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by

Sarah Katelynn Alaniz

May 2014

EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF VIDEO OBSERVATION
FOR ENHANCING PRESERVICE TEACHERS' REFLECTIVE PRACTICES

A Dissertation Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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Although from outward appearances the following dissertation might seem to comprise the work of a sole author, this piece of research ultimately embodies a joint effort. Three years ago, when I embarked upon my journey as a full-time doctoral student and part-time research assistant, I quickly realized that reaching my destination would be unattainable but for the support of certain companions – companions whose very presence sheltered my path, whose words of wisdom guided my way, and whose camaraderie played an integral role in shaping among the most rewarding three years of my life.

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Ultimately, I have sensed God's hand guiding me through each and every step of this journey, and in truth, I owe Him everything. Within the Bible, the prophet Isaiah declares:

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:29-31, New International Version)

In moments of challenge along the way, the Lord has consistently been my hope, my strength, and my most faithful companion. Not only am I indebted to Him for the completion of this research and the doctoral program, but I am beholden to Him for every day I have been granted upon this earth. To my Lord and Savior Jesus, I owe my greatest thanks, as well as my very life. With all of my heart, soul, mind, and strength, I love you.

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Abstract

Through this dissertation research study, I investigated and communicated the ways in which preservice educators' stories about viewing videos of themselves teaching influence their ability and willingness to reflect upon personal teaching practices. As a component of the requirements of the teacher education program within the University of Houston's College of Education, preservice teachers view video footage of themselves teaching a lesson within their field placement classroom. Each preservice teacher subsequently documents personal reflections regarding the lesson through identifying individually meaningful moments, or "pause points." With the objective of offering the reader a rich narrative account of the video observation experiences of three preservice teachers, the study features three in-depth interviews exploring the tensions, challenges, and triumphs these individuals negotiated through their encounter with this highly personalized, self-exploratory process. In accordance with the related literature, the outcomes of this study point to immense potential for video observation as a means of promoting preservice teachers' heightened reflective practices.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Prologue

In the shadowy places of my memory, tucked away behind the more promising moments of my experience as an educator, I vaguely recall the first instance in which I was asked to record a video of myself teaching a lesson. In my recollection, this assignment was given during my initial year of teaching. The task had been assigned me by my school administrator as a potentially effective tool through which she, my assigned mentor, and I might be able to assess my current teaching aptitude as well as identify areas in which improvement appeared necessary.

Although my memory now fails to evoke many of the specifics regarding that lesson, I nonetheless associate this preliminary act of recording myself on video with a poignant sense of trepidation. From the point-of-view of my administrator and mentor, the process of video observation served as an “excellent gauge” through which to view my teaching practices from another perspective. However, from my personal, carefully concealed viewpoint, apprehensions abounded. I was concerned that distractions regarding unease over my appearance, mannerisms, and the sound of my voice might eclipse valid contemplation of my approaches to teaching, thus rendering this a futile exercise. A plethora of anxieties assailed my mind, leading me to regard the assignment with an impending sense of doom.

While navigating the unfamiliar and sometimes precarious waters of that introductory year within the classroom, I frequently struggled to muster confidence

enough in my teaching abilities to present a self-assured, capable demeanor before my twenty highly intuitive first grade students. In fact, the very work of learning to teach presented me challenge enough. The added element of doing so in front of a video camera and then being required to view footage of myself performing in an insecure manner seemed almost too much to bear. Yet, as this was a required exercise, I determinately persuaded my qualms and timidities to succumb to my overwhelming desire prove to my superiors - and even to myself - that I was “teachable,” possessing a willingness to examine my practices as an educator in pursuit of further refining them.

Perfectionism within the Addictive Organization

As I viewed the video of my lesson, I recall that my perfectionistic nature produced an influx of criticisms regarding even the smallest aspects of my performance. I dwelt upon the seemingly child-like tone of my voice, overuse of the word “like” to fill void spaces in conversation, and the emergence of redundant hand gestures. Such perfectionism had occupied a central position in my mindsets and patterns of behavior from my earliest performance-related experiences.

Interestingly, certain researchers actually point to the notion that this tendency is not at all unusual within organizational settings. Rather, perfectionism comprises a central characteristic of what Shaef and Fassel (1988) refer to as the “addictive system.” Within their book entitled *The Addictive Organization*, the authors explain that people often become tied to the institution in which they work to such an extent that they develop a preoccupation with pleasing it. Additionally, they propose that “the addictive system operates from the same characteristics that individual addicts have routinely

established” (p. 62). According to Shaef and Fassel, members of such organizations are often consumed by thoughts of “not being good enough, not doing enough, and not being able to be perfect as the system defines perfect” (p. 64). Furthermore, “mistakes are unacceptable in the perfectionistic system” and “not valid material for learning; they are indicative of imperfection” (p. 65).

Looking back upon the various settings and experiences of my life in which perfectionism seemed an acceptable response, I agree with the authors’ conclusion that this view is highly regrettable “because ‘failures’ are often rich sources of data for individuals and groups” (p. 65). However, at that time, as a newcomer to the professional sphere, I had difficulty realizing that perfection is really only an “illusion.” In that phase of my life, I could not seem to wrap my mind around the simple but essential truth that “we are not perfect, we’re just people” (p. 157).

Oversight of Reflection

In addition to my efforts to grapple with a tendency towards perfectionism, the very act of reflection seemed foreign and even somewhat cumbersome to me. Looking back upon my frame of mind throughout that initial year of teaching, I was certainly unaware of the fact that reflection is regarded as an indispensable teaching behavior by both former and current educational researchers and teacher educators (Dewey, 1933; Langley & Senne, 1997). Such reflection may be defined as dynamic engagement of the mind to disentangle problems and enhance academic functioning (King, 2008). Furthermore, reflection can be described as a critical analysis encompassing self-awareness and amplified cognizance (Dewey, 1933; Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

According to Dewey (1933), reflection "converts action that is merely appetitive, blind, and impulsive into intelligent action" (p. 17). Although non-reflective instruction may be classified as mechanical, instinctive, and confined, educators who employ reflection traverse beyond an exhibition of teaching behaviors created and prescribed by others (Dewey, 1933; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Moreover, they distinguish problems, examine objectives, investigate frameworks, evaluate opportunities, and create applicable educational encounters to the advantage of learners.

The Influence of a Placating Personality

Unfortunately, this sort of reflection was not something that had previously assumed a substantial role in either my academic or professional experience. It was not that I considered the process of reflection a fruitless task. In fact, I had always admired those who seemed to possess a natural affinity for profoundly and sincerely considering their patterns of thought and behavior as well as the ramifications of their actions upon their own lives and society. No, a failure to find the value in reflection was not the issue.

Truthfully, my neglect of reflection stemmed from the fact that many of my earliest academic and professional experiences had been associated with a pervasive instinct to identify the most timely and efficient means of delivering a satisfactory, tangible product to my superiors. Such endeavors closely relates to Schön's (1983) concept of "technical rationality," which he described as a model of professional activity that "consists in instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique" (p. 21). Technical rationality represents a utilitarian methodology that stresses rational, scientific means to achieving extrinsic goals, such as

measurable objectives set by administrators. Throughout my life, I have often felt highly driven towards pleasing teachers and supervisors by offering exemplary outcomes. Quite possibly, this tendency constitutes a reflection of the “placating personality” depiction offered by Arieti and Bemporad (1978). In employing this term, they refer to elements of an inability to listen to one’s own wishes in pursuit of pleasing others. Interestingly, research has pointed to the finding that this pattern of behavior occurs more often in women than men (Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991).

Yet, in contemplating the position this feature of my personality has occupied throughout my educational and career-related pursuits, I cannot recall ever once attempting to alter this personal mode of operation. Truthfully, actions taken to please others seem to have consistently proven mutually beneficial, serving them and me well. This personality trait has more often than not allowed for avoidance of relational conflict, the presence of which I have forever found particularly unpleasant.

Furthermore, even above my desire to elude discord, since my childhood, I have found that few joys compare with the knowledge that through my actions, another has been benefitted or imparted with happiness. The innate desire to bring a smile to another’s face through diligent efforts on my part has constituted a pervasive motivation throughout my life. Conversely, the fear of letting another down - especially a person I particularly esteem - through my neglect to deliver a satisfactory outcome or product has played a role in my unceasing desire to please others.

In light of these aspects of my personal disposition, reflection had seldom before appeared to me as an effective means to such an end; and thus, it had infrequently found a place among my priorities. Essentially, in my pursuits to please others, I had taken very

little time to personally reflect upon my thought processes and patterns of behavior, purely for the sake of personal curiosity, satisfaction, or betterment. I simply recall thinking that I never had the time.

An Opportunity for Growth

Regardless of the discomfort I felt while watching myself on video and despite the mistakes I might have made throughout the lesson, I do recall that a form of personal reflection constituted a significant outcome of my initial experience with video observation. Like many instances that comprise genuine challenge, this occasion represented an important opportunity for growth. As painful as it might have been to carefully consider the manner in which I engaged my students, presented them with new concepts, and assessed them, it was a beneficial exercise in that it led me to genuinely consider my teaching practices, even if through a highly critical lens. This first encounter with authentic reflection elicited by participation in video observation provided me a brief glance of the potential value of such reflection.

The process of viewing my interactions with students on video caused me to reexamine certain practices that had become a part of my teaching repertoire – practices that somehow appeared less efficacious when viewed through the lens of an “observer” rather than when perceived through the mind of the one performing such practices. Additionally, to my amazement and delight, I inadvertently discovered that the process of viewing my teaching and ensuing reactions from students served to affirm the value of other classroom practices. This aspect of the video observation process functioned to heighten my assurance in my teaching abilities, which was especially beneficial during

that initial, somewhat daunting first year. As might be true of any experience in which one is becoming acclimated to the challenges of a new vocation - and particularly when it happens to be one's primary experience within the professional sphere - such reassurance serve as a tremendous support.

Even more importantly, viewing myself "in action" worked to validate my decision to pursue the profession of teaching. As I witnessed the joy with which I interacted with the children, the obvious enthusiasm I displayed at their engagement in the learning process, and the pride and delight they exuded as new concepts arose to life within their minds, I knew that I had chosen the ideal profession to which to dedicate my coming years. In light of this realization, my feelings regarding this experience might have been likened to the framework on agency offered by Hull and Katz (2006), who believe that "individuals and groups can learn to fashion identities as competent actors in the world, able to influence the direction and course of their lives" (p. 8). Bruner (1994) defines "agency" in psychological terms as "the initiation of relatively autonomous acts governed by our intentional states—our wishes, desires, beliefs, and expectancies" (p. 41). Hull and Katz (2006) contend that people possess the potential to develop agentive selves, drawing upon the distinctive repertoire of tools, resources, and relationships that are accessible to them at precise historical moments, in particular social and cultural circumstances.

In my mind, this particular circumstance epitomized what Bruner (1994) might have deemed a "turning point." In his studies of unprompted spoken autobiographical accounts, he remarked upon the universality of such turning points, or moments in which people report distinct transformation in their lives and associated vivid alterations in

representations of self. According to Bruner, moments like this are so pervasive among autobiographical accounts that “it may well be that the culture’s canonical forms for characterizing the seasons of a life encourage such subjective turning points” (p. 42). Turning points typically incorporate distinct detail and have a tremendous influence upon one’s life. In Bruner’s estimation, turning points such as this may be classified as “thickly agentic” (p. 50). Instead of supposing these accounts to be simply true accounts of past occurrences, Bruner sees benefit in viewing them as “preternaturally clear instances of narrative construction that have the function of helping the teller clarify his or her self-concept. They are prototype narrative episodes,” he maintains, “whose construction results in increasing the realism and drama of the self” (p. 50). Thus, such turning point narratives function as symbols of the way in which a person imagines his or her life as a whole.

The Current Study

Nearly a decade after my initial encounter with video observation transpired, I found myself in a slightly familiar place. Yet, this time, instead of playing the title role, I was asked to assume what might be considered a supporting part. After nine years of teaching elementary students full-time, I shifted gears, excitedly resolving to embark upon a doctoral program in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Instructional Technology. Additionally, I accepted a part-time elementary teaching position, leaving time for a graduate assistantship. This position required that I serve as a video facilitator for preservice teachers in the initial stages of their field experience.

As such, I was responsible for viewing video recordings of lessons taught by these preservice teachers. In the course of this process, I endeavored to encourage their progression of reflection upon their teaching practices through specifically addressing areas of perceived successful practice as well as those in which improvement might be necessitated. Within the context of the video observation process, these moments are referred to as “pause points.”

Because I was personally involved in this undertaking on almost a daily basis, I had countless opportunities to journey alongside preservice teachers as they negotiated many of the same tensions and challenges I had through my initial experience with video observation. Due to its compelling impact upon my teaching experience, I consistently considered the prospect of assisting them through this process a privilege and a joy.

Naturally, I soon developed a passion for investigating its effectiveness in supporting deeper reflective practices and incorporating successful teaching techniques for preservice teachers. Although I since left the position of video facilitator in order to fulfill another role within the university’s teacher education program, the two semesters in which I occupied this position left me with an indelible curiosity regarding the nature of this experience’s impact upon preservice teachers’ reflective practices.

The Process of Narrative Inquiry

This paper describes a research study built upon a series of stories and reflections. Throughout, I utilized pseudonyms for the people mentioned in order to retain their anonymity. In reviewing this study, I invite the reader to “think narratively” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), or to think through and about stories. In her book entitled *Peripheral*

Visions, Catherine Bateson (1994) illustrates the process of employing stories as an avenue for interpreting experiences. No matter from whence a story originates, whether a proverbial myth or a personal memory, the reciting of that story typifies the formulation of a link from one pattern to another. In cases such as this, the potential translation in narrative becomes parable and the “once upon a time” comes to represent some burgeoning truth. This approach pertains to all instances of day-to-day life, even including a phrase in a magazine, the endearing chatter of children, or a squabble at the office. Humankind reasons in metaphors and learns through stories.

In relation to the notion of thinking narratively, Bruner (1990) suggested that there are two fundamental ways of knowing. One is through pragmatic means, or the search for universal truth. The other is through the process of narrative inquiry, which entails examining and understanding the world while searching for distinct connections that link events to one another. Stories are narratives written subjectively, reflecting the experiences of people. In this way, narrative becomes “both phenomenon and method” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2).

Through this study, I sought to investigate and communicate the ways in which preservice educators’ stories about viewing videos of themselves teaching weave into their ability and willingness to reflect upon personal teaching practices. Their stories speak to how perceptions of self are intricately linked to how and why we learn; the longing to assimilate new skills and understandings is interrelated with who we desire to become as people (Hull & Katz, 2006).

In accordance with Barrett’s (2005) research regarding digital storytelling, this study is based upon the proposition that incorporating technology within educational

settings should transform the way in which instruction occurs, thus providing for movement away from teacher-directed instructional approaches to student-directed practices. Such socio-constructivist methods incite inquiry, problem solving, and collaborative means of learning, underscoring the attainment of novel skillsets and knowledge. In situations in which traditional means of classroom or teacher assessment fall short of fully accounting for such skills, or in instances in which they prove ill-equipped to examine profounder cognitive processes such as problem solving and critical thinking, the effective assimilation of technology may prove especially helpful.

Overview of the Study

The preceding segments of Chapter One introduced the story through my personal narrative of participating in video observation during my initial year of teaching. Additionally, I shared how this experience correlated with my engagement in a future role as a video facilitator, in which I was assigned the responsibility of assisting preservice teachers in the process of reflecting upon teaching practices through video observation. The amalgamation of these two experiences commenced my research journey, causing me to become intrigued to investigate the potential link between video observation and enhanced reflection.

In Chapter Two, I convey a review of related literature. This review of literature includes a more fully-developed definition and description of reflection as it applies to educational settings, as well as a survey of video observational practices that have been previously employed within preservice teacher preparation programs. Other research synthesized focuses upon these themes: field experience and mentoring as tools for

promoting reflection, technological tools for promoting reflective practice, and the potential of video for promoting self-reflection.

Chapter Three comprises an extensive description of the data collection and analysis processes. Specifically, I provide a thorough explanation of the application of narrative inquiry as the methodological framework for the study. Additionally, this chapter contains a detailed depiction of the research setting, including the specifics of the video observation process. I incorporate an overview of the procedures for participant selection, data collection, and data analysis as well, concluding with a section concerning my means of appraising the validity of the findings.

Chapter Four encompasses a synthesis of research findings, accomplished through studying interview responses regarding preservice teachers' experiences with video observation. Specifically, I present the stories of three preservice teachers who contributed to this research, focusing upon how these individuals navigated the experiences, feelings, and insights encountered while participating in the process of video observation and meeting with a video facilitator to discuss personal reflections regarding this process. An exploration of their experiences, as uncovered through their individual stories, imparts insight into their perspectives on the role of reflection in preparation to become teachers within their own classroom. I also address the research questions utilizing data obtained from their personal narratives. Findings incorporate associations between these three teachers' stories, their personal reflections, and their teaching practices.

Within Chapter Five, the conclusion, I deliberate implications from the study for preservice teachers and the institutions charged with the task of preparing them for the

challenges of teaching in the real world. Finally, I pose novel inquiries for consideration regarding video observation and the process of reflection.

Significance of the Study

Personal Justification

As previously introduced, my personal experience with video observation included certain specific misgivings related to my apprehension over viewing myself on video, as well as my perceived inability to effectively reflect upon my teaching practices. However, even in the face of such obstacles, I specifically recall that this experience exceeded my expectations in that it produced genuine deliberation regarding my methods of engaging my students, presenting them with original concepts, and assessing them.

Essentially, the process of viewing my interactions with students assisted in confirming my decision to become an educator. The evident joy and enthusiasm for learning that pervaded our classroom throughout the lesson caused me to doubt that any other professional sphere could ever provide a more personally heartwarming and gratifying experience than that of teaching.

Through conducting and sharing research regarding the effects of video observation upon the reflective practices of preservice teachers, my desire is that others seeking to enter this most significant profession, as well as those institutions charged with the task of preparing them to do so, will be encouraged to examine the potential of this method. Conceivably, video observation may be utilized by preservice educators not only to consider areas of potential improvement, but also to bolster confidence through

highlighting areas of successful practice. Ultimately, my hope is that this experience may serve as a means of reassuring those who possess the heart and passion to nurture and cultivate the minds of tomorrow's generations that they have, in fact, chosen a highly fitting profession.

Practical and Social Justification

The process of conducting this research brought my attention to the reality that investigation regarding the efficacy (or lack thereof) of video observation in preparing preservice teachers to reflect upon current teaching habits comprises genuine practical and social implications. In providing them an avenue through which to identify means of incorporating successful techniques into subsequent lessons and distinguish areas of improvement, such practices might be utilized to advance colleges of education in their quest to more successfully prepare preservice teachers to meaningfully impact their students' learning.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Context for the Study

As time progresses and integration of technology into educational practices becomes ever more prevalent, preservice teacher preparation programs are increasingly integrating video as an effective tool for reflective observation (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2010). In reviewing current research relating to the incorporation of video observation within preservice teacher preparation programs, numerous studies point to significant positive outcomes of this method.

