A REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER APPROACH TO TEACHER PREPARATION:
LEARNING IN AND THROUGH COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

by

HSIU-TING HUNG

(Under the Direction of Betsy Rymes)

ABSTRACT

The present study examined a group of prospective second language teachers’ process of learning to teach in a curricular innovation featuring implementations of service-learning and a web-based course tool (i.e., WebCT). The overarching research questions that guided this study included: (1) How does participation in service-learning impact academic learning from the participants' points of view? (2) How does participation in WebCT impact the participants’ professional identity development integral to their ongoing professional development?

The situative perspective on learning provided a theoretical framework through which to consider the prospective second language teachers’ academic learning and professional identity development in the curricular innovation. The observed classroom was a TESOL methods course designed to prepare students for teaching English as a second or foreign language to adult learners. The methodology employed was a qualitative case study. The data collection methods for this study involved classroom observation, document collection, and online data collection. The collected data was analyzed using a constant comparative method to investigate the conceptual data (i.e., the students' video analyses, service-learning portfolios, and course evaluations) and a discourse analysis method was used to examine the textual communications that occurred in WebCT.

Findings of the study indicated that this curricular innovation, with its focus on reflective practice, was proven to facilitate the prospective teachers’ process of becoming theoretically and pedagogically informed second language teachers. Specifically, the implementation of service-learning contributed to the prospective teachers’ academic learning and development. The implementation of WebCT was rich for fostering the prospective teachers’ professional identity development. Implications drawing from the research findings point to a holistic view of understanding reflection as both individualistic and social collective practices rather than advancing one at the expense of the other.

INDEX WORDS: reflective practice, service-learning, teacher learning, WebCT
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mom.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The saying of “Tell me and I’ll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I’ll understand” captures the very essence of effective learning. Most educators would agree that involving students in direct experience enhances the learning process and accelerates the learning outcome. One form of experiential education that builds upon and amplifies the notion of “learning by doing” is called service-learning. Definitions of service-learning abound, but the core concept is that service-learning blends community service and student learning to address authentic community needs while students learn and develop through active engagement in that experience. If experience and learning are and should be closely bound, then it would appear that service-learning which literally reflects a dual focus on service/experience and learning has potential for strengthening education across the curriculum at all levels. To address this ambitious claim, this dissertation focuses on exploring service-learning applications in the under-researched filed of second language teacher education.

In service-learning, students are involved in social engagement of community service and reflection on such real-life practice. In a broad sense, students participating in service-learning can be seen as reflective practitioners who engage in a reflective process that seeks to enhance their practice or service to the community. The term “reflective practitioner” is commonly associated with practicing teachers engaged in job-embedded professional development. This dissertation, however, takes a step forward to expand the popular concept of reflective practitioner in on-site training or professional development to the early phase of teacher learning in teacher preparation programs. To this end, service-learning is strategically employed in the present study to educate a group of prospective second
language teachers into reflective practitioners. An alternative mode of reflective practice via computer-mediated communication in a web-based learning environment is also implemented as a supplement to the observed course and as a means to enhance the prospective teachers’ process of becoming theoretically and pedagogically informed second language teachers.

**Background**

Service-learning advocates pointed out that “Service-learning is a relatively young field with a limited research base that extends back a little more than ten years” (Billig & Furco, 2002, p.16). Given that research on service-learning is still in its infancy stage, it is not surprising that researchers have not reached an agreement of the definition of service-learning. Instead of trying to pin down the question of “what is service-learning,” it might be more realistic to start with “what does service-learning look like?” or “what do people do in service-learning?”

Service-learning activities take various forms and come in all sizes. Wade (1997) organized service activities typically used in K-12 education into three categories: direct, indirect, and advocacy. Direct service involves students working directly with individuals or the environment. Common examples are cleaning up a park or other nature area, landscaping the grounds at a nursing home, serving a meal at a local soup kitchen, and helping seniors with chores, such as painting fences and shoveling snow. Indirect service allows students to work indirectly with the individuals or the environment by organizing or channeling resources to those in need. Some examples include collecting food, clothing, and supplies for a homeless shelter, fund-raising for shelter residents or low-income families,
coordinating an after-school hotline for latchkey children, organizing a car pool system for high school student drivers, and developing survival kits for new immigrants. Advocacy service engages students in social action to improve or solve identified problems. In this sense, advocacy service holds great potential for students to learn how to make a difference and effect change in society. Among the three types of service in service-learning projects, advocacy service allows for not only “learning by doing” but also “doing what matters”. Examples of advocacy service are researching the effects of smoking and secondhand smoke as a national health issue and then publicizing the findings to educate the public, researching issues affecting new immigrants in the local community and then writing to local officials for supports, and interviewing community members on issues of safety and then developing a plan for taking action that addresses the root causes of the problem.

Service-learning is growing in popularity since the federal initiatives in the 1990s, including the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 (National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2004). A sizable majority of K-12 schools in the United States currently engage students in service-learning or incorporate service-learning in their curricula. Based on the findings of a national survey on service-learning in U.S. public schools and U.S. Department of Education Statistics on the number of public schools and students, roughly 54,000 K-12 schools currently engage about 13.7 million students in service-learning activities (Scales & Roehlkepartain, 2004).

K-12 service-learning varies in implementation that often gears toward students’ developmental level. For instance, service-learning applications at the elementary level often centers on an interdisciplinary unit (Kinsley, 1997). Applications of service-learning
in middle school programs often focus on affective development “as youth face the emotional issues of identity formation and separation from family” (George, 1997, p.163). In high school programs, service-learning is often infused in the curriculum as an attempt to connect service activities to subject areas (Hill & Pope, 1997).

For the most part, research on service-learning has shown promising impacts of service-learning on civic responsibility (Morgan & Streb, 1999, 2001; Weiler et al, 1998), moral development (Boss, 1994), self-esteem (Shaffer, 1993; Falcinella, 1998), self-image (Switzer et al, 1995), caring perspectives (Swick, 1999; Berkas, 1997), leadership development (Staton, 1990), multicultural and multiethnic perspectives (Weah, Simmons, & Hall, 2000; Melchior, 1999; Berkas, 1997), language socialization and development (Rymes, 2002), community development (Miller, 1997), school and community partnership (Cooper, 2002), school improvement and reform (Loesch-Griffin, Petrides, & Pratt, 1995, Bhaerman, Cordell, & Gomez, 1998; Owens, & Wang, 1997; Pearson, 2002), etc. In general, these outcomes of service-learning fall into 3 categories: student development, community development, and school development (Wade, 1997). Given that service-learning applications produce positive educational results for students, communities, and schools, it is not surprising that educators, especially those in K-12 education, are drawn to service-learning.

Among the three outcome areas of student, community, and school development that service-learning generates, the promising impact of service-learning on student development is what leads to the prevalence of service-learning in K-12 education. Generally, the impact of service-learning on students reflect three dimensions: (1) personal development – common aspects include self-image, self-esteem, self-confidence, and moral sense; (2)
interpersonal and social development – common aspects include civic responsibility, interpersonal skills, caring perspective, and acceptance of diversity; (3) academic and intellectual development – common aspects include critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, academic knowledge and skills (Conrad, 1991; Alt & Medrich, 1994; Wade, 1997).

While academic development is presented as one of the potential effects of service-learning for students, as Wade (1997) pointed out, “Research evidence for the impact of service-learning on academic learning and intellectual development is neither extensive nor conclusive” (p.30). There is clearly a need for more research on the academic learning dimension of service-learning. Furthermore, the major problem of current service-learning practice is the disconnection between the service provided and the academic learning of the service provider (Schensul, Berg, & Brase, 2002). For example, a group of English major college students work collaboratively with community members in activities designed to educate the general public about issues of pollution and what can be done to protect the environment. In this social engagement, the students provide a service that meets the community’s need and learn how their service makes a difference. Of course, learning emerges out of the engagement, but such learning is marginally related to the students’ major or academic learning. It is the lack of strong evidence to demonstrate the linkages between service-learning and academic learning that leads to a common concern of service-learning watering down the academic content in higher education. Therefore, higher education institutions are rather reluctant and slow to incorporate service-learning into their already crowded curricula, despite the prevalence and generally recognized potential of service-learning in K-12 education.
In higher education, “teacher education programs traditionally have been slow to adopt and maintain teaching methodologies that take the learning process outside the walls of the schools” (Weatherford & Owens, 2000, p.125). Teaching and learning conventionally take place inside the classroom. The classroom-based tradition, which has been the dominant model for teaching, is transmitted generation by generation because teachers tend to teach as they were taught (Richards, 1998). If it is true that we teach as we have been taught, the big question then is how to go about breaking that cycle. Teacher educators have long struggled with how to create effective learning environments for prospective teachers and how to cultivate learning experiences that will transform prospective teachers’ future classroom practice. As the advocates for change in teacher education begin to question the effects and rigor of the classroom-based model for teaching, the call for educational reform has often included an implementation of service-learning (Myers & Bellner, 2000).

**Statement of Problem**

How does service-learning fit with educational reform efforts in teacher education? Students in teacher preparation courses often complain that what they learn in the classroom is far removed from the real-world practice. Such a complaint often results from a two-part fractured curriculum in teacher education. That is, a curricular design that contains a series of theory-based courses followed by on-site teaching practices, respectively. For instance, Roberts’ (1998) review of language teacher education curriculum at higher education institutions confirms the common problem of lack of integration between abstract and practical course components. In response to this problem, teacher educators have long strived to find ways to situate prospective teachers’ learning experiences in a context that
promotes learning of relatively abstract knowledge and practical applications of that learning. In this sense, service-learning with its integrated focus on practice and learning appears to be a promising alternative to the linear model of fractured curriculum in teacher education.

While the impact of service-learning on academic development remains under-researched, it raises a concern that may hinder the reform effort to infuse service-learning into teacher education. For teacher educators, the question is not whether learning occurs during service-learning, but whether such learning reflects academic knowledge that is deemed essential for teacher learning and professional development. Inquiries as to how service-learning impacts academic learning, how academic learning takes place in participation in service-learning, to what extent the learning emerged in service-learning is connected to course objectives, and how the learning process in service-learning contributes to prospective teachers’ ongoing professional development, etc., have not been mapped in any detail. Answers to these questions have enormous implications for why and how to better incorporate service-learning into teacher education, yet contemporary research on service-learning does not address them well.

Taken as a whole, if we see the potential of service-learning to foster reform efforts in teacher education and if we are to extend the success of service-learning in the K-12 realm to teacher education, more attention has to be paid to bridging the gap between the service provided and the academic learning of the service provider in order to best serve prospective teachers in the process of learning to teach.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study is twofold. First, given the lack of service-learning research on student academic development and the disconnection between the service provided and the academic learning of the service provider, I focus on exploring how academic learning is achieved through service with the mediation of reflective practice. Second, in response to recent calls for more research on teacher learning, I examine how a group of prospective second language teachers’ reflective practice in online community participation impacts their professional identity development which is deemed an integral part to their ongoing professional development.

For this study, I observed and investigated a curricular innovation in a methods course designed to prepare students for adult second language teaching. Two defining characteristics of this curricular innovation contained an implementation of service-learning and an implementation of WebCT, a web-based course management system. I adopted a situative perspective on learning as the theoretical framework for understanding the learning experiences of a group of prospective second language teachers in this curricular innovation. Specifically, the research questions that guided the study were: (1) How does participation in service-learning impact academic learning from the participants’ points of view? (2) How does participation in WebCT impact the participants’ professional identity development integral to their ongoing professional development?

Significance of the Study

In conducting the present study, I attempted to form connections between two lines of research: research on service-learning and research on teacher learning. My intention was
to leverage the strengths and supplement the weaknesses of these two domains in order to bring them into a cohesive whole. The significance of the present study is, therefore, situated across the fields of service-learning and teacher education. In particular, this dissertation is significant to teacher educators as it presents an integrated approach to second language teacher preparation.

The present study is anticipated to bring insights into the learning process of teachers-as-learners through an examination of a group of prospective second language teachers’ participation in service-learning and online discussion activities with an emphasis on their reflective practice. The rich and complex process of learning to teach is what teacher education should focus on. Understanding how prospective teachers learn to teach provides a frame-of-reference that furthers our understanding of how teacher education interventions should be organized to support that learning. By infusing our understanding of students-as-learners and teachers-as-learners, we can then work toward the shared and ultimate goal of effective teaching and learning in education across different fields of research.

**Definitions of Terms**

Throughout this dissertation, I use certain terms and abbreviations. It is necessary to introduce the glossary terms pertaining to the present study in order to situate my discussions in a meaningful way.
Service-Learning

The question of “what is service-learning” can be answered by a variety of definitions, depending on where one is entering into the service-learning world. Service-learning may be viewed as a form of civic responsibility, a community-building strategy, an informal learning practice, an instructional method, a philosophy of education, etc. These views of service-learning all share a core belief that service-learning combines service to community with student learning in a way that community service is employed as the experiential basis for learning. As Morton and Troppe (1996) pointed out, service-learning begins with the assumption that “experience is the foundation for learning” (p.3). Definitions of service-learning abound and differ as to their primary foci and beneficiaries. In the present study, I follow the definition of Eyler and Giles (1999) that manifests the underlying assumption of service-learning and places learning at the heart of the service-learning activities. According to Eyler and Giles (1999),

Service-learning is a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students work with others through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems and, at the same time, reflecting upon their experience as they seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves.

In the present study, I favor the term “service-learning” although some people use the terms “service learning”, “academic service learning” and “community service learning” interchangeably. My decision about which term to use is shaped by the primary focus of the
study on the learning dimension of service-learning. Therefore, the term “service-learning” as it is used in this study indexes the following activities (Kraft, 1996):

1. involving students in selecting or designing the service activity,
2. linking the service experience with the identified academic learning objectives,
3. providing opportunities for student reflection on the service experience.

While I view service-learning as a form of experiential education, I shall emphasize that service-learning is distinguished from other forms of experiential education. Furco (1996) established a continuum of experiential education based on two distinctions: the primary beneficiary and the focus (see Figure 1 below).

*Figure 1: Furco’s (1996) Model of Distinctions among Forms of Experiential Education*

![Figure 1: Furco’s (1996) Model of Distinctions among Forms of Experiential Education](image)

At one end of the continuum are volunteerism and community service, in which the primary beneficiary is the service recipient and the focus is on the service. At the other end of the continuum are field education and internship, in which the primary beneficiary is the service provider and the focus is on the learning. Furco (1996) placed service-learning in the middle of the continuum in that the intention of service-learning is to “equally benefit the provider and the recipient of the service as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service
being provided and the learning that is occurring” (p. 5). In other words, the distinctive feature of service-learning lies in a balanced reciprocity between the service provider and the service recipient.

Another form of experiential education worth mentioning is practicum, an established practice in the field of teacher education. A renowned teacher education theorist Donald Schön defined practicum as “a setting designed for the task of learning a practice” (Schön, 1987, p.37). More specifically, a practicum is a field practice as part of an academic course or as an integral part of a program that is designed to expose students in formal, supervised settings to hands-on experience. Although practicum and service-learning share similarity as forms of experiential education, their differences can be summarized as follows.

*Table 1: Distinctions between Practicum and Service-Learning*

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<th>Practicum</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nature of Practice/Service</td>
<td>Formal, structured, supervised, and usually institutionalized</td>
<td>Informal and voluntary (though some classroom-based service-learning is mandatory)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary and Focus</td>
<td>Students or the service providers</td>
<td>Reciprocity between the service providers and the service recipients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desired Outcomes</td>
<td>Students’ professional skill development and integration of knowledge</td>
<td>Students’ personal, social, and academic development (other outcomes include school development and community development)</td>
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While this dissertation examines students’ academic learning and professional development in mandatory service-learning participation as part of an academic course, the service-learning application in the present study resembles practicum implemented in student
coursework. Based on Furco’s (1996) model of distinctions among forms of experiential education, however, practicum falls in the category of field education that locates at the middle right end of the continuum. My decision to define the practical experience involved in the observed classroom as service-learning is intended to emphasize a balanced reciprocity between the service provider and the service recipient – a defining feature of service-learning from among other forms of experiential education.

