

Partners in PDS: Designing, Implementing, and Examining a Collaborative Pedagogical Model

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ABSTRACT: This study examined the ways in which PDS participants use language to co-construct knowledge about literacy teaching and learning during debriefing conversations following shared instructional experiences in K-3 classrooms. The debriefing conversations were part of a collaboratively developed pedagogical model situated in a literacy methods course. The primary data sources for the study were transcriptions from one collaborative planning conversation and six debriefing conversations. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed (1) to understand how participants used language during debriefing conversations and (2) to identify the focus of the debriefing conversations as they related to Bransford, Darling-Hammond, and LePage's (2005) Framework for Understanding Teaching and Learning. The study was conducted during year four of a five-year design-based project. The goal of the project was to engage in continuous improvement to enhance, for all stakeholders in the PDS, the potential for professional growth. Findings reveal that, despite varied uses of language to explore literacy teaching and learning, participant interactions largely reflected institutionalized discourses of pre-service teacher education. Additionally, findings provide insight about the focus of debriefing conversations as they related to research on relevant knowledge in pre-service teacher preparation. Most importantly, the study demonstrates that pedagogical innovations in PDS settings can be continuously improved through collaborative design-based processes.

NAPDS Essentials: 2. A school-university culture committed to the preparation of future educators that embraces their active engagement in the school community; 3. Ongoing and reciprocal professional development guided by need; 4. A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice by all participants.

Within the field of teacher education, researchers have long recognized a gap between theory and practice (Alsopp, DeMarie, Alvarez-McHatton, & Doone, 2006; Gordon & O'Brien, 2007; Liston, Whitcomb, & Borko, 2006). This well-documented gap reflects the tendency of teacher education programs to frontload educational theory in university classrooms before providing teacher candidates with more practical school experiences. This perceived separation of theory and practice is exacerbated by the physical separation of schools and universities and has been recognized as a "glaring weakness in most university-based professional learning for educators" (Holmes Group, 1990, p. 80-81). While we reject the idea that theory and practice exist separately, we recognize that a perceived separation influences teacher preparation practices in universities and schools, and we argue that closing the physical gap between the two institutions is a viable way to disrupt the ways in which theory and practice have been positioned in each. We view theory as derived from practice, and practice as theoretically driven, although we recognize that practitioners can, and often do, act on tacit theories.

More than two decades ago, Goodlad (1990) acknowledged that teachers were not adequately prepared to work in the field of education. Goodlad cited a separation of theory and practice in teacher education as one cause of inadequate preparation and

argued for the simultaneous renewal of schools and colleges of education. He asserted that:

the need for higher educational involvement in the schools is great. If we are to have good schools and good teachers for them, the simultaneous effort to improve both must proceed under conditions that make it possible for such a venture to succeed. (p. 181)

At the same time, the Holmes Group (1990), a consortium of 96 research universities with professional education programs, recommended a partnership model for teacher preparation in which school and university educators collaboratively and systematically inquire into teaching and learning. They referred to this model as a Professional Development School (PDS), and defined PDSs as communities of practice grounded in a systemic process similar to the medical profession. Theoretically, the model requires teacher candidates to be immersed in an authentic school setting for at least one full year, where they engage simultaneously in university coursework and clinical experiences with the collaborative support of school and university faculty.

What Does it Mean to Be a Professional Development School?

When PDSs emerged, they did so from a vision of collaborative inquiry in which pre-service teacher candidates, university faculty, and P-12 school faculty examined teaching and learning from a “shared conception of good teaching that informs their joint work” (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005). Despite this early vision, and in part because of a limited definition of the key features of PDS models, proponents have raised concerns about “in name only” PDS sites (Abdal-Haqq, 1998; Teitel, 2001). The National Association of Professional Development Schools (NAPDS) shared these concerns, writing in 2008 that:

Despite the valuable work of these PDS pioneers, in the two decades since “PDS” first hit the American educational landscape and in the six years since the publication of the NCATE PDS Standards, the term Professional Development School has come to be used to describe all manner of school-university relationships. (p. 1)

As the field began to recognize that PDS candidates were better prepared to teach than candidates who completed a traditional student teaching experience (Castle, Fox, & Souder, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2014; Ridley, Hurwitz, Hackett, & Miller, 2005), it became important to more clearly define what it means to be a PDS. The NAPDS (2008) responded with nine essentials, arguing that, “Without having all nine the relationship that exists between a school/district and college/university, albeit however strong, would not be a PDS” (p. 2).

