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ABSTRACT

This study examined the use of transactional inquiry to help preservice and inservice teachers examine and construct their own beliefs and practices about equity in excellence for all learners. Transactional inquiry encourages teachers to identify and describe events that exemplify their developing understanding and to examine those events with their peers. The study involved three contexts: an undergraduate, campus-based literacy methods course wherein students observed and taught content reading lessons to public school students and wrote reflectively on their experiences; a field-based internship during which student teachers learned to be content reading teachers through apprenticeships with public school mentor teachers and support from university liaisons; and an alternative format session at a national literacy research conference in which participants developed their own definitions and told their own stories around equity in excellence for all. The transactional inquiries for this study revealed that racism, classism, and differential treatment of the differently abled were present within classrooms. More experienced practitioners understood and implemented the equity proficiency differently than less experienced practitioners. They were more learner-centered than teacher-centered and included more detailed ideas about working with diverse learners. (Contains 30 references and 5 figures.) (SM)

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**Equity in Excellence for All Learners: An Unobtrusive Look at Racism, Classism, and the
Differently Abled in Residents' Portfolio Growth Summaries**

Running Head: Equity in Excellence

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Equity in Excellence for All Learners: An Unobtrusive Look at Racism, Classism, and the
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Preservice and inservice teachers in Texas are expected to implement five learner-centered proficiencies: learner-centered knowledge, learner-centered instruction, learner-centered communication, learner-centered professional development, and equity in excellence for all learners (Texas Education Agency, 1994). Our work in professional development schools suggests that equity in excellence is the most challenging of these proficiencies, possibly because it is so seldom realized in the society surrounding our schools: "Once thought of as the most equalizing institution in our society, public schools play as much of a role in magnifying differences between children from wealthy and impoverished backgrounds and between children of different ethnic backgrounds as they do in overcoming those differences" (Slavin, 1997/1998, p. 7). Therefore recognizing that understanding, accommodating, and celebrating the increasing diversity of our student populations is critical to effective teaching, we have sought strategies to make the pursuit of equity personal.

In this paper we discuss one evolving strategy, transactional inquiry, for helping preservice and inservice teachers examine and construct their own beliefs and practices about equity in excellence for all learners. Transactional inquiry encourages teachers to identify and describe events that exemplify their developing understanding, and to examine those events with their peers. The process of narrating, reflecting, and discussing may help to make visible the beliefs that underlie practices (Copeland, W.D., Birmingham, C., De La Cruz, E. & Lewin, B, 1993; and Schon, 1987), as well as facilitating change in both beliefs and practices (Fleener, M.J. & Fry, P. G., 1998, Hargreaves, A., 1994; and King, P. M. & Kitchener, K.S., 1994). The purpose of this paper is to present findings from our ongoing study, based on the reflections and interactions of preservice and

inservice teachers about their understanding of equity in excellence for all learners. We focus on the narratives of teachers at three points in their professional development.

Perspective

Our line of study began in 1996 with an inquiry into mentor teachers' participation in a field-based teacher education program. Among our findings was that the mentors welcomed the opportunity to share their experiences and insights in an informal, conversational format, and that their sharing tended to be expressed in stories of their work as mentors (Authors 1998a). The lively interaction of these early sessions suggested to us that we could structure similar formats in which teachers could tell or write their own narratives of professional growth and reflect collaboratively on these stories. We hypothesized that this vehicle for articulating personal expertise and integrating the expertise of others (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992; Liberman & Miller, 2000) would increase teachers' collegiality and help them recognize that professional development is an internal process rather than an external imposition (Barth, 1990; Crowther, 1998, Duffy, 1990, Liberman, 1995).

Since our initial inquiry, we have explored a variety of specific formats and prompts for our sessions with mentor teachers, focusing on their "aha" experiences (Authors, 1999b). Various groups of teachers have told, written, and collaboratively analyzed their narratives, suggesting a title, moral, and message for each. We have also asked groups of preservice teachers to tell, write, share, and analyze narratives of their own teaching and learning experiences. Our goal for both groups of teachers is to help them recognize the value of reflection and collegial interaction, as well as to help them articulate and identify the kinds of experiences that can be turning points in teaching (Authors, 1999a). In our work with teacher groups, we have noticed that the same story can elicit different titles, morals, and messages in different group contexts (Authors, 1998b),

suggesting to us that both the narratives themselves and the social context provide opportunities for teaching and learning.

