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Tinker Sachs, G. Fisher, T. & Cannon, J. (2011). Collaboration, mentoring and co-teaching in teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*, 13 (2), 70-86.

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COLLABORATION, MENTORING AND CO-TEACHING IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Collaboration at the university level is a fundamental element needed to enhance teaching (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005) and reflection is a critical component of teacher education (Dewey, 1933, 1938). A case study is presented of one senior university faculty member's experiences co-teaching with two doctoral students seeking to understand the impact of shared decision-making and authentic collaboration on individuals entering the academy. An analysis of the authors' shared experiences indicated that, through this mentoring, collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships were built. An analysis of the authors' experiences also indicated that these collaborative relationships were built upon several key factors, specifically (a) a strong sense of individual accountability and professionalism; (b) the mutual creation and demonstration of respect; (c) affirmation and overt participation in reciprocal growth and development; (d) attention to issues of power and abeyance. The findings of the study highlight the need for further exploration into the role of mentorship of junior faculty and the efficacy of co-teaching processes in the development of professional identities of junior faculty entering the academy.

Key words: *co-teaching in teacher education, mentoring in teacher education, collaborative teaching in teacher education, mentoring doctoral students in the academy*

Introduction

In this standards-driven era of education, it is more critical than it ever has been for educators at all levels to resist individualism and isolationism and work together to create collaborative and supportive communities of practice in institutions of learning (Brisk, 2008).

Mentoring and collaborative teaching are vital to the success of learners in educational settings where differences necessarily exist in educators' expertise, knowledge, experience, and cultural resources and adaptability. Faculties that work to cultivate a collaborative spirit and to mentor each other are more likely to be successful in promoting student learning and job satisfaction (Cobb, Fox, Many, Mathews, McGrail, Taylor, Sachs, Wallace, & Wang, 2006a; Cobb, Fox, Many, Mathews, McGrail, Taylor, Sachs, Wallace, & Wang, 2006b). This case study chronicles our ventures co-teaching teacher education courses in an institution of higher education. Through this analysis of our experiences, we critique our shared efforts to co-construct curriculum and co-teach, specifically addressing some of the challenges of collaborative teaching. It has been said that we in teacher education do not report on our own practices (for instance, Rossiter, 1993; Anderson & Herr, 1999; Zeichner, 2005a; Brisk, 2008). This case study is an attempt to examine and articulate what we have done through critically reflecting upon our processes and understandings. The case study method which we have employed in this work is particularly suitable for sustainability research as it allows us to look at "real-world phenomena which have both physical and social aspects" and it helps us to understand "...ideas and initiatives that are expressed within a context or milieu which has multiple influences, actions and potential outcomes" (Evans, 2011, p. 57).

The need for collaboration in the academy

Cochran-Smith and Fries (2005) emphasised the call of the American Council on Education's President's Task Force on Teacher Education for college and university presidents to strengthen teacher education through "increased collaboration between faculty members" (p. 91). Collaboration, however, comes in many forms (Nunan, 1992) and in this paper we will address two forms of collaboration namely the co-teaching and mentoring models. Both models can coexist in any educational community and in this paper we speak specifically of the teacher education community with applications to the elementary through high school settings, particularly for educators who work with English language learners.

We three writers come from diverse backgrounds and are at various points in our career as teacher educator professors. The first author is an associate professor of African descent and the second and third authors are of European descent and were at the time of our classes, doctoral students in different programmes in the college of education at an urban research institution in the south-eastern United States. In the tradition of universities, most professors are used to working in isolation as they select their textbooks, develop their curricula and teach their courses. Collaboration between instructors, in the public schools and the academy alike, requires time to engage in frequent discussions in order to prepare curriculum and instructional engagements and time to engage in ongoing self-evaluation as well as students' evaluation. Collaboration also requires that both parties demonstrate patience as they strive to include their colleagues within the teaching act and repertoire of activities, respect and affirm the other's knowledge and expertise and attend to equitable roles in the shaping of the class and impacting students' learning. In institutions where advancement is based primarily on the number of publications that one garners per year, much

