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Abstract

This paper focuses on the divide between the university as a site of teacher education and the profession of practicing teachers. We employed a theoretical inquiry methodology on a singular case study which included formulating questions about the phenomena of the university-profession divide (UPD), analysing constituents of the UPD, and developing a language system to represent our findings about the UPD. The questions guiding our examination were: How do we conceptualize this divide? How are these concepts represented in the literature? How can a Teacher Education Program (TEP) respond to the divide? The theoretical inquiry was conducted within a singular case study of a TEP in order to explore the chasm between these two settings in a limited and focused manner. Our inquiry led to the identification of three key concepts: competing cultures, competing expectations, and theory-practice dichotomy. In analyzing these concepts and responding to questions which drove this inquiry from the beginning, we assert that these concepts contribute to the divide and therefore, have implications for teacher education programming. We summarize findings about these three concepts, suggest causes for the chasm, and offer recommendations to address the divide. Finally, we argue that while it is important to address the divide to enhance teacher education, the divide itself is a potentially rich site of possibilities. We contend that a reconceptualization of the UPD in this way might mitigate its negative impact on teacher education curriculum and programming.

Cet article se concentre sur l'écart qui existe entre l'université en tant que lieu de formation des enseignants et la profession d'enseignant en exercice. Nous avons employé une méthodologie d'enquête théorique basée sur une seule étude de cas qui comprenait des questions sur l'écart entre université et profession, l'analyse des composantes de cet écart et le développement d'un système de langue pour représenter nos résultats concernant l'écart entre université et profession. Les questions qui ont guidé notre examen étaient les suivantes : Comment conceptualisons-nous cet écart? Comment ces concepts sont-ils représentés dans les publications? Comment un programme de formation des enseignants peut-il répondre à cet écart? L'enquête théorique a été menée sur une seule étude de cas d'un programme de formation des enseignants afin d'explorer le gouffre qui existe entre ces deux domaines d'une manière limitée et ciblée. Notre enquête a permis d'identifier trois concepts clés : la concurrence entre les cultures, la concurrence entre les attentes et la dichotomie entre théorie et pratique. Suite à l'analyse de ces concepts et aux réponses obtenues aux questions qui étaient à l'origine de cette enquête dès le départ, nous pouvons affirmer que ces concepts contribuent à l'écart et, par conséquent, ont une incidence sur les programmes de formation des enseignants. Nous résumons nos résultats concernant ces concepts, suggérons des raisons à l'origine du gouffre et proposons des recommandations pour remédier à l'écart. Pour finir, nous suggérons que, bien qu'il soit important de remédier à l'écart afin d'améliorer la formation des enseignants, l'écart lui-même est un lieu potentiellement rempli de riches possibilités. Nous soutenons qu'une reconceptualisation de l'écart entre université et profession selon cette manière pourrait mitiger ses effets négatifs sur le curriculum et les programmes de formation des enseignants.

Keywords

teacher education, profession, university, competing cultures, theory-practice dichotomy, third space

This paper examines the nature of the relationship between university and the profession. For the purposes of this paper, we refer to this relationship as a university-profession divide (UPD). Using a theoretical inquiry methodology focused on a singular case study, we examine the work of a small teacher education program (TEP) in Western Canada to reveal the UPD in daily practice and program development. We then explore the UPD as it is referenced in research literature in relation to three key questions: (a) How does this divide exist within this program?, (b) How are these divisions represented in the literature?, and (c) How can a TEP respond to the divide? By triangulating theoretical inquiry, case study, and research literature, we present results which aim to clarify the UPD and provide other teacher education programs and professions with possibilities for working within this divide.

History

Across professional preparation programs, such as nursing, business, and social work, there is a consistent tension that exists between the professional field and the university charged with preparing university candidates for that field. For example, in social work, Fargion (2007) argues that the tension is related to the difference in language games and power systems between the university and the professional field of social work. Similarly, in nursing, Nelson (2002) discusses the challenge that exists when the profession favours nurses to hold a baccalaureate degree. This raises concerns of power as it results in shifting the control of what is taught from the field to the university. Literature regarding this divide or chasm in teacher education is just as prevalent (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990; Cuenca, Schmeichel, Butler, Dinkelman, & Nicols, 2011; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1983; Friedrichsen, Munford, & Orgill, 2006; Grossman & McDonald, 2008; Martin, Snow, & Franklin Torrez, 2011; Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry, 2004; Smith & Avetisian, 2011; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998; Williams, 2014; Zeichner, 2010; Zeichner & Miller, 1996; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981). We acknowledge that this persistent metaphor of a divide is also born out of both student teacher misconceptions of teaching and negative perceptions of teacher education programs.