This chapter features an extensive investigation of the process of reflection, commencing with an examination of various means by which to define reflective practice, methods for promoting deeper modes of reflection, and an extension of Dewey's (1933) concept of "learning by doing." Also, comprised within this chapter are explorations of field experience and mentoring as tools for promoting reflection, technological tools for encouraging reflective practice, and the potential of video for fostering self-reflection. Prior to concluding with a presentation of the purpose of the study and research questions, I address the unique perspective afforded by video lessons, including video as a tool for shifting from technical to theoretical orientation and a structured approach to video analysis.

The Process of Reflection

This review of literature commences with an overview of the concept of reflection as it relates to teaching practices. Additionally, research involving the processes of promoting deeper modes of reflection and extending the concept of “learning by doing” among preservice teachers provides a basis for subsequent sections.

Defining Reflective Practice

Foundational conceptions regarding reflection rest in Dewey's (1933) interpretation of reflective reasoning as a critical tool for facilitating educators' organization of activities and development of efficacious courses of action with proper outcomes in sight. More specifically, he characterized reflective cognition as the “active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends” (p. 9).

As touched upon in the previous chapter, Dewey (1933) classified genuine reflection as that which transforms human behaviors from mere impulses to rational acts. Whereas non-reflective instruction may be described as routine, automatic, and limited, educators who utilize reflection venture beyond a demonstration of teaching behaviors shaped and stipulated by others (Dewey, 1933; Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Instead, they discern issues, explore ideas, consider novel strategies, contemplate opportunities, and generate relevant encounters in learning to the benefit of their students.

Ross (1990) describes reflection within educational contexts as “a way of thinking about educational matters that involves the ability to make rational choices and to assume responsibility for those choices” (p. 98), delineating components of the reflective process as a succession of stages in handling “educational dilemmas” in which the educator is proficient at:

1. Recognizing educational dilemmas
2. Responding to a dilemma by recognizing both the similarities to other situations and the unique qualities of the particular situation
3. Framing and reframing the dilemma
4. Experimenting with the dilemma to discover the implications of various solutions, and examining the intended and unintended consequences of an implemented solution and evaluating it by determining whether the consequences are desirable (p. 98)

In its most base form, reflection emphasizes the technical components of teaching, or the function of teaching proficiencies in reaction to a constrained set of problems (Cruickshank, 1985; Hatton & Smith, 1994; Schön, 1983; van Manen, 1977; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Such technical reflections frequently utilize "research-based means for achieving given ends" (Hatton & Smith, 1994, p. 3).

Promoting Deeper Modes of Reflection

As opposed to technical reflection, “critical reflection” may be defined as rational endeavor during which one deliberately contemplates the bearing of one's actions upon others and offers justification, considering the societal and cultural dynamics pertaining

to the event (Hatton & Smith, 1994). Promoting such deeper modes of reflection has presented a persistent challenge for those involved in the education of preservice teachers (King, 2008). As observed by Jay and Johnson (2002), “Reflection has become an integral part of teacher education, yet its elusive boundaries make it difficult to define and teach” (p. 73). Although efforts to foster reflection frequently occupy a focal position in preservice teacher preparation programs, such programs often fall short of cultivating a coherent conception of this term among teacher practitioners. Additionally, due to its complexity and variances in communication regarding reflection, preservice teachers tend to experience difficulty in understanding and applying this concept (Zeichner & Liston, 1987).

Thus, the majority of preservice teachers more easily demonstrate technical rather than critical reflective skills. In fact, although numerous researchers have determined that cultivating meaningful reflection presents a challenge for prospective teachers, they have formulated few suggestions as to why this is the case and how to more effectively support their growth as reflective practitioners (Risko, Vukelich, Roskos, & Carpenter, 2002, p. 136). Another aspect of the enduring challenge faced by preservice teacher educators to encourage profounder modes of reflection involves the apparent difficulty of effectively instilling an understanding and sense of value regarding the advantages of reflection within preservice teachers’ minds (King, 2008).

Despite such challenges, the promotion of reflective competences endures as an essential element in the majority of teacher education curricula (King, 2008). Numerous state licensing agencies and professional associations, including the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), list reflection among the proficiencies

considered vital for effective development of preservice teachers (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, 2013). As preservice teachers are equipped to participate in meaningful reflection, they become better able to evaluate and enhance their pedagogy by coupling theory and practice (King, 2008).

Extending the Concept of “Learning by Doing”

Quite conceivably, there exists no name more frequently referenced throughout research regarding reflective practice and pedagogical advancement than that of Donald Schön (1983; 1987). As elucidated by Craig (2009), “Dewey’s notions of experience and practical knowledge, together with his sense of inquiry, represent important linchpins, not only for narrative inquiry, but also for reflective practice, which traces directly to Dewey via Schön who was a Deweyan scholar” (p. 107). Expounding upon the work of Dewey, Schön extends the concept of “learning by doing” through putting forth “an epistemology of practice which places technical problem solving within a broader context of reflective inquiry” (p. 69). From Schön’s standpoint, professional development has traditionally placed too great an emphasis on scientific theories and the suggestion that identifying solutions to problems might be accomplished in a clear-cut manner. He contends that this approach falls short of equipping future professionals such as preservice teachers with the proficiencies required to manage the unforeseen and demanding occurrences they will certainly confront in the “real” world, or what Schön (1983) refers to as the “swampy lowlands” (p. 3). With “freedom to learn by doing in a setting relatively low in risk” as well as the opportunity “to see on their own behalf and in their own way what

they need most to see,” he proposes that preservice teachers will be more effectively equipped to acquire and apply the “art” of teaching (p. 17).

In Schön’s viewpoint, “reflection-in-action” represents the capacity to reflect prior to reacting in circumstances in which clear-cut solutions and scientific models are irrelevant. “Reflection-on-action” encompasses a process of judiciously reflecting upon the incident subsequent to the fact. Schön advocates that each form of reflection should be cultivated and enriched throughout the course of one’s professional career. In relation to this perspective, Byra (1994) posits the following:

...once preservice teachers complete their teacher preparation program and enter the ‘real’ world of teaching, they are often on their own. Any changes that they make to their teaching and/or have about their thoughts regarding what ought to be taught and why it ought to be taught will probably be the result of self-reflection. If preservice teachers do not experience tasks that necessitate them to reflect on the act of teaching and the world in which they teach, they will likely make few changes as teachers. (p. 11)

Therefore, activities that require reflection previous to reaction in circumstances in which a definitive solution may not be apparent (reflection-in-action) as well as those that entail thoughtful reflection subsequent to action (reflection-on-action) constitute a necessary component in effectively preparing preservice to face the realities of their intended profession.

In recent years, personal reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action have encompassed an increasingly prominent role among methods to bring about change in preservice teacher preparation programs. This sort of reflection goes beyond merely thinking about one’s actions. As stated by Ginsburg and Clift (1990), it constitutes an amalgamation of theory and practice. Such reflections involve instances of tension and unrest in preservice teachers’ personal philosophies. Furthermore, these opportunities

offer moments of intellectual and even emotional uncertainty that engage preservice educators in viewing themselves through an alternative lens. When the reflection process requires preservice teachers to describe their lines of reasoning and defend practices in light of contemporary learning theory, it “enhances understanding or readiness for acting in the moment” and, as such, “their future praxis will likely change” (Roth, 2003, p. 15). Nevertheless, Roth also cautions that reflection on teaching cannot generate instantaneous transformation in teaching practices.

Killion and Todnem (1991) have extended Schön’s theories regarding reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action to include “reflection-for-action,” or the anticipated outcome to influence future action. Thus, in their view, the reflective process is not restrained solely to a single time frame, but rather it takes place in the past, present, and future.

In further exploration of the components of reflection, van Manen (1977) categorizes levels of reflection in three different junctures: (a) technical means to attain a specified goal; (b) practical reflection that encompasses examination of suppositions and perceptions motivating actions; and (c) critical reflection that comprises aspects of the former two, yet also incorporates moral and ethical evaluations. Upon entering their teacher preparation experience, preservice teachers bring pre-existent educational experiences and principles regarding teaching, learning, children, and culture. These compelling influences hold the potential to generate profoundly embedded schemata that can be difficult to modify (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

In conclusion, meaningful reflection may function as a means of restructuring previous understandings and sharpening pedagogical reasoning. Endeavors to influence

the reflective process have significantly impacted the strategies through which teacher education programs seek to more effectively prepare preservice educators to decipher and solve classroom predicaments (Korthagen, 2001; Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

Field Experience and Mentoring as Tools for Promoting Reflection

In endeavors to foster significant reflective practices among preservice teachers, teacher educators have attributed merit to the “learning by doing” approach since as early as the mid-nineteenth century (Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986). Thus, field experiences have become a cornerstone among current preservice teacher education programs (Hixon & So, 2009). In alignment with Dewey’s stress on experiential education, contemporary field experiences are concentrated on offering illustrations of best practices and pairing students with teachers who not only exhibit excellence in teaching but also demonstrate the ability to serve as superior role models eager to participate in reflective practice alongside preservice teachers (Freiberg, 1995; Posner, 2005). As explained by Craig (2011), teacher knowledge in narrative research necessarily encompasses human relationships, including those among preservice teachers and experienced educators: “Sitting at the root of the teacher knowledge conception of teacher education as studied through the narrative inquiry lens is a different understanding of expertise” (p.2).

Currently, the number of educational institutions utilizing models of instructional coaching is mounting at an astounding rate (Knight, 2006). According to Knight (2006), “Coaching is becoming popular, in part, because many educational leaders recognize the old form of professional development, built around traditional in-service sessions for teachers, simply doesn't affect student achievement” (p. 36). Therefore, the impact of

preservice teachers' interactions with seasoned educators within a true-to-life classroom setting remains a vital consideration in studies of narrative inquiry involving teacher education experiences.

Through the process of participating in structured field experiences, preservice teachers commonly obtain feedback regarding their teaching. Soon-to-be teachers benefit from opportunities to practice vital competences "frequently under good conditions, and get help in the form of instruction, supervision, and feedback..." (Siedentop & Tannehill, 2000, p. 3). Such feedback affords an impetus for their reflection, and prevalent modes of feedback are written, verbal, and visual (King, 2008). Written and verbal feedback typically originates from a knowledgeable and dependable "other," for example a supervisor, instructor, cooperating teacher, or colleague fulfilling the role of coach (Hatton & Smith, 1994). Subsequent to observation, such coaches converse with preservice teachers and impart verbal or written analyses regarding their teaching performance. Thereafter, preservice teachers are expected to reflect upon the feedback offered by the coach.

Nevertheless, regarding efforts to stimulate heightened reflection among preservice teachers through the involvement of knowledgeable others, Loughran (2002) provides some cautionary remarks. He highlights a discrepancy between reflection that involves merely "rationalization" and that which he denotes as "effective reflective practice." Thus, "to teach about reflection requires contextual anchors to make learning episodes meaningful," he contends. "Simply being encouraged to reflect is likely to be as meaningful as a lecture on cooperative group work" (p. 33). In isolation, the process of reflection might consist of little beyond merely reviewing or summarizing. Thus, the

importance of presenting preservice teachers with applicable and effectual reinforcement by such knowledgeable others cannot be overemphasized (Sewall, 2009).

Models of mentoring (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Norman & Feiman-Nemser, 2005) and guided practice (Feiman-Nemser & Rosean, 1997) have played a role in shaping the means by which preservice teacher preparation programs and school districts endeavor to serve their teacher candidates' needs while advancing through what Fuller (1969) describes as "stages of concern." More precisely, Fuller utilizes this term in reference to the anticipated development learners are inclined to follow throughout their initial teaching encounters. For preservice teachers, these stages typically shift from concerns directed towards oneself to concerns regarding the task at hand and ultimately to concerns involving students.

Yet, in contrast to the function of coaches and mentors who assist novice teachers in teacher preparation or training programs, supervisors such as administrators or preservice teacher program personnel face a potential added difficulty in that they occupy a twofold role; they not only act as guides for these preservice teachers, but they also function as assessors (Sewall, 2009). Sewall (2009) notes that "considering that the very term 'supervisor' carries with it the connotation of a hierarchical relationship between the expert and novice, the relationship between advisor and advisee has the potential of being constrained in areas such as trust, openness, and willingness to be as honest and straightforward as possible" (p. 13). Consequently, tools are necessitated to assist such supervisors in the possibly problematical role of remaining both impartial and forthright in conferencing with preservice teachers regarding the teaching practices and reflective competencies they exhibit.

Technological Tools for Promoting Reflective Practice

With the advent of performance assessment in the 1990s, especially portfolios requiring that preservice teachers exhibit aptitude in a variety of pedagogical categories through assembling and reflecting upon “artifacts” demonstrative of their teaching capabilities, the topic of teacher reflection ascended to an elevated position within teacher preparation programs, and this methodology has endured through the years (Sewall, 2007). Hence, there exists a substantial amount of research relating to the topic of portfolios and their constructive influence in promoting heightened, more effectual reflection among preservice teachers (Brown, 2002; Jay & Johnson, 2002). However, as technology continues to occupy an increasingly prevalent and highly developed role in the field of education, a variety of novel and distinctive methods have emerged to support and build upon portfolio assessment in promoting reflective practice among preservice teachers (Sewall, 2007).

As reported by Sewall (2007), computer-based tools for encouraging such reflective practices are achieving ever more widespread utilization within teacher education programs. More specifically, from the incorporation of interactive CD-ROM programs (Bowers, Sale, Kenehan, & Doerr, 2000), software programs (Lin & Kinzer, 2003), threaded discussions and e-mail communication on the Internet (Whipp, 2003), and electronic portfolios (Norton-Meier, 2003), technology has certainly made its mark in the teacher preparation literature. An additional area of technology that currently prevails among the research in this area involves the employment of videotaped lessons to foster and extend preservice teachers’ reflective practice.

The Potential of Video for Promoting Self Reflection

As previously remarked, self-reflective tools constitute one enterprise to assist preservice teachers in acquiring fresh outlooks and emotional distance in relation to their own teaching, which can successively function to support advisors in the sometimes ambiguous situation of remaining “both nurturing and candid” (Freidus, 2002). By observing their own pedagogy through an alternative lens, beyond gathering feedback solely from an “expert,” preservice teachers are incited to examine their teaching practices in a more impartial manner, possibly perceiving their “teaching selves” in such a means as others view them. As of late, technology has maintained a progressively noteworthy role among endeavors to enhance that process.

A sphere of technology predominant among the research regarding preservice teacher preparation involves the utilization of videotaped lessons to foster and heighten reflective practice. Amongst the initial studies integrating video technology with preservice teacher observation, Moore (1988) employed videotaped lessons of a preservice teacher’s classroom as a debriefing instrument between the teacher and supervisor, deducing an imperative that lessons be jointly evaluated by both parties – in other words, observed, analyzed, and reflected upon concurrently – in order to serve as a successful means of pedagogical improvement. As well as providing for increasingly purposeful dialogue regarding the lesson implementation, due to the preservice teacher’s capability of essentially viewing particular aspects of his or her teaching, Moore observed that the use of videotaping for teaching and supervision permits the supervisor to notice more than is regularly achievable with site observations.

In much the same way, additional studies using video-supported reflection, such as those by Beck, King, and Marshall (2002) and Sherin and van Es (2005), have established that novice and seasoned teachers alike benefit from viewing and evaluating videotaped lessons of their own or another person's teaching. "The participants' ability to identify, interpret, and analyze evidence of exemplary teaching" was enriched (Beck et al., p. 345) and generated favorable appraisal from teachers that considerably overperformed those who did not integrate video observation throughout the reflective process.

The Unique Perspective Afforded by Video Lessons

Concurrently, Wang and Hartley (2003) advocate that video technologies hold promise for documenting the rich contexts of teaching and learning, offering preservice teachers a unique perspective by which to observe and reflect judiciously. Moreover, editing video of their own teaching affords preservice teachers with instantaneous feedback regarding their lessons – confirmation with an immediacy far less vulnerable to selective memory (Yerrick, Ross, & Molebash, 2005).

Cognitive dissonance comes into play when what teachers recollect taking place in the lesson varies from the events they witness occurring in the video. Nevertheless, "dissonance does not need to be negative to lead to learning; it just needs to jar complacency" (Rosaen, Lundeberg, Cooper, Fritzen, & Terpstra, 2008, p. 358). From this perspective, video analysis has emerged as a remarkably effective means of challenging preservice teachers' modes of unraveling classroom events and prompting divergent thinking (Romano & Schwartz, 2005). Yadav and Koehler (2007) note that

unless given the opportunity to analyze their teaching via a video recording, “preservice teachers are likely to continue viewing classroom episodes with their prior lenses” (p. 358). Consequently, video recording serves as a particularly useful tool when employed to focus preservice teachers on specific facets of practice of which they were unaware.

Through the process of video analysis, teacher candidates have opportunity to reach a more finely-attuned understanding of practice than that permitted in memory-based recollection, thus affording increased data from the lesson upon which to reflect. Furthermore, the preservice teacher can explore video footage in unison with a more knowledgeable other, thereby prompting various analyses of classroom occurrences.

Video as a Tool for Shifting from Technical to Theoretical Orientation

Additionally, video has been explored as a vehicle for transporting teachers from an emphasis exclusively on technical aspects of practice to linking these practices to a theoretical orientation (Harford, MacRuairc, & McCartan, 2010). The imperative of such a shift in reflective emphasis comes into even sharper focus when considering the admonition of Altrichter and Posch (1989), namely that a solely technical concentration upon reflection might also confine educators to a subordinate, technical-rational approach to teaching. In such a case, the practice of teaching is reduced into numerous smaller components to be evaluated without “developing reflective features of professional action” (p. 91). Within this technical-rational approach, reflection is likely to be condensed to solving urgent, immediate complications regarding the effective presentation of curricular objectives (Leitch & Day, 2000). In comparison to the limited

scope inherent in this style of teaching, video offers a more holistic self-reflection experience.

A Structured Approach to Video Analysis

Empirical researchers have repeatedly observed that preservice and current teachers profit from the instantaneous, rich, and comprehensive medium of authentic classroom video as a tool to enhance professional learning (Rich & Hannafin, 2009; Sherin & van Es, 2005; Yerrick et al., 2005). Furthermore, both new and experienced teachers benefit from direction concerning how to examine lessons taught through this means. Although inexperienced teachers notice less of the complexity in classroom events than do more seasoned teachers, those who are provided a scaffold by which to analyze their videos of teaching are often capable of further extending the inferences drawn from their observations (van Es & Sherin, 2002). Research suggests that “video instruction for novice preservice teachers must be highly structured in order to affect positively their views, knowledge, and skills” (Dymond & Bentz, 2006, p. 99). Studies recounting a number of methods through which preservice teachers might investigate their own and other’s teaching practice have time and again highlighted the necessity that video review be scaffolded through means of a viewer’s guide, which either leads the viewer to focus upon certain aspects of the lesson or exhorts the viewer to personally select items for investigation in reply to guiding questions (Baecher & Connor, 2010). These scaffolds encourage preservice teachers’ development in both their teaching and classroom observational practices.