time is needed for conducting research and preparing manuscripts while time spent on other endeavours is not accorded the same status in annual faculty evaluations. This implicit statement of institutional priorities begs the question of how we can build up our workplaces and live up to our institution's mission if we rarely engage in collaborative activities and fail to mentor less-experienced colleagues and faculty at all stages of their professional development (Cobb et al., 2006a). The tensions of needing isolated and focused time to engage in the type of scholarly writing required for tenure and promotion creates significant disquietude in faculty who simultaneously value collaboration and recognise the significant investment of time required for true collaboration. In spite of these challenges with narrowly articulated priorities in institutions of higher education, we believe that a workplace cannot thrive on isolationism and competition but can become truly innovative and generative through the collaborative efforts of colleagues who work together by mentoring and supporting each other on a regular basis to achieve mutual satisfaction as well as group and individual success (Sachs, Clarke, Kinuthia, McGrail, & Verma, 2011). In talking about collaboration in writing groups, Vandrick (2009) puts it this way:

Some of the benefits of collaboration are the same benefits derived from other types of groups: exchange of information and ideas, drawing on each member's individual area of expertise, giving each other feedback on ideas and drafts, providing a regular time to meet and move forward on projects and more (p. 137).

Our collaborative efforts are steeped in our collective endearments to the common essence of our humanity and womanhood. Our humanism encourages us to live purposeful and meaningful lives through valuing and respecting our common humanity (Davies, 2008; Cave, 2009). Maddi and Costa (1972) expand on our common humanity to assert, "...humanism takes a very optimistic, laudatory view of man (sic)" (p. 4) and recognises the uniqueness and individuality of humankind that must be examined not in isolation but "by putting all the parts together and employing a knowledge of the characteristics of whole" (p. 4). When humanism is translated into our classroom practice, this means that we strive to recognise the individuality of our teaching and learning styles as well as the centrality of meeting pupils' interest in our subject area. We believe, as Bernard and Huckins (1974) state, that "teachers must be good examples as learners and as persons. They teach what they *are* quite as much as what they *do* and *say* (p. 7, original italics). Simultaneously, our dispositions draw us to "building structures of inclusiveness and positive interrelationships" while relying on "dialogue to establish and negotiate relationships" (Phillips, 2006, p. XXV).

Co-teaching and mentoring

In our work together, we have co-taught several different classes in our English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) master and doctoral programmes. Co-teaching in the teacher education academy provides an excellent opportunity to demonstrate how collaborative teaching strategies can be utilised for ESOL teacher candidates and practising teachers alike

that may have opportunities to adopt these practices when they commence teaching (Doheny & Sachs, 2007). Pre-service teachers also learn by an apprenticeship of observation and engagement within the teacher education classroom (Lortie, 1975) and the work of two faculty members collaborating in their preparation/development programme can provide a space to observe and consider the possibilities and potentialities of co-teaching.

Co-teaching has come to be defined as two professionals teaching together with a joint delivery of instruction, a heterogeneous group of students and shared responsibility for planning, instruction and evaluation (Friend & Cook, 2007; Friend, Cook, Harley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010). Co-teaching and collaborative teaching are often used interchangeably. In his 1992 text on collaborative language learning and teaching, Nunan (1992) also uses the term “collaborative” interchangeably with “team approaches to teaching”. He cites the work of Armstrong (1977) to clarify the nature of team teaching which “permits members to take advantage of individual teacher strengths in planning for instruction and in working with learners” (p. 6).

Friend and Cook (2007) identify six models of co-teaching. These models include three large group models: One Teach/One Observe, One Teach/One Assist and Team Teaching and three small group models: Station Teaching, Parallel Teaching and Alternative Teaching. All three large group models can be used in the general education classroom or higher education classroom with two teachers and up to thirty students, but in the small group models the class is divided up between the two teachers.

In the first model *One Teach/One Observe*, one teacher manages the overall class discipline and instruction and the other teacher systematically observes one student, small groups, or the whole class to gain important information on students. In the second model “One Teach/One Assist” there is again, one primary teacher that manages the overall class discipline and instruction while the other teacher circulates throughout the room, redirects students’ attention and helps individual students. The third model, “Team-teaching”, as a mutual teaching engagement, involves two teachers having joint responsibilities for teaching and assessing all content to all students (Friend & Cook, 2007).