Student Teacher Misconceptions of Teaching

A brief review of the literature on students' views of teaching reveal two common misconceptions that student teachers have when entering a TEP. The first misconception, termed the familiarity pitfall by Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1983), focuses on the student teacher's confidence in his or her own knowledge about teaching. As a result of more than 15 years as students themselves, student teachers enter TEPs and observe practices in both courses and in the practicum that remind them of previous experiences. Rather than challenging the schema they have developed over many years as a student in a classroom, student teachers are simply connecting new ideas to old schema; being in a classroom reinforces what they already know and cements their perception of teaching as a familiar act. In this way, the traditional aspects of today's classrooms confirm student teachers' prior beliefs about teaching rather than reconceptualising them (Puk & Haines, 1999).

A second misconception stems from student teachers' beliefs of effective qualities of teachers. Richardson and Placier (2001) found student teachers believe that the most important characteristics of teachers are affective. Rather than view expert knowledge of content, pedagogical content knowledge, or knowledge of learning theories as important, student teachers

place more value on being caring, loving children, and being enthusiastic (Paine, 1990). As discussed by Hammerness et al. (2005), it is difficult to alter this preconceived idea of what students value most in teachers. The same can be said for those in social work where the motivation to care for and help children is viewed as the priority (Fargion, 2007).

Perceptions of Teacher Education Programs

In addition to student teachers' misconceptions of teaching, an additional factor relevant to the perceived UPD is the prevalent and negative perceptions of TEPs (Barone, Berliner, Blanchard, Casnova, & McGowan, 1996; Bullough & Gitlin, 2001; Sandlin, Young, & Karge, 1992; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981). There persists a widespread lack of faith in TEPs to meet the aim of producing good teachers (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005; Crocker & Dibbon, 2008; Kagan, 1992; Korthagen, Loughen, & Russell, 2006): teachers who are capable of responding to a broad range of issues, meeting the demands of producing a literate society, and shaping future citizens who are critically aware and responsive to their own evolution as productive citizens. Moore (2003) reports that teachers in the profession also hold a negative view of their own TEPs and this is conveyed in both subtle and overt ways when they mentor prospective teachers in practicum. For example, teachers share stories of their own practica as being the most useful part of their own learning in comparison to what was learned in their university courses. Hargreaves and Jacka (1995) summarize TEPs as "a stressful but ineffective interlude" (p. 42). This same challenge exists in nursing. Pravikoff, Tanner, and Pierce (2005) found that current nurses in the United States did not value or know how to work effectively with current research on best nursing practices. Consequently, time spent in nursing education programs can often be undervalued as the focus on research is not valued once they enter the field.

Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, and Shulman (2005) focus on research demonstrating a lack of connection and coherence in TEPs with the field. Grossman and McDonald (2008) note that TEPs often lack opportunities "to practice elements of interactive teaching in settings of reduced complexity" (p. 190) even though this might enhance connection between the university and the field. Instead, this *approximation of practice* is left to the field. There are several reasons why this is the case. First, simulating teaching requires more time which may be perceived to negatively impact instructors' ability to address all content in university courses. Second, approximations with peer adults leave prospective teachers to merely *guess* how children would respond to lessons and this raises questions about authenticity. Third, planning and teaching lessons as part of an assignment in a university course reinforces an unfavourable notion that planning can be done effectively without any knowledge of students' learning needs (Grossman & Thompson, 2008). Wideen et al. (1998), who support these concerns regarding a lack of connection and coherence, raise the issue that universities focus on knowledge about teaching rather than the development of teaching practice; in essence, universities are accused of requiring students to *do as we say, not as we do*.

Goodnough, Falkenberg, and MacDonald (2016) share the conclusion that "more research is needed to understand the context of teacher preparation and how programs and individual faculty can offer appropriate, coherent learning experiences" (p. 23). Consequently, while research does not support the perception that TEPs are ineffective in preparing teachers, it does not challenge it either. This questioning of the value of higher education is not unique to teacher education. As reported by Bennis and O'Toole (2005), business schools are often devalued for focusing on research rather than current issues and trends in today's marketplaces.

This calls into question not only the structure of MBA programs, but also how faculty are hired within those programs. If the university preferences for publication records outweighs experience in the field, the program is viewed as disconnected and ill-prepared to meet the needs of business students.

As just reviewed, student misconceptions regarding their familiarity with teaching and the over importance of affect or knowledge, combined with the often negative perceptions of university programs serve as contributing factors to the divide that exists between universities and the profession. While we acknowledge these factors are at play, we believe that additional exploration is required to further our understanding of the divide itself. To clarify and articulate the concepts central to this divide, we employ the research methods of singular case study and theoretical inquiry.

Method

We conducted our exploration of the UPD by combining two qualitative approaches, namely a singular case study (Stake, 2005) of a small university TEP in British Columbia's lower mainland using theoretical inquiry (a form of curriculum inquiry) and case study. The case method facilitated our exploration of the program as a whole and led to relevant questions about knowledge, concepts, and language embedded within the UPD.

