulnerability* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://youtube/iCvmsMzlF7o.

Bryan, A. Logan Institute of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Teaching Seminary, Fall 2018, November 14 2019.

Cahnmann-Taylor, M. (2008). *Arts-based research: Histories and new directions*. In M. Cahnmann-Tayor & R. Siegesmund (Eds.), Arts-based research in education: Foundations for practice (pp. 3-15).

Caine, S. (2 March 2012). *The Power of Introverts* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0KYU2j0TM4.

Danica, P., & Sazhko, G. (2013). Humanizing of higher education in Ukraine: Kraine blending of hard core sciences and humanities. Retrieved from http://www.trend.uns.ac.rs/stskup/trend_2013/radovi/T5.2/T5.2-1.pdf

Denzin, N. K. (2014). *Interpretive autoethnography*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Dethier, Brock. (2005). *First Time Up*. Logan: Utah State University Press.

Ellis, C. (1999). Heartful autoethnography. *Qualitative Health Research*, 9 (5), 669-683.

Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about teaching and doing autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira.

Ellis, C. (2009). Fighting back or moving on: An autoethnographic response to critics. *International Review of Qualitative Research*, 2(3), 371-378.

Ellis, C., & Bochner, A. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 733-768). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Farnsworth, V., Kleanthous, I., & Wenger-Trayner, E. (2016). Communities of Practice as a Social Theory of Learning: A Conversation with Etienne Wenger. *British Journal Of Educational Studies, 64*(2), 139-160.

Freire, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness.* New York: Seabury Press.

Freire, Paulo. (1993) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* New York: The Continuium Publishing Company.

Freire, P., & Betto, F. (1995). *Esso escolar chamada vida.*São Paulo, Brazil: Atica

Freire, P. (1998a). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage* (P. Clarke, Trans.). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Freire, P. (1998b). *Pedagogy of hope: Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed.* New York, NY: Continuum.

Furedi, F. (2009). *Wasted: Why education isn't educating.* London: Continuum.

Geertz, C. (1983). Local knowledge: Further essays in interpretive anthropology. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Geiger, R. L. (2015). *The History of American Higher Education.* Princeton University Press.

Greene, M.. (1988). *The Dialectic of Freedom.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Gentry, C. (2011). *Imagination, Possibility, and Wide-awakeness: Maxine Greene's Salon at the Creativity, Imagination, and Innovation,* Portland, ME: Stenhouse.

Guskey, T. R. (2005). Formative Classroom Assessment and Benjamin S. Bloom: Theory, Research, and Implications. *Online Submission,* 11. Retrieved from http://dist.lib.usu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=ED490412&site=eds-live

Hooks, B. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Hooks, B. (2003). *Teaching community: A pedagogy of hope.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Horton, M., et al (1990). *We make the road by walking: Conversations on education and social change.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Humphreys, M. (2005). Getting personal: Reflexivity and autoethnographic vignettes. *Qualitative Inquiry,* (116), 840-860.

Hutton, P. (20 November 2014). *What if students controlled their own learning?* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMxqEkg3wQ0.

Jones, S. H. (2008). Autoethnography: Making the personal political. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (3rd ed., pp. 205-245). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Joy, J. (1991). Reflections on Teaching: Gender, Race, & Class. Feminist Teacher, no. 3, p. 9. EBSCOhost, dist.lib.usu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsjsr&AN=edsjsr.40535461&site=eds-live.

Law, L. P. (2015). Humanizing education: Teacher leaders influencing pedagogical Change (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Iowa State University, Iowa. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1174450.pdf.

Leavy, P. (2009). *Method meets art: Arts-based research practice*. New York, NY: Guilford.

Long, D. A. (1995). Sociology and a Pedagogy for Liberation: Cultivating a Dialogue of Discernment in our Classrooms. (n.d). *Teaching Sociology*, 23(4), 321-330.

Love, A. 2006. Teaching Is Learning: Teacher Candidates Reflect on Aesthetic Education. *Teaching Artist Journal* 4 (2): 112-21. doi: 10.1207/s1541180xtaj0402_7.

Macedo, D., & Freire, A. M. (2005). Foreword. In P. Freire, Teachers as cultural workers: Letters to those who dare teach (pp. vii-xxvi). Boulder, CO: Westview.

Morrell, Ernest. Bakhtin's Dialogic Pedagogy. *Journal of Russian & East European Psychology*, vol. 42, no. 6, Nov/Dec2004, pp. 89-94. EBSCOhost, dist.lib.usu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=pbh&AN=17250864&site=eds-live.

Nieto, S. (1999). *The light in their eyes: Creating multicultural learning communities*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Nieto, S. (Ed.). (2005). *Why we teach*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Nieto, S. (2006). Solidarity, courage and heart: What teacher educators can learn from a new generation of teachers. *Intercultural Education*, 17 (5) 457-473.

Nieto, S. (Ed.). (2015). *Why we teach now*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Palmer, P. J. (1998). *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Palmer, P. J. (1999). *The Courage to Teach Guide: for Reflection & Renewal*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Parson, Robert. (2009) Encyclopedic History of Utah State University. *Library Faculty & Staff Publications*. Paper 121. https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/lib_pubs/121.

Patterson, C. H. (1987). What has happened to humanistic education? *Michigan Journal of Counseling and Development,* XVIII(1), 8-10.

Pelias, R. J. (2004). *A methodology of the heart: Evoking academic and daily life.* Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.

Pennington, J. L., & Brock, C. H. (2012). Constructing Critical Autoethnographic Self-Studies with White Educators. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education (QSE),* 25(3), 225-250.

Price, J. N. (2014). *Challenges of forging a humanizing pedagogy in teacher education.* Retrieved from http://faculty.education.illinois.edu/m-osbor/osborne/hum.rtf.

Shih, Y.-H. (2018). Towards a Pedagogy of Humanizing Child Education in Terms of Teacher-Student Interaction. *Journal of Education and Learning,* 7(3), 197–202. Retrieved from http://search.ebscohost.com.dist.lib.usu.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ117 4450&site=eds-live.

Stoller, P. (1997). Conquergood, Rethinking Ethnography, *Sensuous Scholarship,* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2014). *Interdependence between democracy and human rights.* Retrieved from http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(Symbol)/E.CN.4.RES.2003.36.En?Opend ocument.

Utah State University (2017) *IDEA Evaluation.* Retrieved from Logan, UT.

Utah State University (2018) *IDEA Evaluation.* Retrieved from Logan, UT.

Vasconcelos, E. F. (2011). I Can See You: An Autoethnography of My Teacher-Student Self. *The Qualitative Report,* 16(2), 415-440. Retrieved from https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol16/iss2/6.

Zucca-Scott, L. (2010). Know thyself: The importance of humanism in education. International Education, 40(1), 31-38.