The nine essentials include requirements related to the establishment of a shared governance structure, the explicit articulation of participant roles and responsibilities, the commitment to the preparation and professional development of teachers through innovative and reflective practices and deliberate investigations, as well as a commitment to work across institutional settings.

In addition to defining what it means to be a PDS, the nine essentials can provide a frame for planning and carrying out research in PDS contexts. For example, Carpenter and Sherretz (2012) situated their study on the development of teacher leaders within a PDS in essential three, *ongoing and reciprocal professional development for all participants guided by need*, and essential eight, *work by college/university faculty and P-12 faculty in formal roles across institutional settings*. Carpenter and Sherretz’s findings related to increases in opportunities for professional development, co-teaching, and teacher efficacy suggest that “PDS partnership activities create potential for enhancing teachers’ opportunities to become leaders within their school communities” (p. 89).

The research described in this paper was conducted in a longstanding PDS district with a specific focus on Essential 3: *Ongoing and reciprocal professional development guided by need*, and Essential 4: *A shared commitment to innovative and reflective practice*

by all participants. The multi-method study was part of a five-year design project in which researchers examined a pedagogical innovation situated in a literacy methods course that was embedded in a K-3 PDS. The research questions that guided the study were:

1. How do PDS stakeholders use language to co-construct knowledge about literacy teaching and learning within a shared instructional experience model?
2. In what ways can the pedagogical model be improved?

Context of the Study

The setting for this study was a K-3 elementary school in a suburban school district that serves approximately 3,600 students, kindergarten through grade eight, in the Midwestern United States. The school district includes ten schools: six primary/elementary schools, grades K-3; two intermediate schools, grades 4-6; and two junior high schools, grades 7-8. The district has a long-standing PDS partnership with a nearby state university. The ongoing partnership began in 1999 and has educated more than 500 pre-service teachers. The PDS program is structured as a year-long internship during which teacher candidates split the fall semester between methods coursework and classroom experiences and continue through a spring semester of full-time student teaching. Through a collaborative application and interview process, interns are matched with mentor teachers and placed in schools across the district. Interns in this program are directly supported throughout the year by a mentor teacher, a district-based PDS supervisor, a university supervisor, and multiple course instructors.

Fall coursework takes place on-site in the school district. While there is designated space for coursework in one intermediate school in the district, both school and university partners are open to innovation. North Ridge Elementary School (pseudonym) is a K-3 school in the district. North Ridge serves approximately 320 students. Sixty-eight percent of the students at North Ridge qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch. According to state data, in 2017, the achievement gap between low income and non-low-income students was thirty percent. North Ridge teachers consistently apply to serve as mentor teachers in the PDS program and enthusiastically collaborate with school district and university partners to support teacher candidates. North Ridge Elementary hosted the literacy methods course each fall for three years and, in year two, served as the specific site for this study.

The study was conducted within the broader context of a five-year design project in which author one, a university faculty member, worked with school district partners to collaboratively design a literacy methods course that addressed university curriculum and school-based needs and was embedded within the regular school day. At the time of the study, the course had been implemented four times in two schools across three school years. The study was conducted in the fifth iteration of the course, which was the second iteration at North Ridge

Elementary, and a sixth iteration was happening simultaneously at a third participating school. At the time of the study, Author 2 was a classroom teacher at the school where the sixth iteration was taking place, a mentor to a pre-service teacher intern, and a doctoral student at the university. In each iteration, the embedded model was collaboratively designed, or revised in multi-year contexts, based on the goals and needs of the school community and the university course curriculum.

Shared Instructional Experience Model: Two-Week Cycles

The model designed for North Ridge Elementary was a shared instructional experience model in which small groups of stakeholders engaged in recurring instructional cycles that included planning, teaching/observing, and debriefing literacy lessons. The lessons corresponded with the school's pacing guide, state curriculum standards, and university curriculum goals and objectives, and over the semester included lesson structures such as interactive read alouds, writing workshop mini-lessons, and guided reading groups. The overall structure of the model was designed in two-week cycles. Four classroom teachers hosted 3-4 interns and at least one other stakeholder (i.e., principal, literacy coach, PDS supervisor, course instructor).

Week one. During the first week, classroom teachers planned and taught one lesson. Before the lessons, teachers posted a lesson summary to the course wiki and all interns were asked to review the lesson they would observe. Following the lesson, teachers, interns, and stakeholders from each classroom met to debrief the lesson. The debriefing conversations were guided by a collaboratively designed debriefing protocol (see Appendix A).