In addition to considering a scaffolded approach to viewing video recordings as a means of promoting meaningful reflection among preservice teachers, one apparent influence that must be considered is the particular events on which preservice teachers are invited to reflect. More specifically, should preservice teachers be encouraged to reflect upon exemplary lessons or those including readily perceived issues? Additionally, should preservice teachers be requested to participate in a guided discussion of another educator's teaching tensions (e.g., video case studies), or should students have opportunity to reflect upon their own endeavors in which they likely have devoted a great deal of time and energy planning, which also represent their personal teaching philosophies? Although questions such as these lack decisive answers, researchers contend that the reflection process more effectively engages students in a personal rather than vicarious form of observation (Abell & Bryan, 1997).

Despite the fact that certain researchers maintain that reflection by preservice teachers should emphasize collective positive experiences (van Zee & Roberts, 2001), one must consider the context in which preservice teachers are placed. Research has demonstrated that merely modeling best practices or confronting preservice teachers' beliefs regarding these practices fails to produce meaningful change (Abell, Bryan, & Andersen, 1998; Abell & Bryan, 1997). Rather, Howes (2002) contends that recognition of the nuances of personal experiences and interpretations preservice teachers bring to the field of education might best assist them in acquiring a "critical consciousness" (p. 20) for implementing key teaching practices. Nevertheless, relatively few past studies feature preservice teachers both individually watching and collaboratively discussing their own digital video recordings (Zhang, Lundeberg, Koehler, & Eberhardt, 2011).

The Current Study

In light of the apparent shortage of prior research specifically focusing upon the potential of video as a means of supporting preservice teachers in reflecting upon self-elected teaching events, the present study attends to this matter through the application of “pause points.” Within the current study, such “pause points” serve as a stimulus for capturing reflection as preservice teachers experience either areas of successful practice or areas of potential improvement throughout their own lessons on the field and are requested to recall their reflections on those moments. The term “pause points” is employed to describe teaching episodes that compel the preservice teacher to engage in reflection in order to make an immediate decision about how to respond to a particular opportunity or challenge in practice. Ideally, the opportunity or challenge holds significance to the preservice teacher and perceivably denotes future implications for teaching practice.

The notion of “pause points” differs from what Tripp (1993) would describe as a “critical incident” in that individual teachers may consider some incidents in teaching to be more typical than others. Whereas in Tripp’s view, the most straightforward accounts of everyday occurrences may be rendered critical through future analysis, the “pause point” term suggests that the preservice teacher has previously perceived certain areas of successful practice or potential improvement in teaching and participated in some sort of reflection in order to establish their means of response. Thus, not all incidents in teaching would be considered “critical” to an individual, but many “pause points” in teaching could be characterized as such.

Additionally, the incorporation of “pause points” varies from Romano’s (2006) conception of “bumpy moments” in that within her research, such occurrences serve as an impetus for encapsulating the reflection of practicing educators and not necessarily preservice teachers. Moreover, as the name might imply, these “bumpy moments” function as a means of highlighting solely those experiences involving problematic episodes. Conversely, “pause points” comprise areas of potential improvement, or problematic instances, as well as areas of successful practice. Thus, within the present study, through considering both categories rather than excluding moments of success, preservice teachers are invited to reflect upon teaching practices that might warrant incorporation into subsequent lessons as well as those that might require some remedying. Ultimately, the process of utilizing “pause points” as a context for deliberating reflection in practice may offer an entry into revealing automatic reflective practice as well as the understandings and viewpoints preservice teachers generate when afforded additional time for more cognizant reflection.

Conclusion

As previously addressed within the current review of literature, investigation of prior studies regarding the topics of reflective practice and instructional technology implies that assimilation of both methods, particularly in conjunction with one another, holds the potential to powerfully influence the arena of teacher education in noteworthy respects. Although reflective practice has been frequently employed as a means of fostering meaningful teacher education exercises, the extent of its effectiveness reasonably depends upon the proficiency with which it is incorporated into such a

program. Naturally, this principle also applies to strategies such as mentoring, field experience, and the application of instructional technology. While each of these tools exhibits great potential, the process of establishing their worth and effectiveness in the pursuit of cultivating highly capable educators requires some measure of careful contemplation.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The preceding overview of literature highlighting the subjects of teacher preparation, reflective practice, field experience, interaction between experts and novices, and instructional technology has provided a brief analysis regarding existing concerns within these arenas of inquiry. This collection of issues comprises the foundation of the following study, and the ensuing research questions find their basis in these previously expounded upon matters.

The purpose of the present study regards consideration of the impact of preservice teachers' participation in video observations of their own lessons upon subsequent reflective practices. More specifically, the research questions addressed through this study are as follows:

1. In what ways do preservice teachers perceive that their participation in the video self-observation process impacts their reflective practices?
2. How do preservice teachers perceive that self-identified examples ("pause points") of either successful practice or areas of potential improvement provide opportunity for discussion and reflection regarding their professional practices?

3. In what respects do preservice teachers perceive that such reflection resulting from participation in the video observation process influences their professional practice?

Chapter Three illustrates the methods through which these questions function to direct this dissertation research. Specifically, the coming chapter offers an examination of the means utilized for investigating video observation's role in cultivating increasingly capable educators who are confident in their abilities to meaningfully impact future generations of learners.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

This investigation was designed to explore impact of preservice teachers' participation in the video self-observation process upon subsequent reflective practices. More specifically, the research questions addressed through this study are as follows:

1. In what ways do preservice teachers perceive that their participation in the video self-observation process impacts their reflective practices?
2. How do preservice teachers perceive that self-identified examples ("pause points") of either successful practice or areas of potential improvement provide opportunity for discussion and reflection regarding their professional practices?
3. In what respects do preservice teachers perceive that such reflection resulting from participation in the video observation process influences their professional practice?

This chapter offers an in-depth description of methodological framework utilized to collect and analyze the data in order to examine the effects of video observation upon preservice teachers' reflective practices. Descriptions of the data collection methods and data analysis procedures are contained within this chapter as well.

Methodology

The qualitative nature of the research questions greatly influenced my selection of narrative inquiry as a highly fitting methodological framework through which to conduct

this study. In making this selection, my intent was to present a vivid, illustrative account of three preservice teachers' video observation experiences, as well as to uncover details that might suggest a link between video observation and reflective practices.

According to Phillion (2002), "Narrative inquiries almost always are about people's lives, their interests, concerns, and passions" (p.17). Much research supports the notion that through narratives, people share their experiences (Coles, 1989; Wortham, 2001). As stated by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), "Experience happens narratively. Narrative inquiry is a form of narrative experience. Therefore, educational experiences should be studied narratively" (p.19). From the narrative inquiry standpoint of knowledge acquisition, preservice teachers, like all other individuals, make meaning of life through the use of stories. In fact, their methods of functioning within a classroom are storied. Teachers are authors of and characters within their own tales of teaching (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). Olson and Craig (2001) explain that "...each of us is authoring his/her own life while at the same time being a character in lives authored by others" (p. 668). Furthermore, "Because the narrative version of knowledge construction is transactional, authority comes from experience and is integral as each person both shapes his or her own knowledge and is shaped by the knowledge of others" (p. 670). Stories assist individuals in more thoroughly understanding themselves and serve as windows through which to observe the life experiences and perspectives of others.

Therefore, I elected to utilize narrative inquiry as a window through which to view the intricacies of three preservice teachers' encounters with the video observation process. In beholding and examining these individuals' experiences through the vantage point of a narrative researcher, I concerned myself with "making sense of experiences

that are unfolding in the present” as well as those that “have taken place in the recent past — with an eye to the future” (Craig, 2005, p. 216).

A personal interest in studying the complexities of preservice teachers’ experience with video observation through the lens of narrative inquiry initiated with my own video observation encounter, described within Chapter One. The time I spent conversing with preservice teachers about their videotaped lessons left me with a profound curiosity regarding the role that video observation plays in shaping preservice teachers’ reflective practices. As noted by Craig (2009), “... narrative inquiry is entirely dependent on participants’ *and* researchers’ capacities to reflect” (p. 114, italics in the original). Thus, in conducting this study, I sought not only to consider preservice teachers’ reflections prompted by their experience with video observation, but also my personal reflections upon this process, first through my initial encounter as a novice teacher, then throughout my time as a video facilitator, and ultimately within my current role, as the researcher.

Among the body of research regarding teacher education, there exists a history of narratives as a tool for studying reflective practices within teacher education programs and the ways in which teachers utilize narratives within classroom settings (Lyons & LaBoskey, 2002; McEwan & Egan, 1995). As explained by Bruner (1990), “People narrativize their experience of the world and of their own role in it” (p.115). Individuals’ stories offer a means of discerning their own viewpoints and the ways in which events within their lives have molded those viewpoints.

Narrative inquiry comprises a fundamental role among the collection of research that enlarges our knowledge of teaching and learning. Although inquiry-based research does not abide by an inflexible set of rules, it does encompass shared methods and

assumptions that serve to shape a tradition. Kuhn's (1962/1970) exploration of paradigms as exemplars forms the basis of Mishler's (1990) contention that a deep-seated tradition can possess a trustworthy standard. Building upon this research, Lyons and LaBoskey (2002) affirm that such exemplars possess the capacity to formulate a process for developing, communicating, examining, and transferring teacher knowledge. Although, by their very nature, studies involving the methodology of narrative inquiry cannot be replicated, the potential to develop shared strategies and values among narrative researchers certainly exists. Through explicitly describing methods and rationales, the narrative researcher provides a means by which others might subsequently conduct research through similar approaches. Yet, experiences involving individual participants and settings will naturally retain certain unique and inimitable elements.

In the words of Olson and Craig (2012), such narrative exemplars prove both “useful and valuable in representing the teaching enterprise” (p. 436). Lyons and LaBoskey (2002) maintain that narrative exemplars share five essential features that traverse all narrative inquiry research, regardless of the subject matter. Namely, narrative exemplars:

1. encapsulate deliberate human behaviors, thereby imparting a story while simultaneously transmitting the emerging knowledge of those individuals affected
2. find their basis in socially and contextually rooted circumstances; hence, readers glean germane background information and are invited to explore the thoughts of the research participants
3. bring others into the story as the narrative is unpacked

4. allude to the nuances of involved individuals' personalities as a corollary of the inquiry
5. emphasize interpretation, frequently taking different perspectives into account.

Within the context of this study, through specifically exploring three such exemplars, I utilized narrative inquiry as an instrument for examining the potential of video observation to impact the reflective practices of preservice teachers. Subsequently, Chapter Four offers insights regarding how these particular preservice teachers navigated the experiences, feelings, and understandings that surfaced during their individual encounters with the video observation process. An examination of these experiences, as revealed through their personal stories, serves to illuminate their perceptions regarding the role of reflection in their preparation to become teachers within their own classrooms.

Successively, within Chapter Five, I invite readers to peer through a broader lens, reflecting upon the relevant narrative links intermeshed throughout these three stories, together forming certain distinct, consolidated themes. In doing so, I engage in Schwab's (1969a) approach of "serial interpretation," whereby "encompassing ideas" within individual inquiries emerge, thus generating a point of entry through which new ideas materialize.

Narrative Interviews

The art of conducting research in any discipline involves constructing systematically sound methods and essentially posing the most appropriate questions. In light of the significance of asking pertinent questions, Kvale's publication entitled *InterViews* (1996) served as an indispensable guide through the process of planning,

implementing, and analyzing the results of the interviews utilized within this study. According to Kvale, this type of research interview fits the description of a “semi structured life world interview,” which is essentially defined as “an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena” (p. 5-6). Furthermore, such interviews span beyond the unstructured exchange of views that occurs in day-to-day conversations, thus developing into “a careful questioning and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thoroughly tested knowledge” (p. 6).

After identifying the specific knowledge to be sought, I was charged with the task of designing a means of eliciting this information through the interview process. Kvale suggests creating an interview guide that contains the central topics and questions, thus providing a formalized plan for gathering information. In terms of the design process, I found Kvale’s explanation of the principle that “the interviewer is the instrument” to be particularly noteworthy. He expounds upon this statement by affirming that the interview “does not follow content- and context-free questions, but rests on the judgments of a qualified researcher” (p. 105). Furthermore, “the outcome of an interview depends on the knowledge, sensitivity, and empathy of the interviewer” (p. 105). This notion of the interviewer as the instrument served as a poignant reminder of the tremendous responsibility my work as an interviewer entailed. Thus, an environment of sensitivity and empathy for my interviewees became an imperative.

Another aspect of Kvale’s work I found particularly helpful regards his discussion of the importance of “active listening,” or the interviewer’s adeptness at listening keenly to what the interviewee articulates. A crucial component of actively listening involves

listening without prejudice, allowing the interviewees' portrayals of their experiences to develop free of insinuating questions or comments from the interviewer. This concept particularly resonated with me, as I anticipated from the outset of the study that implementing the principle of listening without prejudice might prove to be somewhat challenging in an interviewing situation. Although my prior experience with video observation enabled me to personally observe its effectiveness for enhancing reflective practices, I was specifically careful to avoid developing interview questions or interpreting the participants' answers in such a way as to generate unsubstantiated support for this premise. Rather, in order to ensure that the information I received from the interviewees represented a true reflection of their experiences, I practiced the concept of researcher "reflexivity" (Johnson, 1997), consistently striving for mindfulness of the need to avoid such presumptions. Measures taken to avoid such researcher bias are described subsequently in the present chapter, within the section regarding validity.

The Interview Design Process

As a means of guarding against researcher bias and seeking to identify other potential issues in my interview design prior to actually conducting the interview, I solicited the advice of an expert within this context, namely a fellow graduate student serving as the video facilitator for the preservice teacher education program from whence my research originated. As the person who began fulfilling this role after my departure from the position, at the time of my study, Adam had met with approximately four hundred students throughout the course of two semesters. Therefore, he was vastly

familiar with the video observation process and the types of responses elicited from participants.

Prior to seeking his assistance, I initially formulated twenty interview questions based upon personal reflections regarding my research questions, the nature of the data I sought to collect, and Kvale's guidance for interviewers. However, based upon the wise counsel of my graduate advisor and out of a desire to consume no more than an hour of my interviewees' time, I endeavored to consolidate my original set of questions to approximately ten. This was accomplished largely through the Adam's assistance. After I had shared my intended research questions and original interview guide with him, Adam kindly and carefully sifted through the set of twenty, sorting them according to research question and eliminating those he felt to be less likely to elicit answers pertaining to my areas of inquiry. His efforts resulted in a condensed collection of twelve questions, thus providing me with a more manageable list from which to judiciously select a final ten.

As an interviewer, I sought to investigate how three preservice teachers' personal reflective practices were impacted through the process of viewing a video recording of themselves teaching a lesson, selecting areas of successful practice and areas of potential improvement, and discussing these moments of personal significance with a video facilitator. Qualitative researchers largely concur that interview questions should be constructed in an open-ended format and utilize commonplace, widely understood language (Merriam, 2009; Kvale, 1996). I structured the interviews and discussions on the basis of three categories: (a) the preservice teachers' views of reflection, (b)

descriptions of their personal reflection associated with the video observation process, and (c) their perceptions of the impact this reflection has upon their teaching practices.

An interview protocol containing the final ten questions prepared in advance of my meetings with these preservice teachers is found in Appendix A. Although this protocol served as a plan for the interviews, the intention was that some level of flexibility be maintained within the conversations. The consolidated list of questions provided leeway for follow up questions in addition to opportunities for developing rapport. A friendly relationship marked with respect between the interviewees and I served as an essential component of my inquiry design.

Additionally, as previously mentioned, I remained mindful of my role as a former video facilitator. This required my acknowledgement of the ways in which my own experiences might have impacted what I observed and perceived, as well as the ways in which the participants relayed their experiences.

Research Setting

According to Pierson and Borthwick (2010), “To assess the effectiveness of professional development in leading teachers [or preservice teachers, in this case] to long-lasting gains in knowledge, attitudes, and instructional behaviors, we must examine supporting factors within the teaching and learning context” (p. 128). Thus, this chapter would be incomplete without a depiction of the research setting wherein this study was conducted, commencing with a brief description of the university in which this particular video observation endeavor originated.

The University of Houston's College of Education teacher education program comprises the backdrop for this study. Positioned within the heart of the fourth most populous city in the United States, the University of Houston represents the third largest university in Texas and the nation's most ethnically diverse comprehensive research university.

The University's College of Education offers students the opportunity to learn about recent educational developments in a diverse urban setting through the teacher education program. Within the program, coursework and field experiences are specially constructed to provide preservice teachers with frequent opportunities to meaningfully interact with students in public schools throughout the greater Houston area. The student teaching phases of the program span an academic year, and during that time, field placement is integrated with associated coursework. As a content-focused program, the student teaching experience provides preservice teachers the opportunity to learn current methodology in addition to gaining performance-focused experiences, thereby engaging preservice teachers in the professional activities of teachers within school settings. Candidates are guided in the schools by cooperating teachers and trained university supervisors and graduate student facilitators, who are responsible for observing and appraising lessons taught by preservice teachers on the field.

Video Observation Process

As an extension of preservice teachers' field-based observation experiences, video observation comprises a significant component of the first student teaching semester. This assignment requires that each preservice teacher collaborate with his or her

cooperating teacher to develop a lesson plan to implement within the field experience classroom. Preservice teachers are instructed to create the lesson in such a way as to align with the guidelines and methodologies taught in their methods courses. These lessons may address any pertinent subject area or concept, provided that the content has been approved by the cooperating teacher. Once the lesson plan has been developed, each preservice teacher receives the opportunity to implement the plan within the field experience classroom while a fellow preservice teacher records the lesson on video. Although the program now requires that each preservice teacher complete two videotaped lessons per semester of field experience, at the time of data collection, preservice teachers were required to present only one videotaped lesson.

Pause points. After the lesson has concluded, the preservice teacher devotes time to personally reviewing the lesson prior to selecting and writing about teaching events, or “pause points,” that hold personal significance. Such “pause points” serve as an impetus for encapsulating reflection as preservice teachers experience either areas of successful practice or areas of potential improvement throughout the lesson. As previously alluded to in Chapter Two, the term “pause points” is employed to describe teaching episodes that compel the preservice teacher to engage in reflection regarding how best to respond to a particular opportunity or challenge in practice. Ideally, each opportunity or challenge bears significant meaning for the preservice teacher and quite possibly represents forthcoming effects upon the preservice teacher’s professional practice.

Pause points represent only brief moments, each of two minutes in length or less. Through the process of isolating such pause points, preservice teachers are invited to

reflect upon teaching practices that might merit inclusion in successive lessons as well as those that might necessitate adaptation. Ostensibly, the process of utilizing pause points as a tool for encouraging reflection in practice presents a window through which to view automatic reflective practice in addition to the understandings and viewpoints preservice teachers formulate when given time for profound reflection.