Second Language Teacher Education

Second language teacher education, literally speaking, is an area of study in the field of teacher education. The term second language (L2) is not limited to the “second” language, rather, it refers to any languages learned after one’s first language (L1). To avoid confusion, some researchers prefer the term “additional language” to “second language.” The term “first language” is often used as a synonym for native language in the literature.

In the field of English language teaching, a distinction is made between English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL). ESL refers to the teaching or learning of English in a setting where English is the functional language in the broader social context. By contrast, EFL refers to the teaching or learning of English in a context where English, the target language, is used primarily in educational settings, such as in the classroom, and not used for everyday purposes. A more encompassing term TESOL, which stands for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, is often used for a general discussion to include both ESL and EFL education.

In the present study, I examine a TESOL methods course designed to prepare students for teaching English as a second language to adult learners through direct
involvement in service-learning and participation in a course-based, online community. The students who enrolled in the observed TESOL methods courses were mostly pre-service teachers with no or limited student teaching experiences, although two of them were practicing teachers with formal teaching experience. In this dissertation, I use the term “prospective second language teachers” in a generic sense to refer to the students in the observed classroom regardless of their teaching experience. In terms of implications and contributions of the present study, I do not intend to limit English language teaching to ESL and “second language” to English, since I believe that learning to teach ESL, EFL, or any other language shares certain fundamental characteristics. I therefore relate the present study to the relatively broader field of second language teacher education.

**Professional Development and Professional Identity Development**

The practice of professional development exists widely and its forms vary. Professional development is usually defined in context-specific ways with operational meanings and complementing standards. For example, its definition is often discipline-based or contextualized at individual, departmental, institutional, national and even at global levels. My definition of professional development in the present study is a rather generic one. I view professional development as a recurring process integral to endeavors or activities concerned with developing one’s learning and teaching competence. This process is embedded in all learning environments or educational communities of practice (see theoretical definition of community of practice in Chapter Two). At the local level, the educational communities of practice involved in the present study include classroom participation in weekly class meetings, participation of service-learning in and out of the
classroom, and participation in the online community of WebCT. Broadly speaking, the prospective second language teachers’ communities of practice also relate to the ESL teaching profession at the global level.

Professional development is often used interchangeably with academic development, educational development, and staff development. In the present study, I utilize the term professional development in an encompassing way to include a wide range of educational activities, but I use academic learning or academic development to specifically refer to educational practices that reflect the learning objectives of the observed course. I am conscious that academic learning overlaps with professional development. My decision to go with a broad definition of professional development and a narrow view of academic development eliminates the need to attempt to draw a distinguishing line between these two overlapping terms.

Professional identity in the present study refers to (second language) teacher identity. As a result of the general socio-cultural turn in human science, identity is conceptualized as a socio-cultural construct that is constantly created and re-created in human interactions (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). Based on the theoretical framework that informed the present study, learning is a way of being in the world or in other words, the process of learning involves a process of identity construction (see Chapter Two). In this sense, it is reasonable to view identity as a window to understand students’ academic learning in the class that interrelates with their ongoing professional development. I therefore examine a group of prospective second language teachers’ professional identity development as an attempt to understand their ongoing professional development in the learning process of becoming professional second language teachers.
Organization of the Dissertation

As presented above, Chapter One provides an overview of this dissertation, including a statement of the problem as my rationale of the study, the purpose of the study along with the overarching research questions that guided this study, the significance of the study, and a general sketch of the definitions of key terms pertaining to the present study. In the following sections, Chapter Two reviews the literature relevant to the study. Specifically, this study adopts a situative perspective on learning as the theoretical framework and is informed by two lines of research, including research on service-learning and research on teacher learning. Chapter Three introduces the methodology of the present study, i.e., qualitative case study, with detailed descriptions of the participants, data collection, and data analysis methods. Chapter Four presents findings derived from a conceptual analysis in response to my first research question, and Chapter Five presents findings derived from a discourse analysis in response to my second research question. Chapter Six is dedicated to an interpretation close to my research questions (i.e., discussions of the research findings) and an interpretation beyond my research questions (i.e., pedagogical and research implications drawn from the research findings).
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The present study is guided by the theoretical framework of a situative perspective on learning and informed, in particular, by two lines of research: research on service-learning and research on teacher learning. In this chapter I first provide an overview of the situative perspective on learning focusing on its conceptual themes in order to ground my research in the overarching theoretical context. These conceptual themes of the situative perspective outlined in this chapter provide specific lenses through which to consider a group of prospective second language teachers’ service-learning experience and their process of learning to teach. Following the section of theoretical framework, I then review contemporary research on service-learning and teacher learning with emphasis on the role of reflection in learning.

Theoretical Framework: The Situative Perspective on Learning

“Learning is a way of being in the world, not a way of coming to know about it.”

-- William Hanks

The quest for learning has been historically a central concern in education and human society in general. Theorists, researchers, and practitioners across fields develop and rely on diverse conceptualizations of how people learn to guide their study of interest. A recent view of learning that is becoming known as the “situative perspective” has been gaining influence on educational practice as an alternative to the cognitive perspective on learning (Putnam & Borko, 2000). From the behaviorist perspective to the cognitive
Cognitive versus Situative Perspectives

The situative perspective on learning overlaps with the cognitive perspective, in particular, what DeCorte, Creer, and Verschaffel (1996) termed the second wave cognitive revolution in psychology. According to DeCorte et al. (1996), there were generally two waves of cognitive studies in the development of cognitive learning perspective. The first wave of cognitive studies is prototypical of a computer metaphor. It holds that the human mind acquires knowledge in a way similar to the information processing of a computer. Researchers following this view are interested in investigating the mental process of human learning independent of social context. They focus on the study of cognitive tasks, such as memory, perception, attention, and logical reasoning.

While the first-wave research evolved when the behaviorist view failed to account for the higher mental functions involved in human learning, the pure focus on internal cognitive processes is often accused of falling short in explaining possible external influences on human learning. The second wave of the cognitive revolution, therefore, evolved as a reaction to go beyond the limitations in the first wave research. What DeCorte et al. (1996) termed the second wave of cognitive revolution refers to cognitive studies that take social and cultural variables into account. A central metaphor of situative perspective on learning is that human beings learn best in authentic environments under guidance of an expert or more experienced person. This apprenticeship metaphor gives rise to the pedagogical model of cognitive apprenticeship (cf. Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1989;
Rogoff, 1991, 1995). As DeCorte et al. (1996) point out, the second-wave research redirected researchers’ interest away “from a concentration on the individual to a concern for social and cultural factors; from ‘cold’ to ‘hot’ cognition; from the laboratory to the classroom as the arena for research; and from technically to humanistically grounded methodologies and interpretive approaches” (p.491).

Three terms or terrains under the banner of the second wave research include social cognition, situated cognition, and distributed cognition. Social cognition (cf. Kunda, 1999; Pennington, 2000) developed in social psychology highlights the social origin of learning with a constructivist view that learning first occurs at the interpersonal level and is later internalized at the intrapersonal level. The emphasis is on the meaning construction process of how individuals make sense of social events. Situated cognition holds that “knowledge is situated in activity, context, and culture of which it is a part” (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). In situated cognition, the cognitive process of knowledge acquisition and meaning construction is viewed as a sociocultural activity that must be understood in a context-specific way. Distributed cognition emphasizes the interaction among individual, cultural artifacts, and environment. It describes how tool-mediated social interactions come to be internalized in the private thoughts of the individual. It also considers the development of individual cognitions as an interactive, mediated process (Salman, 1993).

The terrains of social cognition, situated cognition, and distributed cognition shift researchers’ attention away from purely individualistic accounts of learning and have enormous influences on educational research and practice in the past decades. Recently, the situative perspective appears to gain the leading status as a theoretical orientation towards educational research and practice (Greeno, 1997; Cobb & Bower, 1999; Putnam & Borko,
Putnam and Borko (2000) presented “three conceptual themes that are central to the situative perspective – that cognition is (a) situated in particular physical and social contexts; (b) social in nature; and (c) distributed across the individual, other persons, and tools” (p.4). Interestingly, what they termed the central themes of the situative perspective that cognition as situated, cognition as social, and cognition as distributed are surely the central claims of situated cognition, social cognition, and distributed cognition, respectively. It follows that although Putnam & Borko (2000) claimed the situative perspective to be a “new” way of understanding the nature of knowledge, thinking, and learning, it might be more appropriately understood as an “extended” or “integrated” view of cognition, if based on the central themes of the situative perspective they proposed.

Given that the situative perspective shares substantially overlapping concerns with the second wave cognitive studies, it leads to a reasonable question that if the situated perspective is better conceptualized as “third-wave” research rather than a “new” theoretical orientation towards a different paradigm. If not, what makes it fundamentally distinct from the cognitive views of learning? Some scholars argue that the major difference between the cognitive and situative perspectives lies in their different levels of analytical focus (Greeno, 1997; Henning, 2003). To be more specific, while the cognitive perspective pays special attention to cognitive activities with individualistic focus, the situative perspective focuses on understanding participatory activities as interactional achievement in a broader sense.

The cognitive perspective on learning (both the first-wave and second-wave cognitive analyses) is concerned with individual cognition. Although the second wave cognitive studies advance to investigate how external factors, such as history, culture, society, and affect impact the internal mental process, the unit of analysis remains as the
cognitive activities that the individual performs. For instance, Huang and Eskey (2000) examined the effects of closed-caption television on 30 ESL students’ listening comprehension. In the study, social factors, such as starting age of ESL learning, length of time in the United States, and time traveling in English speaking countries, were considered to determine the impact on the participants’ listening comprehension. Findings of the study indicated that closed-caption television facilitated the participants’ vocabulary and phrase acquisition and thus had beneficial effects on the participants’ listening comprehension, but the social factors examined in the study showed no correlation with the participants’ listening comprehension. Although this study recognized the sociocultural influences on the cognitive dimension of learning, the analytical focus was on the cognitive activity performed by each individual participant, i.e., listening comprehension.

The situative perspective, in contrast, takes a broader approach to consider participatory activities in ongoing social interaction as the unit of analysis. From the situative perspective, learning is seen to take place in participation frameworks and therefore should always be examined within the context from which it emerges (Hanks, forewords in Lave & Wenger, 1991). A central methodological concern from the situative perspective follows that participation in social interaction provides the minimal meaningful context for understanding human learning embedded in social practices. For instance, Chun (1994) reported a case study on how participation in computer-assisted classroom discussion impacted interactive competence. The participants were first-year American college students in German classes who participated in a networking program over a two-semester period. Findings of the study indicated that computer-assisted classroom discussion enhanced the students’ interactive competence in terms of greater opportunity to practice
more varied communicative skills. The participants were found to engage in class discussion more interactively because of the contextual features of the networking program, such as more responding time for composing discussions, less interruptions, and less intimidating conversational context due to physical absence. These contextual features that contributed to the participant’s increased student-student and teacher-student interactions actually resulted from the absence of constraints related to traditional face-to-face communication. Without the understanding of the social interaction context in which this particular research was situated (e.g., the participation norms and structures of computer-assisted classroom discussion, the nature of the electronic discourse, etc.), the interpretations of the research findings would not yield contextualized, legitimate insights. Likewise, this view also applies to research that is conducted in face-to-face contexts. The point is that to understand what and how learning occurs, we must take into account where the learning is situated and interpret research findings based on a participation framework from which the learning emerges.

In considering the distinction between the cognitive and situative perspectives, I follow the view that the individual versus social collective unit of analysis (i.e., cognitive activity versus participatory activity) draws a distinguishing line between the two overlapping perspectives on learning. As Lave and Wenger (1991) emphasized, the significance is “shifting the analytic focus from the individual as learner to learning as participation in the social world, and from the concept of cognitive process to the more-encompassing view of social practice” (p.43). In short, the situative perspective provides a broader framework for understanding the participatory nature of learning and give rise to the
notion of learning as a process of participation in the social world. This account of learning is further elaborated in the situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

**Community of Practice as Participation Framework**

Lave and Wenger’s (1991) work on situated learning theory is a hybrid of cultural-historical theory (Vygotsky, 1978), activity theory (Engeström, 1987; Engeström, Miettinen, & Punamäki, 1999), and sociocultural theory (Wertsch, Rio, & Alvarez, 1995; Wells, 1999). In other words, the situated learning theory is deeply rooted in the analytic perspective of Marxism, inherited from L. S. Vygotsky and his followers. The Vygotskian influences relate the situated learning theory to a broad set of interdisciplinary notions, such as mind, culture, language, meaning, identity, activity, and context. This is reflected in the encompassing, essential argument of situated learning theory that learning is a process of legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice. This contention relies on two key concepts: Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LPP) and Community of Practice (COP).

Lave and Wenger (1991) began their introduction of situated learning theory with the assertion that “Learning viewed as situated activity has as its central defining characteristic a process that we call legitimate peripheral participation” (p.29). They emphasized that legitimate peripheral participation is not itself an educational form, a pedagogical strategy, or a teaching technique, but “a descriptor of engagement in social practice that entails learning as an integral constituent” (p.35). Simply put, what they termed legitimate peripheral participation (LPP) is an analytical viewpoint on learning. They built on the notions of learning by doing and apprenticeship to theorize about the process of generative social practice in which a novice or newcomer becomes an expert or old-timer (Hay, 1996).
This was evidenced in the five types of apprenticeships (i.e., Yucatec midwives, Vai and Gola tailors, naval quartermasters, meat cutters, and nondrinking alcoholics) they provided to support their argumentation of situated learning theory. Legitimate peripheral participation is most noted by the developmental process of how a novice gets progressively more engaged within a social practice, from the periphery to the center and from playing the role of newcomer to the old-timer. While the accounts of legitimate peripheral participation appear to resemble the educational notions of apprenticeship and learning by doing, legitimate peripheral participation as an analytical viewpoint on learning is more inclusive with its goal to understand the broader and less individual-centered concerns of learning than the accounts of apprenticeship and learning by doing that rest on activities an individual performs. As Lave and Wenger (1991) noted, legitimate peripheral participation “provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artifacts, and communities of knowledge and practice. It concerns the process by which newcomers become part of a community of practice” (p.29).

A community of practice, as Lave and Wenger (1991) wrote, is “an intrinsic condition for the existence of knowledge, not least because it provides the interpretive support necessary for making sense of its heritage” (p.98). People generally are involved in a number of communities of practice, whether at home, school, work, or other social settings. Lave and Wenger (1991) further pointed out that a community of practice is “a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice” (p.98). In this sense, a community of practice is better viewed as a framework of social participation. The term community of practice as portrayed in the situated learning theory is an integrated conceptual framework, which is not
to be confused with restricted notions, such as community as a place, an entity, or a space; practice as an act, a behavior, or an experience; or community of practice as a presence defined by socially visible boundaries. Wenger (1998), in his later work on situated learning, proposed three dimensions for conceiving a community of practice: (1) What it is about – its joint enterprise as understood and continually renegotiated by its members; (2) How it functions – mutual engagement that binds members together into a social entity; and (3) What capability it has produced – the shared repertoire of communal resources (routines, sensibilities, artifacts, vocabulary, styles, etc.) that members have developed over time (pp. 73-84).

Lave and Wenger (1991) argued that the concept of community of practice denoted “participation in an activity system about which participants share understandings concerning what they are doing and what that means in their lives and for their communities” (p.98). In fact, anyone familiar with the work of activity theorists (e.g., Engeström, 1987; Cole & Engeström, 1993; Wertsch, Rio, & Alvarez, 1995; Wells, 1999) will realize at once that the situated learning theory is profoundly indebted to the analytical perspective of activity theory.

Activity theory can be traced back to revolutionary Russian psychology between the 1920s and 1930s and has evolved from Vygotsky, through Leontiev, Luria, and other activity theorists to its present form (Engeström, Miettinen & Punamäki, 1999). In Vygotsky’s work, human “higher mental functions” are viewed as socially mediated. Vygotsky’s idea that there exists an intermediate link, i.e., mediation, between the stimulus-response model is reconfigured as a triadic representation of activity, which is composed of a subject (an individual or a group involved in an activity) and an object (the objective or the
direction of an act held by the subject), mediated by artifacts or instruments, including material and mental tools (Cole & Engeström, 1993). This reconfigured model was then referred to as a basic triangle of activity theory that serves as a building block in the current model of activity system. As an expanded analytical perspective, the activity system was proposed to incorporate rules, community and the division of labor (Engeström, 1987). Although Lave and Wenger (1991) proposed the concept of community of practice as a participation framework, they never explicitly and thoroughly examine what constitutes such a framework, at least not as profound as the analytical components presented by the activity system. Lave and Wenger (1991) acknowledged that the analytical perspective of the activity system served as a theoretical guide for understanding communities of practice. As they noted, the term community of practice “does imply participation in an activity system” (p.98).