Week two. During the second week of the cycle, a pre-service teacher intern planned and taught a lesson in the same classroom she/he observed during the previous week. The interns shared a formal lesson plan on the course wiki for review and feedback prior to lesson implementation and debriefing conversations immediately followed the shared instructional experience. Throughout the cycles, classroom teachers and pre-service teacher interns read the same professional texts. Interns discussed texts during class time. Teachers and other stakeholders were invited to optional book study groups before and after school to discuss texts. Classroom teachers and other stakeholders were also invited to the bi-weekly instructional cycle planning meetings before school.

Research Methods

Situated within a five-year design project, this study is grounded in a transformative paradigm in that an overarching goal of the study was to improve upon a pedagogical model of teacher education in a PDS. Creswell (2014) argues that a transformative paradigm "contains an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of the participants, the institutions in which individuals work or live, and the researcher's life" (p. 9). Consequently, we drew on aspects of design-based research and participatory action

research to examine participants' interactions around teaching and learning literacy and to identify strategies for improving the design of the model. The study took place in an authentic educational setting. Throughout the process, we sought to both collaborate and participate in the research setting, draw on and inform theory, respond to the social context, and intervene to promote positive change (McKenney & Reeves, 2012). We aimed for transparency in the research by sharing our research process and findings along the way and including all participants in discussions of revising/improving the model. We concur with Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) that:

At its best, then, participatory action research is a social process of collaborative learning realized by groups of people who join together in changing the practices through which they interact in a shared social world in which, for better or worse, we live with the consequences of one another's actions. (p. 277)

We selected qualitative research methods to examine participants' language during debriefing conversations following shared instructional experiences and to identify aspects of the model that could be improved upon to extend and/or deepen learning for all stakeholders. Additionally, based on prior observations in which pedagogical knowledge was often privileged in debriefing conversations over knowledge of learners and knowledge of curriculum (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage's, 2005), we articulated a goal to facilitate more balanced conversations to demonstrate the integrated nature of knowledge in teaching and learning. We employed descriptive statistics to assess the focus of debriefing conversations as they related to learners, curriculum, and pedagogy (teaching).

Participants

All stakeholders who participated in the design and/or implementation of the pedagogical model, including pre-service teacher candidates, classroom teachers, school administrators and support staff, one PDS supervisor, and one university faculty member/course instructor (Author 1) were invited to participate in the study. One-hundred percent of those invited agreed to participate. There were 26 total participants in the study: 16 pre-service teachers, six classroom teachers, one school administrator, one PDS supervisor, one school-based instructional coach, and one course instructor.

Data Sources and Collection Methods

The primary data sources for the study were audio recordings of planning and debriefing conversations associated with the implementation of the collaboratively designed pedagogical model. Specifically, one planning conversation and six debriefing conversations collected during the two-week writing workshop cycle were transcribed for analysis. Secondary data sources included course documents (i.e. syllabus, reading lists,

shared instructional experience protocols), student artifacts (lesson plans, written reflections), and written feedback on planning (course wiki). These data were compiled at the completion of the course and were used to confirm/disconfirm patterns and themes constructed from the conversation data. They were also examined in the light of the patterns and themes for the purpose of revising the pedagogical model.

Data Analysis

We analyzed the data in stages. To prepare for the first stage of analysis, we had debriefing conversations transcribed by an outside source. We reviewed each transcription for accuracy before beginning an open coding of the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Our process was recursive and collaborative. We listened to the conversations while viewing the transcripts, pausing to discuss excerpts in relation to the first research question before assigning codes. Excerpts were highlighted and codes were recorded in the margins of the transcriptions. A qualitative codebook (Creswell, 2014) was created during the coding process. As new codes were generated, they were added to the codebook. We initially coded all data sources together, then using the codebook, we independently returned to the full data set to recode and write research memos about patterns we noticed in the data. We came back together to discuss codes and patterns, and to identify themes related to how participants used language to construct knowledge about teaching and learning literacy during debriefing conversations. Six themes were constructed from the data. For example, participants used language to praise/encourage, question, and explain/describe teaching and learning.