Singular Case Study

Case study research, in general, may include qualitative and quantitative processes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Stake, 2005). While Denzin and Lincoln (2005) suggest that a variety of terms are often used as synonymous with case study, such as field work, the common feature in a singular case study is that the purpose is to learn deeply about the case rather than to focus on generalizing beyond the case (Stake, 2005). This description serves to clarify that the aim of this paper is to offer recommendations which may or may not be generalizable to all programs even though issues related to the UPD may apply broadly to the field of teacher education. Stake proposes a stance of *peculiarity* as a lens by which to examine a single case. This is helpful in analyzing unique contextual features such as the cohort model or integrated practica and facilitates an understanding of the intricacies and complexities which characterize the UPD.

For the purposes of this paper, we framed our examination of the TEP using two aspects of singular case studies: experiential knowledge and examination in the absence of comparison to other cases. Our examination of the case drew on experiential knowledge (Geertz, 1983) as faculty members, mentors in the practicum, and department heads. In analyzing the singular case of the TEP, we learned the complexity and intricacies which characterized the divide itself. Our experiential knowledge resulted from both vicarious experience and from developing what Stake and Trumbull (1982) refer to as naturalistic generalizations: a set of enduring meanings which come from recurring encounters of personal and vicarious experience. Further, "good case study research follows disciplined practices of analysis and triangulation to tease out what deserves to be called experiential knowledge from what is opinion and preference" (Stake, 2005, p. 455). Triangulation, in this case, was facilitated by identifying common knowledge from experiences in three different roles within the TEP: practicum supervision, teaching courses on campus, and immersion in the daily operations of the program. Knowledge about the UPD was derived from

consistent and qualitatively rich reflections on our experiences in these three aspects of our roles as faculty within the program.

A second component of singular case study is the attention to studying the case itself rather than the case in comparison to other such cases. We analyzed the TEP with an aim to understand the complexities, conditions, and expression of the UPD within the TEP's own parameters and boundaries. The aim of comparison, as Lincoln and Guba (2000) reiterate, in effect obscures learning deeply about a single case. We assert that a nuanced understanding of the UPD was enhanced by an in-depth focus on one case rather than the comparison of several cases.

Theoretical Inquiry

Short (1991) lays out a comprehensive analysis of multiple forms of curriculum inquiry which includes aesthetic, narrative, scientific, phenomenological, theoretical, and evaluative. Curriculum inquiry is based on three principles: it is a process that requires developing salient questions, engaging in inquiry, and constructing knowledge from this inquiry. With respect to the first principle of curriculum inquiry, in order to better understand the UPD we chose to develop several questions to explore this phenomenon: How does this divide exist within our TEP? How are these concepts represented in the literature? How can a TEP respond to the divide?

With respect to the second principle of engaging in inquiry, we chose to use a process of theoretical inquiry. How researchers engage in inquiry determines the form of curriculum inquiry they are using. Theoretical inquiry is a form of research which involves "creating and critiquing conceptual schemes by which the essential nature and structure of the phenomena can be better understood" (Grove & Short, 1991, p. 211). Consequently, we analyzed rich descriptions of the TEP (provided below) to identify a conceptual scheme to describe our divide. Once that scheme was identified, we completed a comparative analysis against existing literature. Were we able to substantiate the conceptual scheme we identified? Did this scheme provide a way to respond to the divide?

The conceptual scheme itself produced "a language system...by which we [could] think and talk about the entity" (Grove & Short, 1991, p. 213). As a result, we addressed the third and final principle of curriculum inquiry.

Data Sources

Given that the data set is based on the experiential knowledge of the authors, it is important to describe our roles and experiences with the TEP itself. Working from Brookfield's (1995) four complementary lenses of knowing, our data was generated from our interactions with each other as co-educators, our colleagues in teacher education, and our students. Both authors have spent time as department heads for the TEP, a role that involved working with regular faculty, sessional instructors, faculty mentors, teacher mentors, and school district personnel (superintendents, principals, and curriculum specialists). In addition, both have worked as faculty mentors, working with student teachers in the field during practica. This role is critical to the study as it places both authors in the field each year and contributes to their knowledge of current trends, issues, and practices in the field. Finally, both have taught more than four courses in the TEP, including both foundation and method courses. One author has worked in British Columbia secondary schools (up to 2004), teaching science courses for Grades 8 to 12. She instructs

courses in the TEP that focus on social justice, elementary science methods, classroom research, technology in the classroom, and reflective practice. While department head, she oversaw the development of a secondary stream to the TEP and the implementation of a graduate certificate. She completed her MA in a large, British Columbia university, and her current doctoral dissertation examines the conceptual development of teacher education. It is from this examination that these more specific questions regarding the UPD emerged. At this point, she sought a collaborator to assist in this theoretical inquiry to provide an alternative voice to her own.