To sum up, the central argument of situated learning theory that learning is a process of legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice concerns the whole person acting in the activity system or the social world – an epistemological conception derived largely from Vygotskian tradition. This view of learning reflects a fundamental epistemological shift in social science. As William F. Hanks put it beautifully in his forward for Lave and Wenger’s (1991) book on the situated learning theory, “Learning is a way of being in the social world, not a way of coming to know about it” (p.24).

**Conceptual Themes of the Situative Perspective**

In this dissertation, I adopt a situative perspective on learning as my theoretical framework for understanding a group of prospective second language teachers’ process of
learning to teach. The situative perspective, as discussed above, is in fact an integrated or hybrid view of learning derived from the writings of Vygotskian theorists and infused the contributions of the second wave cognitive studies. It should be noted that while the situated learning theory offers two striking notions of “legitimate peripheral participation” (LPP) and “community of practice” (COP) that serve as building blocks to the situative perspective, what I mean by the situative perspective on learning is more “inclusive.” The term situative perspective as it is used in this dissertation infuses major tenets of social cognition (cf. Kunda, 1999; Pennington, 2000), situated cognition (cf. Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989), distributed cognition (cf. Salman, 1993), and situated learning (cf. Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The situative perspective, therefore, denotes four conceptual themes: (1) learning as social in nature, (2) learning as situated, (3) learning as distributed, and (4) learning as legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice.

**Theme 1: The Social Nature of Learning**

The argument of learning as social in nature is best noted in ethnographic studies that typically examine what and how learning takes place in social contexts. In the early 1970s, researchers began to investigate language learning differences in and out of school, such as Hymes’ (1974) work on the ethnography of communication in cultural studies, Scribner and Cole’s (1981) empirical study on cognitive consequences of the social organization of education, and Heath’s (1983) fieldwork on “ways with words” in community-based settings. Recognizing the social origin of learning is not to be seen as “anti-school.” Instead, it provides us a variation of limited, school-based notion of learning through an expanded
account of learning as social practice to find a way to connect these two polarized domains to improve learning in school-based settings.

Theme 2: The Situated Nature of Learning

The situatedness of learning suggests a more culturally sensitive and context-specific view of learning. The situated feature of learning leads to an understanding that learning is and should be contextualized, which is evidenced in many failures of knowledge transfer between tasks and across contexts. For example, the literacy required in an academic conference might differ from the necessary literacy for a job market. Similarly, a western conception of computer literacy might not make sense to other cultures or village people who do not use or even know what a computer is. An underlying assumption of the situativeness of learning is that learning in any kinds of settings (formal or informal or even experimental laboratory situations) is situated in time, space, and a broader cultural-historical context (Henning, 2003). In the language found in the situative perspective camp, all learning is situated in certain (and multiple) communities of practice.

Theme 3: The Distributed Nature of Learning

The distributed feature of learning is in reaction to learning as private that can be achieved solely by the individual. Alternatively, the situative perspective posits that learning is distributed across people and tool mediations. For example, a situation where a group of students perform a research project collaboratively and conduct a presentation with an overhead projector to inform the whole class demonstrates a process of how learning is co-constructed, or scaffolded, by people and supported by tools. Influenced by the
analytical perspective of activity theory, the notion of learning as distributed concerns how tool-mediated social interactions come to be internalized in the private thoughts of the individual (Salomon, 1993). The notion that learning as distributed recognizes and amplifies the significance of mediational means. Mediation of tools, signs, and actions are key concepts in supporting the distributed account of learning as portrayed in the situative perspective. The recent integration of technology in education, such as Computer-Mediated Communication and Computer-Assisted Language Learning, highlights the mediational potential of technology. Such educational practices are best applications of how learning is distributed.

**Theme 4: The Participatory Nature of Learning**

In arguing that learning is a process of legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice, the situated learning theorists (Lave & Wenger, 1991) attempted to locate and frame learning within a broader conceptual term “community of practice.” The concept of community of practice is proposed as a participation framework that bears resemblance or borrows from a sociocultural theorists’ term “activity system,” as mentioned in the preceding discussion. Along the same line, Gee’s (1996, 2000) well-known distinction of D/discourse also falls in this camp. How does D/discourse relate to the notion of community of practice? Gee (1996) defined Discourses (with an upper case D) as “ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing that are accepted as instantiations of particular roles by specific groups of people” (p. viii). Discourses (with a lower case d) were defined as the language bits of Discourse or stretches of talk and writing. Clearly, Gee’s (1996) construct of Discourse echoes the view
that learning is a way of being or a process of participation in communities of practice. The notion of learning as a way of being ties learning and identity closely together. Identity is not naturally acquired but a sociocultural construct that is embodied through language practice (or discourse with a lower case d). In this sense, language, learning, and identity are fundamentally interrelated. In short, while theorists often frame their viewpoints in different terms, their shared concern points to the essence that learning must be understood within a broader framework, be it community of practice, activity system, or Discourse, that takes into consideration of the interplay among language, learning, and identity.

To sum up, the situative perspective on learning, as it is referred to in this dissertation, consists of four conceptual themes that focus on the social, situated, distributed, and participatory nature of learning. It should be noted that I do not conceive these four conceptual themes to be mutually exclusive. I recognize that these conceptual themes exist with blurry boundaries as they derive out of broader theoretical terrains, namely social cognition, situated cognition, distributed cognition, and situated learning – each embraces a wide range of concepts and share overlapping concerns about activity, culture, and society. Amplifying the difference among these conceptual themes allows me to articulate their individual characteristics and provides me more specific lenses for understanding the phenomenon of interest, i.e., a group of prospective second language teachers’ process of learning to teach. Guided by the situative perspective on learning, the curricular innovation under study was anticipated to promote the notions of learning as social, learning as situated, learning as distributed, and learning as participation in communities of practice. The theories and rationale behind the instructional design of the observed curricular innovation particularly built upon research on service-learning and research on teacher learning. In the
discussions to follow, I first review the two lines of research and then address what new insights the situative perspective has to offer.

**Research on Service-Learning**

Service-learning is commonly associated with the conceptual framework of experiential learning. Viewing it differently, I take the theoretical lens of the situative perspective as outlined in the preceding section to understand the nature of service-learning and to develop better ways of incorporating service-learning in education. To this end, it is necessary to review the impact of service-learning on student development and its theoretical origin.

**Impact of Service-Learning on Student Development**

In outlining the background of service-learning (see Chapter One), I concluded with a general consensus that its major impact on student development reflect three areas, including personal development, interpersonal and social development, and academic and intellectual development. The claim is supported by research results found in K-12 service-learning literature. Billig (2000) conducted a research review on service-learning implementations in K-12 schools in the past decade. As she summarized, service-learning has a positive impact on the personal development of participating students. For example, elementary and middle school students who engaged in service-learning had fewer behavioral problems and showed reduced levels of alienation (Yates & Youniss, 1996). Service-learning participating students had increased sense of self-esteem and self-efficacy (Shaffer, 1993; Falcinella, 1998). In terms of students’ interpersonal and social
development, Billig’s (2000) research review showed positive influences of service-learning. For example, service-learning participating students had greater empathy (Neal, Shumer, & Gorak, 1994), enjoyed helping others (Loesch-Griffin, Petrides, & Pratt, 1995), and were better able to trust and be trusted by others (Stephens, 1995). Billig (2000) also reported that service-learning contributes to the academic and intellectual development of participating students. For example, elementary school students who engaged in service-learning outperformed non-participating students on state tests in mathematics (Akujobi & Simmons, 1997). Middle and high school students who participated in service-learning increased their grade-point averages (Supik, 1996). In short, findings of service-learning studies in K-12 schools provide evidence that service-learning has a positive impact on student development, which has led to the prevalence of service-learning in K-12 education in the past decade (Billig, 2000).

Although service-learning is generally more widely adopted and has a longer history in primary and secondary education, the positive effects of service-learning in K-12 education have sparked much interest of practitioners in higher education in designing and implementing service-learning courses in recent years (Rowls & Swick, 2000; Myers & Bellner 2000). Service-learning research found in the higher education literature has shown promising results. For example, Eyler, Giles, and Braxton (1997) examined the impact of service-learning on college students by analyzing data gathered from over 1500 undergraduates at 20 higher education institutions. Findings of their research indicated that students who engaged in service-learning differed from those who did not in a number of ways, such as increased self-efficacy, better problem-solving skills, more tolerance for others, and ability to remain open to new ideas. Astin and Sax (1998) conducted a research
on how college students were affected by service-learning participation based on data collected from more than 3000 undergraduates attending 42 higher education institutions. Findings of their research indicated that participation in service-learning substantially enhanced the students’ academic development, life skill development, and sense of civic responsibility. Astin, Sax, and Avalos (1999) examined long-term effects of service-learning on college students. More than 10,000 college students completed 3 surveys administered through the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) of the Learn and Serve Institutions. Findings of the research showed that students who spent six or more hours a week in service-learning during their college years were twice as likely to perform volunteer work (such as helping others in difficulty and participating in environmental cleanup) after graduation. Some examples of valuable outcomes found in service-learning participating students’ development were increased sense of efficacy, better degree aspirations and higher degrees earned, and enhanced multicultural understanding. In brief, research on service-learning in higher education echoes the effects of service-learning found in the K-12 education literature.

In the field of teacher education, teacher educators and policy makers have shown interest in working on institutionalizing service-learning in teacher preparation programs. Anderson (1998) pointed out that rationales for incorporating service-learning in teacher education included: (1) to prepare prospective teachers to use service-learning as a teaching method with their K-12 students; (2) to socialize prospective teachers in the essential moral and civic obligations of teaching; (3) to enhance prospective teachers’ ability to reflect critically on current educational practices and their own teaching; (4) to prepare prospective teachers for easily adapting to educational reforms; (5) to accelerate the process of learning
how to perform a variety of roles needed to meet the needs of students; (6) to develop human service-oriented teachers who can work effectively in schools with integrated social services. While the integration of service-learning and teacher education is still in its infancy, it has been implemented with considerable variation. Heffernan (2001) reviewed 900 course syllabi and summarized 6 basic models of service-learning, including: (1) pure service-learning courses, (2) discipline-based service-learning courses, (3) problem-based service learning courses, (4) capstone service-learning courses, (5) service internships, and (6) service-learning action research. At a broader level, Erickson and Anderson (1997) presented 14 cases/models of teacher education courses and programs that integrated service-learning. The cases studied were drawn from multidisciplinary teacher preparation programs and represent a diversity of types of institutions throughout the United States.

Much research has revealed that service-learning applications in teacher education also yield positive outcomes. For example, Wade (1995) investigated a service-learning implementation in an elementary social studies methods course. In the study, the students participated in individual and group service-learning projects in an elementary classroom. The research findings showed that the students developed positive attitudes toward community participation, demonstrated gains in self-esteem, and increased knowledge about their subject matter, etc. Rymes (2002) explored the impact of service-learning on student development in an adult ESL methods course. The prospective ESL teachers provided home-tutoring ESL services in pairs to Spanish-speaking adults (primarily Mexican immigrants) in northeast Georgia. Throughout the semester, the service-learning participating students developed their course portfolios that were used as an assessment of the value and impact of the service-learning experience, both for the instructor and for the
students. Findings of the research indicated positive development of the service-learning participating students centering on three themes, including personal transformation of the students, more tolerance of the use of first language in ESL teaching, and changing pedagogical values. Cooper (2002) examined a K-12 ESL methods course with a service-learning component. The prospective ESL teachers provided English services to children in a Latino community center. The service-learning participating students developed their own lesson plans centering on grammar and vocabulary related to the children’s subject matter classes. Cooper (2002) reported that “although it is hard to pinpoint what effect the service-learning projects had on the attitudes and viewpoints of the students, most of them spoke in positive terms about their learning experiences in this ethnic neighborhood” (p.419).

In short, service-learning implementations in higher education and teacher education (as similar to service-learning in K-12 schools) have positive effects on students in terms of personal, interpersonal, and academic development. However, as mentioned in the problem statement of this dissertation, more research is needed to shed light on academic learning of service-learning participating students since student academic development is more targeted in higher education than in K-12 education (Wade, 1997).

Theoretical Origin of Service-Learning

While service-learning is relatively new, it is philosophically in line with experiential learning that gained popularity in the 20th century. The concept of experiential learning is rooted in educational philosopher John Dewey’s classic book *Experience and Education*. Dewey (1938) emphasized that not all experience educates and called for a theory of experience in education. He wrote, “The belief that all genuine education comes about
through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other (p.25).” Dewey (1938) argued that we must understand the nature of experience in order to design effective education. In framing a theory of experience, Dewey (1938) presented two key principles needed for learning to happen. The first is continuity – the learner needs to be able to connect aspects of the present experience to what he or she already knows, and the present experience will also have an impact on his or her future experiences. The second is interaction – the learner’s present experience arises from the interaction between the present situation/environment and the learner’s past experiences. These two principles or criteria of experience form the basis of Dewey’s (1938) perspective on the social nature of learning.

After Dewey’s (1938) introduction of the theory of experience, the importance of experience continued to be discussed within education. It was not until the 1960s, with the rise of humanistic psychology that placed the learner at the heart of the learning process, that the concept of experiential learning began to acquire status as a movement in education (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). The growing interest in experiential learning gave rise to pedagogical models, such as the project approach (Katz & Chard, 2000; Glassman, 2001) in early childhood education and later, service-learning in K-12 education. As one of the Dewey-inspired pedagogical approaches, service-learning encourages students to be actively engaged in field work and hands-on experience with an emphasis on process over product. Much work at developing a theoretical base for and rationale behind service-learning has focused on the role of experience in learning, among which Kolb’s (1984) model of experiential learning provides the conceptual groundwork for understanding the process of how experience/service is transformed into learning (Erickson & Anderson, 1997).
Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning model is a four-part cycle that delineates the experiential learning process. The elements of the learning cycle include concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Kolb’s (1984) Model of Experiential Learning Cycle

Continuing in the spirit of Dewey (1938), Kolb (1984) also viewed that experience forms the foundation of any learning process. He therefore placed concrete experience at the starting point of the learning cycle, although he also argued that the learning cycle could begin at any point of the cycle. Following the concrete experience is the reflective thinking activity that serves to make sense of the experience. While the second step in the learning cycle aims to understand the experience at a local level, the third step brings this understanding to a broader level of thinking to form general understanding and conceptualization that can be applied across context. After theorizing general principles out of the concrete experience, the next step is to put it into practice in a new context within the range of generalization developed in the third stage. In other words, the fourth stage is an experimentation of
“theory” or abstract concepts. If the abstract concept does not work in practice, then the learner goes through the loop of the learning cycle again with appropriate adjustment until he reaches satisfied results. The whole process, as presented in Figure 2, is a continuous spiral. Central to Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning model is the premise that reflection links experience to learning. Such emphasis on reflection impacts how service-learning is structured and implemented in education in the past decades.

The Role of Reflective Practice in Service-Learning

Many service-learning researchers and practitioners have worked to develop effective ways to structure and implement service-learning in education. Campus Compact, a coalition of U.S. college and university presidents, identifies three basic components of service-learning: preparation, service, and reflection. The five essential elements of service-learning defined by Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance include preparation, service, evaluation/assessment, and celebration. Kaye (2004) stated that there are seven components to effective service-learning, including integrated learning, meeting genuine needs, youth voice and choice, collaborative efforts, reciprocity, systematic reflection, and civic responsibility. Pate (2002) presented a service-learning guide that includes nine components: need, learning, students, collaborators, project, service, reflection, evaluation, and publicity. In fact, the list can go on and on. These variations in what constitute essential components actually result from the variety of service-learning definitions in the field. Among the various ways for defining service-learning components, however, the concept of reflection seems to cut across context.
The importance of reflection was highlighted in Geleta and Gilliam’s (2003) model of service-learning components (see Figure 3). They identified three essential components or phases as follows: (1) Preparation – identifying community needs and course objectives, considering logistical procedures of performing service, reflecting on the fit between the service and academic learning; (2) Action – making decisions about what type of service to provide, establishing partnerships and collaboration with the community, providing the service that has been mutually agreed upon, and reflecting on the service experience; (3) Evaluation – reflecting on the impact of service-learning, assessing the impact of the service to the community, reporting the final outcomes of the service-learning experience.