After establishing two pause points representing areas of successful practice and two signifying areas of potential improvement, the preservice teacher shares important background information regarding the lesson and pause points through completing the Video Observation Cover Sheet, which is found within Appendix C. Additionally, an overview of the steps mentioned above and leading up to the completing of this cover sheet resides within Appendix B. Each preservice teacher receives access to both the guide and the coversheet at the commencement of the semester via Blackboard Learn, an online learning management system utilized in the program.

Video observation meeting. Currently, the University of Houston's teacher education program field experience component provides preservice teachers the opportunity to consecutively view each formally observed lesson on video with a university-appointed field experience supervisor. At the time of this study, however, a video facilitator held sole responsibility for viewing video recordings of lessons on the university campus, alongside each preservice teacher, rather than viewing live lessons taught in the field. This facilitator's role included encouraging each preservice teacher's progression of reflection upon his or her teaching practices through specifically addressing areas of perceived successful practice as well as those in which improvement

might be necessitated. As previously stated, within the context of the video observation process, these moments are referred to as “pause points.”

Through meetings of approximately fifteen minutes in length with roughly two hundred preservice teachers each semester, the video facilitator was granted countless opportunities to journey alongside these budding educators as they negotiated through tensions, challenges, and triumphs of teaching. At the time of this study, all meetings took place within a College of Education computer lab, and the preservice teachers were responsible for scheduling a time segment in which to meet with the video facilitator via a wiki site calendar available through Blackboard Learn. Each preservice teacher was required to submit their Video Observation Cover Sheet via Blackboard Learn at least twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting in order to provide the video facilitator ample time for review. Currently, video observation meetings between preservice teachers and their supervisors encompass a lengthier timeframe and typically take place on the field experience campus subsequent to each preservice teacher’s lesson.

At the time of this study, every meeting began with a brief oral overview provided by the preservice teacher, including the grade level in which the lesson was taught, the title of the lesson, and the objectives of the lesson. From that point forward, the preservice teacher and the video facilitator viewed the preselected pause points in sequential order. After viewing one and before proceeding to the next, the video facilitator invited the preservice teacher to expound upon his or her reasons for designating that particular moment as significant. Typical questions offered by the video facilitator include the following:

- What about this moment causes you to describe it as an area of successful practice?
- What about this moment causes you to describe it as an area of potential improvement?
- What did you see yourself doing that you would like to implement again in future lessons?
- What would you do differently if you had the opportunity to repeat that part of the lesson?

Questions such as these invited the preservice teacher to reflect upon moments of engagement with the students, thus entering a place between two stories, or a liminal space (Heilbrun, 1999). Liminality, as defined by Heilbrun (1999), is a situation characterized by "its unsteadiness, its lack of clarity about exactly where one belongs and what one should be doing, or wants to be doing" (p. 3); ultimately, such moments represent a "state of necessary in-betweenness" (p. 98). Within classroom settings, these potentially educative places encompass opportunities for teachers and students to co-construct and enact their own storylines (Heilbrun, 1999). Though liminal spaces sometimes seem arduous as preservice teachers transition from a place of assurance to ambiguity, these spaces permit them to envision innovative possibilities and novel stories by which to live (Huber, Murphy, & Clandinin, 2003).

Although every meeting included a review and discussion of all four pause points, the percentage of time spent conversing about each one varied significantly from one meeting to the next. The individual questions and concerns of each preservice teacher largely determined the path traversed at the meetings, and the specific topics addressed

diverged tremendously depending upon each preservice teacher's areas of interest and inquiry. No matter the route taken, the emphasis of every meeting remained, of course, providing an opportunity for discourse and reflection foreseeably leading to future applications to professional practice.

Video facilitator. As previously mentioned in Chapter One, my initial graduate assistantship role entailed serving as the teacher education program's video facilitator. Prior to that time, preservice teachers participated only in live observations conducted by a graduate assistant facilitator within their field experience classrooms. After nine years of teaching elementary students full-time, I felt both excited and privileged to work alongside preservice teachers in this very foundational stage of their journey as educators. Due to my personal involvement in this undertaking on an almost daily basis and the powerful effect the process of video observation rendered upon my early teaching experiences, I considered the opportunity to journey alongside preservice teachers through this activity both an honor and a pleasure.

Although I eventually moved on from the position of video facilitator in order to perform another function within the university's teacher education program, the two semesters in which I fulfilled this position placed a deep-seated curiosity within my mind in regards to the nature of this experience's influence upon preservice teachers' reflective practices. At the time of this study, a fellow doctoral student within the College of Education's Learning, Design, and Technology program who is also an experienced teacher served as the program's video facilitator.

Participant Selection

Within this study, I sought to focus on exploring the impact of the video observation process upon the reflective practices of preservice teachers who had most recently participated in this experience. I based my reasoning upon the assumption that preservice teachers who had encountered video observation within the preceding semester might more accurately recall and be able to discuss their experience and its influence upon their reflective practices. Additionally, as a means of eliminating the nature of researcher bias possibly resulting from attempts to interview a student for whom I had served as video facilitator, I sought to obtain participants from a semester during which I no longer occupied this role. In order to provide a reasonable scope for this study, I elected to base my research upon the data collected and analyzed from three in-depth interviews. Figure 1 displays a timeline of the entire process of participant selection and data collection for this study. Throughout this study, I utilized pseudonyms for the individuals mentioned in order to retain their anonymity.

| January | March | May | June | July | August |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| Sent recruitment script to most recent video observation participants | Conducted interview with Joy Chin | Presented initial results at candidacy defense | Sought suggestions from current video facilitator regarding additional participants | Received responses from two interested participants | Conducted interview with Grace Moore |
| Received three responses from interested participants | | Received approval to seek two additional interview participants | Sent recruitment script to approximately twenty recent video participants | Conducted interview with Christina Palacios | |

Figure 1. Timeline for the participant selection and data collection processes.

In January of 2013, approximately one week after the conclusion of the Fall 2012 semester, I sent a recruitment script via mass email to each of the approximately two hundred most recent video observation participants, utilizing the addresses provided to the university by the students at the time of their enrollment in the teacher education program. A copy of this script resides within Appendix D. Subsequent to sending this initial email, I received three responses from preservice teachers interested in participating in the study. After contacting them via email to express gratitude for their willingness to participate and attempting to identify a convenient time in which to conduct an interview on the university campus, I began to realize that due to the students' tremendously full schedules in their final semester of field experience, pinpointing an opportune time for an interview within the necessary timeframe entailed a challenge. Even still, one of the students, Joy Chin, managed to spare time enough to meet on campus; thus, she served as my initial interview participant for this study.

Although I initially intended to interview all three preservice teachers as a component of my candidacy research, my advisor astutely suggested that focusing upon one interview within this stage might provide the most effective means of testing the interview protocol, thus allowing me to analyze the initial results and devise necessary adaptations prior to proceeding with the other two interviews.

In May 2013, after presenting the results of this initial interview during a defense before my candidacy committee members, I received approval to proceed in seeking two additional interview participants. At the committee's recommendation, I sought suggestions from Adam, the current video facilitator, in regards to students who might be able to share their insights, whether positive or negative, concerning the video

observation process. Thus, shortly after the closing of the Spring 2013 semester, I sent the previously utilized recruitment script via email to the approximately twenty preservice teachers Adam recommended, all of whom had recently participated in the video observation process. Following my emails, I received exactly two responses from preservice teachers interested in participating in the study.

In this interview process, there existed a potential source of sampling bias in that the preservice teachers who took part in this study fundamentally self-selected their participation. Narrative interviews regarding other preservice teachers' experiences would, of course, have resulted in entirely different data. Yet, had I somehow coerced the participation of certain preservice teachers, I might then have encountered the issue of less forthright and potentially even unwilling participants, a situation which would almost certainly contribute to data bias.

Approval to conduct the research hinged on the prerequisite that preservice teachers be informed of the strictly voluntary nature of their participation, as well as their entitlement to discontinue participation at any point. As remarked by Erickson (1986), "Trust and rapport in fieldwork are not simply a matter of niceness; a noncoercive, mutually rewarding relationship with key informants is essential if the researcher is to gain valid insights into the informant's point of view" (p. 142). Another means of fostering trust and rapport in my relationship with the participants involved the assurance of the confidentiality of their participation in this project. Documentation containing their names was kept separate from all research materials and available to no one other than me.

Data Collection

In the fall of 2012, I obtained permission to conduct the study from the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects. Following each participant's offer to volunteer time for an interview, the informed consent document, available in Appendix E, was disseminated and collected subsequent to completion. In the spring of 2013, I interviewed Joy, essentially at the midway point in the semester. I conducted the second interview – this time with Christina – within the first week of July, 2013. My final interview with Grace took place approximately one month later, within the first week of August. Through use of an open-ended interview protocol (Appendix A), each participant was invited to comment upon her view of reflection, descriptions of her personal reflection associated with the video observation process, and her perceptions of the impact this reflection rendered upon future teaching practices. Each interview lasted for approximately one hour, and the contents of the interviews were audio-taped and subsequently transcribed for the purposes of analysis.

Figure 2 provides an overview of the three participants' personal and professional characteristics.

| Participant Pseudonyms | Joy Chin | Christina Palacios | Grace Moore |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Age | 35 | 51 | 23 |
| Home Country | China | Venezuela | United States |
| Student Classification | Graduate | Undergraduate | Undergraduate |
| Certification Sought | 8-12 | EC-6, Bilingual | EC-6 |
| Professional Teaching Experience | Secondary chemistry teacher in China | Elementary school paraprofessional in Houston | No prior teaching experience |

Figure 2. Table of participants' personal and professional attributes.

Data Analysis

In Kvale's (1996) words, the purpose of the qualitative research interview might best be described as "the description and interpretation of themes in the subjects' lived world" (p. 187). Furthermore, "a continuum exists between description and interpretation" (p. 187). The process of interview analysis involves distinct phases, which are explained in depth within the subsequent paragraphs.

A first step in Kvale's (1996) process encompasses the interviewee's descriptions of their "lived world" during the interview. In this stage, the interviewee freely expresses personal experiences, feelings, or actions relating to a given a topic. Within the context

of this study, this phase involved little interpretation or explanation from either the interviewer or the interviewees.

The phase of Kvale's (1996) interview process in which the participant themselves uncovers novel relationships and observes new meanings in their experiences and behaviors comprises the second step. During this step, the interviewee begins to perceive previously unobserved connections in their life worlds based upon their spontaneous descriptions. This stage, like the first, allowed for autonomy from interpretation by me, the interviewer.

The third step (Kvale, 1996) involves condensation and interpretation of meaning by the interviewer during the course of the interview. The interviewer "sends" the meaning back to the interviewee, thereby granting the interviewee opportunity to respond with such statements as "That was not what I meant to say," or "That was exactly what I was intending to say," or "No, I did not quite feel that way. It was more like..." Preferably, this sort of dialogue proceeds until only one interpretation remains, or it is plausible that the interviewee holds multiple interpretations of one theme. Kvale explains that this mode of interviewing entails "an ongoing 'on-the-line' interpretation with the possibility of an 'on-the-spot' confirmation or disconfirmation of the interviewer's interpretations" (p.189), thus resulting in a "self-correcting" interview.

The fourth step (Kvale, 1996) entails the transcription process by the interviewer, which consists of the following three elements: structuring, clarification, and analysis proper. Once the interview material has been structured via transcription in preparation for analysis, the interview may begin the clarification process. Kvale describes clarification as a mode of making the transcribed material "amenable to analysis" (p.

190). Within the present study, this was accomplished through eradicating unessentials such as asides and reiterations, thus differentiating between the necessary and the unnecessary. Much of this process of determining the essential versus the unessential hinged upon the research questions and the study's theoretical premises. Upon completion of the clarification stage, the analysis proper began, which involved elaborating upon the meanings of the interviews, shedding light upon the personal understandings of the participants, and offering my own original perceptions.

Narrative Structuring

According to Kvale (1996), there exist five primary approaches to the analysis of meaning: condensation, categorization, narrative structuring, interpretation, and ad hoc. I elected to utilize the process of narrative structuring in analyzing the interview data for this study, primarily due to this strategy's relevance to the methodological framework of narrative inquiry.

An interview analysis might be described as "a form of narration, as a continuation of the story told by the interviewee" (Kvale, 1996, p. 199). Furthermore, a narrative analysis of the words spoken by an interviewee often precedes an additional story to be shared, a story extending the themes present within the original interview. Narrative structuring involves the sequential and social organization of text in order to extract its meaning. This type of analysis emphasizes the stories shared throughout an interview and excavates their structure and plot. In the event that stories are not told instinctively, a narrative analysis may attempt to construct a coherent story from the experiences conveyed throughout an interview. The process of structuring through

narratives typically results in text reduction; however, it also may also serve to extend the text through the development of meaning possibilities from a basic interview story into an increasingly rich narrative.

Mishler's publication entitled *Research Interviewing – Context and Narrative* (1986) comprises a foundational work exploring the role of narratives in interview research. Within this piece, he delineates the numerous interpretative prospects of treating interviews as narratives, therein highlighting the temporal, social, and meaning structures of narratives. Every narrative includes a temporal sequence, or an arrangement of events. Narratives also encompass social element in that they include one individual's sharing of a story with another person. Additionally, every narrative contains meaning, providing the story with a purpose and a unifying theme. Throughout the process of analysis, the researcher may fluctuate between the role of "narrative-finder" – searching for narratives obtained from the interview – and the role of "narrative-creator" – fashioning the various experiences shared into narrative stories (Kvale, 1996).

In accordance with the work of Kvale and Mishler, Riessman (1993) reminds researchers that "narratives do not speak for themselves or have unanalyzed merit; they require interpretation when used as data in social research" (p. 2). The specific type of narrative analysis employed in my study might best be described by Riessman as "interactional analysis." This method of analysis emphasizes the dialogic process between teller and listener. Although awareness of thematic content and narrative structure are not without purpose in the interactional approach, attention shifts to storytelling as an activity of co-construction, in which teller and listener generate meaning in concert. Within this model, "stories of personal experience, organized around

the life world of the teller, may be inserted into question and answer exchanges” (p. 4). This approach necessitates that transcripts incorporate all participants in the conversation. As explained by Craig (2005), “... narrative inquirers are actively involved narrators – frequently co-participants” (p. 217). Ultimately, both narrative inquiry and reflective practice are “fueled by researchers’ and participants’ reflective capacities” (Craig, 2009, p. 108).

Inductive Analysis

The inductive analysis process employed within this study entails three primary approaches, namely categorizing, memoing, and contextualizing (Maxwell, 2012). These three strategies of analysis were intertwined throughout and subsequent to the data collection process rather than being utilized discretely.

Categorizing. Through repetitive reading of the interview transcripts, I made note of potential themes regarding video observation and reflective practices. Then, I grouped the themes into broader, interrelated categories. Upon completing this process, I utilized these categories to code essential details concerning the data. Finally, in an effort to grasp new meanings in relation to video observation and preservice teachers’ reflective practices, I created preliminary summaries of each category.

Memoing. The process of constructing memos provided an initial means of speculating about ideas and the relationships between ideas that emerged from categories at each stage of data analysis. In reviewing the interview transcripts, memo writing

enabled me to identify relationships between pieces of empirical data to the more extensive topics of video observation and reflective practices.

Contextualizing. Strategies for contextualizing facilitated my understandings of the meaning of data in context through associations of broad themes, eventually leading to a unified final product. I constructed summaries of categories in order to describe the ways in which the categories corresponded with one another. This process gave rise to a series of contentions about the impact of video observation upon preservice teachers' reflective practices. The ensuing stage of analysis entailed testing the validity of these assertions, which Erickson (1986) refers to as "establishing the warrant." In order to address this imperative, I methodically probed through the data records in search of tangible examples to either verify or refute each contention. Finally, I sought patterns spanning my assertions, thus assisting in the formation of credible explanations of my interviewees' intended meanings.

Judging the Validity of Findings

As explained by Johnson (1997), "When qualitative researchers speak of research validity, they are usually referring to qualitative research that is plausible, credible, trustworthy, and, therefore, defensible" (p. 282). Thus, rather than endeavoring to uncover and report upon indisputable or objective evidence, my purpose in conducting this study encompassed the presentation of a reasonable, convincing, and thorough interpretation of the research findings. Maxwell (2012) advises that the most effective means of addressing issues of validity within the spheres of qualitative research involves

considering potential threats to validity. Thus, validity encompasses a strategy for understanding and attending to such threats.

Internal Validity

Internal validity serves as a measure of how precisely the research findings mirror what truly took place within the study. In other words, this type of validity relates to the degree to which a study examines what it is designed to examine or “the extent to which our observations indeed reflect the phenomena or variables of interest to us” (Pervin, 1984, p. 48). Within the realms of qualitative research, the prevailing view of validity finds its basis in the epistemology that the responsibility for knowledge construction rests with each individual.

This study incorporated a variety of approaches designed to augment internal validity. For example, one method I utilized consistently throughout the planning, data collection, and analysis phases of the study might best be described as “reflexivity.” This strategy involves a researcher’s “self-awareness and critical ‘self-reflection’ on his or her potential biases and predispositions as these may affect the research processes and conclusions” (Johnson, 1997, p. 283). As mentioned in my discussion of Kvale’s (1996) emphasis upon “listening without prejudice,” from the outset of the study, I became aware of the importance of consistent and conscious endeavors on my part to remain mindful of probable biases in my process of designing and conducting the interviews and analyzing the data, thus seeking to avoid as many such threats to validity within my means. Due to my previously explained involvement in the video observation process, both as a participant and as a facilitator, I began with the understanding that researcher

bias might well represent an issue within this study. Accordingly, I transitioned from my role as video facilitator prior to beginning my research, thus eliminating the impact that a formerly established relationship as facilitator might have upon my research participants' willingness to answer interview questions candidly.

Additionally, as a means of addressing issues of validity, I sought "participant feedback," which involves "the feedback and discussion of the researcher's interpretations and conclusions with the actual participants," all the while seeking verification and understanding of the participants' viewpoints (Johnson, 1997, p. 283). Throughout the interview process, I employed Kvale's (1996) aforementioned techniques of condensation and interpretation of meaning. These strategies provided for instantaneous confirmation or disconfirmation of my interpretations from the interviewees, ultimately resulting in "self-correcting" interviews.

Finally, I utilized the technique of "peer review" (Johnson, 1997) when constructing my interview questions. As earlier described within this chapter, I submitted my initial twenty research questions to the current video facilitator for review, asking him to assist by identifying which questions might be most applicable for the purposes of effectively addressing my research questions. Additionally, I implored the advice of other colleagues and professors familiar with the concept of video observation in teacher education programs, as well as individuals unaccustomed with this topic.

Plausibility

Unlike quantitative research, within the qualitative research paradigm, reliability cannot reasonably hinge on the prospect of repeating a study in order to produce identical

outcomes. Because educational research is assumed to be in fluctuation, multidimensional, and decidedly contextual, and also because the results of the data collection process are highly contingent upon the behavior of the participants and the researcher's ability to effectively gather information, reliability in the quantitative sense might well be considered unattainable (Merriam, 2009). As explained by Craig (2005), narrative studies in particular should be considered "as tending to have a live, unresolved quality about them—simply because the lives of the study participants are still unraveling and issues cannot be viewed in hindsight" (p. 216).