In the small group variations of co-teaching, there are: (1) *Station Teaching* which utilises stations with different aspects of the lesson for students to circulate to and from; (2) *Parallel Teaching* which involves dividing the class into two heterogeneous groups and both teachers teaching the same content at the same time; (3) *Alternative Teaching* which is when one teacher manages a larger instructional group while the other manages a smaller group of heterogeneous students (Friend & Cook, 1997). However it is defined, co-teaching has a range of benefits which includes the infrequently discussed opportunity to mentor less experienced or new faculty into the community of practice in the academy. Friend, Cook, Harley-Chamberlain and Shamberger (2010) believe that despite the benefits, the potential for further research and the applications of co-teaching in education remain virtually unexplored.

Mertz (2004) in her article *What’s a mentor anyway* uses the phrase “bewildering array of relationships and roles” (p. 541) to refer to the many definitions and terms ascribed to mentoring in the literature and likens the conception of it to the biblical “Tower of Babel.” Mertz (2004) suggests that mentoring is essentially conceptualised as a supportive work relationship that is hierarchically arranged based on primary intent and level of in-

volvement which encompasses a broad range, variety and context for mentoring. Mertz distinguishes between levels of involvement on the part of a mentor distinguished by the focus and intent of the relationship and the levels of investment and involvement on the part of the mentor and trust on the part of the mentee. She posits that the level of mentorships are indicated by six levels of supportive collaborations and are as follows: (1) the role model, peer pal or supporter, (2) the teacher or coach, (3) the counsellor, advisor, or guide, (4) the sponsor or benefactor, (5) the patron or protector and (6) the mentor. Mertz stated that levels four through six particularly include support and brokering for mentees career advancement. Mertz recognised that any level of involvement in mentoring another could be marked by intensity and could be highly complex and require significant emotional and personal cost. Mertz explained that the highest and “ultimate” expressions of mentoring are marked by mutual trust. While Mertz’s conceptualisation of mentoring can be useful, it does not begin to capture the complexity of relationships as they develop and shift over time. Contrastingly, Van Dyne (1996) provides a rather straightforward explanation and views mentoring as “helping an individual adjust to the organisation’s expectations” (p. 160) explaining that “the best mentors develop their students and socialise them into the academic profession” (p. 160).

Smith, Basmadjian, Kirell and Koziol (2003) contend that just as pre-service and in-service teachers need mentoring, doctoral students need training to become teacher educators because the “lack of attention to the development of... doctoral students for their roles as teacher educators is particularly problematic when we recognise the substantial role these students play in teacher preparation” (p. 9). The varying degrees, types and contexts of mentoring new and experienced professors is an important aspect of our work in teacher education (Mullen & Kealy, 2000; Cobb, et al., 2006a; 2006b) and this important work must be recognised by those who are in positions of authority within the academy. Even though simple definitions of mentoring are elusive, attention needs to be given to the mentoring of future teacher education professors. Explorations inquiring into the particularities and potentialities of those relationships need to occur in order to illuminate the reflections of those becoming teacher educators (Aker, 1997; Mullen & Kealy, 2000; Reybold, 2003) and to gain an understanding of the specific issues and challenges that novice teacher educators face (Murray & Male, 2005).

Methodology

Reflecting has a long established tradition within the teaching profession (Dewey, 1933, 1938; Munby & Russell, 1993; Halton & Smith, 1995). Like many practicum requirements for pre-service educators, teacher educators can also benefit from reflecting on our work (Tabachnich & Zeichner, 1991; Dinkelman, 2003) because these reflections can produce new processes and deeper understandings of our practices (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Loughran & Berry, 2005; Zeichner, 2005b). In keeping with sustainability research, we draw on case study and self-study methodologies to report our reflections. Simultaneously, we implicitly employ constructivist principles which promote shared and collaborative exploration of issues with participants and generate co-constructed data and lead to an empowerment of all

research participants. Reflecting on what we have done promotes sustainable values in the academy and building relationships through collaboration is one way that that we can fulfil our moral imperative to improve schools and the academy (Dinkelman, 2003; Fullan, 2011). In the next section we provide a reflective case study of three educators' experiences collaborating longitudinally in teacher development courses over the course of three years. This study focuses specifically on reflections on co-teaching in the teacher education academy.