*Figure 3: Geleta and Gilliam’s (2003) Model of Service Learning Components*
Among the components, reflection plays the central role in each phase of service-learning. As Geleta and Gilliam (2003, p.11) noted,

Students reflect in the preparation phase as they identify the community need, considering if the knowledge that they develop at each stage is sufficient to provide the needed service. In the action phase, students actually perform the service. At that point, they constantly reflect on their ability to provide the service, on the state of the partnership, and the challenges and successes that they encounter. During the final phase, the sharing of results, students not only discuss among themselves and the teacher their thoughts about the service experience, but they also prepare a written assignment detailing their reflections on the service-learning activity. This assignment gives the students an opportunity to reflect on everything that they learned and practiced.

In brief, while researchers and practitioners coming from different views on what service-learning is may lend themselves more to one way of defining service-learning components than another, a recurrent theme in the above discussion has been the role of reflection as a necessary component for linking service and learning. Historically, the concept of reflection, like the role of experience, is rooted in John Dewey’s work. Dewey (1938) viewed reflective thinking as an intentional cognitive process that involves discovering connections between what have done and what may happen. For this reason, Dewey believed that “reflective thinking would improve students’ problem-solving skills and increase their ability to learning from their experience” (cited in Wade, 1997, p.95). Service-learning as it is currently practiced is predominantly informed by Dewey’s (1938)
thinking and, in particular, by Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning model – both consider reflection as higher-order thinking or cognitive activity. From the situative perspective, I would agree on the central role of reflection in learning. However, the conceptualization of reflection with individualistic focus does not live up to the spirit of the more encompassing situative perspective on learning.

Service-learning practitioners as well as other experiential learning followers frequently use Kolb’s (1984) model of experiential learning for planning teaching and learning activities and analyzing students’ learning performance (Pritchard & Whitehead, 2004). However, from the situative perspective that I am taking, this model is rather limiting. Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning model focuses on the learning process of how an individual makes sense of his experience without paying too much attention to: (1) how learning is situated in the broader context (e.g., cultural settings), (2) how distributed resources (e.g., instructors, peers, and tool mediations) support the learning process, and (3) how learning shapes and is shaped by participation in and through communities of practices from which the experience derives (e.g., the mutual growth of service receiver and service provider). In short, Kolb’s (1984) model incorporates the social nature of learning as developed in the work of Dewey (1938) by implementing experience in the learning cycle. It, however, falls short in accounting for the situated, distributed, and participatory features of learning that are deemed critical from the situative perspective. For this reason, the present study examined a group of service-learning participating students’ social collective, reflective practice in an online participatory community to move beyond the limiting view of reflection as merely cognitive activities performed by the individual, such as personal journal writings in traditional paper format.
Research on Teacher Learning

The present research attempts to build upon the theoretical base for and rationales behind research on service-learning and research on teacher learning to develop an integrated approach to second language teacher preparation. A shared argument that connects these two lines of research is the central role of reflection in learning. As reviewed in the previous sections, the situative perspective allows me to move beyond viewing reflective practice as merely individualistic, cognitive activities. In this section, I review the historical origin of research on teacher learning, followed by a consideration of reflective practice in teacher learning.

Teacher education has long been synonymous with teacher training (Richards, 1998, Freeman, 2002). Until the late 1980s, teacher preparation programs, for the most part, had been operated based on a training or knowledge-transmission perspective. In earlier times, teacher education was more concerned with teacher knowledge base and how such knowledge could be effectively delivered to prospective teachers. In other words, the focus of teacher education was on “teaching of teaching”, an exclusive concern for what to teach and how to teach in order to serve prospective teachers well.

Shulman (1986) defined teacher knowledge base in terms of three basic domains, including content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge. Content knowledge is an understanding of the subject matter. For example, content knowledge or subject matter knowledge of a second language teacher often refers to an understanding of second language acquisition, TESOL methods, and sociolinguistics, etc. In the field of second language teacher education, content knowledge can also be referred to as
target language competence of the second language teacher. Pedagogical knowledge is defined as the knowledge of generic teaching strategies and practices, such as classroom management techniques and effective communication skills. Pedagogical content knowledge, according to Shulman (1986, 1987), is the most crucial domain of teacher knowledge base that constitutes the essence of teaching. He viewed pedagogical content knowledge as “the capacity of a teacher to transform the content knowledge he or she possesses into forms that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to the variations in ability and background presented by the students (p.15).” Shulman’s (1986, 1987) interest lies in exploring how prospective teachers develop understanding of teacher knowledge base and how such understanding shapes their teaching practices. After Shulman’s (1986, 1987) work, the prospective teacher’s process of learning to teach gained attention of teacher educators.

In the 1990s, the orientation of teacher education began to shift away from a “training” perspective to a more holistic view, or an “education” perspective in Richards’ (1998) term, that aims to understand not only “teaching of teaching” but also “learning of teaching.” In the idea of learning of teaching, the focus is on prospective teachers as learners and their processes of learning to teach. The underlying assumption is that “teaching is realized only in teachers” or effective teaching cannot be taught directly (Richard, 1998, p.81). It follows that teacher education should be less involved with transmitting content knowledge and best practices to prospective teachers, although both content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are essential domains of teacher education. Recent research on teacher learning suggests that the role of teacher education should be more concerned with prospective teachers’ higher-order cognitive processes of learning to
teach and provide experiences that facilitate their professional development (Killion & Todnem, 1991; Hatton & Smith, 1995a, 1995b; Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & Lopez-Torres, 2003).

The Role of Reflective Practice in Teacher Learning

With the growing interest in research on teacher learning, the concept of reflection has increasingly been discussed in the literature of teacher education in the past two decades. Teacher reflection plays an important role in developing content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge about what to teach and how to teach more effectively (Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & Lopez-Torres, 2003). The role of reflection in teacher education, as it is currently conceived, is at the core of teacher learning. While the historical root of reflection can be traced back to John Dewey, it is the work of Donald Schön that popularizes the significance of reflection as an important theme in teacher education. Schön's (1983, 1987) primary interest lies in examining how reflection potentially contributes to teacher learning and professional development although his model of reflection has been widely applied in educational theory and practice in general.

Schön (1983) argued that thought is closely tied to action and presents a model of reflection consisting of two modes, including reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. While it seems clear that a distinguishing line can be drawn between reflective thought and reflective action, Schön (1983) viewed these two as an integral process within which reflective thought and action occur concurrently. According to Schön (1983), a reflection-in-action involves simultaneously reflecting during practice or action. It requires one to think consciously about what is happening while doing something and modify his actions.
immediately. A reflection-on-action retrospectively reflects on what happened to make sense of the lived experience. Killion and Todnem (1991) built on the work of Schön (1983) and presented a third mode, reflection-for-action. Like reflection-on-action, a reflection-for-action is also practiced after the action but differs with its proactive emphasis on how such reflective thought prepares one for future changes. Killion and Todnem (1991) argued that reflection-for-action is the desired outcome of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Together, these studies shed light on the links between reflective thought and action based on time frames. Viewing reflective thought and action as a bounded construct provides the vehicle for understanding how cognitive activities that are fundamentally individual practices have the potential to bring about social change.

Given that reflection is essentially a cognitive practice, it raises a concern of how to assess “unobservable” reflection and what counts as evidence of reflection. Hatton and Smith (1995a, 1995b) outlined three forms of reflection in a hierarchy and provide criteria for the recognition of evidence for each type. According to Hatton and Smith (1995b, p.48-49), descriptive reflection “is not only a description of events but some attempt to provide reason justification for events or actions but in an evocative or descriptive way. Dialogic reflection “demonstrates a stepping back from the events/actions leading to a different level of mulling about, discourse with self and exploring the experience, events, and actions using qualities of judgments and possible alternatives for explaining and hypothesizing.” Critical reflection “demonstrates an awareness that actions and events are not only located in, and explicable by, reference to multiple perspectives but are located in, and influenced by multiple historical, and socio-political contexts.” Hatton and Smith’s (1995a) framework provides a way of assessing the level of reflection in educational practice. For example,
Orland-Barak (2005) adopted the framework developed by Hatton and Smith (1995a) and to analyze the evidence of reflective practice in 32 portfolios of teachers to understand the specific quality of reflection.

As researchers’ interest in the concept of reflection continues to grow, educational practice with a reflection component is increasingly adopted in teaching and learning in general. Many researchers have worked to develop ways of conceptualizing the notion of reflection and how it can be better implemented to facilitate educational practice (e.g., Killion & Todnem, 1991; Richards, & Lockhart, 1994; Hatton & Smith, 1995a, 1995b; Richards, 1998; Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & Lopez-Torres, 2003). In the field of teacher education, the concept of reflection opens up opportunities for enhancing teacher learning and professional development. In the case of second language teacher education, Richards (1998) pointed out that the dilemma of second language teacher preparation is to locate a balance between micro and macro approaches to the preparation of prospective teachers. As he noted, a micro approach “looks at teaching in terms of its directly observable characteristics” and a macro approach “involves making generalizations and inferences that go beyond what can be observed directly in the way of quantifiable classroom processes” (p.4). Activities in the micro approach consist of trainable skills, such as teaching assistantship (assisting an experienced teacher in aspects of a class), workshops (participating in training sessions focusing on specific instructional techniques), and microteaching (presenting structured mini-lessons using specific strategies and techniques). In contrast, activities involved in the macro approach focus on guiding prospective teachers to adopt the role of self-directed learner throughout the course of their professional development. Examples include practice teaching under guidance of experienced inservice
teacher and teaching observation that allows for critical reflection on and a deeper awareness of the employed teaching principles and techniques. While both macro and micro approaches to teacher preparation have their merits, they are often criticized as polarized and “rarely involve teachers in an ongoing process of examining their teaching” (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, p.2). To address the limitation of conventional teacher preparation approaches, reflective teaching or reflective practice is proposed as a promising, balanced approach to teacher learning and professional development (Richards & Lockhart, 1994; Richards, 1998).

Reflective practice (often used interchangeably with reflective teaching) has been adopted in a diversity of areas with different foci of beneficiary, such as teacher preparation, teacher learning, teacher professional development, and student learning (e.g., Richards, & Lockhart, 1994; Richards, 1998; Chase, Germundsen & Brownstein, 2001; Herrington & Oliver, 2002; Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & Lopez-Torres, 2003; Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). For the most part, reflective practice is considered a means of teacher professional development (Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & Lopez-Torres, 2003). Gibson (2003) examined a preservice teacher’s experience in a professional development program that blends lectures and tutorials with collaborative project and discussions. Through a narrative inquiry, Gibson found that the participant’s reflection on her past experience “helped her develop explicit knowledge and understandings of school culture, university and teaching terminology and discourse, teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, different styles of learning, the importance of time, preparation and planning and community practice” (p.44). In addition to narratives or stories, other reflective activities, such as personal journals, dialogue journals, discussion groups, and portfolios, have also proven to
be facilitative of teacher learning and professional development (e.g., Dong, 1997; Edens, 2000; Orland-Barak, 2005, Kea, & Bacon, 1999).

While the importance of reflection is widely recognized in teacher education, reflection as it is currently conceived and practiced tends to operate at the intrapersonal level centering on reflection-in-action or reflection-on-action. For instance, Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985) viewed reflection as “intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to new understandings and appreciations” (p.19). Hatton and Smith (1995a) defined reflection as “deliberate thinking about action with a view to its improvement” (p.52). Osterman and Kottkamp (2004) considered reflection as a professional development strategy that provides professionals with “opportunities to explore, articulate, and represent their own ideas and knowledge” (p.16). With understanding that reflection is to bring about social change, Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & Lopez-Torres (2003) caution that “reflection defined as a technical and isolated skill is insufficient to support meaningful teacher learning” (p.248). They called for a need to move beyond the common implementation of reflective practice as cognitive activities performed solely by the individual. They further emphasized the importance of viewing reflection as both cognitive and social practices constitutive of a broader learning process. Following this new thinking, Herrington and Oliver (2002) studied an online course with an implementation of reflection as the central design. The course incorporated what they term individually-mediated reflection (i.e., personal learning journals) and socially-mediated reflection (i.e., collaborative tasks, such as listservs and discussion boards) to facilitate student learning and development. They concluded that embedding reflection in a
collaborative, supportive learning environment engaged students in a cycle of reflection that potentially led to lifelong learning.

As presented above, researchers seem to be in agreement that reflection lies at the heart of teacher learning, although the term reflection is still loosely defined and used to embrace a wide range of concepts (Hatton & Smith, 1995b). Given that reflection is embedded in teacher learning, to understand the nature and effects of reflection we must study it within the broader context, namely teacher learning. And, as Borko (2004) pointed out, “To understand teacher learning, we must study it within multiple contexts, taking into account both the individual teacher-learners and the social systems in which they are participants” (p.4). It then seems clear that the situative perspective on learning that focuses researchers’ attention on “individual teachers as learners and on their participation in professional learning communities” is a legitimate solution to unfold the puzzle of how teachers learn to teach (Borko, 2004, p.4).

**Summary**

In this chapter, I provided an overview of my theoretical framework, the situative perspective on learning, followed by discussions of its conceptual themes: (1) learning as social in nature, (2) learning as situated, (3) learning as distributed, and (4) learning as legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice. In other words, the situative perspective provides specific lenses to manifest four dimensions of the nature of learning, i.e., the social, situated, distributed, and participatory nature of learning. While the situative perspective is an encompassing view, it is particularly useful for unfolding the complexity of learning. Taking this holistic view, I then reviewed contemporary research on service-
learning and research on teacher learning to explore what the situative perspective brings to light. To propel current practice of service-learning and teacher learning, the situative perspective points to a consideration of viewing reflection as both individualistic, cognitive practice and as collective, social practice. Following this new thinking, the present study examined a group of prospective second language teachers’ reflective practice involved in (1) their service-learning participation with a focus on reflection as cognitive practice and (2) their participation in an online learning community with a focus on reflection as social practice. The following chapter presents details about the present study’s methodology.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to a description of my research methodology. I first provide a rationale of using qualitative inquiry, or more specifically, qualitative case study design for conducting the present research. I then describe the context in which the research was situated, followed by portraits of my research participants. As a qualitative case study, the “case” in the present study is defined by the instructional design of the observed classroom. Therefore, a major section of the chapter presents descriptions of the curricular innovation with emphasis on its implementation of service-learning and the use of WebCT as a supplement to the course. Next presented is a section on data collection followed by data analysis methods. In the last part of the chapter, I address the strategies that I employed to enhance trustworthiness of my research.

Research Perspective: Qualitative Case Study

I believe that multiple realities are socially constructed by individuals. It is this constructivist philosophical stance that governs my choice and use of qualitative inquiry (rather than quantitative inquiry, philosophically rooted in positivism) to conduct my dissertation study. While the present study is theoretically informed by the situative perspective on learning – one that reflects a constructivist viewpoint, the qualitative mode of inquiry is legitimate for exploring my study of interest, i.e., a group of prospective second language teachers’ process of learning to teach.
Merriam (1998) identified five defining features of qualitative research, including (1) Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the phenomenon of interest from the participants’ perspectives; (2) Qualitative researchers are the primary instrument for data collection and analysis; (3) Qualitative research involves fieldwork; (4) Qualitative research employs an inductive mode of inquiry; (5) Qualitative research findings are in the form of rich description and interpretation (pp.6-8). These features described above are reflected in the research design of the present study.