Rather than being conducted with the "purpose of explaining" as in quantitative research, useful qualitative research maintains the purpose of "generating understanding" (Stenbacka, 2001, p. 551). An effective qualitative study can help a reader to "understand a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing" (Eisner, 1991, p. 58). The distinction in purposes of evaluating the quality of research in the quantitative and qualitative realms lends further support to the irrelevance of reliability in qualitative research (Golafshani, 2003).

Thus, the practical intention of this study involves a presentation of dependable results that "generate understanding" and hold meaning for the reader. I sought dependability through reviewing the data I collected for substantiation of every contention presented and provided as comprehensive an explanation as possible of my methods of data analysis.

Generalizability

Generalizability describes the extent to which one study might be employed to clarify or lend understanding to an alternative circumstance. Traditionally, scientific knowledge lays claim to generalizability; furthermore, from a positivist viewpoint, the goal of social science involves developing laws of human behavior in order to generalize these laws universally (Kvale, 1996). Yet, a contrasting view often applied to qualitative research implies that “every situation is unique, each phenomenon has its own structure and logic” (Kvale, 1996, p. 232).

In addressing the issue of generalizability as it relates to case study research, Stake (1994) provides the following definition: “Qualitative case study is characterized by the main researcher spending substantial time, on site, personally in contact with the activities and operations of the case, reflecting, revising meanings of what is going on” (p. 242). Instead of instinctively generalizing conclusions to a separate situation in which conditions cannot conceivably be identical, the reader of qualitative studies must engage in what Stake terms “naturalistic generalization.” Naturalistic generalization relies upon personal experience, meaning that it arises for an individual as a function of personal experience. Furthermore, it originates from an individual’s understanding of the way things are, resulting in expectations rather than more formalized predictions.

Conclusion

In the words of Craig (2009), “Truth in narrative inquiry and other forms of reflective inquiry is fundamentally different than in quantitative research where a single vision of capital ‘T’ Truth prevails. Instead of one capital ‘T’ Truth, trustworthiness is

generally sought in narrative inquiry, reflective practice, and other kinds of qualitative research” (p. 111). Furthermore, trustworthiness might be defined as “the degree to which other practitioners or researchers turn to, rely or will rely on, and *use* the concepts, methods, and inferences of a practice as the basis of their own theorizing, research, or practice” (Mishler, 1990, p. 419, italics in the original).

In conducting and presenting this study, I purposed to provide readers with a multifaceted narrative account of the video observation process and its implications, thereby enabling them to vicariously experience the ways in which this specific event impacted three particular preservice teachers’ lives. The successive chapter features descriptions of in-depth interviews exploring the tensions, challenges, and triumphs these individuals negotiated through their encounter with this highly personalized, self-exploratory process.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

This study was designed to explore the impact of preservice teachers' participation in the video observation experience upon their subsequent reflective practices. Within the current chapter, findings are initially described in the fashion of illustrative vignettes, as a means of familiarizing the reader with the preservice teacher participants involved in this study. In many instances, the exact words of the participants are utilized, extracted directly from the interview transcripts and adapted in structure, yet not modified in content in order to remain coherent with the narrative form.

As a means of attending to the research questions, the descriptive reports of the interview are arranged around the three questions themselves. Subsequent to the narrative accounts, contentions are presented according to theme along with data examples, thereby offering a method of extrapolating meaning from the preservice teacher participants' responses throughout the interviews.

Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the three participants' personal and professional characteristics.

| Participant Pseudonyms | Joy Chin | Christina Palacios | Grace Moore |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Age | 35 | 51 | 23 |
| Home Country | China | Venezuela | United States |
| Student Classification | Graduate | Undergraduate | Undergraduate |
| Certification Sought | 8-12 | EC-6, Bilingual | EC-6 |
| Professional Teaching Experience | Secondary chemistry teacher in China | Elementary school paraprofessional in Houston | No prior teaching experience |

Figure 4.1. Table of participants' personal and professional attributes.

Joy Chin

Personal and Professional Stories

Prior to relocating from China to the United States approximately four years ago, Joy had been teaching chemistry to secondary students for a year and a half. Her move to Houston was prompted by an invitation her husband received to work for a prominent college of medicine within the city, and Joy sincerely hopes that she and her husband, along with their young child, will have the opportunity to remain in the United States for an extended period of time. Although she is currently attending school through a Student

Visa, she anticipates one day procuring a Green Card and ultimately raising her child within her new country.

In China, Joy earned a teaching certificate specifically authorizing her to teach chemistry. As a student in the United States, Joy is enrolled in the Master's program in Curriculum and Instruction, working to obtain a certification allowing her to teach science to students in grades 8 – 12. Within the teacher education program, she has only one semester remaining before achieving this goal. Once she has successfully completed the program and earned her teaching certificate, Joy greatly looks forward to employing the skills she has learned throughout her time at the university in her own high school chemistry classroom.

When asked what inspired her to pursue the profession of teaching, Joy thoughtfully and earnestly replied, “I like to help students improve. I have a strong passion to be a teacher. This cannot be said in very simple words. It’s just a love for me.” Joy’s “strong passion” for teaching became increasingly apparent as her story unfolded throughout the interview, described in detail in the following sections of this chapter.

Framing the Interview

In the words of Kvale (1996), the interview functions as “a stage upon which knowledge is constructed through the interviewer and the interviewee roles” (p. 127). The importance of “setting the interview stage” cannot be overestimated, as this process encourages the extent to which the interviewee will express through words personal perspectives on their life and experiences (Kvale, 1996). Accordingly, Kvale

recommends that interviewees be afforded a context for the interview, more specifically through a briefing prior to commencing and debriefing at the conclusion of the interview. Through the briefing process of Joy and the successive two interviewees, I defined the interview situation, concisely describing the purpose of the interview, my use of the tape recorder, reassurance of my commitment to their anonymity, and other such significant details, all of which are listed in the interview protocol (Appendix A). Additionally, I invited each participant to ask any questions they might have before proceeding.

The preliminary minutes of an interview are pivotal, as most interviewees naturally desire to establish some level of familiarity with the interviewer before talking openly about personal experiences (Kvale, 1996). Although Joy mentioned that she recognized me from our mutual attendance at several sizeable student meetings throughout the semester prior to our interview, we had never directly conversed. Thus, I sought to create rapport with Joy, as well as with Christina and Grace, through attentive listening and exhibiting a keen interest in, appreciation for, and respect of their words. Simultaneously, I endeavored to assist them in feeling comfortable through demonstrating my own ease with the situation and clarity regarding the information I desired to obtain.

Research Question One

The initial three questions I focused upon during my interview with Joy were designed to address the following research question: “In what ways do preservice teachers perceive that their participation in the video self-observation process impacts their reflective practices?”

When asked to describe the process of reflection in her own words, Joy immediately began to talk about the ways in which her video observation experience has been helpful in enabling her to reflect upon the high school chemistry lesson she created and presented for this assignment. She mentioned that through the process of viewing the video, “Watching my performance gave me very direct information. I could see my students’ reflection upon my instruction. I have asked a lot of students from China [also within the program], and they like this too.” After I prompted Joy to talk more generally about her views of reflection, I sensed that she had difficulty describing the term “reflection” in her own words. Although she spoke easily about her personal progression of reflection through the video observation experience, defining reflection apart from a set context presented a challenge. Eventually, Joy conveyed a description of reflection as a process of taking time to analyze problems and formulate plans for improvement.

Next, I asked Joy to explain, in as much detail as possible, her most recent experience with reflecting on her own teaching practices. She recalled that throughout the previous semester, she was assigned a significant amount of reading every two weeks from the book entitled *Teach Like a Champion* (Lemov, 2010). According to Joy, “I learned a lot of things from the book and from my cooperating teacher. Before the semester began, I had no idea about American high school, but afterwards, I knew about 80% more than before.”

As a means of continuing to address my first research question before proceeding to the second, I requested that Joy begin thinking specifically about her experience with the video observation process prior to asking, “In what ways, if any, did your

participation in the video observation process prompt you to reflect on your teaching practices?”

As with the previous question, she appeared quite certain of her answer, responding without hesitation,

I talked with Adam [the current video facilitator] and discussed the disadvantages of my instruction [throughout the lesson], and that was very helpful. I also talked with him about the successful points of my video observation, and this was also very helpful because he not only agreed with me but also shared his own strategies for making teaching practices more helpful for all students.

Additionally, Joy’s thoughts regarding this question prompted her to refer to another component of the university’s preservice teacher education program, the College of Education’s Teacher Research Symposium. Each semester, preservice teachers are invited to reflect on a concept they are curious about in their teaching, which develops into a foundation for their research. In fulfillment of this assignment, preservice teachers study their own teaching practices, initially through contemplating a "wondering" question regarding what occurs in the classroom. Next, they gather data in preparation to conduct a roundtable discussion for the symposium.

At the Research Symposium, each roundtable is comprised of five or six student presenters who share their work in progress, and numerous roundtable discussions occur simultaneously within the same room. Each presenter delivers an oral report lasting approximately five minutes, and once everyone has accomplished their individual talks, a discussion ensues regarding specific projects as well as various themes and inquiries that span multiple endeavors. This format provides for maximum interaction among participants from numerous disciplines, affording a highly effective resource by which preservice teachers are able to talk through their research in progress. For the majority of

the preservice teachers, this research is sustained throughout the subsequent semester as they continue in their field placement.

In reference to her experience at the Research Symposium as it relates to video observation, Joy explained, “During the roundtable, we showed our videos and reinforced the strategies in the book [*Teach Like a Champion*]. Sometimes the video helped us to think about the practices in the book and modify them for our students.” The added element of the preservice teachers presenting and discussing their video observations with one another, in addition to the video facilitator, comprised an unexpected component of the interview. However, Joy’s comments caused me to begin thinking about how this process might serve as an added impetus for further, enhanced reflection resulting from the video observation experience. Joy’s descriptions of her reflections corresponding to the video observation process provided a fitting transition to the successive set of questions.

Research Question Two

After addressing the first three interview questions, the next section served as a means of focusing upon the second research question: “How do preservice teachers perceive that self-identified examples (“pause points”) of either successful practice or areas of potential improvement provide opportunity for discussion and reflection regarding their professional practices?”

My initial question regarding pause points involved the impact that personally selecting two areas of successful practice and two areas of potential improvement rendered upon Joy’s process of reflection. In response, she explained that through

watching her video and contemplating individually significant moments of instruction, “You can see your performance very directly and you can reflect by yourself, even if no person is there. For example, I thought about different ways I could stand and get my students involved.” Joy particularly noted her realization that “next time, I need to not talk so much but to get my students involved directly.”

Attempting to prompt her to expound upon these thoughts, I next asked Joy, “In what ways, if any, did identifying pause points prepare you to discuss your thoughts on your lesson with the video facilitator?”

After taking a moment to ponder her answer to this question, Joy rejoined, “Of course [identifying pause points prior to the meeting] was helpful! You must see things yourself first, and then you can have something to tell someone else. I would say that this is absolutely necessary to prepare before the meeting.”

As a concluding means of addressing the second research question, I asked Joy to describe the ways in which her conversation with the video facilitator impacted her reflection upon her lesson. Prior to sharing her thoughts about this question, Joy felt it necessary to provide me with additional background information regarding her rapport with the video facilitator. She explained that in a semester prior to her video observation experience, she attended a science methods course with Adam. Thus, she expounded, “We had fairly similar feelings about how to teach science, and especially chemistry.” Throughout the meeting, she continued, “We shared many things together, so we had a very good talk. Actually, fifteen minutes was not enough time.”

Expressing my gratitude for her forthrightness concerning this suggestion, I asked, “How much time would be enough for this meeting, would you imagine?”

Joy thought for a moment before replying, “It’s difficult to say, because I’m not sure about other students. I have no idea if they would need more time. Twenty minutes or half an hour would give more time for even more specific instruction.” At this point, prior to moving on to the concepts relating to the final research question, I again conveyed my appreciation for Joy’s recommendation, affirming that such suggestions were well noted and might potentially serve to further strengthen the program.

Research Question Three

The final four questions of the interview involved my pursuit of data regarding research question three: “In what respects do preservice teachers perceive that such reflection resulting from participation in the video observation process influences their professional practice?”

I began this section by asking Joy to describe her thoughts about how her personal video observation encounter affected her teaching practices. She immediately recalled several specific and personally significant examples. For instance, she commented, “I need to speak more loudly because I could not clearly hear myself in the video.”

She continued, “I need to make my conversation more flexible.” After requesting that she expound upon this thought, she explained, “I can make my students understand me about the content. But, I need to make my students feel more relaxed, more comfortable... Sometimes you need to make students relaxed, and then they will be more interested in the content you will teach.” My efforts to seek further clarification regarding Joy’s intended meaning allowed me to perceive that the process of analyzing her video brought her to the conclusion that speaking with her students in a more

conversational as opposed to formal style might further enhance their interest in the content and thus their learning experience.

Next, Joy provided another example of lessons learned through the video observation experience. “Chemistry lessons typically require activities in the lab, so I think maybe I need to give students a more reasonable time to finish their activities.” In other words, while viewing the video of her lesson, Joy observed her students struggling to complete their lab assignments within the allotted time, thus leading her to the conclusion that an expanded timetable might provide for a richer hands-on experience for her students.

Additionally, Joy shared her realizations regarding the collaborative aspect of her lesson. She explained, “I separated students into four groups, and some were a little bit delayed to finish the job. I need to pay more attention and put these students in a more efficient group or give these students more specific instruction.” She spoke at length about how analyzing the video, both alone and with Adam, enabled her to perceive that students might have accomplished their tasks more effectively and encountered a more valuable learning experience had the groups been configured somewhat differently. She determined that strategically constructed mixed ability groups in which struggling learners have access to the guidance of more advanced students would have best accomplished these goals.

Intrigued by her findings, I next questioned, “Did you find yourself starting to put these ideas into practice?” After Joy enthusiastically responded in the affirmative, I asked, “Did you begin to see these effects immediately, or did it take more time?”

Joy replied, “It didn’t take a lot of time, because you immediately realize what’s wrong with your teaching. For me, I know what I’m going to do in the next class. I just know.”

Interested to learn more regarding her discoveries through her video observation experience, I asked Joy to share what aspect or aspects of the video observation process she found most helpful. Without hesitation, she responded, “Talking with Adam. You have someone helping you to analyze some problems and to give you direction on how to improve. I think that’s helpful.” She continued to speak at length regarding the importance of the video facilitator’s role and qualifications:

I don’t know the background of Adam, but having a discussion with someone helpful after watching the video is very important. I hope the person will be very professional. I would like someone there who has a very strong background, someone who also teaches high school science who has strong experience. They could give very key points for students.

Joy then began to discuss an additional, related element of her video observation experience, one which I had not previously anticipated. She began to speak of Kelly, the graduate facilitator responsible for conducting live observations of her teaching and serving as a guide for her and twenty-five other fellow preservice teachers throughout the semester. Interestingly, Kelly happened to be visiting Joy’s school on the day of her video observation, providing her the opportunity to view Joy’s lesson live as it was being recorded on video. Expanding on her perspective regarding the significance of a seasoned and highly qualified “experienced other” with whom to review video lessons, Joy continued,

Actually, I think that Kelly is a very good teacher and a very experienced teacher. I talked with her after the video observation and she gave me very clear direction and shared her own experience. That is also helpful. If she has time, if she can work with Adam together, that would be good.

I don't know if this is practical. For me, two people would be wonderful. Kelly was present during the video, and after that, we talked. She gave me some very valuable suggestions.

Joy's thoughts regarding this particular question provided me with novel insights to consider regarding the magnitude of the video facilitator's responsibility and the significant impact that his or her experiences and insights might render upon students' reflections and responses stemming from this experience. This portion of our conversation left me with much to contemplate concerning this particular aspect of video observation.

In an attempt to prompt Joy to consider additional ideas for enhancement of the video observation experience, I next asked her to describe the aspect or aspects of the process she found least helpful. After a long pause, Joy simply commented, "Nothing. It was all helpful." In truth, I had been hopeful that she might be able to offer some suggestions for improvement other than the previously mentioned extended time allotment for the video facilitator meetings, realizing that such recommendations might well function to enrich the program and the students involved. After confirming that she could offer no additional suggestions, I invited her to contact me at any time, should a new insight come to mind.

Before concluding our interview, I asked Joy if she might be able to briefly compare and contrast her video observation experience with her live observation experience, in which Kelly had observed another of Joy's lessons and met with her afterward in order to discuss her performance in depth. Joy explained,

I can actually see my teaching in the video. I think it's better to have the video. [After the live observation], Kelly told me, 'Okay, you can improve here.' But I

don't know exactly what the problem is with this point. I just think, 'Next time I'll pay more attention to this point.' The video gave me a very direct feeling. I could see things very directly. The video is very efficient.

Concluding the Interview

Similarly to the initial briefing period that occurred at the commencement of each interview, the interviews concluded with a time of debriefing (Kvale, 1996). Mindful of the possibility that Joy and the subsequent participants may have felt some anxiety as a result of their moments spent expressing personal viewpoints, I sought to ease their potential tensions regarding the interview's purpose and the ways in which I intended to use the data she provided. Additionally, I anticipated that Joy, Christina, and Grace might each to some degree experience emotions of emptiness, realizing that they offered much information regarding their experience without obtaining anything in return. As a means of addressing this possibility, I worked diligently to provide a "genuinely enriching" experience for Joy and the succeeding interviewees, inviting them to talk freely about their passion for teaching and learning with an attentive listener, hopefully thereby attaining fresh perceptions regarding significant themes within their own life worlds (Kvale, 1996, p. 128).

In order to provide Joy, Christina, and Grace with further opportunity to address any lingering issues on their minds, I concluded all three interviews by stating, "I have no further questions. Is there anything else you would like to tell me, or ask about, before we end our time today?"

Although within this moment, Joy, as well as Christina and Grace in their later interviews, responded that they were not able to think of additional items to address, I welcomed them to call or email me at any time with further questions or comments.

After turning the tape recorder off, I spent several moments conversing with Joy, Christina, and Grace about their personal and professional experiences, which are described within this chapter at the beginning of each section pertaining to the three interviewees.

Christina Palacios

Personal and Professional Stories

Before her family's move from Venezuela to the United States, Christina earned a high school diploma in elementary education in her home country and devoted twelve years to teaching at a private elementary school there. Having developed a passion for teaching young children in Venezuela, Christina sought to work within the educational sector in the United States. Subsequent to the relocation process undertaken by Christina, along with her husband of thirty-two years and her two grown daughters, she felt grateful to find employment as a paraprofessional within a suburban elementary school just outside of the Houston area. After three years of working in this position, Christina decided to pursue a bachelor's degree in Curriculum and Instruction through the University of Houston, as well as certification to teach early childhood through sixth grade students, thus enabling her to pursue her passion of teaching within a classroom of her own. As a native Spanish speaker, Christina earnestly desires to work in a bilingual program, hoping to assist young students in the process of learning the English language. Christina's passion for realizing this dream was evidenced as her story unfurled through the interview, which is described in depth in the sections to follow.