Participants and setting

The three participants were engaged in different co-teaching experiences from the summer of 2006 to the fall of 2008. All the courses that were taught were for ESOL pre-service and in-service teachers in our master's and doctoral programmes. These courses were: Applied Linguistics, Immersion in the Classroom, TESOL Methods and Approaches and ESOL Practicum in the homes of refugee families (Sachs, Hendley, Klosterman, Muga, Roberson, & Soons, 2008). The first author, Author 1, is an associate professor of ESOL, Language and Literacy and was the instructor of record for the four courses. The second author, Author 2, was a doctoral fellow in the area of ESOL, Language and Literacy at the time the courses were co-taught. Author 2 was involved in co-teaching three of the four courses and due to her field of interest had a more extensive engagement with the first author. The third author, Author3, was a clinical professor and doctoral student who specialised in Special Education with a concentration in Deaf education when she co-taught the course Immersion in the Classroom. Author 3 and Author 1 utilised several co-teaching models, including One Teach/One Observe, One Teach/One Assist, Team Teaching and Station Teaching (Friend & Cook, 2007). All the courses were taught at a large urban research university in the southeast. Based on our experiences and our reading of the literature, we believe that while mentoring exists in many forms and is more commonplace, co-teaching is not as common in most colleges of education (McKenzie, 2009).

Case study narratives: Critical reflections on co-teaching in the academy

Author 2's reflections. As a doctoral fellow with an emphasis on teacher education, I have worked collaboratively with Author 1 in a variety of courses and contexts. During my first semester in the programme, I worked with Author 1 as her teaching assistant in Applied Linguistics as I was preparing to teach on my own the following semester. It was my first time really teaching adults, and I was rather unfamiliar with the material. Though we spoke about the planning of the course and the aspects of applied linguistics that we would address, I did not have the expertise, the background, or the confidence to make any substantive suggestions. While no stranger to collaborative work in teaching, I questioned my ability to make meaningful suggestions and contribute to the learning of adults in a subject in which I initially felt unprepared. As a former student in the ESOL programme I had taken the course and was familiar with the content, however, I did not feel as if I could compe-

tently teach it to someone else. It is also important to note that I was literally days out of the first grade classroom, and I was quite intimidated by my new role. Additionally, this course was my first contact with Author 1, and, since I was hired for this role for three years, I was eager to make a good impression on my new colleague.

We divided the readings, the content and the presentation of material based on my wishes and what I felt most comfortable with. One of our texts was significantly rooted in classroom practice while the other was more theoretical. The vast majority of the content I volunteered for was centred on classroom practice and pedagogy as it allowed me to build upon what I did know well and to share insights from my own experience teaching in elementary through high schools contexts. Author 1 modelled her processes and practices and gave me latitude to present the material as I chose. After a few weeks of collaborative teaching, she encouraged me to plan an entire class session. In truth, however, my knowledge base was limited. While I had the practical classroom application and the connections to students and their learning, I did not know all of the theories and therefore poured over the texts mere days before students were learning the same material. My limited knowledge of the content forced me to rely heavily on summary of the material rather than synthesis and I did not feel like the teacher educator I wanted to be. At the end of each class period, Author 1 would sit with me and we would debrief, how things went, what we would do next, how we might change things. Gradually, I began to find my voice and realise that though I didn't know all of the professional discourse, once I appropriated the linguistic terms, I was able to make strong theory to practice connections from my many years working with pupils in a range of contexts. Author 1 provided me with scaffolds and support as I learned what it meant to teach people my age and older, which was in many ways a challenge. It is also important to recognise that I was met with some level of resistance by the students. My obvious inexperience in higher education and my age was a point of contention for some. Author 1 consistently modelled respect for me and my contributions in front of the class, enabling me to navigate the often murky waters of higher education for beginning teacher educators. Notably, this was the first time Author 1 taught this course in this setting so we both were learning as we went. We sat together and compared grading. We collaborated on nearly everything, and we discussed our questions, concerns and ideas. When I suggested changes to the syllabus so we could make some variations in the order of the readings (I had no idea then what a significant issue changes in the syllabus might be in students' evaluations) she agreed to be flexible and work with my ideas. I believe that this gradual release of responsibility, the feedback, suggestions, scaffolding, and guidance I was provided gave me both the skill and the reflexive abilities to begin teaching independently. This time, while extremely challenging, was a necessary and empowering part of my transition from a teacher of pupils to teacher of teachers.