We continue to explore structures for developing narratives and interacting around them that can lead to growth for all the participants. We also continue to explore ways in which we can help both preservice and inservice teachers integrate the Texas learner-centered proficiencies into their instructional practices. This paper reports on what we learned about the levels of concern of educators at different stages of their professional development through transactional inquiries with the portfolio growth summaries of residents (second semester student teachers). The state-adopted framework suggests that, in the area of equity in excellence for all learners, "the teacher responds appropriately to diverse groups of learners" (p. 5). In our current study, we pursued three questions: 1) How have we as teachers responded to equity in our own practice? 2) What do the questions raised during transactional inquiries suggest for our practice? and 3) What do the transactional inquiries using portfolio growth summaries of residents tell us about the persistence of racism, classism, and inequitable treatment of the differently abled in our region?

Theoretical Framework

Our research is based in narrative inquiry and sociocultural theory. We developed the term *transactional inquiry* to describe the process of a group of readers responding and reflecting on a text and on others' responses to the text for the purpose of informing and guiding further inquiry (Authors, 1998b). Research supports the value of narrative in making visible teachers' thought processes (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995), encouraging reflection on classroom beliefs and practices (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995), and providing opportunities for interaction with colleagues (Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995). The process of writing, analyzing, and discussing narratives of professional practice engages teachers in a series of

transactions with their own experiences and knowledge, the texts themselves, and the social context (Rosenblatt, 1978). Readers approach each text from both an efferent and an esthetic stance, encouraging schema elaboration, application, and personal response (Many, Gerla, & Ellis, 1992; Rosenblatt, 1978).

Transactional inquiry is also based on a social constructivist, sociocultural theory of knowledge (Gardner, 1999; Vygotsky, 1934 & 1986; Wertsch, 1985) that holds that knowledge is constructed through a gradual process of reflection about one's own and others' ideas. By taking a reflective stance toward each other's constructs, learners are able to explore their ideas and recognize where they fall short. Eleanor Duckworth has stated, "Whether we are children or adults, whatever it is that we believe is our only starting point for going on" (Fosnot, 1989, p. ix). Transactional inquiry forces the productive messiness of critically examining our own beliefs, practices, and struggles through contemplation and discussion with our fellow practitioners at the particular "starting points" of all involved in the process.

From the social constructivist perspective, education is not a matter of studying facts, but a matter of helping learners reflect on how they create meaning and negotiate with others in contexts of symbolization (Gardner, 1983). Communication (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988), narrative (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995), and metaphor (Bruner, 1990) play a key role in this construction process. Transactional inquiry embodies such an epistemological orientation and is designed to empower teachers to choose what must be done in schools, not wait to be told by outsiders what to do. Through experiencing transactional inquiry as learners, these teachers should be more inclined to provide their own students with opportunities to express their current "starting points" or ideas through stories, and to encourage them to reflect upon and discuss these current theories or beliefs with others.

Methods and Data Sources

Two major themes in the narratives of the teachers are the challenges presented and opportunities provided through working with highly diverse groups of learners. In the current study, we asked teachers to focus on their beliefs and practices about the nature and role of diversity and equity in teaching and learning. We found that their preferred practices were both revealed and strengthened through transactional inquiry. The journals, logs, and reflective assessments resulting from teacher development "events" proved to be rich data sources not only for documenting growth in learning to teach but also for allowing practitioners to interactively examine their beliefs and practices.

In the current study, we worked in three different contexts, exploring teachers' understandings of equity in excellence through small group discussion and written narrative. We will briefly describe each of the contexts and then present results from three teachers. One of the contexts in which we worked was an undergraduate, campus-based literacy methods course wherein students observe and teach content reading lessons to public school students and write reflectively of their experiences, receiving rich feedback from the university instructor. The second was a field-based internship during which preservice teachers learn to be content reading teachers through apprenticeships with two public school mentor teachers with coaching support from university liaison teachers. The apprentice teachers write weekly reflection journals connecting theory with practice. They also develop in-depth assessments of their growth in learning to teach for middle and end of the semester portfolio conferences with their mentors and liaison. The third context was an alternative format session at a national literacy research conference in which the participants developed their own definitions and told their own stories around equity in excellence for all learners.

The distinctive feature of these events is that through transactional inquiry participants go far beyond the trainee role often played in college courses and professional development workshops. They are intensely involved in evaluating the impact of their work on classroom practice—their own and those of fellow practitioners. Journals and other artifacts are shared and analyzed within as well as across sites. These analyses involve identifying prevailing themes among data sources. In addition, answers are sought to individual and collective hard questions about how to intentionally integrate skill and art into practice.