Research Question One

As with my interview with Joy, the initial three questions posed during Christina's interview purposed to address the following research query: "In what ways do preservice teachers perceive that their participation in the video self-observation process impacts their reflective practices?"

When asked to describe the process of reflection in her own words, after a moment of careful contemplation, Christina replied, "You just think about the things that you did, why you did that, what went wrong, what went right - to get better."

Interestingly, defining reflection seemed to come somewhat more easily for Christina than it had for Joy. Whereas Joy had difficulty describing reflection apart from the set context of a classroom-related example, Christina appeared to formulate and express her thoughts regarding the reflective process without additional prompting.

Following this initial question, I requested that Christina describe her most recent experience with reflecting on her own teaching practices, with as much specificity as possible. Once again, she answered with little hesitation, explaining that her video observation experience, which took place approximately two months prior to our interview, constituted the most recent experience with reflection upon teaching practices she could readily recall.

Maintaining focus upon my first research question prior to progressing to the second, I requested that Christina specifically consider this experience with the video observation process in answering the following question: "In what ways, if any, did your participation in the video observation process prompt you to reflect on your teaching practices?"

In response to this question, Christina seemed to possess an abundance of insight, as evidenced through the following reply:

[Prior to teaching the video observation lesson,] I had time to plan my lesson with my cooperating teacher. Then, I went home, and I watched the video about a hundred times. I had time to watch the video to consider what I did right and what I did wrong. [During the video observation meeting,] I like that Adam was just considering the facts, and not the opinions. The advice that Adam gave me was very right. I really enjoyed it.

Christina's initial description of her video observation experience provided a fitting transition to the consecutive series of questions.

Research Question Two

As Christina and I proceeded to the next section of the interview, I sought to pose questions serving to address the second research question: "How do preservice teachers perceive that self-identified examples ("pause points") of either successful practice or areas of potential improvement provide opportunity for discussion and reflection regarding their professional practices?"

I first asked Christina to describe the influence that personally deciding upon two areas of successful practice and two areas of potential improvement rendered upon her process of reflection. In reply, Christina shared that the process of repeatedly viewing her video and thoughtfully considering moments of personal significance brought her to the following conclusions: "With my two good parts [areas of successful practice], I was proud of what I did. And, with the ones that were horrible [areas of potential improvement], those are point that I will always consider and never forget." Christina proceeded to specifically express her awareness of a particular area of potential

improvement, perceivably stemming from a lack of planning on her part. In watching her video, Christina noticed that her preschool students experienced quite a bit of difficulty arranging themselves into line as directed in order to participate in a group activity. In hindsight, she realized that a slight change in the setup of the room or directions given to the students might have enabled this activity to have been conducted more efficiently and effectively.

As a means of encouraging her to further expound upon these thoughts, I next posed the following question to Christina: “In what ways, if any, did identifying pause points prepare you to discuss your thoughts on your lesson with the video facilitator?”

Without hesitation, Christina explained, “It helped the meeting to be more successful. I was able to reflect and to think about what I saw on the video, and I came with questions.”

In summation of the second section of Christina’s interview, I requested that she describe the ways in which her conversation with the video facilitator impacted her reflection upon her lesson. Once again, Christina almost immediately and quite assuredly rejoined,

It was great! I think that Adam’s attitude had a great effect. He was very calm, looked at the video, and allowed me to talk. Maybe with the advice that he gave me, he was able to share some of his teaching experiences.

Christina’s response to this question provided a fitting conclusion to our discussion regarding the second research question and an appropriate starting point for focusing upon areas of inquiry related to the final research question.

Research Question Three

The concluding questions of the interview correlated with my pursuit of information addressing the third research question: “In what respects do preservice teachers perceive that such reflection resulting from participation in the video observation process influences their professional practice?”

This section commenced with an invitation for Christina to describe her perceptions of the ways in which her video observation encounter impacted her teaching practices. She replied, “I wish I could do my student teaching [next semester] with this method. I was not nervous at all, and I really enjoyed it.” Referring to her live observation conducted by her facilitator, Christina explained,

When you know that someone is going to come, and the facilitator is looking at you and talking with the teacher, you can get nervous. With the video, you’re just teaching. I’ve been talking with some friends about this, and many of them seem to feel the same way.

Attempting to gain insight regarding a specific example of how viewing the video affected her subsequent teaching practices, Christina remarked, “I noticed that I was moving my hands too much, and those little things really helped me.” For her, this symbolized a significant area of improvement she readily addressed in order to more effectively teach new concepts to her students, without the added distraction of excessive hand motions.

Interested to learn more concerning her perceptions of the video observation experience, I requested that Christina share what aspect or aspects of the video observation process she found most helpful. After careful contemplation, she responded, “The whole process... Let me think... It’s hard to pick just one part, because it’s like a whole. It was very helpful to come and talk to Adam. And, even though I was nervous,

it really was helpful.” As in my interview with Joy, Christina’s contemplations regarding this particular question seem to affirm the significance of the video facilitator’s role and the substantial impact that his or her experiences and insights might render upon preservice teachers’ reflections regarding and reactions to this experience.

I subsequently asked Christina to share the aspect or aspect of the process she considered least helpful. After a moment of thoughtful hesitation, she earnestly replied, “No, I can’t think of anything [that was not helpful].” Yet, rather than offering recommendations for improvement regarding the process itself, Christina shared,

I loved [my video observation experience], and I wish that I could do it again. I don’t know if it’s a requirement for next semester, but it’s an awesome idea. It can save time and money, with the facilitator being able to watch your video instead of driving to view your lesson. Now days, everyone has a video recorder on their phone, and it’s so simple. I think it’s not complicated at all.

Prior to the conclusion of our interview, without prompting, Christina offered insights that served to compare and contrast her video observation experience with her live observation experience, in which her facilitator had observed another of Christina’s lessons and conducted a debriefing meeting:

With the first observation, it was kind of stressful. When someone is looking at you and grading you, that is a situation that is hard to handle. Everything was going well until the end while I was doing independent practice. My facilitator was speaking with my cooperating teacher, and I began to get nervous. As soon as we finished, she began talking about what I did right and what I did wrong. To begin your reflection, you need time. I want to do my best, but everything seemed wrong. I wish I had more time to think, and that’s the way that I compare it with my video. It was relaxing since the beginning. I had time to plan my lesson with my CT. Then, I went home, and I watched the video. I had time to watch the video to consider what I did right and what I did wrong.

Grace Moore

Personal and Professional Stories

As a native Houstonian, twenty-three year old Grace's journey towards the profession of teaching involves a path quite distinctive from that of Joy and Christina. In fact, at the time of Grace's admission to the University of Houston, she envisioned herself in an entirely different field, namely that of physical therapy. However, after realizing that her occupational interests and passions centered upon working with children, Grace determined that education would be a more fitting field of study. Grace explained, "I love seeing kids learn, especially the spark in their eyes when they figure out a new concept and it means something to them."

Research Question One

As in the preceding two interviews, I presented Grace with an initial set of three questions intended to address the following research query: "In what ways do preservice teachers perceive that their participation in the video self-observation process impacts their reflective practices?"

The act of describing the process of reflection in her own words seemed to present somewhat of a challenge for Grace. After taking several moments for careful contemplation, she replied, "I would say reflection is something that people need to do on a daily basis to improve themselves. I think when people self-reflect, they're able to see their mistakes and accomplishments and figure out what works and doesn't work."

Although able to explicate her views regarding the importance of personal reflection and the benefits of engaging in reflection, she seemed unable to actually define the term.

After this initial question, I invited Grace to share her most recent experience with reflection upon her own teaching practices. After a moment of contemplation, Grace explained that her video observation experience, which took place approximately four months prior to our interview, comprised her most memorable recent experience with reflection upon teaching practices.

Next, I requested that Grace specifically think upon her experience with the video observation process in responding to the following question: “In what ways, if any, did your participation in the video observation process prompt you to reflect on your teaching practices?”

Grace appeared especially assured of her answer to this question:

I would definitely have to say in word selection and body movement. There was a point when I asked a student a question and called them “student” instead of by name. After watching the video, I realized that calling them by name would have been more personal. When I was speaking in the front of the classroom, I realized that I moved my hands so much that I could have actually hit a child.

These preliminary descriptions of Grace’s video observation experience offered a timely transition to the succeeding series of questions.

Research Question Two

Within the next section of the interview, I inquired about areas of focus relating to the second research question: “How do preservice teachers perceive that self-identified examples (“pause points”) of either successful practice or areas of potential improvement provide opportunity for discussion and reflection regarding their professional practices?”

First, I invited Grace to share the influence that personally deciding upon two areas of successful practice and two areas of potential improvement had upon her process of reflection. Grace explained that the process of viewing her video numerous times and considering points of personal significance led her to the following conclusions: “I would say that it definitely made me feel confident because I was worried that my video would be horrid. After pausing, I was able to see the things that I was able to do correctly and efficiently.” Alternatively, she expounded, “It was also a challenge to look through [the pause points] because at that point, you realized your mistakes and thought, ‘I could have improved this or that.’”

Attempting to encourage Grace to further expand upon these thoughts, I then posed the following question: “In what ways, if any, did identifying pause points prepare you to discuss your thoughts on your lesson with the video facilitator?”

After taking a moment to contemplate this question, Grace replied, “I would have to say that it was a way to reassure me as a teacher to know that I was able to communicate as well as actively show what I was doing to someone else.” Endeavoring to gain further clarification from Grace regarding the impact of personally-selected, predetermined pause points upon her meeting with the video facilitator, I asked her to explain how things might have been different had she not been asked to select four pause points prior to the meeting. Grace emphatically replied, “It would not have been very productive because I wouldn’t have been able to pinpoint important areas. I would have been so concerned about how I looked or sounded over the course of a thirty-minute lesson.”

Next, I invited Grace to describe the ways in which her conversation with the video facilitator impacted her reflection upon her lesson. In response to this question, Grace paused contemplatively before sharing,

It gave me a lot of things I should think about more often, such as how to improve the seating arrangement or different ways of interacting with the students. [Adam] shared a couple of stories [about his own teaching experience]. One of my lessons was about safaris. He told me about a personal story about his adventures and how it relates to the lesson and how teachers' excitement can create interest for students.

Grace's reply to this question provided an apt conclusion to our consideration of the second research question and a fitting point of entry for investigations relating to the final research question.

Research Question Three

The final questions of the interview purposed to address my third research question: "In what respects do preservice teachers perceive that such reflection resulting from participation in the video observation process influences their professional practice?"

I first requested that Grace describe her perceptions of the ways in which her video observation experience affected her teaching practices. After a moment of contemplation, she replied,

I would have to say that I became more aware of myself as a teacher... I would also have to say that the video affected my preparation and organization. It was very obvious what you did or did not do at that moment or time. I think I discovered that nothing will turn out perfectly and sometimes you just have to keep going and deal with situations as they arise.

Next, I asked Grace to share whether she perceived such impacts immediately after her video observation experience or this required more time. Without hesitation, she responded, “I would say immediately. I recorded my video towards the end of the semester, but I still had about four weeks left to use what I had learned. Almost constantly [within that time], I thought back to the video.”

I then invited Grace to share the aspect or aspects of the video observation process she found most advantageous. After pausing to contemplate her response, she replied, “I would have to say just being able to see yourself is a whole different experience, and to think about how that’s what students see every day.”

Attempting to seek further clarification from Grace regarding why viewing herself as the students view her had proven helpful, I asked her to compare and contrast her video observation experience to her live observation. After careful contemplation, Grace rejoined,

I thought [video observation] was more natural. I think because when someone is video observing you, there is not someone in the room, so you’re not as nervous and students aren’t as distracted as when they see someone in the room.

As a final concluding question, I asked Grace to describe the aspect or aspects of video observation she regarded as least helpful. She almost immediately answered,

The time allowed to meet with [Adam]. I had to wait an extra 20 minutes because someone else was in the process of explaining their experience. I actually think that 25 minutes would have been a good timeframe. Giving someone the option of more time rather than less gives them a chance to say all they need to say.

Summary of Findings

The patterns that arose from the preceding three interview sessions illustrate the ways in which these preservice teachers' encounters with video observation impacted their abilities to reflect upon their teaching practices. Additionally, this highlighted their perceptions of the subsequent impacts of such reflections upon future actions taken in the classroom. My interviews with Joy, Christina, and Grace offered a window through which to glimpse the various ways this experience influenced and continues to shape their perceptions of strategies for effectively implementing a lesson. Their responses clearly and consistently reinforced the notion that this process incited a form of reflection consistent with Dewey's definition, including an "active, persistent, and careful consideration" of their actions within a classroom setting, "in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (Dewey, 1933, p. 9).

As remarked in previous chapters, Dewey (1933) described genuine reflection as that which alters human behaviors from ordinary impulses to rational actions. Teachers who employ such reflection progress beyond a display of teaching activities postulated by others (Dewey, 1933; Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1991; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Rather, they perceive issues, investigate ideas, contemplate innovative approaches, anticipate opportunities, and create applicable experiences in learning to the advantage of their students. In analyzing the experiences and contemplations shared by Joy, Christina, and Grace throughout the interviews, I began to perceive that their personal encounters with video observation seemed to serve as an impetus for employing the very mode of reflection described by Dewey and his predecessors – that which transcends from impulsive-driven behavior to judicious courses of action. The subsequent and final

chapter contains an in-depth account of the specific themes that emerged in relation to the associations between video observation and reflection through an analysis of the three participants' interview responses.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

Approximately ten years ago, while traversing the unfamiliar and sometimes daunting passage through my initial year as a classroom teacher, I often grappled with a lack of confidence in my abilities as an educator. This struggle seemed especially poignant during those times in which I found myself reluctantly catapulted “into the spotlight,” such as during formal and walk-through observations by the school’s principal and especially throughout my introduction to the process of video observation. It was with much trepidation that I regarded the prospect of presenting a lesson to my twenty first grade students while simultaneously being videotaped and subsequently compelled to view and assess this footage of myself.

Nevertheless, the impending day of my video observation and succeeding evaluation finally arrived, and to my astonishment, the experience transpired in a far less dreadful way than I had anticipated. Far from my imaginings, my initial encounter with video observation served as a stimulus for significant personal reflection, representing a decidedly memorable opportunity for growth. As it prompted me to honestly and deeply consider my teaching practices, this experience afforded me a brief yet indelible glimpse of the potential value of video observation as a catalyst for reflection. This “turning point” (Bruner, 1994) in my experience as an educator incited marked transformation in my perceptions of my abilities to teach effectively. Through the coming days, months, and years, my memory of this encounter served as a deeply inspiring affirmation of the notion of teaching as my true professional calling.

Understandably, when I was presented with the opportunity to encourage and support preservice teachers through their own video observation experiences nearly a decade later as a graduate assistant, I deemed this responsibility a privilege and a pleasure. Through the process of assisting hundreds of preservice teachers over the course of two semesters, I grew increasingly intrigued by the thought of exploring the potential of this activity for enhancing preservice teachers' reflective practices, both within the university setting in which I worked and studied and beyond the walls of my current environment. Thus, my research began.

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of video observation upon preservice teachers' reflective practices. Chapter Four offered an account of the interview responses of three preservice teachers in regards to their recent encounters with the video observation process. An examination of their stories imparts meaningful inferences pertaining to the promise of this activity for promoting heightened levels of reflection among preservice teachers such as Joy, Christina, and Grace.

Reflections on Reflection

Throughout these three teachers' narrative accounts of their personal video observation experiences, I sought to uncover particular themes available for reflective analysis. In analyzing their answers to the various questions posed during the interview, patterns in the data arose to the surface, thus serving to further illuminate the ways in which the video observation process influenced personal reflection regarding their teaching practices.

An interpretative assessment of these patterns led to the materialization of several themes, which are described in detail below. The following discussion represents an initial endeavor to grasp what I have learned from this process. The assertions put forth are neither comprehensive nor definite. I composed them with the anticipation of generating further conversation and as a guide to my own continuing reflection on the research topics at hand.

Video Observation as a Catalyst for Reflection

Although the task of describing reflection in her own words initially presented a challenge for Joy, after explaining her perceptions of reflection within the context of past experience, she more easily and instinctively articulated that reflection represents a process of taking time to analyze problems and formulate plans for improvement. Much like Joy, Grace displayed difficulty in defining the process of reflection. Nevertheless, she articulated her firm belief in the importance of engaging in the act of reflection along one's path to achieving personal development. In contrast to Joy's and Grace's attempts at describing reflection, Christina appeared quite certain of her viewpoint, stating with assurance that reflection consists of actively pondering "the things that you did, why you did that, what went wrong, what went right - to get better."

Despite the distinctiveness of each participant's efforts to define reflection, throughout the three interviews, their responses pronouncedly conveyed their individual beliefs in the efficacy of the video observation framework for assisting preservice teachers such as themselves in understanding and assessing their teaching practices. Joy, Christina, and Grace each alluded to explicit aspects of the experience that aided them in

examining certain actions within the context of teaching, in addition to concentrating upon specific goals for improvement.

Their answers to the various interview questions particularly indicated that the retrospective nature of the experience supported them in decisively and enthusiastically planning alternative courses of action to take in future classroom experiences. For example, as a result of viewing herself on video, Joy determined that because she had difficulty deciphering her own words spoken aloud, efforts to project her voice in future lessons might better serve her students. Unless she had been afforded the opportunity to participate in the video observation process, she might never have reached this conclusion.

Much like Joy, Christina readily shared her cognizance of a particular area of potential improvement, perceivably arising from a deficiency of planning prior to her implementation of the lesson. In viewing her video, Christina noted that her young students encountered difficulty as they attempted to assemble themselves into line preceding a group activity. Retrospectively, she determined that a minor alteration in classroom logistics or instructions given the students might have provided for a smoother implementation of this activity. Therefore, Christina endeavored to spend additional time considering seemingly minor, but ultimately quite significant, details such as this in planning for future lessons.

Similarly to Joy and Christina, Grace described several areas she sought to alter after viewing herself on video. For instance, upon observing herself in action, Grace determined that in order to more effectively reach her students, she must actively seek to call them by name rather than addressing them more generically. Although several of the

examples she provided lacked such specificity, Grace also spoke of a wide variety of matters she endeavored to enhance subsequent to viewing her lesson, including the classroom seating arrangement, her methods of interacting with students, and the amount of time and level of effort she devoted to planning for future lessons.