Merriam (1998) pointed out that case study as a research design “is chosen precisely because researchers are interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing. … By concentrating on a single phenomenon or entity (the case), the research aims to uncover the interaction of significant factors characteristic of the phenomenon.” (pp.28-29). The “case” in case study is defined as “a bounded system” (Smith 1978 cited in Merriam, 1998). Given that the present study aimed to understand a group of prospective second language teachers’ lived learning experience in a curricular innovation of a TESOL methods course (i.e., a bounded system), case study was selected as the most appropriate methodology that allowed me to elicit the meaning construction of the participants in the particular context. In short, as a qualitative case study, this research contains a rich and thick description with the intent of analyzing and interpreting the studied phenomenon through an inductive mode of inquiry.

**Research Context**

The research context was situated at a large university in the southeastern United States. The observed class is one of the three methods courses offered by the master’s
program of TESOL that prepares students for teaching English as a second or additional language in the United States or abroad. These three methods courses are dedicated to different age levels of English language learners with different foci of teaching practice and knowledge. The observed course is specifically designed to prepare students for teaching English as a second language to adult learners.

This TESOL methods course was a split-level course with 21 students enrolled, 4 undergraduates and 17 graduates. Among the 4 undergraduate students, one majored in German, one in Spanish, one in Physics, and one was in an exchange program. In comparison, 14 of the 17 graduate students were working on their M.Ed. degree in the TESOL program and 3 of the 17 graduate students majored in Linguistics. In both groups, the students were predominantly female. Among the 21 students, 18 were female and 3 were male. Their age ranged from 24 to 62 years. The observed course consisted of students from diverse cultural backgrounds. While the students were mainly Americans (11 European Americans and 1 African American), there were 5 Korean, 2 Taiwanese, 1 Chinese, and 1 Japanese.

**Research Participants**

Qualitative research typically adopts purposeful sampling based on the assumption that the researcher wants to discover what occurs, understand the implications of what occurs, and gain insight into the interplay of occurrences (Honigmann, 1982; Patton, 1990; Merriam, 1998). Purposeful sampling, therefore, is the appropriate and logical technique to select a sample that provides a prototype and yields in-depth understanding rather than generalization from the sample to a larger population. As Patton (1990) pointed out, “The
logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling” (p.230).

As a qualitative case study, the type of sampling selected for the present study was purposeful sampling or criterion-based sampling in LeCompte and Preissle’s (1993) term. I adopted multiple sampling strategies to select among the students enrolled in the observed class as my purposeful/criterion-based sample. Patton (2001) outlined 16 sampling strategies for purposefully selecting information-rich cases for qualitative inquiry. In conducting the present research, I specifically relied on 3 sampling strategies, including (1) intensity sampling, (2) stratified sampling, and (3) maximum variation sampling.

Intensity sampling is to select “information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon intensely” (Patton, 2001, p.243). The students enrolled in the observed course came from rather diverse backgrounds; there were undergraduate and graduate students with different majors, such as German, Spanish, physics, linguistics, and TESOL. While the purpose of the study was to examine the potential of a curricular innovation designed for second language teacher preparation, I selected only master’s students in the TESOL program to be my intensity sample. Stratified sampling captures major variations within samples and therefore helps researchers “increase confidence in making generalizations to particular subgroups” (Patton, 2001, p.243). In the field of TESOL, teachers of English to speakers of other languages are constitutive of 2 main groups, namely native speakers of English (NS) and non-native speakers of English (NNS). Both NS and NNS English teachers are unique with distinct social, cultural, and linguistic characteristics. Therefore, I adopted the
stratified sampling strategy to select 5 native speakers of English and 5 non-native speakers of English. Maximum variation sampling is to “identify important common patterns that cut across variations” (Patton, 2001, p.243). This sampling strategy allows me to take into account sociocultural factors, including gender, age, and ethnicity, to document diverse variations within my samples. The following table (Table 2) summarizes my sampling criteria for participant selection. I believe that the sampling strategies used for selecting my participants lead to information-rich data and are appropriate to yield descriptive and interpretive understanding for the purpose of the study.

Table 2: Sampling Strategies for Participant Selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intensity Sampling</th>
<th>Stratified Sampling (NS/NNS)</th>
<th>Maximum Variation Sampling (Ethnicity, gender, age)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10 master’s students majoring in TESOL | 5 native speakers of English | • Diane  
European American, female, 23 years old  
• Shirley  
European American, female, 62 years old  
• Rachel  
European American, female, 35 years old  
• Jessie  
European American, female, 32 years old  
• Freya  
African American, female, 28 years old |
| 5 non-native speakers of English | • Yolin  
Taiwanese, female, 25 years old  
• Wantin  
Taiwanese, female, 25 years old  
• Jungsoo  
Korean, female, 35 years old  
• Sunme  
Korean, female, 32 years old  
• Atsuro  
Japanese, male, 26 years old |

Like other classroom-based research, the course instructor and the enrolled students were involved in the present study to varying degrees. Although I observed the class as a whole, I worked more closely with 10 focal students to gain in-depth understanding of their
learning development. I started participant recruitment at the beginning of the course. All the students enrolled in the course were invited to voluntarily participate in the study; no incentives were provided. All the students signed up research consents for allowing me to observe their classroom participation and performance. In the syllabus, there were also statements that read “Student projects and performance in this course may be used as a basis for research and academic publications. Pseudonyms will be used to ensure confidentiality.” I then adopted the sampling strategies described above to select 10 focal students for close examination of their coursework.

The majority of the focal students (7 out of 10) were in their 3rd semester of the master’s degree in TESOL, 2 were in their 2nd semester, and 1 was in her 1st semester when taking this methods course. Almost all the focal students (9 out of 10) had prior language teaching experiences but only 2 of them were practicing teachers during the course of the present study. A brief participant description is presented as follows.

- Shirley was a 62-year-old European American female. She had 20 years of experience in teaching reading and language arts in Grades 2 to 6 (1 year in a US Army school and 19 years in private Christian schools). She took a year’s leave to pursue a master’s degree. Her career goal was to teach ESL in either elementary or middle school. She was in her 3rd semester when she took the TESOL methods course. She graduated one semester after the course was completed and started teaching ESL in a public elementary school.

- Rachel was a 35-year-old European American female. She was a practicing ESL teacher at a high school in the neighborhood while taking the TESOL methods course. She had 15 years of experience teaching English abroad. She was in her 2nd semester when she
took the TESOL methods course. Her career goal was to teach English abroad in university settings in Asian countries.

- Jessie was a 32-year-old European American female. She did not have any formal teaching experience prior to taking the TESOL methods course but she had much experience working with students in educational settings given the nature of her job as a student coordinator. She got a teaching job at an international public high school starting in August, 2005. She was considering pursuing an advanced degree in administration or applied linguistics and was open to whatever paths she might take in her teaching profession.

- Freya was a 28-year-old African American female. She was in her 2nd semester of her master’s degree when participating in the study. She did not have professional teaching experience but had 4 month of student teaching prior to taking the TESOL methods course. She was interested in teaching ESL to both children and adults.

- Diane was a 23-year-old European American female. She was in her 1st semester of her master’s degree in TESOL. She had no prior teaching experience before taking the TESOL methods course. Her goal after completion of the degree was to teach EFL to K-5 aged children in a Latin American country.

- Jungsoon was a 35-year-old Korean female. She was in her 3rd semester while taking the TESOL methods course. Prior to the methods course, she had a field experience in her 2nd semester of teaching ESL to an elementary school. She was an experienced EFL teacher in Korea. She taught English as a foreign language to secondary school students in Korea for 7.5 years, and after graduation, she planned to return to Korea and continued EFL teaching.
• Sunme was a 32-year-old Korean female. She was in her 3rd semester while taking the TESOL methods course. She taught German to high school students for 1 year in Korea before she came to study abroad in the United States. Upon completion of her master’s degree, she hoped to teach ESL in K-12 education.

• Atsuro was a 26-year-old Japanese male. He had years of experiences of teaching English as a foreign language in Japan and teaching Japanese as a foreign language in the United States. He was in his 3rd semester while taking the TESOL methods course. He was a practicing teacher who taught Japanese to undergraduates at the university where he pursued his master’s degree. He graduated one semester after the TESOL methods course was done and continued his doctoral study in Language Education with a concentration on TESOL.

• Yolin was a 25-year-old Taiwanese female. She had student teaching experience in pre-K in Taiwan before she came to study abroad in the United States. She was in her 3rd semester when taking the TESOL methods course. She graduated in the next semester and was looking for an EFL teaching job in elementary schools in Taiwan when the present study was complete.

• Wantin was a 25-year-old Taiwanese female. She had EFL teaching experience in Taiwan prior to taking the TESOL methods course. She was in her 3rd semester of her master’s program of study. She planned to find a job of teaching ESL in K-12 education after graduation.

In participating in the present study, the 10 prospective second language teachers were immersed in a community of learners where they interacted, learned, and grew together in their process of becoming professional second language teachers. They were engaged in
a curricular innovation that required participation in multiple communities of practice (see Figure 4).

*Figure 4: Educational Communities of Practice Involved in the Present Study*

These educational communities of practice specifically involved in the present study included (1) participation of service-learning in and out of the classroom, (2) participation in an online learning community enabled by WebCT, (3) classroom participation in weekly class meetings at a broader level that encompassed the previous two, and (4) a discourse community of ESL teaching profession at the farthest, global level. In particular, the dotted area between the service-learning and WebCT communities of practice indicates their shared
focus on reflective practice. A description of the curricular innovation containing details about these communities of practice is provided in the following section.

**Research Design: The Curricular Innovation**

The observed course was a traditional face-to-face class with an integration of a web course tool, WebCT. The syllabus stated, “WebCT is used as a supplement to this course.” To be more specific, this course was designed based on a triad of Lecture Class – Teaching Class – Reflection Class with a supplement of WebCT as an attempt to innovatively and effectively integrate service-learning and technology into the curriculum. The class met weekly on Monday evenings from 4:40pm to 7:30pm for 16 weeks. The first 4 weeks were devoted to introduction to TESOL methods. The rest of the 12 weeks were organized into a triad of Lecture Class, Teaching Class, and Reflection Class. The triad was rotated 4 times throughout the semester as shown in the following table. The Teaching Class and the Reflection Class were specifically devoted to the service and reflection components of the collaborative service-learning project, respectively. The collaborative service-learning project that was carried out in the classroom is delineated later in this chapter.

*Table 3: The Triad of Lecture-Teaching-Reflection Classes and Its Relation to Service-Learning*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture Class</th>
<th>Teaching Class</th>
<th>Reflection Class</th>
<th>Lecture Class</th>
<th>Teaching Class</th>
<th>Reflection Class</th>
<th>Lecture Class</th>
<th>Teaching Class</th>
<th>Reflection Class</th>
<th>Lecture Class</th>
<th>Teaching Class</th>
<th>Reflection Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Week 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Service)</td>
<td>(Reflection)</td>
<td>(Service)</td>
<td>(Reflection)</td>
<td>(Service)</td>
<td>(Reflection)</td>
<td>(Service)</td>
<td>(Service)</td>
<td>(Reflection)</td>
<td>(Service)</td>
<td>(Service)</td>
<td>(Reflection)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Lecture Class was basically teacher-lead in which the course instructor either provided presentations on concepts or issues pertaining to TESOL methods in contemporary literature or invited experienced ESL practitioners as guest speakers to share their expertise.
with the class. In these lecture classes, the students met in a traditional classroom setting. Next, the Teaching Class was designed for in-class ESL teaching practice to provide the students with an opportunity to teach and learn collaboratively. In these classes, the students were to design, prepare and teach lessons to ESL learners who came to the classes on a drop-in basis. The students were divided into small groups and assigned specific roles for each teaching class in turn. These roles included teacher, teacher’s aide, peer observer, cameraperson, and logistics coordinator. In these teaching classes, the students met in the Family Housing Community Center, a building 5 minutes away from the university classroom where the class normally met. The community center was actually the office of the university Family and Graduate Housing, with an adjoining computer lab and a community room that served as a gathering place for its residents. The 1,300 residents of Family and Graduate Housing were predominantly international graduate students from very diverse cultures. The Family and Graduate Housing residents or more specifically, the dependents of the university graduate students were the target population for the ESL teaching classes. Last, the Reflection Class provided the students an opportunity to critically reflect on the last week’s teaching practices. Those who served as Teacher and Peer Observer for the last week’s Teaching Class were to provide 10-minute presentations in pairs, supported by representative video clips. In reflection classes, the students met in a traditional classroom setting. In short, the triad of Lecture Class – Teaching Class – Reflection Class allowed the students to first gain content knowledge of TESOL methods, then put what they learned in the classroom into practice, and lastly have a chance to reflect on what they have learned and what needed to be learned.
Two defining features of this curricular innovation were an implementation of service-learning and an integration of WebCT. In the following sections, I elaborate the components of the curricular innovation represented in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Instructional Design of the Observed Curricular Innovation

The implementation of service-learning

Service-learning as it was implemented in this course consisted of a collaborative service-learning project in the classroom and a self-directed service-learning project out of...
the classroom. Both are presented in the following sections with a focus on the service and the reflection components of these service-learning applications.

*The collaborative service-learning project*

This methods course was designed based on the triad of Lecture Class – Teaching Class – Reflection Class. The collaborative service-learning project required the students to organize and provide ESL services as a team to voluntary ESL learners in the Teaching Classes, which was scheduled for 5 class times throughout the semester. The enrolled students were grouped into 5 teaching teams, and the 10 focal students in the present study evenly scattered in these groups. The teaching practices were video-recorded as a mediational means for later reflection and analysis. The students reviewed the videos of their teaching that was tape-recorded in the Teaching Class, and based on that they composed a video analysis paper and provided a presentation to the whole class in the following week of the Teaching Class, i.e., the Reflection Class.

This service-learning project was designed to be collaboratively carried out in teams. While the grouping stayed the same throughout the semester, each student was assigned a specific role in the teaching team in each Teaching Class. In other words, while there were a total of 5 Teaching Classes and 5 people in each teaching team, every student had opportunities to play different roles in turn throughout the course. These roles included: (1) Teacher – To prepare a lesson plan and conduct teaching; (2) Teacher’s Aide – To assist the teacher with his or her teaching; (3) Peer Observer – To take observational field notes of the teacher’s teaching practice; (4) Cameraperson – To videotape his or her teaching group and give the tape to the teacher and peer observer after class for their collaborative video
analysis; (5) Logistics coordinator – To recruit ESL learners and coordinate with the teaching team. The prospective teachers, specifically the lead teacher of the team, were in charge of lesson planning. No specific curriculum was given to the prospective teachers although common themes for lesson planning were assigned to each Teaching Class for better organization and focused reflection. The assigned themes were drawn from one of the required textbooks (McKay & Tom, 1999) that provided practical activities of lesson plan ideas. Examples of these themes were housing, health, work, and food.

At the beginning of the semester, the class members collaboratively designed and distributed flyers to publicize their ESL services and to recruit voluntary ESL learners in the community. The ESL learners came to this class on a drop-in basis, which turned into a logistical challenge for this service-learning project. Approximately a total of 30 ESL learners were served by this collaborative service-learning project throughout the course. An average of 8 to 12 ESL learners came to each scheduled Teaching Class, but there were times we had no or not enough (less than 5, since there were 5 teaching teams) “real” ESL learners so that the class members had to role-play for completing the teaching practice. As one participant described in her service-learning reflection, “Tonight’s class was somewhat artificial for us since no ESL students arrived for the class. We used some of our international student classmates as target students.” The lack of real ESL students shifted the nature of the participants’ teaching practice from service-learning to micro-lab teaching which was less desirable in the observed classroom. Ideally, the implementation of service-learning in the observed classroom was to promote authenticity of teaching practice in the prospective teachers’ process of learning to teach. Despite the few instances of logistical difficulty, the participating students considered this collaborative service-learning project
practical and beneficial to their process of becoming professional teachers (further details are provided in Chapter Four). As one participant commented in the anonymous course evaluation, “Being able to teach actual students is a great chance for everyone who wants to get a teaching job in the future.”