Data were collected over four semesters (spring and fall 1999 and spring and fall 2000). Subjects included 1) 20 junior-level preservice teachers enrolled in a literacy methods course required before student teaching, 2) 87 first or second semester student teachers in a field-based teacher education collaborative, 3) 9 teachers pursuing graduate degrees and 4) 5 university-level literacy educators attending a national conference. These data were analyzed through the participants' transactional inquiries, examining lessons contained in written reflections, narratives, and journals.

The inquiry process facilitated by the authors included these steps which took 75-90 minutes to complete: 1) define *equity in excellence for all learners*, 2) find snippets from authoritative sources which align with the definition and make a web below the definition, 3) find snippets from practitioners' responses which align with the definition for a second web, 4) identify questions which the first three steps have raised, and 5) write a story about a personal experience with this term. The authors completed this process alongside the other participants. Stories were shared among the participants and next steps suggested by the questions were identified.

Responses to five prompt selected by the authors from three contexts as representative of different experience levels are presented in Figures 1-5. The first responses in each figure were

selected from a set of junior-level, preservice teachers whose classroom experience was mainly observing. The student wrote her reflection at the end of a methods course. She and her classmates chose snippets from copies of materials describing the learner-centered proficiencies (Texas Education Agency, 1994) as well as copies of two portfolio growth summaries written by student teachers for their mid-semester conferences. The second responses in each figure, written by an experienced student teacher, were compiled during a seminar session around the middle of the first semester of student teaching just prior to the time the initial portfolio conferences were held. She and her fellow interns had copies of the materials described above from which to work. The third responses came from a veteran teacher educator. She had access to the same materials as the other two respondents. Her work was done during an alternative format session at a national conference.

The first prompt was to define the term *equity in excellence for all learners*, based on the respondent's ideas and understandings. It is one of five constructs (proficiencies) which define the practice of teaching in Texas. Figure 1 presents the definitions of the three respondents.

Insert Figure 1 here.

Next, in each of the contexts, respondents were prompted to find snippets from educational theory which aligned with their definition of *equity in excellence*. Their authoritative source was a twenty-line description written by the Texas Education Agency in 1994, widely used in undergraduate methods courses. Each respondent developed a concept web using excerpts she chose from the Texas Education Agency document. Figure 2 presents the responses from the three contexts.

Insert Figure 2 here.

Then, respondents were prompted to find snippets from practitioners which aligned with their definition. They cut out pieces from two summaries written by a lesser and a more experienced student teacher. Each student teacher assessed her current level of expertise within the proficiency and presented professional development plans for continued growth. The summaries, written four times during the year the student teachers spend teaching alongside public school mentor teachers, are an integral part of the portfolio assessment process. Figure 3 presents the snippets chosen by the three respondents.

Insert Figure 3 here.

Next respondents were prompted to write questions that the process had brought to mind. Figure 4 presents their questions.

Insert Figure 4 here.

Finally, the respondents were prompted to share an example from their own experience where *equity in excellence* was realized. Figure 5 presents their descriptions.

Insert Figure 5 here.

Results

In our current study, we pursued three questions: 1) How have we as teachers responded to equity in our own practice? 2) What do the questions raised during transactional inquiries suggest for our practice? and 3) What do the transactional inquiries using portfolio growth summaries of residents tell us about the persistence of racism, classism, and inequitable treatment of the differently abled in our region? The following is what our data suggest:

Question 1. In our own practice, attention to equity ranges from articulating its importance to being intentional about its possibilities. Responses from those just beginning their teacher preparation courses to veteran teachers and teacher educators to the prompt *for me equity in excellence means* follow.

- . . . [during my 30 hours of observation] *was when my teacher incorporated Spanish into her lessons to include and glorify her Spanish speaking students* [Pre-intern]
- *My mentor's celebrating Black History month and sharing literature and videos w/kids* [Intern]
- *I have demonstrated "equity in excellence" through the lessons I have been teaching. I have created an atmosphere that promotes student diversity, a link to the community, and positive self-concepts.* [Intern]
- *Educational institutions should be designed to benefit all learners and respect and value all cultures.* [Teacher]
- *Embracing all seven languages and cultures in my classroom.* [Teacher]
- *Placing students in situations they may encounter in the "real world" to stimulate their own growth and awareness of diverse backgrounds for self-discovery of these topics.* [Teacher]

Question 2. The hard questions that surfaced during the inquiries reveal practitioners assuming varying degrees of personal responsibility for the realization of equity in our own practice.