Through participating in this experience, Joy, Christina, and Grace purposefully reflected upon their actions by questioning and contemplating their teaching practices. These three individuals' stories regarding this process demonstrate their awareness of the ways in which viewing and analyzing their videos supported them in actively examining certain behaviors. Their answers alluded to the hypothesis that reflection within the context of this activity was focused upon their individual purposes and objectives as teachers, which directly correlate with their students' learning. For instance, after noticing that many of her students appeared to struggle to complete the hands-on portion of her assignment within the time allotted, Joy determined that an expanded timeframe for more involved lessons might better serve her students in effectively achieving her established goals for them. Similarly, upon perceiving that her students struggled to form a line due to the arrangement of the classroom in which she delivered her lesson, Christina determined that increased time spent planning for minute details will comprise a significant component of her future teaching endeavors. Additionally, after viewing her students' responses to her strategies for communicating with them, Grace resolved to implement a more personal approach to addressing her students in future lessons, thereby increasing her likelihood of engaging them. Ultimately, Joy's, Christina's, and Grace's responses demonstrate that this reflective process enabled them to develop an enhanced

mindfulness of their actions as well as the ways in which those actions impact their students' learning.

Significance of Collaborative Analysis

Several of Joy's, Christina's, and Grace's responses allude to the assumption that individual reflection upon video lessons is heightened by collaboration with others. Viewing the lesson alongside and deliberating key points with peers and experienced others assists in the process of molding and refining ideas. Plausibly, a pair or group possesses greater resources from which to draw than do individuals. Such collaboration holds the potential to promote a transformation of preexisting viewpoints. Additionally, the value of some level of rapport between the preservice teacher and video facilitator, as well as the preservice teacher's ability to trust in the video facilitator's experience and capabilities, cannot be overestimated.

The three participants' responses demonstrate their openness to suggestions and discussions with others about their teaching practices. Their comments insinuate a trusting relationship with the video facilitator, Adam. Additionally, Joy specifically commented upon the significance of her rapport with Kelly, her primary facilitator, and her colleagues, such as those who collaborated with her during the Research Symposium. In the words of Reilley Freese (1999), "Reflection is not only a solitary activity but also occurs as a social process within the context of a learning community. [Preservice teachers] consider multiple perspectives and co-reflect and co-construct teaching incidents together" (p. 904).

Nevertheless, in accordance with Francis' (1995) work regarding preservice teachers' reflective practices, the findings of this study point to the notion that effective collaboration does not occur automatically. Rather, the foundation for such collaboration must be deliberately established through carefully planned experiences, such as the video observation meeting, that simultaneously provide preservice teachers with guidance and the freedom to openly express their insights regarding their experiences in the classroom and resultant lessons learned.

Self-Selected Pause Points as a Tool for Heightened Reflection

The act of self-selecting pause points throughout a video lesson appears to hold promise for heightening preservice teachers' reflective processes. Through Joy's, Christina's, and Grace's quest to identify and analyze two areas of successful practice and two areas of potential improvement within their lessons, they personally and directly viewed their actions as they naturally occurred in teaching practice, rather than attempting to recall them "after the fact." Additionally, instead of simply relying on another's interpretation and analysis of the events that transpired during the lesson, as in their live observations with their primary facilitators, Joy, Christina, and Grace were able to behold and evaluate their actions on a first-hand basis. In such instances, authentic opportunities and problems confronted in practice might function as an entry point for assisting preservice teachers to distinguish, assess, and possibly modify or further improve their teaching behaviors (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999). Detection of and reflection upon pause points in preservice teachers' video observation lessons has

generated a common language within this particular teacher education program through which to deliberate these events in practice.

Significantly, the three participants, like all preservice teachers within this specific program, self-selected pause points representing personally meaningful moments within the videotaped lesson. This process transpired prior to their meeting with the video facilitator, thus differentiating the experience from one in which the supervisor and preservice teacher jointly identify and discuss “meaningful” instances, or one in which the supervisor alone selects the events upon which to focus. Joy, Christina, and Grace held full responsibility for deciding upon the focal points of discussion, thus presumably giving them a distinct sense of ownership over the direction of the meeting. This aspect seemed to result in a more personal, and presumably more impactful, experience for the preservice teachers involved.

Additionally, the process of determining limited aspects around which to anchor their processes of reflection and dialogue quite possibly increased the manageability and applicability of the task at hand. As proposed by Brinko (1993), activities designed to narrow the focus of reflection might potentially assist teachers in circumventing a superficial analysis of their professional practices. Rather than concentrating upon the lesson as a whole, the participants and video facilitator possessed the freedom to more thoroughly and deeply explore certain components of the preservice teachers’ professional practice. Because the incorporation of pause points enabled the participants to focus on distinctive elements of the lesson, Joy, Christina, and Grace concluded their video observation meetings with specific ideas for concrete, relevant alterations immediately implementable within their field experience and future classrooms.

Further consideration of pause points within the context of the video observation experience might present professional development opportunities by which preservice teachers can reflect on classroom experiences, thus informing future teaching practices through the process of questioning presumptions and obtaining novel viewpoints (Eraut, 1985). As noted by Pierson and Borthwick (2010),

Professional development comes in all sizes and flavors, and to make an accurate assessment of the quality and impact of an activity, professional developers must consider the variety of ways teachers learn and the variety of variables that could affect teacher learning. (p. 127)

Through offering preservice teachers a highly interactive and self-directed experience, video observation holds promise for serving as an avenue by which to address the assorted means whereby preservice teachers acquire enduring understandings of and applications to their practice as educators.

The Power of Irrefutable Evidence

The aforementioned findings would have proven unattainable if not for Joy's, Christina's, and Grace's unequivocal trust in the sources of feedback. Throughout the interviews, all three preservice teachers alluded to trusting the classroom events they personally viewed via video beyond the confidence they entrusted to previous observational experiences in which they had taken part. In Brinko's (1993) estimation, feedback is rendered most effective when the source of such feedback is perceived as credible. Within the context of this study, video functioned as a credible source, enabling these three preservice teachers to view themselves and their practices through their own eyes. Although Joy, Christina, and Grace naturally trusted personally viewable video recordings above feedback given apart from experiences with video, it is quite

conceivable that merging video with additional feedback methods might serve to augment their trust in such methods. Furthermore, Brinko (1993) highlighted the value of viewing feedback sources as “knowledgeable enough to make an accurate judgment” (p. 577), as well as recommending that “feedback is more effective when it contains irrefutable evidence” (p. 579). From Joy’s, Christina’s, and Grace’s perspectives, video recordings of their lessons represented “irrefutable evidence” on which to base their intended modifications to future teaching practices.

The following figure provides an overview of the key implications of this study.

| Key Findings | Summative Analysis | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Video observation as a catalyst for reflection: | Participants' responses conveyed their belief in the efficacy of video observation for assisting them in understanding and assessing teaching practices. | The video observation experience assisted the participants in examining certain actions within the context of teaching. | Participants' reflective processes enabled them to concentrate upon specific goals for improvement. |
| Significance of collaborative analysis: | Individual reflection upon video lessons is heightened by collaboration with others. | Viewing and discussing the lesson alongside peers and experienced others assists in the process of molding and refining ideas. | The value of rapport between the preservice teacher and video facilitator, as well as the preservice teacher's ability to trust in the video facilitator's experience and capabilities, cannot be overestimated. |
| Self-selected pause points as a tool for heightened reflection: | Through selecting pause points, participants personally and directly viewed their actions as they naturally occurred in teaching practice. | Instead of simply relying on another's interpretation and analysis of their lessons, they were able to evaluate their actions on a first-hand basis. | Detection of and reflection upon pause points generated a common language by which to deliberate these events in practice. |
| The power of irrefutable evidence: | Participants alluded to trusting the classroom events they personally viewed via video beyond the confidence they entrusted to previous observational experiences. | Functioning as a credible source, video enabled these three preservice teachers to view themselves and their practices through their own eyes. | Video recordings of their lessons represented "irrefutable evidence" on which to base their intended modifications to future teaching practices. |

Figure 5.1 Summary of key findings of the study.

Additional Factors

Within the multidimensional and continually fluctuating setting of a teacher education program involving a field experience component, there exists the possibility that numerous variables beyond the actual video observation process might likely have impacted Joy's, Christina's, and Grace's abilities to reflect upon their personal teaching practices. While recognizing the potential influence of these variables upon the outcomes of this research, an all-encompassing exploration of the effects of each extends beyond the scope of the present study.

Life Experiences of the Preservice Teacher

Throughout the interview process, the thoughts expressed by Joy, Christina, and Grace conveyed a commitment to utilizing insights from knowledgeable others and peers as an impetus for refining teaching practices. Their comments consistently implied a trusting relationship with advisors and colleagues and an eagerness to glean novel, applicable insights from their interactions with such individuals. Although the three participants involved within this study appear to share many such commonalities, when considering feedback gleaned from any group of individuals, special characteristics and life experiences undoubtedly play a significant role in influencing the distinct variety of information gleaned from each person.

For instance, Joy's and Christina's responses in particular indicate a commitment to lifelong learning, both within and outside of the classroom, and an overall sense of maturity that might be less developed in the case of other preservice teachers. Quite possibly, such maturity stems in part from the fact that both Joy and Christina have

experienced more years of life than many of their peers within the teacher education program, as the vast majority of preservice teachers at this stage have only recently entered their twenties. Additionally, in Joy's case, as a student within the master's program having already embarked upon the profession of teaching, her life experiences and the impact these encounters have rendered upon her perspectives and behaviors might differ in any number of ways from others who have not yet managed their own classroom.

Moreover, the fact that this study encountered both Joy and Christina amidst cross-cultural experiences as students and developing teachers carries potential implications that must not be underestimated. Previous studies demonstrate that university students often experience intercultural development, challenging perceptions of themselves and others, through involving themselves in study abroad programs (Bennett & Bennett, 2004). Although Joy's and Christina's situations differ from that of a study abroad experience in that both preservice teachers intend to reside and practice teaching in the United States for years to come, their experiences may be likened to that of a person studying abroad in that they are endeavoring to earn a degree in a country apart from their homelands. Concentrating upon student teaching experiences, Cushner (2007) identified influences analogous to those pinpointed by Bennett and Bennett, with the addition of enhanced self-confidence, efficacy, intercultural understanding, and cognizance of the imperative of attending to diversity among learners within a classroom setting. Interestingly, a certain element that appears to frequently surface within such research revolves around the necessity of experiencing the world from the perspective of an outsider. This phenomenon corresponds with Merryfield's (2000) findings regarding

students' firsthand encounters of identity shifts spanning outside of their realms of control. The international experience often incites preservice teachers to more deeply reflect upon previously embraced viewpoints.

Naturally, both apparent and unapparent differences in the life stories of preservice teachers might bring about any number of variances in the ways in which video observation impacts one preservice teacher's reflective practices in comparison to another's. Researchers within the field of narrative inquiry acknowledge the fact that participants enter the research experience "suspended in a web of extenuating personal and social circumstances" (Craig, 2009, p. 108). In the words of Clandinin and Connelly (2000),

As researchers, we come to each new inquiry field living our stories. Our participants also enter the inquiry field in the midst of living their stories. Their lives do not begin the day we arrive nor do they end as we leave. Their lives continue. (p. 63-64)

Thus, the intricacies of each preservice teacher's life story impart him or her with impressions and viewpoints that influence interpretations of and lessons learned from subsequent experiences, including video observation.

Characteristics of the Video Facilitator

During her interview, Joy emphatically expressed her thoughts regarding the significance of meeting with a highly qualified, professional, and experienced video facilitator. On several occasions, she communicated that similarities between Adam's background and her own, namely their shared training and experience in high school chemistry education, provided an enhanced video observation encounter for Joy.

Apparently, she perceived that Adam thoroughly understood the content of her lesson,

thus enabling him to more effectively offer suggestions for improvement and encouragement regarding examples of successful practice.

In addition to similarities concerning their teaching backgrounds, Joy also noted that she had worked alongside Adam on a prior occasion, as they were enrolled in a course together during a previous semester. Consequently, she entered the meeting having already established some level of rapport with him. Joy alluded to the notion that this aspect of her video observation meeting provided for a more friendly, open, and thus possibly more productive experience than might have been the case had she not previously interacted with Adam.

Obviously, not every student of the approximately two hundred that met with the video facilitator over the course of a semester received the opportunity to interact with him prior to their meeting. Additionally, only a limited number of these students, as might be expected, shared his background in chemistry and elected to teach a lesson on this subject. Because the preservice teachers within this program seek to earn a variety of teaching certificates permitting them to teach assorted grade levels from preschool through twelfth grade, they enter the video observation experience having a wide range of specializations and teaching lessons across all subjects and developmental stages. Therefore, the program endeavors to appoint supervisors who not only possesses several years of teaching experience, but also those who display an ability to consider and actively reflect on an extensive scope of classroom encounters. Such individuals must be able to call upon a background of pedagogical expertise to assist in supporting and encouraging preservice teachers in their journeys to grow as educators.

Although unlike Adam, Christina's and Grace's areas of emphasis reside within the early childhood through sixth grade range of certification. Additionally, neither individual had opportunity to interact with Adam in a previous course as did Joy. Yet like Joy, both Christina and Grace spoke of the significance of meeting with a more knowledgeable other to review and discuss their videotaped lessons. Thus, their video observation experiences also seem to align with the notion that the characteristics of the video facilitator may exhibit great influence upon the extent of reflection resulting from video observation meetings.

Impact of Varying Degrees of Structure

As previously noted within the literature review, much research points to the notion that both novel and seasoned educators profit from guidance regarding the process of investigating videotaped lessons. Such studies suggest that those preservice teachers who are afforded a scaffolded means by which to analyze their videos of teaching are often able to further expound upon inferences taken from their observations (van Es & Sherin, 2002). These findings coincide with the recommendation of Dymond and Bentz (2006) that video observation experiences for preservice teachers be "highly structured in order to affect positively their views, knowledge, and skills" (p. 99). Within the context of this study, the video observation cover sheet (Appendix C) served as one such scaffolded viewer's guide, intended to encourage the viewer to personally select items for investigation in reply to guiding questions (Baecher & Connor, 2010).

Although such research points to the beneficial quality of a carefully outlined video observation experience for novice preservice teachers, this particular characteristic

might also be perceived as a limitation of the study. By their very nature, highly structured experiences entail set boundaries, thus potentially limiting preservice teachers' sense of freedom to contemplatively consider and openly discuss certain facets of their experience. For instance, one distinguishable influence concerns the particular events on which preservice teachers are invited to reflect. Within the bounds of this study, preservice teachers were asked to explore two areas of successful practice and two areas of potential improvement. While it appears that these four pause points resulted in rich conversation between the research participants and video facilitator, it is quite probable that other personally significant aspects of the videotaped lessons were in turn excluded from Joy's, Christina's, and Grace's conversations. Even so, unless provided with some level of structure, as suggested by previous research, the majority of preservice teachers will likely experience difficulty in identifying personally significant moments of instruction and engaging in the depth of reflection that might otherwise be possible.

Moreover, upon considering the systematized nature of the video observation experience, there exists the potential for uncertainty regarding whether preservice teachers have yet acquired the skills necessary to informatively select four pause points, each of two minutes or less, from an entire forty-five minute lesson. Some might also argue that novice teachers would benefit from a still more structured experience in which the instructions involve a greater level of specificity. For example, might an assignment requiring that preservice teachers identify a moment of effective classroom management, pinpoint an instance of successful utilization of questioning strategies, and so forth produce increasingly impactful experiences? Would the incorporation of such an activity enable teacher education programs to more effectually address set learning objectives,

thus better preparing their preservice teachers to employ certain strategies within their own future classrooms?

Obviously, the answers to such questions reside outside of the bounds of this study. It is apparent, however, that the double-edged sword of a highly structured video observation experience might plausibly serve as both a potential benefit and a latent liability.

Influence of the Cooperating Teacher

Although Joy, Christina, and Grace did not share specifics regarding the level of support offered by their cooperating teachers within the field experience environment, Joy did refer to how helpful observing a seasoned educator in an authentic classroom setting had been in preparing her to implement her lesson. Preservice teachers such as Joy, Christina, and Grace are afforded the opportunity to spend two full school days per week in the classroom of an experienced teacher throughout the semester of their video observation encounter, and these cooperating teachers are selected on the basis of their principals' or other administrators' recommendations. While teachers are nominated to host preservice teachers on the basis of their experience and skillfulness as an educator as well as their willingness to serve as a mentor, these cooperating teachers naturally impart a variety of understandings and demonstrate a vast array of capabilities within their classroom environments.

Logically, the assumption can be made that cooperating teachers in some ways influence preservice teachers' processes of planning, implementing, and reflecting upon their lessons. Therefore, this facet of the field component, and thus the video observation

activity, highlights another way in which Joy's, Christina's, and Grace's experiences might have varied from other preservice teachers' encounter with video observation.

Features of the School and Classroom Settings

More broadly than the influence exhibited by each preservice teacher's cooperating teacher, the extensive variety of classroom, school, and district settings into which preservice teachers are placed must also be considered as a factor potentially affecting the outcomes of research regarding the video observation experience. Within their individual and shared narrative inquiries, Olson and Craig (2009) focus upon the ways in which such settings, or milieus, are "central to narrative knowledge constructed and reconstructed individually and collectively in different places on the professional knowledge landscape" (p. 1077). Through the process of examining their field notes, they noted an interesting phenomenon that appeared to occur as people in educational contexts transitioned from one milieu to another:

It seemed to us they had valuable kinds of insights to share that were not readily apparent to those who had not had the opportunity for experiencing different milieu... we refer to these phenomena as traveling stories because these stories seem to entail a drawing forward of ways of knowing from previous milieu that lend fresh interpretations to the new milieu individuals encounter... (p. 1078)

Thus, fresh insights provided by such "traveling stories" serve to elucidate formerly overlooked intricacies that have been interwoven into a context's various facets over the course time (Olson & Craig, 2009). The educational landscape of the city of Houston consists of a web of intricately entwined milieus that unquestionably influence and impart novel insights and perspectives within the minds of the preservice teachers in the program. The collective impact of such facets upon preservice teachers' field

experiences, and thus their encounters with the video observation process, cannot possibly be measured.

Summary

As evident, attributes of the preservice teachers' life experiences, the characteristics of the video facilitator and cooperating teacher, the structure of the video observation activity, and the field experience setting exhibit differing degrees of influence upon preservice teachers' video observation encounters. Consequently, these factors also impact preservice teachers' reflections resulting from this experience. Naturally, an investigation into the extent of influence generated by each of these components reaches beyond the scope of this study. Even still, I endeavored to present readers with an in-depth narrative account of three particular individuals' video observation experiences and the resultant implications. My hope is that through considering this research, readers will gain fresh insights through which to establish their own inferences regarding the potential of video observation for enriching preservice teachers' reflective practices.

Recommendations

This study brings to light several significant considerations pertaining to preservice teacher education practice and further research, each of which are described within the succeeding sections.