The second author has worked in British Columbia elementary schools (up to 2002), teaching all subject areas. She completed her MA in a large, British Columbia university and completed her PhD in curriculum studies at a large, Ontario university. She instructs courses in the TEP that focus on elementary math methods, elementary social studies methods, planning and assessment, classroom management, and school governance. While department head, she oversaw the program's five-year review and implementation of Institutional Learning Outcomes.

Together, we have worked with all aspects of the TEP in varying roles. Our different experiences prior to working in the TEP provided us with unique and differing perspectives that we felt were important to our inquiry. An argument can be made that the inclusion of additional sources (e.g., student teachers, other faculty, administration) would strengthen our findings through triangulation. However, our focus for this theoretical inquiry involved checking our findings against existing literature rather than additional participants.

The combined approaches of singular case study and theoretical inquiry serve two important functions. First, the reader learns about the in-depth analysis of a single program through the first-hand experience of faculty within the program. Second, the reader is shown how constitutive and structural components are woven together to form a complex yet identifiable set of relationships within the UPD. As derivatives of qualitative research, the methods employed in this research paper allow us to present a sophisticated, robust, and plausible set of conceptual ideas which inform some of the day-to-day tensions and challenges of the work within the program.

Data Analyses

Using our experiential knowledge about the program, we discussed and developed a rich description of the program (found in the section below). While we did use documents like the Program Handbook (available on the department website) and the original Program Proposal (internal document), our own experiences, additionally informed by our interactions with colleagues and students, were the most critical sources for this description. For example, as department heads we had both received numerous student complaints regarding sessional instructors. These complaints were primarily focused on a lack of practical application. Comments such as “these assignments have nothing to do with my practicum” illustrate these complaints. In contrast, there were very few complaints regarding permanent faculty. Consequently, in the rich description below, we reference these concerns.

Once we had completed the rich description of the TEP found in the next section, we separately analyzed the description using our first key question as our guide: How does this divide exist within our TEP? We combed through our rich description and independently identified examples of the UPD. Continuing with the example in the previous paragraph, each of us identified concerns with sessional faculty not connecting to the practicum as an example of

the UPD in our program. Once our separate analyses had been completed, we came together to compare our analyses. We looked for instances that we both identified as representative of the UPD. Any discrepancies in our identification were debated until consensus regarding whether they were included as examples was found. In this way, we tried to balance our voices and experiences. We believe this increased the trustworthiness of our findings; examples were agreed upon by both authors.

Using those examples, we then looked for common themes. These themes then became our conceptual scheme. This scheme is detailed at the beginning of our results section below. We then began our review of related teacher education research to see if our conceptual scheme was supported in literature. We found considerable overlap and resonance between the conceptual scheme we developed and the current literature about the perceived gap between the university and the profession described in our results. The literature allowed us to clarify the concepts central to the conceptual scheme of the UPD and this, in turn, led us to identify strategies for addressing the UPD within this TEP. The following sections provide a rich description of the single case of the TEP followed by the results of the key concepts that we identified as contributing to the UPD. This is followed by a summary of the literature which strengthens our conceptual scheme. In final sections, we offer recommendations for addressing the UPD in our program based on knowledge gained from this study.

Case: A Rich Description of the TEP

This TEP is a small cohort program of 36 student teachers who complete this post-degree certificate program over a period of 11 months. Student teachers begin the program at the end of July and finish midway through June of the following year. Over these 11 months, the cohort goes through a series of 6 program shifts organized into four thematic terms. When taking university coursework, students have two three-hour classes a day (i.e., 9-12pm and 1-4pm). Courses include both foundational (e.g., diversity in public schools, ESL, Indigenous youth and schooling) and methods courses (e.g., social studies methods, language arts methods, planning and assessment). The methods courses include enacted practice, referred to as embedded pedagogy, in place of merely discussing practice with our students. For example, students experience lessons and classroom management strategies and then reflect on and deconstruct these experiences.

Student teachers take university courses from the end of July until the beginning of September. This thematic term is referred to as “building a learning community.” Student teachers participate in a three-day orientation that involves a variety of small group activities around the program values and expectations, culminating in a one-day retreat organized entirely by the student teachers. These early experiences of planning activities introduces student teachers to the beginnings of the shift from student to teacher in a professional program. Throughout this term, student teachers continue to confront their own expectations that there is a “right way” to teach; they are trying to gather the right tips and tricks for their toolkit rather than developing an understanding of pedagogy and how to connect that to learners. Additional workshops, besides the coursework include professional ethics, the creation of a TEP student association, and practicum placements. Emphasis is placed on working together as a community, similar to the emphasis on professional learning communities in schools (Eaker & DuFour, 2002; Shulman & Shulman, 2004), in an effort to broaden student teachers’ understanding of the nature of professional work.