Two years later, after working closely with Author 1 in a variety of settings, we sat around her kitchen table, covered with books, articles, readings and notes we had both brought to our day long planning retreat. We had a white board and two computers going, taking notes on our ideas and trying to re-conceptualise our programme. During the past two years, I had completed my coursework for my Ph.D., taught 14 courses at our university and coordinated our master's programme for a year. At this point, frankly, I considered Author 1 a dear friend and a trusted mentor. I knew that she believed in me, valued my

ideas and opinions and would also challenge me when I was not authentically representing what she knew I was trying to be and become. In short, our relationship had evolved significantly through two years of close collaboration. In our years advising students, teaching coursework, supervising pre-service teachers and soliciting feedback on our programme from our teacher candidates and their mentor teachers, both Author 1 and I had gained a clear vision of ways we wanted to reshape our programme. We brainstormed, thinking about the things we most wanted our graduates to know and be able to do, we envisioned ways to reconstruct the practicum experiences to align more coherently and comprehensively with our coursework and our programme philosophy. We worked with the big picture in mind, weaving theories, methods and pedagogies together. We completely reconceptualised much of the work that we had done. We left with notes and ideas, lists and assignment descriptions, invigorated and excited. We decided to divide and conquer, both working on the actual syllabus construction for one of the courses incorporating the ideas from our discussions.

In our second round of collaborative teaching, two full years after our first venture into collaboration, Author 1 and I shared the same context and professional discourse, knew the same students and had developed a large repertoire of common experiences. Through our intense and long-term partnership, we had become very different in our collaboration than when we began. There was less “turn taking” and tag team teaching, where she taught one thing, then I taught another. Instead we were both able to chime in, to contribute and to add different perspectives, ideas or understandings. We became much more responsive, both to the teaching of the other and to the needs of our students. We checked in frequently, quickly, and often non-verbally, taking cues from the other and codetermining our next steps. This was much more of a dance, weaving back and forth, anticipating and augmenting the moves of the other. This type of synergy enabled each of us to contribute and to creatively problem solve both the complexities of our content and the intricacies of our collaborative pedagogy with a focus on the development of our future teachers. As a collaborative team, we had come a long way. Through the opportunities and support I have been afforded, I have developed an identity as a teacher educator. Collaboration provided each of us, novice and experienced professional educators, an opportunity to re-envision, re-imagine and re-conceptualise our teaching and our own learning.

Author 1's reflections. The first time I worked with Author 2 was in a very intense summer course. We taught in an extremely large classroom with a console which included internet access, a video projector and DVD/CD equipment. We had two huge screens and a small chalkboard. There was enough equipment and space to be genuine teacher educators, modelling excellent teaching practices to our mixed group of pre-service and in-service teachers by using old and new teaching resources. We had a large class of 25 students whom I considered to be very bright and eager to learn. Because of the volume of content to be covered in a very short period of time, we set up cooperative learning groups with expert groups and home-based groups. While I was familiar with the content of applied linguistics, I had never taught the course and so this was also the first time for me to develop a new curriculum or syllabus in the vast field of Applied Linguistics. I welcomed Author 2 to co-teach this course because she could draw on her local teaching experience to balance my theoretical perspectives and lack of preschool through 12th grade classroom

teaching experiences rooted in the system of education of the United States. I appreciated having her to balance the course content and to make the theories applicable to real teaching contexts in the U.S. Author 2 was willing and eager to learn and was an enthusiastic teacher and co-teacher. We shared a great deal of laughter as we struggled through the course content and found our footing for building a collaborative relationship.

The second time we co-taught together we did not have to go through the process of getting to know one another. Due to our extended working relationship, we were more attuned to each other's ways of being. We knew each other's teaching orientations and philosophies and because they were so closely aligned, we could speak for each other. This knowledge of each other based on mutual respect for each other's assets, created the symphony effect, so that in teaching we were "in sync" in our classroom discourse. Our students knew this by our whispered consultations during teaching and by our eye contact to one another when we felt the other might want to "jump in". Everything was shared and neither of us felt put upon because one was doing more than the other. Again, mutual respect, friendship and professionalism were the foundations for the effectiveness of our discourse.