In the second stage of analysis, conducted to assess the focus of the conversations, we examined the themed data using Bransford, Darling-Hammond, and LePage's (2005) Framework for Understanding Teaching and Learning. Bransford, Darling-Hammond, and LePage argue that:

Teachers must be able to function as members of a community of practitioners who share knowledge and commitments, who work together to create coherent curriculum and systems that support students and collaborate in ways that advance their combined understanding and skills. (p. 13)

The framework situates professional practice at the center of three interdependent fields of knowledge essential to teacher development; knowledge of learners and their development, knowledge of subject matter and curriculum, and knowledge of teaching. To gain a better sense of the debriefing conversations, as they related to these fields of knowledge, we created a spreadsheet in which we sorted data by themes. Using knowledge of learners, knowledge of curriculum, and knowledge of teaching as a priori codes, we categorized all themed data based on the primary topic of each excerpt. We coded ten excerpts from each theme together, discussing our coding

decisions as we went. When a primary topic was not clear, data were assigned multiple codes. For example, a few excerpts focused equally on knowledge of learners and knowledge of curriculum or on knowledge of pedagogy and knowledge of curriculum. When this was the case, we assigned and counted both codes. We calculated descriptive statistics to assess the general focus of the conversations. Findings from each stage of the analysis informed revisions to the design of the pedagogical model.

Findings

We will present our findings in two sections. First, we will report on the ways in which participants used language in debriefing conversations, and positioned themselves and each other, as they constructed knowledge about teaching and learning literacy. Then we will share findings about the focus of debriefing conversations as they relate to participants developing knowledge of learners, curriculum, and teaching. Following the report of findings, we will discuss how we interpreted them to revise our collaboratively designed pedagogical model and conclude with implications this work has for preparing teachers in PDS contexts.

Participants Language during Debriefing Conversations

When engaging in debriefing conversations following shared instructional experiences, PDS stakeholders used language in multiple ways. In the process of constructing knowledge about teaching and learning literacy, participants used language to explain/describe, recognize/acknowledge, question, praise/encourage, provide feedback/critique, and make connections. Despite collaborative efforts to engage in more critical reflection and to integrate knowledge of students, curriculum, and pedagogy in debriefing conversations, participants largely remained grounded in the institutional discourses of teacher education in which feedback and critique moves in one direction; from experienced to novice educator (Graham, 2006; Wang & Odell, 2007).

Explain/describe. Participants used language in debriefing conversations to explain/describe a variety of things related to teaching and learning, including instructional practices, lesson content, educational theories/beliefs, instructional materials, student work samples, and management strategies. For example, one classroom teacher explained how she uses the sketch to stretch strategy during a unit of study on small moment stories:

So, um sketch to stretch is when you have them, when they've already started writing or they have a plan for what they're writing, you have them pick a big moment in the story or a character of the story to some part in the story that they could close their eyes and watch like a movie in their mind. And then you tell them to like freeze frame it, and remember every single detail. In

small moments, we tell them to remember every single detail that was happening at that moment.

While much of the data from the explain/describe theme involved classroom teachers explaining aspects of their classrooms and/or instructional practices, pre-service teachers sometimes explained what they noticed about students during a lesson. In a conversation about a lesson on writing craft, a pre-service teacher described how learners were experiencing the assignment to try a particular strategy in their writing:

Like kind of choosing the right words. Like, some of the kids, like I noticed that, one of the kids that, um, chose sunny. So, that was like a good word that you could embellish upon, but then, [student's name] chose happy, that's, I don't ... With her sentence, I don't remember what it was, but it didn't necessarily make sense to embellish it there like that.

In her explanation, the pre-service teacher seemed to be grappling with the writing assignment. While the pre-service teacher's explanation prompted further discussion about authentic and contrived writing assignments, the particular writing assignment employed in the lesson was not critically reflected upon. Such specific reflection may have disrupted the feedback flow and created space for critical reflection.

Recognize/acknowledge. In contrast with classroom teachers doing much of the explaining/describing, pre-service teachers voices dominated in the recognize/acknowledge theme, often making comments related to students' engagement in a lesson or their understanding of the lesson content. Comments like, "He had really detailed pictures." and "Yeah, she did a good job of having first, second, third, and last." confirmed that students' work reflected the goals of the lesson.

Another common occurrence in the language used in this theme was to recognize when some instructional strategy or management technique did not effectively facilitate the lesson goals. When pre-service teachers were surprised to learn that one third grade teacher allowed her students to choose their own writing partners, the teacher acknowledged that there is not one right way to group students and that students are often capable of making those decisions on their own:

I, and I've done it in the past where I've picked their partners. And then, and that doesn't always work. They know what they need. They know a whole lot more than we give them credit for.