The reflection component involved in this collaborative service-learning project took two forms. One was an 8-page video analysis jointly written by the lead teacher and the peer observer of the teaching team and the other was a 10-minute oral presentation to the class with representative video clips extracted from the recorded teaching practice. In particular, the video analysis write-ups provide the textual data necessary for the analytical purpose of the present study. In each Teaching Class, the students, or more specifically, the students who played the role of “cameraperson” videotaped their team teaching practices. Since there were 21 students enrolled in the observed course, at the end of the semester, this collaborative service-learning project yielded a total of 21 video recordings and 21 jointly written video analyses (each student was involved in this writing assignment twice, once as a lead teacher and once as a peer observer). For the purpose of the present study, none of the students’ video recordings were collected for analysis. I only collected the video analysis papers composed by the 10 focal students to examine the participants’ reflective accounts of their collaborative service-learning experiences.

The self-directed service-learning project

The second service-learning project involved in this course required the prospective teachers to provide at least 12 hours of adult ESL services out of the classroom. This assignment was designed to allow for the prospective teachers to take responsibility for their
own learning. Recommendations for service-learning ideas and possibilities were provided in the syllabus, but the prospective teachers were encouraged to think through and design their own service-learning activities and had to turn in a project proposal for approval by the fourth week of the course. Throughout this self-directed service-learning project, the prospective teachers were required to compile a portfolio as a final project that documented their learning and development out of the classroom. In addition, they were expected to share and introduce their service-learning portfolios to the whole class in the last class meeting. For the purpose of the study, 10 service-learning portfolios were collected and closely analyzed for understanding the participants’ service-learning experiences out of the classroom.

The prospective teachers were given a proposal template to guide their design and help them think through the service and the learning in service-learning. Specifically, the first set of questions regarding “service” included: (1) What service will be provided? (2) Who will be the participant(s)? (3) Where will this project take place? (4) What is the projected timeline for this project? The second set of questions regarding “learning” included: (1) How does this project relate to you (e.g., academics, interests, career goals)? (2) How will you benefit from this project? What skills and knowledge do you anticipate to gain through this project? (3) How will your participant(s) benefit from this project? (4) What do you expect this project will be like? The service-learning proposal served to facilitate the prospective teachers’ planning process and provide the instructor a means to assess the value and appropriateness of the service-learning activities proposed by the prospective teachers. In practice, the participants’ actual ESL service hours ranged from 12 to 19 hours. The service-learning activities varied in terms of settings (5 participants served as voluntary ESL
teachers affiliated with social services at local churches, 3 participants provided home-tutoring ESL services in their neighborhoods, and 2 participants taught English in the classroom settings), language proficiency (beginning, intermediate, and advanced), and content focus (conversation, reading and writing, grammar, test preparation, and American history).

The portfolio counted as the reflection component of this service-learning project and served as the primary assessment for the course instructor to track the students’ learning and performance out of the classroom. Given the importance of the service-learning portfolio, specific guidelines were provided to facilitate the students’ reflection on and documentation of their out-of-class service-learning experiences. In the portfolio, the students were expected to include: (1) a description of the service-learning project, (2) ESL lesson plans, (3) three reflective journals, (4) a statement of teaching principles, and (5) a plan for professional development. The 10 collected portfolios were analyzed through a constant comparative analysis method to understand the participants’ reflective accounts of their self-directed service-learning experiences out of the classroom.

The implementation of WebCT

The observed classroom was a face-to-face course with a web-based instruction component, emphasizing the complementary role of technology. Web-based instruction refers to instruction that is delivered in whole or in part through the World Wide Web. The learning environment of web-based instruction is created by web course tools or online courseware that often incorporates information and communication technologies (ICTs). The web course tool used in this class was WebCT, an online courseware designed for
higher education institutions by a privately held company in 1995. While social interaction is shaped by context, it is important to understand the infrastructure of the online learning environment to better interpret online interactions in WebCT. In the following, I present how WebCT was implemented in the observed classroom and describe the infrastructure of WebCT in terms of its content delivery, communication, and tracking functions.

Content Delivery

The content delivery function of WebCT allows course materials (e.g., lecture notes, presentations, readings, handouts, etc.) to be transferred in electronic format with increased flexibility, accessibility, and reproduction as compared to traditional distribution of course materials. In the observed classroom, the one-way transfer of course content contained a syllabus and plenty of external links to ESL-related websites on the Internet (see Table 4) since WebCT was used as a supplement to the course. In terms of content delivery, WebCT basically functioned as a resource site, and course materials were often distributed in the weekly class meetings in the face-to-face environment. The resources/web links posted in the WebCT course site were actually references to resources regarding English teaching and second language teacher professional development on the Internet. They were categorized into the following topics:

1. Lesson Plans and Activities
2. Listservs
3. Discussion Forums
4. Associations and Institutes
5. English Teaching Jobs
Table 4: Selected Resources Posted in the WebCT Course Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lesson Plans and Activities     | • Adult ESL Lesson Plans  
  http://www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/adultesol/high.html  
• Activities for ESL Students  
  http://a4esl.org/  
• Reader's Theater Editions  
  http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/RTE.html |
| Listservs                       | • TESL-L listserv  
  http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/~tesl-l/  
• English as a second language listserv  
  http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/nifl-esl/subscribe_nifl-esl.html  
• ELTASIA-L listserv  
  http://eltasia.com/ |
| Discussion Forums               | • Teacher Talk at OneStop English.com  
  http://forum.onestopenglish.com/  
• Teacher Talk at OneStop English.com  
  http://www.teachers.net/mentors/esl_language/posts.html  
• ESL discussion forums at FreeESL.com  
| Professional Associations       | • TESOL  
  http://www.tesol.org/  
• NCTE  
  http://www.ncte.org/  
• TEFL Professional Network  
  http://www.tefl.com/ |
| English Teaching Jobs           | • Academic Employment Network  
  http://www.academploy.com/  
• TeachAbroad.com  
  http://www.teachabroad.com/  
• EduFind.com  
  http://www.jobs.edufind.com/ |
Communication

The communication function of WebCT is a particularly robust feature that highly enriched the observed classroom. The interaction in WebCT is better understood as Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) as such communication is specifically enabled by the medium of computer technology. CMC consists of two broad categories, synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous CMC is produced when communication occurs simultaneously between two or more users as in face-to-face communication. Major forms of synchronous CMC include Internet Relay Chat (e.g., Yahoo chat room) and instant message systems (e.g., MSN messenger, Yahoo messenger, ICQ). In asynchronous CMC, interlocutors do not have to use their computers at the same time. This category includes electronic mail systems (Email) and group conferencing systems, such as bulletin board systems (BBS). In WebCT, synchronous communication mode is made possible by WebCT Chat, and asynchronous communication modes included WebCT Mail and WebCT Discussion Forum. Although both synchronous and asynchronous communication were adopted in the observed classroom, asynchronous communication, in particular discussion boards, appeared to be the primary mode of communication in this course.

In the observed course, there was a posting requirement. The students were required to post 5 journal writings in response to their course readings throughout the course, but they were not required to read each class member’s postings and respond to them. The students were instructed to post and interact within their small discussion groups (the grouping was the same as their teaching groups), but they were also allowed to and highly encouraged to interact with other groups. While interactional participation in the discussion boards was optional, it led to the high posting number but low interactivity of online discussions in the
observed class. More details on the number of postings and level of interactivity of communication in WebCT will be presented in Table 10 in Chapter Five.

**Student Tracking**

Another robust feature of WebCT is its tracking function that provides the instructor a means to monitor how the students are progressing throughout the course. The student tracking records can be set to display by group or by individual. The information generated by the tracking function includes (1) First Access – First time the student accessed the course, (2) Last Access – Last time the student accessed the course, (3) Hits – Number of times the student accessed a homepage and content page, (4) Items Read – Number of postings the student has accessed in WebCT Discussion, and (5) Posted – Number of postings the student has posted to WebCT Discussion. These tracking records can be specified to display activity information for individual students. The information generated for individual student tracking records resembles that of collective student records with slight variations. It contains: (1) first login or first access (2) last login or last access, (3) total number of access or hits, (4) last page visited, (5) articles read, (6) original posts, and (7) follow-up post.

In brief, the content delivery, communication, and tracking functions of WebCT contributed to create a facilitative learning environment in addition to the weekly class meetings in the face-to-face environment. The use of WebCT in the observed classroom provided an extended context that allowed for teaching and learning activities, anytime and anywhere. Overall, WebCT as it was implemented in the observed class, served as a means for course content delivery and student assignment submission, a resource site, and a space
that allowed the students to voluntarily participate in discussions. From a researcher’s standpoint, the implementation of WebCT was significant in that the online interaction, in particular the asynchronous communication enabled by WebCT Discussion Forum, yielded rich data that allowed me to examine how the prospective teachers’ learning was embedded in their process of participation in the online community.

**Data Collection**

The data collection period started on the first day of the course, August 23, 2004 and lasted for a semester. The methods that I used to collect data included classroom observation, document collection, and online data collection. These data collection methods are detailed as follows.

**Classroom Observation**

Conducting classroom observation allowed me to gain familiarity with the research context and participants. Since the observations took place in the nature field setting, that is, the actual class meetings, it represented a firsthand account of the situation under study. While on-site, I carefully observed the physical setting, the participants and their interactions, the activities, and subtle factors, such as unplanned activities and what ought to have happened but did not. I did not use any audio or video mechanical devices to record the observations as I did not want to be too obtrusive and, for the purpose of the study, on-site recording was not necessary. I took field notes instead and occasionally took pictures during the classroom observations. The content of my field notes contained: (1) factual descriptions of the setting, activities, and participants; (2) direct quotations or substance of
the participants’ conversation; (3) my observer’s comments on and thoughts about the setting, activities, and participants. I also collected artifacts (e.g., class agendas and student presentation handouts) as they arouse in situ.

Gold (1958, cited in Merriam, 1998) described the relationship between observer and observed with a continuum of four researcher stances based on the interplay of the participant role and the observer role. These four researcher stances include complete participant (or insider), participant as observer (or active membership role), observer as participant (or passive membership role), and complete observer (or outsider). When conducting observations, I took the stance of “observer as participant.” While I served as a teaching assistant in this class, I assumed passive participation in in-class activities. In other words, participation in the class activities was secondary to my goal of observing the class. Taking the passive or “peripheral membership role” in Adler and Adler’s (1994) term allowed me to “observe and interact closely enough with members to establish an insider’s identity without participating in those activities constituting the core of group membership” (Adler & Adler, 1994, p.380). It also provided me access to a wide range of information and gained a holistic view of what was happening in the class.

**Document Collection**

Merriam (1998) defined the term document in a broad sense to refer to “a wide range of written, visual, and physical material relevant to the study at hand” (p.112). In this classroom-based research, student (written) work generated for meeting the course requirements served as one source of documentary materials. The collected student work contained video analyses and portfolios. I collected the students’ write-ups of their
reflection on the collaborative service-learning projects in which they were to review the lesson plans, evaluate their peers’ teaching, recognize peer teachers’ strengths, and critically identify areas for teaching improvement. As a final project of the course, the students compiled portfolios of their self-directed service-learning projects to document, in a systematic fashion, how they planned and carried out their service-learning outside the classroom.

Another source of documentary materials collected in the present study was course evaluation. The course evaluations included a mid-term evaluation carried out by the course instructor and an end-of-term evaluation designed by school administrators. Both the course evaluations were anonymous. The mid-term evaluation consisted of 6 open-ended questions, designed to provide the course instructor with the information to adjust her instructional procedures, strategies, and implementation, if necessary. The mid-term course evaluation questions included: (1) What have we learned from this class? (2) How have we changed as a teacher/person? (3) In what ways has this class worked for you? (4) What do you think about the implementation of WebCT in this course? (5) How could this class have been made better? (6) Do you have any other comments about this course? The end-of-term course evaluation followed a standardized format. It consisted of 36 multiple choices questions and a separate blank sheet of paper for the students to comment openly on the course.

**Online Data Collection**

Textual data generated through Internet or Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is a relative new way of data collection in the electronic age (Mann &
Stewart, 2002, my book). As Merriam (1998) pointed out, online data collection to some extent “offers an electronic extension of familiar research techniques, widening the scope of data available to the researcher” (p.128). Interviews, observations, and document collection have been the three basic and traditional ways to collect data in qualitative research, in which the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection (Patton, 1990). By contrast, in collecting data from the Internet, the researcher is no longer the primary instrument for data collection. Rather, the actual process of how the data is generated is mediated by a range of software to locate and process information (Merriam, 1998). It is this feature that characterizes online data collection as a new technique as compared to the three traditional ways of data collection methods.

WebCT was used as a supplement to the course, therefore, the data generated through or preserved in the WebCT course site also served as one of my data collection methods for the present study. The online data collected involved WebCT generated statistics and computer-mediated communication. The infrastructure of WebCT allowed me to monitor and track how the students were progressing throughout the course. More specifically, it provided statistical information as to how many times the students visited the homepage or content pages, how many postings were read or composed by the individual student, and when they accessed or visited the WebCT course site. The computer-mediated communication in WebCT referred specifically to the students’ discussion postings and their email communication with the instructor and TA. Although synchronous (real-time) chat was made available for the students in the WebCT course site, it was never used by the class members, and asynchronous communication (i.e., discussion postings and emails) remained as the primary mode of interaction in this class. In gathering the textual interaction
preserved in the WebCT course site, I first retrieved the data and then converted it into RTF files (one of the most common text formats) using Microsoft Word for later analysis.

**Data Analysis**

The process of data analysis was recursive and it started as early as the raw data was collected. In general, my analytic procedure and the presentation of my research can be summarized based on a continuum of abstraction with description of data at one end and interpretation of data at the other. The appendix illustrates the five major phases: (2) identifying open codes, (2) developing coding categories, (3) generating themes pertaining to my research questions, (4) interpreting research findings based on the theoretical framework, and (5) drawing implications from the research findings. Throughout the data analysis process, I used a word processing program, Microsoft Word, to facilitate coding on the computer and the organization of my collected data.

In terms of the relations between data collection and data analysis methods, the data gathered or generated through the classroom observation, document collection, and online data collection methods were analyzed using the constant comparative method or discourse analysis method as outlined in Table 5.

**Table 5: Data Collection and Data Analysis Methods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Collection Methods</th>
<th>Types of Data Collected</th>
<th>Data Analysis Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Observation</td>
<td>field notes from 10 observations</td>
<td>Constant Comparative Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Collection</td>
<td>83 on-site photographs</td>
<td>Constant Comparative Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 student video analysis papers</td>
<td>Constant Comparative Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 student service-learning portfolios</td>
<td>Constant Comparative Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 course evaluations (i.e., 1 mid-term evaluation and</td>
<td>Constant Comparative Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 end-of-term evaluation results)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Data Collection</td>
<td>696 WebCT discussion postings</td>
<td>Discourse Analysis Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 types of WebCT generated statistics (i.e., collective and</td>
<td>Constant Comparative Method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>individual student tracking records)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The constant comparative method (cf. Glaser & Strauss, 1967) is often associated with the grounded theory with an intention to theorize about a phenomenon as a result of research. In the present study, however, there was no intention to develop a theory but build on the merits of the constant comparative method to increase representativeness of my data interpretation that can be possibly applied across context. As the multiple data collection methods yielded multiple types of data for the present study, the constant comparative method for data analysis allowed me to document major themes that emerged across the interrelated data. With the assumption that language reflects thinking, conceptual analysis enabled by the constant comparative method allowed me to understand the participants’ points of view through close examination of how they used language to represent their thoughts. For this reason, the constant comparative method was appropriate for examining my first research question “How does participation in service-learning impact academic learning from the participants’ points of view?”

My analytic process of constant comparative method involved five steps. First, I reviewed the raw data back and forth to get familiar with them. Second, while the student generated documents, including video analyses, portfolios, and course evaluation results, served as the primary source for the conceptual analysis to understand my first research question, I extracted phrases and named events pertaining to my research focus from them to assign open codes. Third, I then searched through these open codes for regularities and significance to develop a broader level of conceptual categories through my interpretive lens as a researcher. I found three predominant categories that reflected commonalities among the participants’ perspectives and shared evident relationship to my research focus. These
coding categories included teacher beliefs (B-category), teacher knowledge (K-category), and evaluation (E-category). The open codes developed in the earlier analytic process were then clustered into these coding categories. Fourth, while not all open codes pertained to the research focus, I refined the coding system to better reflect aspects of my research focus. Last, I compared and contrasted units of information to determine and generate the themes embedded in the conceptual categories. Stabilized themes were then concluded as findings pertaining to my first research question regarding the impact of service-learning on student academic learning and development.