As the older, senior and Black international professor in our dyad, I could not help but wonder sometimes if the majority of my students who were Caucasian would have preferred working with a younger Caucasian American instructor with a similar background as they. Being the senior professor I could have easily quelled these mental meanderings by asserting my authority but there was no need to as Author 2 was sensitive enough to our classroom culture and took action to reduce any tendency for the majority students to prefer coming to her for advice or clarification. We both openly dissuaded students from playing one professor against the other or openly showing preference or deference to one of us over the other instructor, instead we helped our students understand that we were a team.

Author 3's reflections. As a clinical instructor and doctoral student I co-taught a course on collaboration and co-teaching with Author 1 in our department. My area is special education, while Author 1 has a specialty in working with ESOL teachers. To develop the course material and syllabus, we had several co-planning sessions prior to the start of the semester and then weekly meetings during the semester to plan our activities. By both working on PowerPoint presentations and our own reading assignments separately and then coming back together to finalise plans for each class session, we were able to conduct the course with a true collaborative relationship. Grading of student work was shared and Author 1 used my input when returning the work to students, often returning two copies of papers so that they could see how we both edited them (I tended to focus on the editing details while Author 1 examined the overall research alignment of the assignment). We were also intentional in trying to share the development of this collaborative relationship with the students in the course throughout the semester so that we were modelling a positive co-teaching environment. This environment included mutual respect for each other's ideas and creativity as well as content expertise and continual reflective conversations about how we planned lessons, shared responsibilities and demonstrated co-teaching models during the course.

Author 1's reflections. Author 3 was very easy to work with not just because of her personality but because we came from different academic backgrounds and I wanted to

learn from her. Because of our different specialisations, we immediately ruled out a potential source of conflict – our areas of expertise would not necessarily be challenged by the other. Both Author 3 and I were respectful of each other and I believe that Author 3 also wanted to learn more about my field as she often conducted workshops on co-teaching for our ESOL teachers. As a clinical professor in the department and doctoral student, Author 3 was very professional. She willingly did her share of the work and was enthusiastic about teaching. Our shared professionalism was conveyed to our students who knew that they needed to submit two assignments for double grading. Students instinctively spoke to both of us in the classroom, establishing eye contact with us both, addressing both of us and seeking advice equally from both when needed. Thus there were no problems with students deferring to one professor over the other which could easily happen in a co-teaching situation.

Results

Based on our experiences, we believe that a synergistic collaborative and/or co-teaching experience must be built upon several key factors, specifically (a) a strong sense of individual accountability and professionalism; (b) the mutual creation and demonstration of respect; (c) affirmation and overt participation in reciprocal growth and development; (d) attention to issues of power and abeyance. These factors, while theoretically simple, are exceedingly complex and are in our experiences the hallmarks of effective and productive collaborative teaching situations.

Individual accountability and professionalism. Professionalism and individual accountability are in many ways impossible to disentangle. As we interpret these factors, individual accountability is more than just pulling one's own weight, it means taking agency, ownership and being fully engaged, involved and committed. It means modelling pedagogies we hope our students will take up, creating assignments that cause students to reconsider long held beliefs and re-imagining new ways of being and acting in classrooms. This belief was embodied in our cooperative learning/teaching approaches that were incorporated in our ESOL courses. Individual accountability suggests that even when working in groups, each member's contribution plays a vital role in contributing to the success of the whole group (Slavin, 1985; Kagan, 1992). A particular strength of our partnerships is that all three of us were particularly committed to going beyond what was required. Our own standards were most generally more challenging than any externally imposed requirements, and we held ourselves exceedingly accountable, not only for the success of our students, but also for the success of our students' pupils. We viewed our roles in this profession as individuals working to transform not only classrooms and pedagogy, but also to shape policies and communities. Professionalism for the three of us was intimately linked to our individual sense of purpose and constructs of vocation that Fullan (2011) alludes to in his book *The moral imperative realized*.