Responses are arranged from lesser to greater responsibility, rather than by experience levels.

- *Out of all the things that are expected of me throughout the internship/residency how can I celebrate each child's diversity each and every day?* [Intern]
- *Within a school or district, how do you provide equity between the "have's" and "have-nots"—technology, etc., and not discriminate against either group?* [Teacher]
- *The last quote I selected from the growth summary, [I understand that each child learns in different ways and I try to capitalize on that] makes me ask, Are we seeing the beginning of a "wealth" view of learning rather than a "deficit"?* [Teacher educator]
- *What is my best resource to use to find ways to "celebrate" diversity?* [Intern]
- *How can I incorporate the community into my lessons?* [Intern]
- *What will make me more sensitive?* [Intern]
- *What can I do to improve my cultural diversity knowledge? Am I reaching every student?* [Pre-intern]
- *Will I have enough creativity to plan and implement interesting and effective lessons that are inclusive and allow all my students to feel successful?* [Pre-intern]
- *How can I create a better learning environment that fosters equity and excellence for all learners?* [Teacher educator]

Question 3. During the past two years transactional inquiries have been carried out by teachers with varying levels of preparation. These included 1) pre-interns with very limited field experience; 2) interns who were spending 2/3 of their time teaching alongside public school mentor teachers and 1/3 of their time in university seminars; 3) certificated teachers, some of whom were mentoring

interns and residents and some of whom and some of whom were pursuing advanced degrees; and 4) teacher educators. Each used residents' assessments of their growth in the *equity in excellence for all learners* proficiency to increase their own understanding of the proficiency. Their responses allowed us an unobtrusive look into three aspects of equity: racism, classism, and treatment of the differently-abled. They are presented by preparation levels from least to most classroom experience.

Racism. "We can't just aspire to be prejudice-free. We need to examine how racism persists in our institutions so we don't perpetuate it" (Tatum, 1997/1998, p. 15).

- *I observed in a classroom during Christmas time for one of my classes. For an assignment, the teacher gave the children a Santa Claus to color. Each child had an excellent time making "their" Santa. When all had finished one African American student had colored his Santa black. The teacher then proceeded to tell this child, "Santa is not black." [Intern]*
- *As I entered my first teaching experience in X I was immediately faced with racial issues. My principal immediately informed me that the reason I was hired was because they needed a white teacher in accordance for ratio purposes. . . .The eyes of children shine with amazement as discovery [on the first day of school that they have a white teacher] is taking place. These eyes are taught to see color by someone. That someone was not me because I truly believe that every child deserves to learn. [Teacher]*
- *Students need to feel that their cultures are valued and they also need to see people from their culture portrayed positively in the material at school. I grew up in a time where African Americans were not portrayed in the school material unless it was a slave or a maid. The only positive figure from my culture that I saw in the textbooks was Dr. Martin Luther King. [Teacher Educator]*

Classism. “Segregated schools are not equal schools. They are segregated by race and poverty. No one has equalized segregated impoverished schools anywhere in the country” (Orfield, G., & Eaton, S., 1996, p. x).

- *Teachers need to understand students’ home life.* [Intern]
- *Creating a learning environment that is conducive to all children regardless of background, cultural diversity, socio-economic class, etc. Treat each child as a special individual and at the same time bring them together in a classroom full of respect and thoughtful activities. Let each child/student contribute a bit of their own differences to create one whole classroom.* [Intern]
- *Equity in opportunities, in resources, access to the best I and my school, have available.*
[Teacher]
- *That all students, rich or poor, students of all races are important and are entitled to a free and appropriate education.* [Teacher]
- *The atmosphere and modeling to grow as a community in spite of differences* [Teacher]
- *Without equality in home life, if all teachers embrace all these factors (qualities of excellence), will there ever be complete equity in the outcome of education?* [Teacher]

The Differently-Abled. “Teachers identify students with special needs as their greatest challenges and often their greatest rewards. Unfortunately most general education teachers feel at a loss as to how to educate these students” (Vaughn, S., Bos, C. S., & Schumm, J. S., 2000, pl. xxiii).