The majority of courses completed over the 11-month program are taught by regular faculty. These faculty members also go with student teachers into the field as faculty mentors who formally observe their assigned student teachers in their practicum classroom a minimum of once a week. They have meetings with the teacher mentors and principals in the schools and contribute to all final reports. As there are many more student teachers than can be observed by program faculty, a large number of faculty mentors are hired externally. Typically, external faculty mentors are retired administrators who have experience in mentoring professionals. These faculty mentors participate in five mentor meetings a year as well as teacher mentor orientations. Examples of lesson and unit planning being taught in the university coursework are shared with the faculty mentors to inform them about the program at the university. This often includes mini-training in best practices (e.g., assessment as, for, and of learning, conceptual development, new curriculum, reflective practice).

By having regular TEP faculty observing and working in the field, there is a strong connection between the coursework they teach and the field in which student teachers are completing their practicum. Student teachers are motivated to complete their assignments and participate in activities because they perceive the work as relevant to preparing them for practicum. Some of the courses in the program are taught by sessional instructors who are brought in for specialty areas (e.g., developmental psychology, ESL, Indigenous youth and schooling, language arts methods). There are often challenges that occur in these courses. Student teachers complain about a lack of relevance with the field, a lack of respect for the student teachers as budding professionals, and a lack of coherence with the overall program values. A few of the sessional instructors that are brought in to teach also act as faculty mentors in the field. There are far fewer concerns expressed by student teachers in these sessionally run courses again due to a perceptively deeper connection between assignments and activities in coursework with practicum requirements.

From September to December students participate in a term referred to as “joining the school community.” Student teachers complete five weeks of coursework through September and into October. Included in this coursework is a three-day “helping schools” opportunity whereby student teachers join their practicum classrooms to help out. They do not teach during this period of time; instead, they help the teacher out in any way, learn their students’ names, and observe the start-up of the school year. This is powerful; when student teachers return to the university, they have a specific classroom and students to plan for when completing assignments. Mid-October student teachers return to their practicum classroom for a five week “school experience.” Rather than referring to this as a short practicum, the program emphasizes a progressive approach to teaching: get to know all aspects of the school, not just the practicum classroom; teach and work with individual students and small groups; teach the whole class for short periods of time; teach full lessons that connect together; and involve an assessment activity of some kind. Co-teaching is strongly encouraged as well as working from the teacher mentors’ planning as well as their own. At the end of the school experience, student teachers are evaluated by teacher and faculty mentors against the 14 program goals (e.g., classroom management, professionalism, assessment and evaluation, effective teaching, effective communication).

The teacher mentors volunteer, and are selected by the principal, to have student teachers in their classrooms. Student teachers remain in the same classroom for the entire year unless there are significant difficulties in the placement. The teacher mentors come in for one half-day of training that focuses on the procedural aspects of the placement as well as an overview of the program as a whole. Some placements work very well for both the teacher mentor and the

student teacher while others have challenges. There are sometimes conflicts around the following: best practices of the teacher mentor and the university do not align, expectations of the teacher mentor that the student teacher take over all responsibilities immediately rather than progressively, or expectations that the student teacher should mimic or copy the practices of the teacher mentor rather than experiment or develop their own teaching practice.

By mid-November, student teachers return to the university for another five weeks of intensive coursework before the winter break. Starting in January, the program refers to the next term as “becoming a teacher.” While emphasis is placed on the long practicum, in January, student teachers return for another four weeks of intensive coursework. By the end of January, student have completed all methods courses. All courses in the program are evaluated as complete/incomplete. Utilizing a mastery learning approach, student teachers rework their assignments until all of them are evaluated as complete. Program instructors refer to “complete” as a “classroom ready” assignment. From February to the beginning of May, student teachers are in the field for their long practicum. To successfully complete the long practicum, student teachers need to be “certification ready” in all 14 program goals.

For the final term, six weeks in May and June, student teachers return to the university for the “shaping our professional community” term. Recognizing that the student teachers have successfully completed their long practicum, this final term is viewed more as professional development than typical coursework. Student teachers rely on and apply a great deal of what they learned while on long practicum to their coursework. Time is spent on understanding the politics of schools and education, developing classroom research, and compiling a final electronic portfolio. As the cohort year comes to a close, the completing student teachers often comment on the “transformative” year they have had, feeling like teachers when they finish rather than students.

Results

Developing a Language System or Conceptual Scheme for the UPD

From the rich description of this case of a TEP and our examination of examples demonstrated the UPD, the conceptual scheme that emerged included three key concepts. The first concept we named “competing cultures.” Within our program, competing cultures is evidenced in university coursework taught by instructors who do not mentor student teachers in the field. These classes are more traditional and teacher-directed with a lecture format reminiscent of undergraduate coursework. This passive involvement as learners is in strong contrast with the active, performance-based engagement student teachers experience in the field. This serves to accentuate the competing cultures of the university and the profession.