Table 6: Refined Coding System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Category: Teacher Beliefs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Belief about teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open codes: teaching principles, teacher role, effective teaching practice, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Belief about learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open codes: effective learning environment, learning styles, learning motivation, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Belief about professionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open codes: career goal, support for professional development, rewarding aspect of ESL teaching, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Category: Teacher Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Content knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open codes: first and second language acquisition, TESOL methodology, connection to textbook, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pedagogical knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open codes: lesson planning, teaching strategies, classroom management, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Category: Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Evaluation of personal teaching and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open codes: things learned, things need to be learned, things went well, things didn’t went well, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evaluation of peers’ teaching and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open codes: strengths, weaknesses, best practice, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evaluation of the service-learning curricular innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open codes: collaborative service-learning project, self-directed service-learning project, implementation of WebCT, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown above, Table 6 indicates a refined coding system with selected examples of open codes. This coding system allowed me to analyze the content of the participants’ reflective practice involved in their service-learning projects. Findings that derived from the conceptual analysis of the participants’ reflective practice are presented in Chapter Four.

**Discourse Analysis Method**

Discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary analytic method for studying “language-in-use,” namely text and talk in social interaction. This research is about understanding learning in and through communities of practice; therefore, a close examination of the participants’ social interaction constituted through discourse is imperative. Discourse analysis is developed based on the premise that language use does not merely reflect human thought but is constitutive of and shapes human thinking. It has been applied to a variety of fields, such as social psychology, sociolinguistics, communication, and cultural studies. Researchers across disciplines have developed diverse approaches to discourse analysis to suit their particular theoretical and analytical interests. Given that the present study adopted the situative perspective on learning as theoretical lens, Ochs’ (1996) approach to discourse analysis with its central focus on a situational framework provided a methodological toolkit through which to analyze and interpret the data collected in the virtual community, WebCT. Through the linguistic lens of discourse analysis, I examined the participants’ social interaction online to approach my second research question “How does participation in WebCT impact the participants’ professional identity development integral to their ongoing professional development?”
The significance of discourse analysis was that it allowed me to investigate the interplay among language, learning, and identity. Given that the purpose of the present study was to understand the prospective teachers’ process of learning to teach, I focused on analyzing their meaning construction of teacher identity in and through language use. My analytic process of discourse analysis involved three basic steps. First, I retrieved the textual communication from WebCT and reviewed it by topical coherence with special attention to temporal sequence relations. Second, I sorted through the data to identify episodes pertaining to my research focus, i.e., the interplay among language, learning and teacher identity. Last, I applied Ochs’ (1996) situational framework to interpret the identified episodes in response to my second research question. The situational framework contains sociocultural dimensions of space, time, epistemic stance, affective stance, social act, social activity, and social identity. My interpretations and inferences drawn from the identified episodes are presented in Chapter Five. Ochs’ (1996) situational framework and the analytical process of applying this framework to consider the discursive data retrieved from WebCT will also be further discussed in Chapter Five.

**Trustworthiness of the Study**

All research (quantitative, qualitative, or a combination of both) is committed to yield trustworthy understanding of the human world. The underlying assumption of qualitative research is that “reality is holistic, multidimensional, and every-changing; it is not a single, fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed, and measured as in quantitative research (Merriam, 1998, p.202). Trustworthiness, in qualitative research, is therefore defined as the extent to which research findings capture and represent
perspectives of the social world. Patton (2002) pointed out, “Validity in quantitative research depends on careful instrument construction to ensure that the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. … In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the instrument” (p.14). While in qualitative research the researcher is the primary instrument for eliciting meaning to understand the phenomenon of interest, it follows that the trustworthiness of qualitative inquiry hinges on how the researcher employs strategies to ensure the rigor of the study.

In conducting the present study, I adopted strategies of triangulation and member checks to enhance the trustworthiness of my research. I triangulated multiple means of sampling, including intensity sampling, stratified sampling, and maximum variation sampling to select information-rich cases for the present study. I also triangulated multiple data collection methods, including classroom observation, document collection, and online data collection, to crosscheck the consistency of information generated by different data sources. The triangulation of data analysis methods, including constant comparative method and discourse analysis method, yielded a holistic understanding and deeper insights into the phenomenon being studied. In addition to the triangulation of sampling, data collection, and data analysis methods, the participants were given an opportunity to verify my interpretations of the data. Upon completion of my initial data analysis, I contacted each participant by phone or by email to invite them to participate in the member check process. Only half of them (5 out of 10) expressed an interest to participate in member checks of the present study. I then provided them the raw data along with my interpretations for their review. This activity was done either by email or in person depending on geographical convenience. Results of the member checks confirmed my initial data analysis and
interpretations, so I proceeded to conclude my research findings. The strategy of member checks is recommended as a means for improving trustworthiness in qualitative case studies (Merriam, 1998).

Qualitative researchers are less concerned about how findings of one study can be generalized across context but more interested in understanding specific cases within a particular context. Patton (2002) emphasized appreciation of qualitative inquiry with its natural limit to generalizability and how it contributes to knowledge production. As he put it, “The vicarious experience that comes from reading a rich case account can contribute to the social construction of knowledge that, in a cumulative sense, builds general, if not necessarily generalizable, knowledge” (p.583). In conducting the present study, I have attempted to provide a rich description of my research design to enhance the extent to which my findings can possibly be replicated and applied to other situations. With the rigorous methods and strategies employed in the present study, I hope my research findings yield quality information and contribute to its overall credibility.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I delineated my research methodology, in which I included why and how I conducted this qualitative case study to understand in what ways the observed curricular innovation impacted the prospective second language teachers’ academic learning and professional identity development. The significance of the curricular innovation outlined in this chapter lies in its implementations of service-learning and WebCT to educate the prospective second language teachers into reflective practitioners.

In selecting my participants, I adopted three sampling strategies, including intensity sampling (i.e., master’s students in TESOL), stratified sampling (i.e., NS or NNS), and
maximum variation sampling (i.e., ethnicity, gender, and age) to ensure that I identified information-rich cases that manifested the purpose of my study. Data collections methods of the present study involved classroom observation, document collection, and online data collection, which collectively yielded 12 field notes, 38 on-site photographs, 10 student video analysis papers, 10 student service-learning portfolios, 2 course evaluation results, 696 WebCT discussion postings, and 2 types of WebCT generated student tracking records. The collected data were analyzed by the constant comparative and discourse analysis methods. I adopted the constant comparative method for conceptual analysis to approach my first research question, “How does participation in service-learning impact academic learning from the participants’ points of view?” The analytical focus of this conceptual analysis was on language as a symbolic content system. It allowed me to document major themes that emerged across the interrelated data. In addition, I employed the discourse analysis method with emphasis on language as praxis to examine my second research question “How does participation in WebCT impact the participants’ professional identity development integral to their ongoing professional development?” The use of discourse analysis method allowed me to understand the interplay among language, learning, and identity, which is deemed constitutive of the process of becoming a member of community of practice from the situative perspective.

In concluding the presentation of my research methodology, I described the triangulation and member checks strategies that I used to ensure the rigor of my research methods. Research findings in response to my first and second research questions will be presented in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, respectively.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS FROM CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of data analysis derived from the constant comparative method. I begin with the research findings in response to my first research question, “How does participation in service-learning impact academic learning from the participants’ points of view?” Following a presentation of major themes that emerged across the collected data, I interpret these findings from the situative perspective to understand how the prospective second language teachers make sense of their lived experience of service-learning.

Service-Learning Participation and Academic Development

The term reflection as it is implemented in the present study embraces a variety of reflective practices or tasks, including video analysis, portfolios, course evaluations, and discussion postings in WebCT. These reflective practices provide a window for me to understand what the service-learning experience means to the participants. They also provide a means for me to assess the value of the service-learning experience for the participants and the effect of the service-learning implementation based on the course objectives.

My analytical focus on the content of reflection is derived from an assumption that reflection, like other forms of language practice, allows the participants to present and represent their knowledge and beliefs (although, as will be illustrated later, reflection does not merely “mirror” thoughts). Carter (1996) called for a need to develop forms of
representation that capture the essence of what teachers know in order to better understand teachers’ process of learning to teach. Along the same line, I draw on the representative function of language use (in this case, the content of reflection) in analyzing data pertaining to my research question about how service-learning impacts academic development from the participants’ points of view.

In conducting conceptual analysis of the participants’ reflective accounts, I applied the coding system as described in Chapter Three (see Table 6) to derive major themes pertaining to my research focus. The minimum unit for coding the content of reflection varied from one sentence to several paragraphs, depending on the extent to which the participants’ writing conveyed meaningful and/or topical information. For the most part, the units of information coded in the conceptual analysis resided at the paragraph level. In many instances, a unit of information was assigned multiple codes in the open coding phase. For example, the following unit of information (a single paragraph extracted from one participant’s video analysis) was assigned three different codes: adjustment of teaching practice, use of first language, and peer support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example of unit of information</th>
<th>Open codes assigned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Amy varied this lesson a bit by allowing the three students to read from the vocabulary sheet instead of her reading to them like she did in the previous lessons. Again, Amy had to explain the difference between a money order and a personal check. Towards the end of the lesson it became apparent that one of the students still did not understand what exactly a money order was. Linlin then said the word “money order” in Chinese and immediately the students understand. This again showed that peer support can be valuable. | • Adjustment of teaching practice  
• Use of first language  
• Peer support |
Although multiple codes may be assigned to a single unit of information (as shown by the instance above), only the codes evident across all the participants’ reflective accounts were further developed into certain themes of the phenomenon under study and concluded as the results of the conceptual analysis. To this end, I searched through all units of information for regularities across the participants’ reflection in the recursive process of the conceptual analysis. For the analytical purpose of examining the impact of service-learning on student academic development, I focused on the participants’ reflective accounts of their learning which related to the course objectives and global understanding of second language teaching. Findings of the study revealed positive influences of the service-learning engagement on student academic learning and a commonality of what the service-learning experience meant to the participants. These findings are presented and discussed in detail in the following sections.

**Major Themes from the Participants’ Reflection on Service-Learning**

This section presents the three major themes that were identified in the participants’ reflective accounts. These themes include:

1. In the service-learning participation, peer support and opportunities to learn from peers facilitated the participants' process of learning to teach.
2. In the service-learning participation, technology served as a mediational tool that was facilitative of the participants’ process of learning to teach.
3. In the service-learning participation, the participants were immersed in a culturally diverse learning environment that opened up opportunities for enhancing their sense of multicultural awareness.
The below table summarizes information on major themes that were identified across the participants and the collected data. These themes are elaborated in the discussions to follow.

Table 7: Major Themes across the Participants’ Reflective Accounts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Themes</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Number of Units of Information</th>
<th>Number of Units of Information by Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer support and learning from peers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology mediation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural awareness</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (teaching confidence, frustration, use of first language, etc.)</td>
<td>vary</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Theme 1: Peer Support and Learning from Peers

The service-learning implementation in this course takes two forms: one is collaborative teaching in class with a follow-up written project and the other is student self-designed service-learning out of class with a portfolio as a final project of the course. In terms of the collaborative teaching practice, learning from peers was most frequently noted in the participants’ reflection on their peers’ teaching. For those who conducted out-of-class service-learning with a co-teacher, the opportunity of being able to learn from peers was also frequently mentioned in their reflection.

The participants reported that they learned from their peers, mostly referring to pedagogical knowledge. Diane, in the analysis of her peer teacher’s teaching, first detailed the procedure of the instructional activity and teaching strategies employed by her peer teacher and then commented that:
This was an exceptionally helpful exercise. I was so impressed with this method, that I have every intention of using it myself in my future teaching career.

Source: Diane, video analysis

Several participants, especially NNS participants, reported learning subject matter knowledge (i.e., English) from their native-speaking peers. For instance, Jungsoon enjoyed the collaborative teaching practice in class and chose to conduct her out-of-class service-learning with a peer teacher, Jessica (who was not enrolled in this course). As she noted:

Jessica led today’s lesson. It was the first time that she gave the students a lesson. I had sent her my lesson plan last Saturday. She modified the lesson plan as she wanted. She took out sportswear, loungewear, men’s underwear, lingerie or women’s underwear, and footwear out of the vocabulary that she taught the students. When I asked her why she took the vocabulary out, she said that because there was a lot of vocabulary that she herself did not use very often. This made me think that it is very helpful for me, an international student, to co-teach with native speakers.

Source: Jungsoon, service-learning portfolio

Peers became a valuable resource for prospective teachers when expert input or resource was not available. In the present study, the prospective teachers learned to build upon each other’s strengths in their teaching practices where expert input is lacking. A
Korean participant, Jungsoon, who taught English to a group of Spanish-speaking adult learners with an English-Spanish bilingual co-teacher relied on her peer’s cultural and linguistic expertise of Spanish to facilitate teaching. Reciprocally, Jungsoon (with her former teaching experience in Korea) took the role of experienced peer in designing lesson plans for the ESL classes. For Jungsoon, the co-teaching practice was a peer-supported and collaborative learning experience.

I had a co-teacher in the Basic II class. Each of us led the lessons every other week. We worked together in cooperative way. When I led the lessons, she observed my teaching and helped me. Also, when she led the lessons, I observed her teaching and helped her. Because she had knowledge of Spanish language, she makes up for my lack of the knowledge of Spanish language and culture. Also, because she did not have a lot of experience of teaching and developing lesson plans, I made all the lesson plans and shared them with her. She modified the lesson plans which I made when she led the lessons. We communicate with each other freely and tried to support each other.

Source: Jungsoon, service-learning portfolio

In ESL teaching, the native speakers are clearly natural resources of the subject matter. A NNS participant felt as if her speech was not at the same level as a native English speaker. She strategically used the native speakers in her group as resources when necessary. As she pointed out that:
I am not a teacher but a learner to learn English with those students. I design activities to learn language with students and those American classmates are my important resources that I can ask questions while we (students and I) are not sure of something.”

Source: Yolin, service-learning portfolio

In addition, non-native speakers’ shared cultural and linguistic background with ESL learners are facilitative of teaching and learning. As evident in a participant’s reflection on a teaching class, a peer, Linlin, who shared the same cultural background with the ESL learners, provided L1 input when one ESL learner was struggling to understand the explanations of the native-speaking lead teacher, Amy.

Amy had to explain the difference between a money order and a personal check. Towards the end of the lesson it became apparent that one of the students still did not understand what exactly a money order was. Linlin then said the word “money order” in Chinese and immediately the students understand.

Source: Freya, video analysis

Based on the excerpts above, it is clear that both native-speaking and non-native speaking participants serve as potential resources for peer support in their process of learning to teach. In collaboration of their service-learning projects, the participants benefited from the opportunities of observing and learning from more experienced peers about content knowledge and/or pedagogical knowledge of TESOL.
Theme 2: Technology Mediation

Technology mediation involved in this course refers specifically to the video recordings in the collaborative ESL teaching project, the implementation of WebCT, and generic Internet resources.

Many participants commented on how video recordings positively mediated their teaching and learning experience. First, the video recordings provided them an opportunity to review what had happened in the classes for ESL services. While the students were divided into 5 teaching teams and were assigned different roles in each Teaching Class, they focused on their team performance with little attention to what had happened in other teaching teams. The oral presentations of video analysis in the Reflection Classes which required the students to demonstrate significant video clips with critical reflections to the whole class served the students well by providing them a second chance to fill in what was missed in the Teaching Classes when everybody was busy. In other words, the video recordings provided a means to capture the essence of what had happened in the classroom for the participants’ review. In the anonymous course evaluations, the participants described that the video recordings were “engaging and informative materials” that were actually “fun to watch.” Generally, the participants were in agreement that participating in the video analysis provided an enjoyable and facilitative learning experience.