- *the “safe” atmosphere Mrs. X creates. A particular example is her treatment of all of her students and especially Hunter, the little boy in the wheelchair. Because of the way he is accepted, respected, and loved he truly enjoys his time with his family of friends.* [Pre-intern]

- *My mentor teachers all encourage students to work cooperatively in groups. One teacher in particular utilizes group literature circles that help students to better understand materials by hearing and receiving other students' ideas! [Pre-intern]*
- *Knowing I'm doing my best to see that all students are able to learn in an equal opportunity environment. The behavior problem children and other children with some major problems can be productive and learn what they need to know. [Intern]*
- *Fighting the school administrators to enroll the child with severe spina-bifida in a regular kindergarten classroom instead of being placed in a SPED classroom. His disability was physical, not mental. We had to stress to those not familiar with his condition that he was to be treated like the other children and expected to do as the other children except when physically impossible. [Intern]*
- *The teacher sat in a chair and gathered a profoundly handicapped boy into her lap, with a big hug and an equal exchange of smiles and affection. Excellence was a clear foundation for this classroom environment. [Teacher Educator]*

Conclusions and Future Directions

The transactional inquiries for this study revealed that racism, classism, and differential treatment of the differently abled are present within classrooms in our region. They confirmed our hunch that *equity in excellence for all learners* is a challenge that has only begun to be realized in the practice of teaching. Further, this study showed that more experienced practitioners understand and implement the equity proficiency differently than less experienced practitioners. Among other things, more experienced practitioners are more learner-centered than teacher-centered and include more detailed ideas about working with diverse groups of learners.

This study focused on preservice and inservice teachers and university teacher educators. We continue to question how teachers' ideas and strategies change as they gain teaching experience. In our ongoing work, we plan to examine the responses of inservice teachers ranging from novice to veteran. We question which events influence their beliefs and practices, and how they translate those influences into their instructional strategies. Because teachers tend to work in isolation, they may be unaware of innovative practices used by their colleagues or of experiences that encourage professional growth. They may also lack opportunities to engage in conversations and events that challenge their beliefs or extend their practices. Our inquiry offers strategies for identifying critical events in teaching lives and extending those events to other contexts.

Hard questions from four who completed transactional inquiries with us during the course of this study suggest that it is a provocative process.

- *Can we have more seminars like this [using transactional inquiry to analyze residents' portfolio growth summaries]? [Intern]*
- *What are the missed opportunities for using this [transactional inquiry] process in my own practice? [Teacher Educator]*
- *What are ways that I . . . can provide a similar climate for learning in my own courses? [Teacher Educator]*
- *How surface is the understanding expressed? How do/would experienced teachers' responses differ from these? (And these students over time?) How would responses vary in different programs—less field time, fewer diverse students in classes, more “traditional” university students? [Teacher educator]*

Finally, our study suggests that the process of transactional inquiry might help move us across the racial and economic barriers that divide us within schools and across communities. It is a gentle

process that allows us both privately and collectively to confront tough issues and become more intentional about our responses. Rather than deepening wounds, the recursive work seems to promote the kind of understanding that brings us closer together. Reflecting on the process calls to mind Marcel Proust's observation, "The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new landscapes, but in looking with new eyes."

Figure 1.

Teachers' Responses to the Definition Prompt

Experience Level	Prompt: The descriptor <i>equity in excellence for all learners</i> suggests. . .
Beginning Preservice Teacher	. . .that the diversity of students is celebrated in the classroom. Books, videos and lessons are made up of multicultural information. All students are accepted and learn to love what makes them different. Teachers learn about background (cultures, religions. . .) of their students and relay this knowledge to their students so all are respected.
Experienced Preservice Teacher	. . .that all students deserve an education. Every child is an individual and deserves validation for that individuality. It suggests that we value cultural differences and bring those cultures into our classroom and celebrate them.
Veteran Teacher	. . .high expectations for all learners, scaffolding to help learners meet expectations, recognition of individual/group differences, access for all to excellent instruction, examining practice (and beliefs), and understanding the various backgrounds of learners and how they affect practice.

Figure 2.

Teachers' Responses to the Alignment with Theory Prompt

Experience Level	Prompt: Snippets from the Texas State Board of Education (1994) definition which align with my ideas about <i>equity in excellence</i> . . .
Beginning Preservice Teacher	The teacher not only respects and is sensitive to all learners but also encourages the use of all their skills and talents. As the facilitator of learning, the teachers models and encourages appreciation of students' cultural heritage, unique endowments, learning styles, interests, and needs. The teachers also designs learning experiences that show consideration for these student characteristics. Because the teacher views differences as opportunities for learning, cross-cultural experiences are an integral part of the learner-centered community.
Experienced Preservice Teacher	As the facilitator of learning, the teachers models and encourages appreciation of students' cultural heritage, unique endowments, learning styles, interests, and needs. Because the teacher views differences as opportunities for learning, cross-cultural experiences are an integral part of the learner-centered community. [The teacher] fosters climate of respect/acceptance of others' ideas and promotes development of positive self-concepts.
Veteran teacher	The teacher responds appropriately to diverse groups of learners. . .the facilitator of learning. . .models and encourages. . .designs learning experiences. . .establishes a relationship. . .designs and integrates learning experiences that respect student diversity. . .maintains a supportive environment. . . establishes a

climates in which learners work collaboratively. . .fosters climate of respect/acceptance of others' ideas. . .learners works cooperatively and purposefully. . .the teacher and students explore attitudes that foster unity. . .promotes development of positive self-concepts.