The opportunity to further discuss the specific student knowledge to which the classroom teacher referred and to challenge a common classroom practice was dropped, and the discussion moved to a new topic.

Question. While all participants asked questions, the course instructor's voice was more prominent in this theme than in any other. After teaching pre-service teachers about formative

assessment in writing workshop, the course instructor asked a classroom teacher in a debriefing conversation, "Do you use any sort of form? Do you write, well, how do you collect data from your conferences?" When posed by university faculty, questions like these, while an attempt to create space for teacher participants to explore theory and practice as interdependent constructs, may reinforce the institutional hierarchy and bolster the perceived gap between theory and practice in the field of education.

The instructor posed questions to pre-service teachers to encourage them to consider alternative instructional strategies and/or language in their teaching. "How might you have prompted that differently, or what could you have done in a, in that invitation to have maybe elicited more creativity in their sentences?" The instructor's questions to pre-service teachers can be viewed as effective in that they prompt reflection and alternative thinking (Liu, 2015), however, when juxtaposed with the instructor's questions to classroom teachers, they reflect a traditional positioning of classroom teachers as knowers and information providers and pre-service teachers as lacking knowledge.

The PDS supervisor questioned pre-service teachers with regard to how they might use in their clinical classroom setting what they were learning about conferring through the shared instructional experience course model. "So overall what were your thoughts about conferring with writing? How can you see taking that back to classroom that you're in for the rest of the year?"

Interns largely directed their questions to classroom teachers, inquiring about the decisions they make with regard to instructional materials, structures, and strategies. After a writing workshop lesson demonstration, pre-service teachers asked:

- "How do you find like the mentor text that you use? Is it just kind of like a trial and error thing that you've kind of like over the years gotten to that point?"
- "How do you figure your writing partners? Do you pick them?"
- "Do they know who is going to come up and talk to you?"

Among all participants, questioning became more focused and intentional in the debriefing conversations. However, the types of questions participants asked reinforced the traditional roles of the university and school participants.

Praise/encouragement. Participants supported each other with praise and encouragement. In moving from shared instructional experiences in classrooms to debriefing conversations, it was common to hear comments such as, "Nice job!" and "I really liked your lesson." During the conversations, praise/encouragement became more specific, however, it did not often support continued thinking about teaching and learning, rather, it seemed more summative in nature.

- "I thought it was great to involve the students."

- “You had her share first which is a good way to see what she is working on and you did a nice job with prompting her like with what she was doing.”
- “I really enjoyed, um, your PowerPoint and I thought that it was really engaging.”

While we believe it is important in pre-service teacher education to recognize effective planning and teaching, much of the praise/encouragement offered both before and during debriefing conversations was non-specific and focused on pedagogy with no connection to student learning or curriculum goals.

Provide feedback/critique. All participants offered feedback/critique, however, feedback/critique was almost always provided to pre-service teachers. For example, following a pre-service teacher’s lesson, the course instructor said, “You could have also provided one example before you said turn and talk.”

Participants were least comfortable offering feedback/critique. There was often a lot of talk leading up to the main point of the feedback. Rather than making a direct statement, the participant would insert words and phrases to soften the potential impact of the constructive feedback. For example, in the following excerpt, a classroom teacher was suggesting that a pre-service teacher give students more wait time after posing questions:

I did, yeah, I mean, I thought that it was, um, it felt a little rushed but I, I was in your head and I knew, I saw you looking at the clock, and I knew exactly where you were at. But yes, I would allow that, just, a whole lot more, kind of, wait time.

Also known as hedging, (Hatch, 1992), “the way people express their uncertainty about something or state something uncertain” (Nugroho, 2002, p.17), this language pattern was consistent no matter who was offering the feedback/critique. When one pre-service teacher offered feedback to another pre-service teacher, she softened it by commenting that she also has trouble deciding what to say when she notices that students struggle to understand a task:

That would have given them more time to like think about it too, because some of the kids were having trouble just like thinking about it. So maybe they could have even like asked their partner, ‘Oh here’s what my story is about. Do you have any ideas?’, or something like that too. Because I noticed that some of the kids were kind of, just seemed like they didn’t, I mean that is hard to think of on the spot, like I have trouble sometimes thinking of stuff like that on the spot too.

The most common use of hedging is to soften a claim, complaint, request, or criticism (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Nugroho, 2002).