The second concept we named “competing expectations.” Within our program, different expectations exist in relation to the purpose of learning, assessment practices, and roles. University faculty emphasize the use of innovative and experimental pedagogies, encouraging students to plan and implement lessons from constructivist and inquiry-based approaches. In contrast, when student teachers enter their practicum classrooms the expectations are clearly focused on technical skills such as following set routines, managing classroom behaviour, and following prescribed structures within the classroom and school system. Rather than an emphasis on exploration, experimentation, and risk-taking, there is an expectation to mimic the mentor teacher’s practice.

The third concept we named the “theory-practice dichotomy.” Even prior to entering our program, students hold the preconceived belief that theory is abstract: something found in a textbook rather than something that applies to real situations (Beck & Kosnik, 2002a; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Segall, 2001; Shulman, 1987). They enter the program with few opportunities to integrate theory and practice in their undergraduate coursework. This gap in their academic experiences results in difficulty when bridging theory and practice, even within a program that aims to integrate them. In our TEP, methods courses emphasize the development of a theoretical understanding of subject matter knowledge. For example, students are exposed to learning about the nature of science and how science knowledge has been developed over time. In contrast, student teachers entering the practicum are concerned with the tools and strategies they need to teach specific science topics. As a result students devalue learning *about* subject matter knowledge in favour of learning to teach subjects.

Having named these three concepts of the UPD within our TEP, we effectively developed a conceptual scheme to describe the UPD. This conceptual scheme consisted of competing cultures, competing expectations, and theory-practice dichotomy as three concepts that contribute to the UPD. From here, we turned our focus to research literature to examine whether this conceptual scheme was present in the research literature. This step of our study answered the question, “How are these concepts represented in the literature?” What we found was a significant amount of research that supported our schema.

Competing Cultures

Kim, Andrews, and Carr (2004) define traditional university curriculum in teacher education as non-integrated courses, a linear arrangement of theory before practice, and a lack of connection between university faculty and school settings. Within this traditionalist model, the perception is that teacher development is a function of learning *about* teaching at the university and learning *to* teach in field experiences. Traditionalist programs are perceived as decontextualized and out of touch with the realities of teaching in schools (Eisenhart, Behm, & Romagnano, 1991; Garmon, 1993; Goodlad, 1990; Kagan, 1992) with practicum mentors and school professionals tending to disregard the role of the university (Laursen, 2008; Puk & Haines, 1999).

Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1983) refer to this as the two-worlds pitfall. As a result of the disconnect student teachers experience between the university and the field experience, they are often unable to transfer what they learn in one setting to another. Instead, student teachers come to believe that “observation is a means, not an end” (p. 14), placing priority on what they learn in the field. This challenge is magnified by the lack of involvement teachers in the field have with the generation of research in teaching (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990). Consequently, the field is both critical of and denied access to, the university.

To reduce the divide between these two competing cultures, Wideen et al. (1998) recommend having TEPs lasting at least one full year as well as using a cohort model. Darling-Hammond et al. (2005) expand on the idea of a cohort model to include teacher mentors. In effect, this would generate a community of practice that enables student teachers, teacher mentors, and faculty to collaborate on shared projects. Anagnostopoulos, Smith, and Basmadjian (2007) refer to this collaboration as the building of horizontal expertise and emphasize its value in reducing the two-worlds pitfall. This recommendation is applicable to all professional

programs calling for faculty in the university to work with professionals in the field: the field is not merely where students are sent, but is an experience that involves university faculty.

Competing Expectations

Beck and Kosnik (2002a, 2002b) note that technical skills and the ability to manage classes, organize classroom events, and relate to students are highly valued competencies in the practicum. Often, teacher mentors in the field engage in a type of induction: having student teachers acquire these technical skills through an observation and reinforcement model (Hargreaves & Jacka, 1995). Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1983) refer to this as the cross-purpose pitfall in which observing teaching and learning how to teach are incorrectly assumed as equal.

Smagorinsky et al. (2004) employ activity theory to explain the way that teacher candidates appropriate different sets of pedagogical skills in these two settings, stating that “these two settings are responsive to different constituents, have different overriding motives, respond to different ideals and consequently emphasize different values and practices, with the university setting more concerned with ideals and schools with their gritty application” (p. 9). For example, our TEP focuses on the development of social justice values (such as equity and inclusion) and reflective practices in university courses. In contrast, when student teachers are in the field, they focus on the mechanics of managing a class rather than considering which classroom management strategy to utilize from a social justice perspective. Consequently, for professional programs, in general, it is important to continually survey the field to examine any contrasts in expectations.