Our own experiences with collaboration in a variety of contexts and with a range of colleagues caused us to posit with relative surety that many partnerships flounder when there is not a shared understanding of professionalism or individual accountability. Very

often one member of the partnership takes the reins, by choice or by necessity, which leaves the other one running to catch up or lead in a direction that is not personally or fully authentic. While it is certainly true that WHO we are working with is a critical factor, it is also critical that we consider HOW we are working together, if the partnership is one in which there is discord (either articulated openly or kept in silence), or one in which individuals work in concert and in harmony. Individual accountability and professionalism are, we believe, a critical foundation if a partnership is to have the potential to move into more developed aspects of collaboration.

Mutual creation and demonstration of respect. Mutual respect was a critical aspect of our partnership which was particularly evidenced in our relating to each other and positioning each other as collaborators in front of our students. In the academy as well as in elementary through high schools, the time required for individuals to really talk about ideologies, pedagogies, instructional goals, and students are limited and difficult to carve out of the daily/weekly routine. A critical part of our collaborative processes included developing patterns and processes for communication and reflexivity. At different stages in our collaboration, these protected spaces looked very different, however, at each stage of our developing partnerships we found time to sit, to think aloud and to debrief. This was a critical part of our reflection as individuals and as an instructional team. These frequent opportunities to touch base and to get (and stay) on the same page enabled us to provide more nuanced and creative engagements for our students and also ensured that we were able to be more thoughtful, comprehensive and consistent in our interactions with them.

Additionally, we demonstrated our respect for the other in front of our students, consistently positioning each other as collaborators, openly affirming the other, asking for feedback, corroboration, recommendations and opinions. In many ways we modelled a reflection in action and a reflection on action (Schon, 1984) simultaneously and aloud to students. As educators, we recognised and taught the importance of think-alouds and demonstrated for learners. We realised that by modelling practices of making thinking and collaborating explicit, visible and shared, we were not only providing an opportunity for developing teachers to consider the content of the course but also to imagine the complexities and possibilities of co-teaching. We consistently strove to demonstrate respect for each other as people and colleagues, but also to overtly position each other as a knower who clearly had much to contribute to the learning of the class. These interactions, this demonstration of mutual respect in public spaces and in patterns of communication, were not only indications of our professional respect for the other, but also exemplified our real care for the other as an individual. Our interactions were rooted in relationship and in constructs of care (Noddings, 1984; Phillips, 2006).

Overt participation in reciprocal growth and development. Another critical aspect of our collaboration was the fact that our co-teaching experiences served as a mutually reciprocal space for growth and development. As evidenced in our narratives above, each of us recognised and utilised the particular strengths, knowledge, skills and contributions of the other. Author 1 and Author 3 came with significantly different expertise and were able to provide insight to each other and to their students from a range of perspectives. Author 1 and Author 2 came with similar pedagogical backgrounds and ideologies but had worked in very different classroom contexts and were able to complement each other and build a very

robust set of experiences and theory to practice connections for their students. Through both of these collaborative situations, co-teaching provided an opportunity to build on each individual's areas of expertise and to share that knowledge base with each other and with the pre-service and in-service teachers in our courses. All parties felt that they not only had much to offer, but also that they had gained much as they learned from the expertise and skills of the other.

Power and abeyance. Our conversations about our collaborative work enabled us to reflect on issues of power and how they could impact and shape relationships (Foucault, 1967; Schon, 1984; Sheared, 2006). Power in this instance refers to how one uses and embraces "authority" in establishing and developing respect in the classroom. Power, as in the case of this report, also refers to the most senior person or "the institutional authority" as recognised in the university setting. When power is judiciously exercised and/or held in abeyance, it can allow someone else to hold the reins or be recognised as an authority also. Author 1 and Author 3 moved back and forth effortlessly in sharing power but Author 2 and Author 1 navigated this terrain over time as Author 2 grew more comfortable in establishing herself as a teacher educator. Giving power to a novice is crucial in assisting students in recognising the novice as competent and knowledgeable. Because manifestations of authority may be tentatively emerging in the novice, it is important for the senior to affirm the assets of the novice publicly and in private so that s/he as well as students recognise(s) the knowledge and skills of the novice.