Occasionally, during the instructor reflection portion of the debriefing, pre-service teachers acknowledged a point of tension in their lesson and requested specific feedback:

I was thinking about that when it was going on. It was very like surface-y sentences to me. They were, they were very small sentences. Um, I really don’t know off the top of my head, what I could do, if anybody has any opinions, or . . .

This occurred more during the second half of the semester when participants had more experience with the debriefing protocol, suggesting that more time for PDS stakeholders to engage in critical reflection may present opportunities to disrupt the dominant institutional discourses in pre-service teacher education.

Make connections. Across the semester, many connections were made by all participants during debriefing conversations. Connections were made between past and current teaching and learning experiences, theory/beliefs and practice, and pre-service teachers specifically made connections between the grade levels they were observing in the course and the grade level they were assigned for clinical work.

During a conversation focused on one-on-one writing conferences with students, a pre-service compares the writing conferences she observed with her own school experience:

I just love the whole aspect of like conferencing every day, because I look back to my elementary school years and I think I probably only met with my teacher once a week, and it was just kind of like you write your own stuff, and then when you get to your teacher to confer it’s kind of like they load so much on you telling you what you need to fix.

When considering how to use classroom time devoted to writing workshop, the course instructor reminded participants that it is important to continually connect personal theories/beliefs to practice:

That’s a great way to do that, too, to just remind yourself that the longer I go, the less time they get to write. You have X amount of time for the whole workshop, so if your belief is that students need lots of time to write, then you have to keep saying to yourself, ‘Okay the more I talk,’ you know, ‘the longer my mini lesson goes, the less time students have to write.’

The school district uses a district-wide pacing guide so that teachers across all schools and grade levels focus on the same curriculum standards at the same times. This afforded pre-service teachers the opportunity to consider similar content across grade levels.

Well I noticed, especially since I’m in third grade now, I actually got to, my teacher actually has me doing this with the students and I had, and just seeing it kindergarten, first grade, and third grade, um, I think that the younger kids need almost more guidance with the how to write and how to do this, and with the older

Table 1. Topics of Debriefing Conversations

Theme	N	Knowledge of Learners		Knowledge of Curriculum		Knowledge of Teaching	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Explain/describe	88	20	23%	14	16%	54	61%
Recognize/acknowledge	58	16	28%	6	10%	36	62%
Question	46	10	22%	7	15%	29	63%
Praise/encourage	37	6	16%	3	8%	28	76%
Feedback/critique	33	6	18%	4	12%	23	70%
Make connections	31	6	19%	7	23%	18	58%
Total	293	64	22%	41	14%	188	64%

kids, it's the more things they can add to their, because they know basically what a story should look like. With my third graders, I was, you know, they're writing fairy tales. I had to ask them like can you go back and add more?

Comments like this one occasionally prompted conversation about how literacy skills and strategies become more complex as learners develop. These connections created space to deepen conversations in ways that integrated participants' knowledge of students, curriculum, and teaching.

Preparing Teachers: Essential Knowledge

After examining how participants used language, we shifted our focus to conversation topics in the debriefing conversations as they related to teacher education (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005). Using knowledge of learners, knowledge of curriculum, and knowledge of teaching as a priori codes, we categorized all themed data based on the primary topic of each excerpt (see Table 1). Our findings revealed that of the 293 codes that were applied to the themed data, 64% focused on teaching, followed by learners (22%), and curriculum (14%). This pattern was relatively consistent across themes, with the exception of the making connections theme within which there was less focus on teaching and more focus on curriculum, indicating more integration of the different types of knowledge. As educators who believe that knowledge of learners, knowledge of curriculum, and knowledge of teaching are interdependent, we expected the prevalence of these topics in debriefing conversations to be more balanced. In the next section, we will discuss our interpretations of these findings and how they informed revisions to the pedagogical model.

Discussion: Revising a Pedagogical Model

As is fundamental in design-based research, the findings of this study informed immediate revisions to the collaboratively designed pedagogical model (Reinking and Bradley, 2008). The hierarchical (top-down) nature of debriefing conversations, the discomfort with providing constructive feedback, and the unbalanced focus on pedagogy over curriculum and learners

were three areas that we agreed should be addressed within the model to enhance participants developing theoretical and practical knowledge.