Figure 3. Teachers' Responses to the Alignment with Practice Prompt

Experience Level	Prompt: Snippets from the portfolio growth summaries of two pre-service teachers which align with my ideas about <i>equity in excellence</i> . . .
Beginning Preservice Teacher	<p>1) I am very conscious of how unique and special each child is and I have celebrated the diversity of the students. I have tried to teach each child by understanding different learning styles. Each week I make it a point to learn a new Spanish word so that I may communicate better with my Spanish-speaking students. 2) Equity in Excellence for All Learners celebrates diversity. In this proficiency the teacher promotes individuality, self-esteem and promotes a positive learning environment. I believe that I am culturally aware. I appreciate the differences and individuality of all my students. I understand that each child learns in different ways and I try to capitalize on that.</p>
Experienced Preservice Teacher	<p>1) I am very conscious of how unique and special each child is and I have celebrated the diversity of the students. I have tried to teach each child by understanding different learning styles. Each week I make it a point to learn a new Spanish word so that I may communicate better with my Spanish-speaking students. 2) Equity in Excellence for All Learners celebrates diversity. In this proficiency the teacher promotes individuality, self-esteem and promotes a positive learning environment. I believe that I am culturally aware. I appreciate the differences and individuality of all my students. I</p>

understand that each child learns in different ways and I try to capitalize on that..

Veteran teacher 1) Teach each child. Takes advantage of every learning opportunity. Understand student's home life and how it affects their learning abilities. Celebrate the fact that I have a multicultural classroom by the activities incorporating diverse learning and reading styles into all my lessons. All children can be winners. 2) Bring understanding to his classroom in regards to diversity. Celebrate diversity, both physical and cultural, in many ways. Try to remember that the classroom is one unit made up of several differences, and each difference is an opportunity to expand one's ideas and knowledge.

Figure 4.

Teachers' Responses to the Questions Prompt

Experience Level	Prompt: This work has raised these questions. . .
Beginning Preservice Teacher	Will I ever feel I know enough about any one proficiency? How can I ensure that I am knowledgeable enough on diversity to better teach my students?
Experienced Preservice Teacher	This work has raised these questions: I feel that this proficiency is the most important, and I challenge myself to always have the goals of this proficiency at the center of my teaching. How will I do this?
Veteran Teacher	How "surface" is the understanding expressed? How do/would experienced teachers' responses differ from these? (And these students over time?) How would responses vary in different programs--less field time, fewer diverse students in classes, more "traditional" university students?.

Figure 5.

Teachers' Responses to an Event from their Own Experience Prompt

Experience Level Prompt: The best example I saw of *equity in excellence*. . .

Beginning . . . [during my 30 hours of observation] was when my teacher incorporated
 Preservice Spanish into her lessons to include and glorify her Spanish speaking
 Teacher students.

Experienced . . . [in internship] was my mentors teaches encourage students to work
 Preservice cooperatively in groups. One in particular utilizes group literature circles
 Teacher that help students to better understand material by learning and receiving
 other students ideas!

Veteran . . . [work with inservice teachers]: In the summer of 1998 I taught a master's
 teacher level class in reading, with a group of 25 students who were highly diverse
 in every possible sense of diversity--except gender (all were women). They
 represented ages from mid-20's to mid-50's; teaching experience from 0 to
 15 years; races/nationalities including white, AA, HA, Filipino. This group
 of very different women came together in a powerful way, which I believe
 was due to our use of stories and the variety of assignments we shared.

We wrote and shared three narratives of practice and experience that
 summer. As we shared them in class, we also shared tears, cheers, and
 amen's. The class members, in turn, empathized and sympathized with their
 peers' experiences.

Our assignments incorporated students' teaching experiences, family backgrounds, and community relationships. Students collaborated to design and teach lessons to the class--mentoring and scaffolding; exploring the ways in which they understood and used literacy to develop plans to continue their professional growth past the 4-week class.

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