Recommendations Regarding Preservice Teacher Education

1. Relevant literature distinctly conveys the imperative of fostering genuine, critical reflective skills among preservice teachers rather than simply encouraging more technical forms of reflection (Harford et al., 2010). Yet, teacher education programs frequently fall short of nurturing a coherent perception of reflection in the minds of their teacher candidates. Moreover, due to the complexity of the reflective process, preservice teachers often struggle to fully understand and apply this concept. As they are exposed to effectively designed resources and experiences that promote their meaningful reflection, preservice teachers become more fully prepared to evaluate and enhance their pedagogy through connecting theory to practice. The findings of this study point to the suggestion that the video observation process holds promise for serving as one such means of enriching the reflective practices of preservice teachers within teacher education programs.
2. The act of self-selecting pause points appears to possess genuine potential for supporting preservice teachers in more intentionally examining their teaching practices. Through their identification of areas of successful practices and prospective opportunities for improvement throughout a lesson, preservice teachers are encouraged to carefully observe, analyze, and discuss naturally occurring, personally constructed moments in teaching after they have transpired. In this way, genuine opportunities and issues confronted in practice might function as a beginning point for facilitating preservice teachers' acknowledgment, examination, and modification or further elaboration of their

individual teaching behaviors. Consideration of preservice teachers' process of selecting and evaluating pause points seems to confirm that this experience calls for thoughtful reflection regarding prior and current teaching practices and contemplative consideration of future implications. Furthermore, identification of and reflection upon pause points within a lesson generated a common language within the program by which to discuss such moments. Therefore, inclusion of an activity such as identifying and analyzing pause points might serve to augment a teacher education programs' video observation component, thus potentially further enhancing preservice teachers' reflective practices.

3. Previous research highlights the discrepancy between reflection that involves merely the act of rationalization and that which promotes effective reflective practice. In supporting preservice teachers' abilities to reflect, contextual anchors are essential for imparting meaning to learning experiences. In seclusion, the process of reflection might entail little more than simply reviewing or summarizing. Therefore, preservice teachers must be presented with relevant and effective reinforcement by knowledgeable others. The video observation meeting described within the context of this study seems to possess great potential for contributing meaning to preservice teachers' encounter with a video recording of their teaching. Because this meeting affords preservice teachers the opportunity to review their lesson while discussing personally significant moments alongside a seasoned educator, budding teachers are provided the opportunity to glean from the experience and insights of knowledgeable others while formulating personally-relevant implications of their own. Thus, a video observation meeting

component such as that referred to within this study appears to hold tremendous promise for effectively enhancing students' video observation experiences within teacher education programs.

4. In considering the implications for teacher education programs and school settings, the instructive versus evaluative application of video observation requires careful contemplation. Within the context of this study, rather than receiving a grade for the "merits" of their lessons as a whole or aspects of their self-selected pause points, preservice teachers simply obtained credit for completion of the assignment. This structure was designed to afford increased focus upon reflection rather than assessment, and the intent was clearly explained to teachers at the commencement of each semester. Understanding that the purpose involved enhancing personal reflective practices rather than judging their capabilities as educators seemed to ease participants' apprehensions regarding the process. Quite possibly, this knowledge also provided for more candid discussion of both positive and negative aspects of each lesson. An instructive process such as this differs greatly from that designed for the purposes of evaluation. Whilst teacher education programs and school districts begin to employ video observation as a component of their teacher appraisal processes, decision-makers within such organizations must remain mindful of the potential limitations of creating an evaluative video observation framework. They must contemplate whether such a system will likely produce the kind of straightforward, unconstrained reflection that holds the potential to powerfully and positively impact teaching practices. This involves examining the answers to certain crucial

questions. For example, might it be wise to separate evaluative appraisal frameworks from video observation processes designed to generate authentic reflection? Might such video observation experiences best be suited to assist in educators' goal-setting endeavors? Undoubtedly, leaders within teacher education programs and school settings must carefully ponder the answers to such questions before implementing a video observation framework for impacting professional practice.

Recommendations for Further Research

1. The present study explored three preservice teachers' encounters with the video observation experience and subsequent processes of personal reflection upon their teaching practices. Further research is recommended with other preservice teachers who have also participated in the video observation experience. Conceivably, prior investigation regarding the potential of video observation to impact preservice teachers' reflective practices will be enriched through the exploration of additional perspectives.
2. During the interview process, both Joy and Grace mentioned that the fifteen minutes allotted for the video observation meeting seemed not to be enough. In order to provide for enhanced opportunities for analysis and discussion leading to reflection, they each recommended that an extended amount of time might be more beneficial. Thus, a future study which allows for increased time for reflective conversation might offer additional insights regarding the potential of video observation for heightening preservice teachers' reflective practices.

3. Also within the context of her interview, Joy referred to the advantageous nature of gleaning from another's perspective of her performance throughout her video lesson, in addition to that of the video facilitator. More specifically, she commented that after Kelly had viewed the videotaped lesson in person, as it was being recorded, she had several helpful insights to offer. Upon discussing Kelly's thoughts, Joy was also able to view the moments to which Kelly had referred directly as she watched the recording of her lesson. Joy suggested that because she was able to personally view the aspects of the lesson she had discussed with Kelly, this experience rendered a more profound impact upon her reflection and subsequent teaching practices than a debriefing minus the video component might have. Christina and Grace also concurred that preservice teachers would benefit from additional video observation experiences throughout the course of their student teaching semesters. This leads to the question of whether all lessons – or at least more than one lesson – taught by preservice teachers for the purpose of evaluation should be videotaped. Additionally, the participants' insights point to the necessity for consideration of whether additional knowledgeable others should be included within the video observation process, rather than only the video facilitator. Future research might benefit from the incorporation of multiple videotaped lessons, as well as multiple perspectives upon these lessons.
4. In addition to mentioning the value of comments provided by her facilitators in assisting her to reflect upon her lesson, Joy in particular remarked on the advantage of being able to present and discuss her video lesson with peers during the preservice teacher Research Symposium. Apparently, this activity served as

another means of reinforcing the impact that the video observation experience rendered upon Joy's process of reflection and corresponding modifications to practice. Although Christina and Grace did not reference this particular activity during their interviews, they each held reciprocal viewpoints regarding the potential advantages of increasingly incorporating video observation into program requirements. Future research efforts might focus upon alternative ways of integrating video observation and related activities into teacher education endeavors, such as through peer review in a roundtable or other collaborative formats.

Conclusion

My personal experience with video observation exceeded my expectations in that it prompted me to genuinely examine and reconsider my methods of engaging my students, teaching them novel concepts, and gauging their learning. In the words of Schwab (1954/1978), an impassioned educator desires

something more for his/her students than the capacity to give back to him/her a report of what he/she has said. He/she wants them to possess a knowledge or skill in the same way that he/she possesses it, as a part of his/her best-loved self. (pp. 124-125)

From a personal perspective, my initial encounter with video observation embodies among my most poignant memories of reflecting upon my "best-loved self" as a teacher. In essence, this experience lent personal validation to my decision to become an educator, leading me to believe that no other line of work might ever afford me a more fulfilling profession than that of molding the hearts and minds of students. Thus was the commencement of my journey with video observation.

As a graduate assistant in subsequent years, my progression of walking alongside preservice teachers through their encounters with video observation served to reaffirm my belief in the promise of this approach for assisting educators in discovering aspects of professional practice that reflect their best-loved selves. Throughout my journey as a video facilitator and more recently in the midst of conducting this study, contemplations regarding my personal response to video observation in the present frequently surfaced within my mind.

As an educator of more than a decade, how might my reflections resulting from viewing video footage of my current teaching practices differ from those of the past? Introspective examination of this question leads me to imagine that in the present, video observation might even more meaningfully impact my teaching practices than during my initial encounter. Not surprisingly, research suggests that educators' ability to notice is directly correlated with their extent of classroom experience (Berliner et al., 1988). In other words, seasoned teachers generally seem to notice more and formulate varying sorts of observations than preservice and novice teachers. In accordance with the findings of Berliner and colleagues (1988), I anticipate that my participation in the video observation process in the present might bring about heightened observations regarding subtle nuances in my instructional strategies. Furthermore, a contemporary encounter with video observation might ultimately spark fresh ideas for further refining my teaching practices. Regardless of the specific insights potentially gained from my present-day involvement in a personal video observation process, I remain quite convinced that such an experience would indelibly impact my teaching practices, as in my initial encounter more than a decade ago.

Through carrying out and communicating research concerning the potential impact of video observation upon the reflective practices of preservice teachers, my hope is that fellow individuals desiring to join the ranks of professional educators, as well as those institutions responsible for readying them to do so, will be inspired to consider the possibilities of this approach.

In accordance with the related literature, the outcomes of this study appear to point to immense potential for video observation as a means of promoting preservice teachers' heightened reflective practices. Additionally, this investigation sheds light upon the promise of self-selected pause points as a means of directing preservice teachers' attention to personally significant moments of successful practice, as well as areas in which improvement might be necessitated. The process of identifying such moments appears to hold genuine promise for enhancing preservice teachers' abilities to reflect upon meaningful teaching behaviors, especially as they are directly viewing these instances in preparation for and throughout the meeting with a video facilitator. Furthermore, the act of jointly analyzing and discussing pause points with a seasoned and supportive knowledgeable other seems to impact reflection to an even greater extent.

Beyond enhanced reflective practices resulting from encounters with video observation, the outcomes of the interviews featured within this study point to the potential for noteworthy effects upon teaching practices. The participants' feedback suggested immediate modifications to day-to-day behaviors within their classroom environment, thus insinuating the prospect of video observation as a tool for sparking personally-initiated, positive transformation. Quite possibly, beyond the heightened awareness of how certain practices influence students' growth and acquisition of

knowledge, preservice teachers will be able to transfer experience gained with reflection through video analysis into their future classrooms and schools.

Naturally, the prospect of shadowing Joy, Christina, Grace, and other video observation participants as they embark upon their journeys as professional educators traverses beyond the bounds of this study. In the aforementioned words of Craig (2005), researchers within the field of narrative inquiry naturally anticipate “a live, unresolved quality” inherent within their studies, simply due to the fact that study participants’ lives are “still unraveling and issues cannot be viewed in hindsight” (p. 216). Consequently, one is left to ponder the ensuing impacts of these preservice teachers’ initial encounters with video observation.

Quite possibly, this experience will ultimately spark a desire to utilize their classroom settings “as the laboratory in which to translate reflections into actions” (Schwab, 1959/1978, pp. 183). In this way, the reflections and resultant actions of Joy, Christina, Grace, and fellow future educators might well contribute to “a pooling of diversities of experience and insight” (Schwab, 1969b, p. 30), thereby resulting in the continuation of improved professional practices. In seeking to incorporate genuine reflection into their daily lives and teaching endeavors, such individuals possess the unique opportunity to serve as “agent[s] of education” (Schwab, 1954/1978, p. 128) and authors of powerful change within the various milieus into which they enter and exhibit influence.

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APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol

Thank you for your willingness to participate and be interviewed for this research. As I mentioned in my email to you, I am seeking to explore the potential of video observation for enhancing preservice teachers' reflective practices. Because you participated in the video observation process last semester, your thoughts regarding your own experience are very important and greatly appreciated.

The interview will not take more than an hour of your time. Because I do not want to miss any of your comments, I will be audio recording the session. I will also be taking notes throughout the interview. All of your responses will be kept confidential. This means that I will ensure that any information included in my study does not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you are not required to discuss anything you would prefer not to, and you may end the interview at any time. Are there any questions about what I have just explained? Are you ready to begin? I want to first ask you a general question about reflection...

Research Question 1: *In what ways do preservice teachers perceive that their participation in the video self-observation process impacts their reflective practices?*

1. How would you describe the process of reflection in your own words?
2. Can you describe, in as much detail as possible, your most recent experience with reflecting on your own teaching practices?
3. Now, let's think specifically about your experience with the video observation process. In what ways, if any, did your participation in the video observation process prompt you to reflect on your teaching practices?

Research Question 2: *How do preservice teachers perceive that self-identified examples (“pause points”) of either successful practice or areas of potential improvement provide opportunity for discussion and reflection regarding their professional practices?*

4. During your video observation experience, how did personally selecting pause points to review with the video facilitator impact your reflection on your lesson?
5. In what ways, if any, did identifying pause points prepare you to discuss your thoughts on your lesson with the video facilitator?
6. How did your conversation with the video facilitator affect your reflection on your lesson?

Research Question 3: *In what ways do preservice teachers perceive that such reflection resulting from participation in the video observation process impacts their professional practice?*

7. How did the video observation process impact your teaching practices in general?
8. Did you begin to see these effects immediately, or did it take more time?
9. What aspect or aspects of the video observation process did you find most helpful?
10. What aspect or aspect of the video observation process did you find least helpful?

APPENDIX B
VIDEO OBSERVATION GUIDE

Video Observation Guide

The following guide will assist you in preparing for your video observation appointment.

Record your lesson.

Review your video.

- As you watch your lesson, look for key areas in which you demonstrated effective teaching practices.
- Also, make note of areas in which you believe that improvement might be needed.

Identify four “pause points” for reflection.

- Pause points will include two segments that demonstrate successful practice and two segments in which improvement in practice might be needed (four in total).
- Each pause point should be no longer than two minutes.
- Pause points will be reviewed in sequential order during your appointment.
- On your coversheet, include a brief background paragraph for each pause point. This information should adequately prepare your facilitator for viewing each segment.

Complete your coversheet, being certain to include the following items:

- **Name**
- **Area of certification and grade level**
- **Title of lesson**
- **Learning objectives of lesson**
- **Pause Point 1**
 - Category (successful practice or area of potential improvement?)
 - Background information
 - Video time segment (for example, 2:35 through 3:35)
- **Pause Point 2**
 - Category
 - Background information
 - Video time segment
- **Pause Point 3**
 - Category
 - Background information
 - Video time segment
- **Pause Point 4**
 - Category
 - Background information
 - Video time segment

APPENDIX C

VIDEO OBSERVATION COVER SHEET

Video Observation Cover Sheet

Name: _____

Area of certification: _____ **Grade level:** _____

Title of lesson: _____

Learning objectives of lesson:

Pause Point 1 Category (circle one): Successful practice / Area of potential improvement Background information:

Video time segment (for example, 2:35 through 3:35):

Pause Point 2 Category (circle one): Successful practice / Area of potential improvement Background information:

Video time segment: _____

Pause Point 3 Category (circle one): Successful practice / Area of potential improvement Background information:

Video time segment: _____

Pause Point 4 Category (circle one): Successful practice / Area of potential improvement Background information:

Video time segment: _____

APPENDIX D

EMAIL RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
EMAIL RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

QUEST 2 VIDEO OBSERVATION RESEARCH STUDY

As a University of Houston College of Education student who has participated in the QUEST 2 video observation process, you are invited to take part in a study exploring the potential of video observation to enhance pre-service teachers' reflective practices. This study is being conducted by Katie Alaniz, a doctoral student at the University of Houston's College of Education, under the direction of Dr. Melissa Pierson.

Should you decide to participate, you will be asked to take part in a one-hour interview regarding your experience with the video observation process, which will be conducted on the University of Houston campus. Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your participation in this project. This research may be utilized to advance colleges of education in their quest to more successfully prepare pre-service teachers to meaningfully impact the field of education.

If you are interested in participating in this study or for more information regarding this research, please contact Katie Alaniz at 281-785-8292 or skalaniz@uh.edu.

APPENDIX E

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

PROJECT TITLE: “Exploring the Potential of Video Observation to Enhance Preservice Teachers’ Reflective Practices”

You are being invited to participate in a research project conducted by Katie Alaniz, a doctoral student under the direction of Dr. Melissa Pierson in the University of Houston’s College of Education. This study is a component of candidacy and dissertation research.

NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any question. If you are a student, a decision to participate or not or to withdraw your participation will have no effect on your standing.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This one-year study will seek to address the following research questions:

1. In what ways do preservice teachers perceive that their participation in the video self-observation process impacts their reflective practices?
2. How do preservice teachers perceive that self-identified examples (“pause points”) of either successful practice or areas of potential improvement provide opportunity for discussion and reflection regarding their professional practices?
3. In what respects do preservice teachers perceive that such reflection resulting from participation in the video observation process influences their professional practice?

In providing teacher candidates the opportunity to identify successful teaching practices and areas of potential improvement, this research might be utilized to advance colleges of education in their quest to more successfully prepare pre-service teachers to meaningfully impact the field of education.

PROCEDURES

Due to your involvement in the video observation process during your QUEST 2 semester, you are being invited to participate in this study. You will be one of approximately five subjects to be asked to participate in this project.

Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to take part in a one-hour interview regarding your experience with the video observation process conducted by me, the researcher, on the university campus.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your participation in this project. Each participant's name will be paired with a code number by the principal investigator. This code number will appear on all written materials. The list pairing the participant's name to the assigned code number will be kept separate from all research materials and will be available only to the principal investigator. Confidentiality will be maintained within legal limits.

RISKS/DISCOMFORT

Participation in this project involves no foreseeable risks.

BENEFITS

While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help researchers better understand the potential of video observation to enhance preservice teachers' reflective practices.

ALTERNATIVES

Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual participant will be identified except by pseudonym. Audio recordings of interview sessions will not be utilized in professional presentations.

AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF AUDIO/VIDEO TAPES

If you consent to participate in this study, please indicate whether you agree to be audio taped during the study by checking the appropriate box below. Should you decide that you would prefer that an audio recording not be made of your interview session, you may still participate in the interview process.

- ☐ I agree to be audio taped during the interview.
 - ☐ I do not agree to be audio taped during the interview.
-

SUBJECT RIGHTS

1. I understand that informed consent is required of all persons participating in this project.
2. All procedures have been explained to me and all my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.
3. Any risks and/or discomforts have been explained to me.
4. Any benefits have been explained to me.
5. I understand that, if I have any questions, I may contact Katie Alaniz at 281-785-8292. I may also contact Dr. Melissa Pierson, faculty sponsor, at 713-743-4961.
6. I have been told that I may refuse to participate or to stop my participation in this project at any time before or during the project. I may also refuse to answer any question.
7. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING MY RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (713-743-9204). ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT ARE CARRIED OUT BY INVESTIGATORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON ARE GOVERNED BY REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.
8. All information that is obtained in connection with this project and that can be identified with me will remain confidential as far as possible within legal limits. Information gained from this study that can be identified with me may be released to no one other than the principal investigator [and his/her faculty sponsor]. The results may be published in scientific journals, professional publications, or educational presentations without identifying me by name.

I HAVE READ (OR HAVE HAD READ TO ME) THE CONTENTS OF THIS CONSENT FORM AND HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED TO ASK QUESTIONS. I HAVE RECEIVED ANSWERS TO MY QUESTIONS. I GIVE MY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY. I HAVE RECEIVED (OR WILL RECEIVE) A COPY OF THIS FORM FOR MY RECORDS AND FUTURE REFERENCE.

Study Subject (print name): _____

Signature of Study Subject: _____

Date: _____

I HAVE READ THIS FORM TO THE SUBJECT AND/OR THE SUBJECT HAS READ THIS FORM. AN EXPLANATION OF THE RESEARCH WAS GIVEN AND QUESTIONS FROM THE SUBJECT WERE SOLICITED AND ANSWERED TO THE SUBJECT'S SATISFACTION. IN MY JUDGMENT, THE SUBJECT HAS DEMONSTRATED COMPREHENSION OF THE INFORMATION.

Principal Investigator (print name and title): _____

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

Date: _____