Hierarchical Nature of Debriefing Conversations

In the process of analyzing how language was used by participants in debriefing conversations, our interpretations of who used language in certain ways across themes revealed a top-down flow to the conversations, suggesting that issues of power and positioning may have influenced the conversations in undesirable ways (Hunt, 2016; McDonough, 2014). The classroom teachers who took on most of the explaining/describing in the conversations positioned themselves, or were positioned by others, as the experts on teaching. In contrast, pre-service teachers, who were almost always on the receiving end of the feedback/critique, were positioned, or positioned themselves, as less knowledgeable. While, as designers of the model, our goal was to come to the shared space as learners, we quickly fell into hierarchical roles situated in the historical, social, and cultural norms of the context (Cuenca, Schmeichel, Butler, Dinkelman, & Nichols, 2011).

Because we believe that the potential for learning is greater when issues of power and positioning are minimized, and everyone's expertise is valued, we shared findings and data with classroom teacher participants and asked for their feedback. Generally, teachers were surprised, as they felt they did approach the experience as learners. We brainstormed about how we might revise the model to disrupt the hierarchy and minimize issues of power and positioning that were evident in debriefing conversations. We decided that pre-service teachers would teach literacy lessons in their clinical placement classrooms, as opposed to the course host classrooms. This would cut out the top-down flow of feedback/critique and position pre-service teachers as providers of feedback/critique in the course setting. Additionally, the course instructor, PDS supervisor, literacy coach, and principal would prepare and implement lessons in host classrooms, thus becoming explainers/describers and receivers of feedback/critique. Finally, we added ten minutes between the shared instructional experience and the debriefing conversation for pre-service teachers to discuss the experience and compose questions and feedback/critique.

Discomfort Providing Constructive Feedback

The discomfort with providing constructive feedback as evidenced by the discourse markers (e.g., you know, like, I mean), filler pauses (e.g., um, uh), and quick shifts back to praising/encouraging, seemed to prevent participants from exploring, in-depth, alternative instructional strategies and/or language. While it can be difficult both to give and receive criticism, participants involved in planning and designing the model agreed that thoughtful feedback propels growth, and that a portion of debriefing conversations should be devoted to feedback. In practice, as evidenced by the use of hedging techniques, participants resisted offering critical feedback, seemingly doing so only to meet a requirement of the debriefing protocol. Buikema and Roeters (1982) reported that such hedging techniques are used, particularly by women, as politeness strategies “to minimize face threatening acts” (Nugroho, 2002, p. 19). Within the field of education, it has been found that structured professional development interactions can lead to a culture of “contrived collegiality” (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990, p. 227), which fosters implementation over development.

With regard to reflecting on personal theories/beliefs in relation to practice, it seemed we were experiencing conflict. How might we embrace the discomfort of feedback/critique to more openly examine literacy teaching and learning practices?

We agreed that disrupting the top-down nature of the conversations and minimizing mentoring hierarchies common in preservice teacher education (Graham, 2006; Wang & Odell, 2007) among the groups was necessary, but not sufficient to fully embrace the growth potential of critical dialogue. Our revisions to the model centered around creating a safe environment and being intentional about naming learning goals and requesting specific feedback related to them. More specifically, we would incorporate community building engagements early in the semester, explicitly discuss the purpose of critical dialogue and the feelings associated with it before beginning shared instructional experience cycles and require participants through the debriefing protocol to request specific feedback on their lessons.

Focus on Teaching over Curriculum and Learners

To some participants, the heavy focus on teaching in debriefing conversations seemed natural given that the context of this work is a teacher preparation program. As researchers, though, we were concerned that there were not more multiply-coded excerpts, indicating the integration of participants’ knowledge of learners and curriculum in debriefing conversations. The focus on constructing knowledge of teaching often appeared separate from any knowledge of curriculum or learners, as if the act of teaching can stand alone. We agree with Bransford, Darling-Hammond, and LePage (2005) that teacher preparation and professional development must address the interdependence between pedagogy (teaching), content (curriculum), and

human development (learners). Addressing these components in isolation, or privileging one over the others, will limit the effectiveness of teaching and learning experiences.

To address this finding and improve the model, we would shift the focus of the cycles from practices to curriculum by grounding each cycle in a specific strand of the English Language Arts (ELA) Common Core Standards (CCS) (e.g., Foundational Skills, Informational Text, Speaking and Listening). This would afford the course instructor the opportunity to integrate curriculum and pedagogy in class lectures and engagements. We developed an observation form (see Appendix B) for participant observers to complete during shared instructional experiences. The form reflects the lesson planning template pre-service teachers use to plan the lessons they teach in their clinical classrooms. It was designed to distribute the observer’s focus across teaching, curriculum, and learners and prompt participants to make relevant connections during debriefing conversations. It is through making such connections that participants explored the complex interrelations between learners, curriculum, and teaching. Finally, we revised the debriefing protocol (see Appendix C) by removing time for sharing appreciations, which may have contributed to participants perceiving feedback/critique as the things they did wrong, and by adding questions to guide a discussion of the effectiveness of a lesson based on students’ responses to the learning goals.