Theory-Practice Dichotomy

Abundant literature and research exists on the effects and conceptions of this dichotomy in relation to prospective teachers and teacher education (Beck & Kosnik, 2002a; Clandinin & Connelly, 1995; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999; Segall, 2001; Shulman, 1987). Overwhelmingly, the literature suggests that the dichotomy persists along the continuum of TEPs, even those with strong constructivist underpinnings and integrated faculty school partnerships which function to minimize this dichotomy. Moore (2003) reminds us that although field experiences hold potential for connecting theory and practice, demands of procedural and planning concerns during field experiences shift the focus away from the broader conceptual knowledge supported at the university. According to Moore, prospective teachers view theory as decontextualized, static knowledge, relegating theories about teaching to the realm of the ideal and unrealistic. Practical knowledge, on the other hand, emerges from activity. Practice, as a body of knowledge, is perceived as more useful, authentic, and responsive to classroom teaching and learning situations. Students question the need to even overcome this dichotomy given their perception of theory as dispensable (Hascher, Cocaridd, & Moser, 2004).

Korthagen and Kessels (1999) categorize the theory and practice dichotomy as a transfer problem based on three key ideas. The first is based on the prior knowledge about teaching and learning held by prospective teachers entering the program. Although conceptual change as an aspect of a constructivist epistemology in teacher education is valuable; in reality, changing one’s prior conceptions is difficult (Gordon, 2008). Hence, students’ prior positivistic conceptions of theory resist integration of contemporary conceptions, such as grounded theory,

espoused in teacher education. Secondly, students learn theory only if it is deemed useful in practical situations. For example, the theory of multiple intelligences is accepted as a useful theory if it directly impacts activity design in the classroom. A third cause of the transfer problem is related to the nature of knowledge itself. Prospective teachers in the practicum and in professional life are constantly developing what Korthagen and Kessels (1999) refer to as “action-guiding knowledge” which is immediate and responsive to the multitude of complexities of teaching experienced in the classroom. Prospective teachers, who value this practical knowledge, hold a “tool” conception of theory in that it is a tool for them to understand practical knowledge while possessing these tools is not conditional to good teaching (Korthagen, 2001). This knowledge is fundamentally seen as different from the abstract and general schematic theories presented by teacher educators and thus the two remain unconnected and non-transferable.

Evident from this literature review is the prevalence of aspects that contribute to the UPD in a variety of TEPs. Although some use different language to illustrate the concerns, the fundamental basis and character of these concerns is similar to the concepts we found in our inquiry. By triangulating the data from our experiences, the description of the case, and evidence from relevant literature, we developed a more sophisticated understanding of the nature of the UPD and the nuances of its conceptual scheme. We now, move to the question of how does a TEP respond effectively to the UPD.

Discussion

In relation to our third question (How can a TEP respond to the divide?), we looked at the conceptual scheme we developed: competing cultures, competing expectations, and the theory-practice dichotomy as concepts that both define and contribute to the UPD, to propose changes in our current practice. Through the lens of this schematic, we drew on Darling-Hammond’s (2006) review of exemplary teacher education programs for support in making these recommendations.

A key feature of an exemplary program is a “common, clear vision of good teaching that permeates all course work and clinical experiences, creating a coherent set of learning experiences” (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 6). We recognized that this was predicated on a coherent vision on part of the instructors in our TEP as well. Viewing the differences in instructional methods used by sessionals versus faculty as “competing cultures” helped us to identify several issues. First, a majority of sessional instructors teaching in our program also work in other undergraduate programs in the university and thus hold a view of students in the TEP as undergraduate students rather than as post-degree, future professionals. They tend to teach them as they would students in their other undergraduate courses. Second, from experience, sessional instructors are less likely to develop activities and assignments that promote a continuous progress model of ongoing assessment and reflection. In essence, they offer a curriculum that lacks coherence with the professional work of teachers and limits opportunities for students to think and act as teachers (Kennedy, 1999). The focus of course work is largely on assignment completion and formative assessment rather than working with feedback and writing weekly journals about professional growth.

It became evident that as faculty in the TEP, we need to support sessionals on becoming familiar with the culture of professional preparation that exists in our TEP. One method is to develop a sessional handbook and orientation training that includes information on the program values, the progression of the program over the course of the 11 months, and our emphasis on

connecting with student teachers' classroom experiences. We also plan to take a more active role in supporting sessional instructors as they develop their course outlines by sharing examples of professionally sound activities and assignments. In the past, this has been a challenge given the importance placed on academic freedom in post-secondary. However, as a result of this study and our deeper understanding of the UPD, we are now able to utilize our conception of the UPD to: (a) provide constructive feedback and tangible examples to support current sessionals, (b) maintain open conversations regarding course creation with all faculty and sessionals, and (c) use this conception of the UPD to support the hiring of future sessionals. In this way, we hope to use this examination to address the tension that can exist between course design and academic freedom.