This is particularly important when one is trying to establish and develop power or reputation as a novice needs to do in the classroom. The more experienced person then needs to know when to hold back "power" and when to accord the novice "power" so that his or her role as "teacher" may emerge. Similarly, the novice also needs to know when to accord the senior person power and when to take an opportunity to demonstrate power.

Conclusions

The juxtaposition of these stories, along with our reflections upon our experiences co-teaching, brings to the fore several issues and challenges which we comment on in our post reflections. The traits and characteristics discussed in the post-reflection of this case study are examples of what co-teachers need to be able to work together in any classroom environment. It became evident, through our exploration, that specific dispositions and commitments must be in place for co-teaching experiences to be authentically collaborative and mutually beneficial.

Author 3 and Author 2's post-reflections. In her work with us as a collaborator and mentor, Author 1 was extremely deliberate in her actions as she enabled us to take risks. She willingly and intentionally empowered us to hypothesise, to create, to experiment, to occasionally falter, to reflect and to regain our footing and reset our paths. It has been evident that her investment in us, both personally and professionally, was both authentic and longitudinal. It has also been evident that her acknowledgement of us as unique individuals first, with experiences and strengths, coupled with our ideological stances enabled our collaboration to be both constructive and generative. While we certainly have learned a tre-

mendous amount, not only about our fields, but also about the academy, from her friendship and ongoing support, we have also felt that we have been able to contribute to her learning and growth, and we both simultaneously learned and shared our knowledge and understandings with the other.

Post-reflections – final words from author 1

My work with Author 2 and Author 3 indicates the power of what could happen when doctoral students are full time in the academy and choose to make use of the resources that are there to support their development. It is easier to become more fully immersed in the life of the academy and to learn the life of academics by being present and around them. Full time doctoral students are more easily initiated into the life of the academy and are therefore privileged in the kinds of support that they can receive. For the majority of my part time doctoral students this level of support is missing because they are full time teachers and/or administrators with limited time to engage in academic activities. At the same time, this work demonstrates what could take place if more professors were prepared to break the bonds of isolationism and become more collaborative in building and maintaining relationships with their mentees. Teacher educators need to see their role as not only supporting the pre- and in-service teachers in their courses, but also nurturing, encouraging and mentoring the novice teacher educators in their departments. Broadening our understanding of our roles empowers each of us to be more authentic members of community. Even in contexts where research takes precedence for tenure and promotion, teacher educators are still called to teach in particular ways that exemplify culturally sustainable, morally and ethically appropriate best practices since we are teaching teachers how to teach (Britzman, 2007; Franklin & Blyton, 2011; Fullan, 2011). Fostering the development of collaborative communities requires the valuation and embodiment of practices such as co-teaching and mentoring.

Summary and recommendations for future research

Through analysis of these case study reflections and our many conversations about the processes and promise of co-teaching and mentoring in the academy, we have come to the conclusion that senior faculty who serve as collaborators and mentors must have specific dispositions to see and bring out the abilities of novice faculty. They must value and understand the nuances of collaboration and co-teaching so that they may help novice faculty navigate the complex roles and responsibilities of the academy while sharing their own professional knowledge, skills and contributions both with their new colleagues and with the students in their courses. Mentors and collaborators with experience in the academy must have an ability to negotiate a variety of tensions inherent when individuals who have previously worked autonomously co-create and carry out a cooperative curriculum. For beginning teacher educators, the opportunity to teach in a collaborative setting in the uni-

versity provides a vision of the potentialities and challenges of the academy and the support needed to navigate those challenges while developing as a teacher educator.

We each feel certain that our professional lives have been enhanced through collegiality of collaboration. Through analysis of our experiences we conclude that the troubling teacher/learner duality (Freire, 2000), so often in place in the academy, can instead be replaced by providing opportunities for apprenticeship and collaboration. This type of environment may provide novice teacher educators with experiences that will better prepare them to succeed in and stay in the academy. Findings from this study indicate the need for further nuanced exploration into the role of mentorship of junior faculty and the efficacy of co-teaching processes in the development of professional identities of junior faculty entering the academy. Drawing on methodologies inherent in sustainability research such as case studies and self-studies will go a long way in helping us to uncover the knowledge and understandings that can enrich our work in education in general and teacher education in particular.

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