To this point in the design project, revisions we have made to the shared instructional experience model have been grounded in informal reflections and largely logistical. We recognize that through intentional and systematic study, we uncovered patterns in participants’ use of language that prompted substantive revisions to the model that have the potential to shift the culture of the setting and to accelerate the trajectory of professional learning.

Concluding Thoughts

Evidence of continuous improvement in university-based teacher preparation programs is more important than ever in the current educational climate. Professional Development Schools are an ideal context in which to design, implement, and examine pedagogical innovations that support participants in initially and continually developing the knowledge and skills essential to effective teaching and learning. However, it is difficult to identify and assess in the literature teacher education innovations that reflect and strive to address the essential components of a Professional Development School (NAPDS, 2008; Teitel, 2001). This may be a result of the complex and contextualized nature of PDS work which hinders the effectiveness of traditional research methods. We argue that design thinking and research processes (McKenney & Reeves, 2012; Reinking and Bradley, 2008) provide a unique structure for such complex, contextualized, and long-term work. Further, the systematic study of practical innovation allows participants to theorize from practice, demonstrating the interdependent relationship between theory

and practice. The commitment of school and university stakeholders to collaboratively develop, implement, and examine a shared mission and vision that values both theoretical and practical perspectives is indeed challenging and complex work.

As researchers and teacher educators, we must embrace these complexities and develop methods to systematically examine teacher development in authentic teaching and learning contexts. ^{SUP}

Appendix A Original Debriefing Protocol

Lab Classroom Debriefing Protocol (Total Time: 15-20 minutes)

1. The teacher leads the debriefing with an oral reflection of the lesson which may include (3-5 minutes):
 - Small moments in the lesson when you felt particularly successful or when you felt some tension
 - Observations about students' responses to specific components of the lesson
 - What you noticed about students' movement toward the lesson objective(s)
 - Consider the alignment between lesson objectives and assessments
 - Ask for specific feedback
2. The observers share appreciations of planning, teaching, and assessing (2-4 minutes).
3. The observers question/provide critical feedback of planning, teaching, and assessing (5-7 minutes).
4. The teacher provides a response to the feedback and considers how they will use the feedback in the future (1-2 minutes).
5. Thinking Forward (2-3 minutes)
 - Goals and objectives for next week
 - Who is teaching who is observing?

Appendix B
Lesson Observation Form

Observer:
Grade Level:

Instructor:
Date of Lesson:

1. What were the learning goals for the lesson?
2. What standards were addressed (ELA and content, if applicable)?
3. What instructional structure did you observe (read aloud, mini-lesson, shared reading, guided reading, word study, independent reading or writing)?
4. In what ways did the teacher use prior academic and/or cultural knowledge of students to support their learning?
5. Related to academic language, what vocabulary, language function(s), tools, and strategies did the teacher use to support student learning of the lesson goals?
6. How were learners assessed in relation to the learning goals?
7. What evidence did you see or hear to indicate students' engagement with the learning goals of the lesson?
8. What accommodations were made for individual learners? How was the lesson differentiated for all learners?
9. How did this practical experience connect with your theoretical understandings of literacy teaching and learning? What are you still wondering? What do you want to know more about?

Appendix C Revised Debriefing Protocol

Shared Instructional Experience Debriefing Protocol (Total Time: 15-20 minutes)

1. The teacher leads the debriefing by sharing the learning goals for the lesson and responding to the following questions (2 minutes):
 - Was the lesson effective?
 - Were the learning goals met for few, some, most, or all students?
 - How do you know?
 - What specific feedback do you want?

2. Participants provide evidence of students moving toward learning goals and connect evidence to instructional decisions/practices (6-8 minutes).

3. Participants provide evidence of students' misconceptions or difficulty making sense of the learning goals, connect evidence to instructional decisions/practices, and suggest alternative instructional possibilities (6-8 minutes).

4. The teacher closes the debriefing conversation by reflecting on how the feedback will inform future instructional planning and decision-making (2-4 minutes).

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