Darling-Hammond (2006) suggests that "strong relationships, common knowledge, and shared beliefs among school- and university-based faculty jointly engaged in transforming teaching, schooling, and teacher education" is imperative in order to strengthen the positive impact of clinical teaching experience in schools (p. 6). In this study, the concept of competing expectations is illustrated in the different aims of faculty who teach university courses and teacher mentors who supervise students in practicum. In order to address this tension, we can alter the structure of teacher mentor orientations to include less emphasis on procedures and forms and more focus on sharing and making explicit the salient differences in expectations: from faculty, from teacher mentors, and from the student teachers themselves. The best placement, for all involved, would be one in which the competing expectations between the school site and the university program are overcome. This may require greater clarity of the program's goals by the faculty mentors, cooperation and flexibility on part of the teacher mentors in schools and commitment to understanding the ethics of being a student and being a teacher. While these requirements seem daunting, orientation sessions provide a valuable opportunity for beginning this conversation.

Finally, the concept of theory-practice dichotomy is probably one of the most consistent themes in teacher education. Our program addresses it in many ways already by integrating our coursework with the practicum, providing students with early experiences as teachers (both in methods courses as well as during the orientation), and turning the field experience into a series of progressive learning opportunities (i.e., helping in schools, school experience, long practicum). As Darling-Hammond (2006) attests, connecting general principles with specific experiences best occurs when students "analyze samples of student work, teachers' plans and assignments, videotapes of teachers and students in action, and cases of teaching and learning" (p. 8) and we find evidence of these connections in our program. However, we also acknowledge the additional challenge student teachers have with this dichotomy is prior to their entry into the program. They often comment on how "jarring" the difference in course delivery and design is in the TEP compared to their undergraduate preparation and recognize the significant shift they need to make in order to continually relate theoretical ideas with practical applications. This indicates that more work needs to be done as part of the admissions and advising stages of the program so that students are more prepared for this shift upon entering the TEP. In addition, throughout the four semesters, the reflective practice course presents another opportunity for instructors to engage students in reflecting on their understanding and use of theory and practice and to support their own bridging of these two key domains of teaching.

To ensure that our TEP continues to explore ways to minimize and perhaps even benefit from the UPD, our focus for the future is to: (a) ensure that we make these divides an explicit part of our program development; (b) identify not just solutions or bridges between these divides,

but also value the space itself; and, (c) explore the generative and connective opportunities of this UPD as a possible third space (Lewis, 2012; Williams, 2014). A final question for further study emerged from our conclusions: In what ways could the presence of the UPD as described in this study be beneficial to teacher education? One possibility would be to use Zeichner's (2010) notion of third space as a "non-hierarchical interplay between academic, practitioner, community expertise" (p. 89). Rather than viewing these different sites in competition, Zeichner proposes that a collaborative approach to this divide serves to generate possibilities for enhanced learning. A possible way to envision this collaboration is by locating learning in a third site such as a seminars in schools (Cuenca et al., 2011). This provides both university faculty and teacher candidates with the opportunity to work productively in a third space rather than being concerned with the differences between field and university. An additional possibility for the third space involves identifying relationships with groups, individuals, and universities as third space relationships that support teacher development (Martin et al., 2011).

Connecting Beyond Teacher Education

Once our language system had been developed and supported by literature in teacher education, we sought to examine how this language system may inform other disciplines. Similar to teacher education, both nursing and social work are areas in which the UPD exists and may benefit from our language system. For example, competing cultures in nursing exists when there are post-secondary faculty who are not involved in clinical supervision and, therefore, are not part of the current culture of practice in medical settings. In social work the competing culture can be amplified by social work faculty who teach without an understanding or experience of the context in which their students are working. An additional contrast in culture exists when social work faculty are experts in policy without substantial experiences with clientele.

Competing expectations are evident in nursing when the post-secondary programs emphasize the development of technical and content knowledge with regards to nursing, while the field expects students to move beyond this knowledge to develop a strong ethic of care evidenced through strong patient-practitioner interactions (Nelson, 2002). This looks a bit different in social work. Competing expectations in social work is evidenced by the emphasis on law and policy at the university, which is then sharply contrasted with the field experience of removing a child from a family. At the universities, students are expected to develop proficiency so in law and policy associated with social work, while the field expects students to be capable of managing difficult and challenging familial situations.

Finally, when looking at the theory-practice dichotomy, both nursing and social work experience a similar gap between knowledge and application. In both cases, theoretical knowledge that is taught at the university is not as highly regarded as the practical demonstration of skills in the field. This is being addressed to some degree in nursing programs that include demonstration and simulations at the university. The opportunity to have students demonstrate and experience procedures in combination with theoretical content helps to mitigate the theory-practice dichotomy in university nursing programs.

While our results cannot be fully generalized, by exploring the case of this TEP and clarifying concepts in the UPD, we propose strategies to address the UPD that may be useful to teacher educators in other TEPs. In addition, our conceptual scheme could be applied to professional programs such as business, nursing, and social work.

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