Secondly and more importantly, the participants’ development of teaching competence was enhanced by the mediation of video recordings. Unlike written field notes, video recordings are relatively more neutral mediation for self-observation as they allow teachers to see and hear themselves as their student see and hear them (Day, 1990). In this study, the participants were required to review their video recordings in pairs, i.e., the lead
teacher and the peer observer. Watching video recordings of their own teaching allowed them to be more aware of their teaching styles, strengths, and weaknesses. As demonstrated in the previous theme about learning from peers, many participants commented in their video analysis papers that they learned about what works and what doesn’t generally work from reviewing their own and their peers’ video recordings of teaching. For example, one participant commented in the course evaluation as follows:

| Video analysis was something new to me and it was good to have someone that has to criticize my teaching and what I did while I was teaching. That vividly depicts my weaknesses and strengths. |
| Source: Anonymous course evaluation |

Likewise, Yolin noted in her reflection that watching video recordings of teaching practice raised a sense of awareness and attention to her teaching.

| This observation gave me much thought to the viewpoints of my teaching. I am more aware of my teaching style now. I will be much more careful on each teaching step when I teach. |
| Source: Yolin, video analysis |

Overall, the participants’ practical teaching experience involved in the collaborative service-learning project was greatly enhanced by the mediation of video recordings which provided them a chance to review how they taught and raised their attention about working on how their teaching could possibly be improved.
In addition to video recording as a means of technology mediation, the use of WebCT as a supplement to this course also had a positive impact on student learning. It not only facilitated the participants’ course performance but also mediated their service-learning experience. In the course evaluation, many of the participants commented on the asynchronous nature of the communication mode enabled by WebCT in positive terms.

“I enjoyed the fact that we were able to formulate our answers mentally before spewing them out. It also gave us the opportunity to respond to others, as well as post lessons, ask questions, and interact outside of the classroom.”

“I liked to see what other people thought and it fun to be able to put in my opinions, too. I know that I am not very good at articulating what I’d like to say. WebCT was really helpful because I could think about what I wanted to say and post whenever I wanted to.”

“We can have more time to talk about and think about issues that we are concerned.”

Source: anonymous course evaluation

As indicated above, WebCT was facilitative to the participants in that it allowed for rephrasing before expressing thoughts. WebCT also contributed to equity of participation. As some participants pointed out in the course evaluation, WebCT presented a less stressful learning environment than in face-to-face interaction for typically reticent students, such as shy or international students.
“I like that it gives the opportunity for further discussion especially to some students who may not speak up so much in class.”

“Some people articulate themselves better in writing and are less inhibited to express themselves via computer.”

“WebCT always allows shy students who are unwilling to raise their hands to say something.”

Source: anonymous course evaluation

In line with the above claims, one NNS participant compared his or her personal experiences of oral discussion in class and asynchronous written discussion in WebCT as follows:

As an international student, participating discussion in class is not easy because I don't have time to organize my thought in English. However, I have plenty of time to think about some issues, and I can express my opinion more effectively in WebCT.

Source: anonymous course evaluation

In addition to its potential for improving class interaction, WebCT also served as a resource site. For example, one participant wrote in the course evaluation that “I love the list of resources and the adult lesson plans we were given.” While the information in WebCT, such as useful links to websites related to ESL teaching and learning, was presented as non-required course content, many of the participants reported that they relied on that information for carrying out their service-learning projects. One participant
mentioned that WebCT provided the primary resources for her service-learning project. As she noted,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: Shirley, service-learning portfolio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I got my lessons for this project [service-learning project] from the lesson plans in our class’s WebCT resources. I made lots of flash cards, charts, and handouts, adding my own ideas to the lessons.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The so-called resources in WebCT were actually synthesized information that served as quick references to the generic information and resources on the Internet. According to the course instructor, the purpose of compiling the resources in WebCT, such as websites that provide lesson plan ideas and teaching strategies, was to introduce and prompt the prospective teachers to make use of resources on the Internet. The intention was proven to have an impact on the participants’ teaching practices. For instance, Shirley commented on the resources on WebCT and the Internet as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: Shirley, service-learning portfolio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almost unlimited resources on WebCT and the Internet have both challenged and informed me about many ways to teach English effectively.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diane reported to rely on resources on the Internet in carrying out the service-learning projects in which no specific curriculum or instruction in teaching was given. As she pointed out in her service-learning portfolio, “We ended up researching most of our ideas off of the Internet.” Another participant, Yolin, provided a one-page long list of websites in her
portfolio from which she derived her lesson plan ideas and teaching strategies. Similarly, Freya relied on certain websites to guide her lesson planning. As she reported in her portfolio, “I used Dave’s ESL Café and Enchanted Learning as prompts. I also consulted Teachers Net for ideas.”

In short, the participants have come to a realization of how technology can be facilitative of teaching and learning through their direct experiences of videotaping and the use of WebCT and Internet. Like many others, Sunme recognized the potential of technology (broadly defined) in teaching and developed a personal teaching principle as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It is important to keep up with the latest technology and also keep the best of traditional ideas in teaching.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source: Sunme, service-learning portfolio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Theme 3: Enhanced Multicultural Awareness**

The service-learning applications in this course were to provide ESL services to adult speakers of other languages, which in itself required intercultural interaction. The participants in the present study and the ESL learners who received the English services consisted of people from diverse cultural backgrounds, such as American, Korean, Chinese, Mexican, Japanese, Taiwanese, Thai, etc. The heterogeneity of the members’ cultural backgrounds contributed to a diverse group dynamic that opened up opportunities for cultivating cultural understanding and appreciation and enhancing cultural awareness.

In the participants’ reflection on their service-learning experiences, they often mentioned cultural points learned from their intercultural interlocutors and reported enjoying
the experiences of cultural exchanges. An attention to cultural difference was clearly
evident in the participants’ reflection, although most of the reflective accounts regarding
cultural exchanges were mentioned in passing at a rather superficial level, such as, “This
particular group contributed lots of cultural differences, and we learned interesting cultural
points from our students”, “We talked about cultural experiences when we had Korean and
Chinese food together”, “We exchanged each other’s thoughts and information about
cultural experiences.” A Korean participant, Sunme, provided beginning level ESL home-
tutoring services to two Chinese housewives as her out-of-class service-learning project.
She expressed in her reflection that she gained new cultural understanding toward her ESL
students and enjoyed their cultural discussion.

The interesting thing I found was that Chinese women abstain
voluntarily from spicy food during their pregnancy. We also talked
about some different taboos both in Korean and in China. This topic
is really fun to all of us.

Source: Sunme, service-learning portfolio

In addition to an attention to cultural difference and enhanced cultural understanding
resulting from direct involvement in intercultural interactions, the participants were found to
make special efforts to build on cultural differences in their teaching practices. Diane, an
American participant, developed a lesson plan to introduce a recent phenomenon of
American popular culture to her ESL students with an intention to enrich her language
lesson with a flavor of cultural education.
Our final activity, and our final television show we would be doing for this class, was to venture into reality TV. This has been such a growing phenomenon in America that it only seems appropriate to introduce them to it. Since my co-teacher is a huge Apprentice fan, we chose to show that. We only had around 15 minutes, so we showed a few segments, asked them to predict which team did the better job, and watched the famous “You’re Fired” scene. To my surprise, most had never heard of Donald Trump, so we explained him and the impact that Reality TV has had on our country. I am not sure if this is actually beneficial to them at all, but if anything, it is listening comprehension and cultural education on the strange ways of our country.

Source: Diane, service-learning portfolio

The participants were convinced with their positive experience of cultural exchanges and culturally enriched lesson plans that creating learning environments with cultural relevance will enhance student engagement and therefore leads to effective teaching. One participant expressed this belief in her reflection as follows:

We have to know more about students’ cultural and social backgrounds. I found that whenever I relate certain student’s background to our lesson, the student would pay more attention to the whole class which makes them feel they are being valued.

Source: Wantin, service-learning portfolio
Another participant considered multicultural awareness as an essential attribute of ESL teachers and emphasized the need to enhance multicultural understanding in ESL teaching.

The teacher should previously think about the differences between American culture and students’ own countries. It is necessary for teachers to be definitely aware of the differences between two cultures and to explain these differences to students to give them a better understanding in class. The teachers should always keep the culture differences in mind for making a successful teaching.

Source: Sunme, service-learning portfolio

Likewise, another participant acknowledged the importance of multicultural understanding and included this belief in her ESL teaching principles. As she stated,

Recognize and respect that all students’ culture is valuable background knowledge. Everyone brings something to the table.

Source: Freya, service-learning portfolio

All in all, the participants demonstrated a sense of multicultural awareness and recognized the importance of integrating culture in ESL teaching. A teacher’s sense of multicultural awareness is one of the many important issues in second language teacher preparation since it contributes to an empowerment of ESL learners, especially those from minority cultures (Rachel, 1998). A renowned multicultural theorist James Banks advanced 4 hierarchical levels of multicultural awareness, from simple to complex, including the
Contributions Level, the Ethnic Additive Level, the Transformational Level, and the Social Action Level (Banks, 1988, 2000). Although the present research findings show some promising evidence, the level of multicultural awareness demonstrated in the prospective second language teachers’ reflective practice appeared rather superficial, that is, at the Contributions Level in Banks’ typology. Clearly, the service-learning experience that directly involved the participants in culturally diverse social engagements contributed to their sense of multicultural awareness and an understanding of how language and culture are and should be closely bound. However, to advance a teacher’s level of multicultural awareness to the highest, Social Action Level, prospective teachers need to be immersed in learning environments that encourage them to challenge culturally-biased assumptions, assume and appreciate the perspectives of diverse cultural groups, examine social issues, and take necessary social actions to improve injustice.

**What Service-Learning Meant to the Participants**

In the previous section, I presented research findings that the participants learned the importance of and benefited from peer support, technology mediation, and multicultural awareness in ESL teaching through the direct involvement in service-learning engagement. Overall, the participants considered the implementation of service-learning facilitative of their process of learning to teach. More specifically, what the service-learning engagement meant the participants was a positive learning experience that allowed for theory into practice and provided insight into teaching profession.
Comparing to other graduate level courses that are typically theory-based and relatively abstract, this methods course with a service-learning implementation stood out for the prospective second language teachers. The practical component of the course brought forth by the service-learning implementation allowed the students to put theory into practice. The “theory” here refers to: (1) any theories that they learn from textbooks or in the classroom and (2) personal theories, principles, and beliefs that they developed out of their past teaching and learning experiences.

In the anonymous course evaluation, the participants commented on the value of teaching practice that allowed them to put what they learned in the classroom into practice.

“It was finally nice to have a practical class in the midst of the theoretical courses.”

“I have enjoyed the balance of theory and practice in this class. We have actually been able to use what we are learning.”

“We strike balance between theoretical aspect and practical aspect.”

“It has given me first hand experience in the teaching world. If all of these theories and ideas had simply been lectured they never would have impacted me as much. I was able to learn something, then immediately go out and teach it.”

“I thoroughly enjoyed this course. When I applied to this program, this is the type of course I was looking forward to taking. My only other comment would be that it's too bad we don't have more courses like this-- more practical, hands-on information.”
Even someone who was not drawn to the teaching activities for some reason (which I was not able to probe given the nature of anonymous evaluation) still recognized the importance and value of teaching practice in educating prospective teachers. As one participant noted anonymously, “I wasn't so interested in the teachings at family housing, but I realize that that was very important to many of the students who want the opportunity to see their theories in action.”

Although the participants were free to design their own lesson plans, they spontaneously used the opportunity to try out the content and pedagogical knowledge learned in the classroom or from textbooks. One participant wrote in the course evaluation that “I learned a lot when designing my own lesson plan associated with the theories in books.” Another participant portrayed her teaching practice as an experiment in which she benefited from applying teaching techniques.

The different methods I tried each class period proved to be an invaluable experiment. I plan on teaching adults abroad, and this has given me a valuable beginning to just that.

Prospective teachers, like other adult learners, hold developing belief systems or personal theories throughout the course of their lives. These belief systems are derived from a variety of sources and built up gradually over time, subjectively and objectively. Likewise, the participants in the present study generally relied on their past teaching and learning
experiences as a common sense approach to guide their ESL teaching practices in service-learning.

For the participants, past experience is the primary source of their beliefs about teaching. For example, Diane reflected on one of her teaching practices and revealed an uncertainty about whether to provide her ESL students a class agenda (i.e., writing the objectives on the chalkboard). She then decided to let her past learning experience be the guide and did what worked for her as a learner. As she reported,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I wrote the objectives on the chalkboard to let them know what we would be covering. I am not sure if that is necessary, but I found that in my classes I appreciate knowing in advance what is in store for us.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source: Diane, service-learning portfolio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personal beliefs about ESL teaching may not always be the best guide. Fortunately, participation in service-learning provided the participants an opportunity to test out their personal beliefs, which allowed for change and even transformation of the prospective teachers into more theoretically and pedagogically informed second language teachers. For instance, a Korean participant who had learned English as a foreign language in the skill-based model (in which the four language skills were taught separately in different lessons, such as reading class and conversation class) was not convinced of the need to teach English in an integrated fashion or through a whole language approach. She adjusted this teaching belief and reported a change before and after the service-learning experience.
Before this service-learning: I did not think that integrating four language skills was important when I developed lessons plans. After this service-learning: Integrating four language skills was what my students wanted me to do. I realized that although integrating four language skills might be difficult for teachers to carry out, it was worthwhile to do. Therefore, teachers need to incorporate four language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – into one lesson.

Source: Jungsoun, service-learning portfolio

Along the same line, a Taiwanese participant who shared similar English learning experience in EFL settings with the other NNS participants expressed a realization of the importance of teaching English in an integrated way. As she reported that one of the teaching principles she developed from the service-learning experience was to “bring these four skills into a lesson as possible.”

Some participants reported generic change and transformation resulting from the service-learning experience, such as “I have changed during the course of this class as both a teacher and a person” and “I have matured as a teacher and as a student.” One participant reported in the course evaluation that he or she has come to a realization that teaching the way one was taught is not a thoughtful attitude and has become more open to understanding what it means and what it takes to be a successful ESL teacher.

Before I started teaching adult ESL learners, I made a conjecture about what adult ESL learners need to know and learn through my
own experience, but I realized this was not a thoughtful attitude for a novice teacher starting teaching. Through my teaching experiences, I have learned what I have to know about students and what students really want to know and what a teacher should do to be a successful teacher.

Source: anonymous course evaluation

In short, the practical component of service-learning translates into a valuable opportunity for the prospective second language teachers to reflect on, refine on, and test out what they hold true based on their past experience or “book knowledge.”

Insight into Teaching Profession

Traditional teacher preparation models operate in a linear fashion in that prospective teachers are required to complete coursework before they are given practical opportunities, such as internship and practicum, to put what they learn in the classroom into practice. As opposed to the linear model of teacher preparation, the implementation of service-learning in this course offers an integrated approach that blends theory and practice. As presented in the proceeding discussion, the participants considered the practical component of this course, i.e., participation in service-learning, beneficial for their process of learning to teach. An expanded benefit of teaching practice in the service-learning implementation was that it paved the way for the prospective teachers’ professional development or, at least, provided them a glimpse into ESL teaching as a real-life profession.
There were ample accounts of gaining insight into the teaching profession emerged out of the participants’ story lines although these reflective accounts were rather generic.

The following comments were extracted from the course evaluation:

| “I learned how to look at myself and decide if teaching adults was what I want to do. I learned that you cannot plan for every circumstance when teaching adults.” |
| “We learned how to deal with complicated situations we may encounter in our professional teaching careers.” |
| “All my education classes and experiences thus far have been for elementary and middle school classroom. This class forced me out of my comfort zone and showed me a field of education about which I knew very little - adult education.” |

**Source: anonymous course evaluation**

The participants reported gaining a better understanding of what ESL teaching is like in the real world. Probably the key word here is “real” – ESL teaching as a real life profession, which echoes authentic teaching practice that the participants most valued in the service-learning experience. As one participant commented in the course evaluation that “I've learned much about the real life of becoming a teacher.” Realistically, the discovery in the process of learning to teach is not exclusively joyful. As Jessie described pertinently in her reflection,

| Beyond the expected teaching experiences, I am quickly discovering the heavy workload associated with planning and teaching. … I |
believe this teaching experience provides a “real,” beyond textbook readings, glimpse into an actual classroom setting including the rewards and frustrations.

Source: Jessie, service-learning portfolio

From the instructor’s point of view, the most comforting observation was that through the service-learning experience, the participants learned to think and act in constructive ways to prepare themselves for real life challenge in their journey of learning to teach. As captured vividly in Diane’s reflection in her service-learning portfolio, “Every bump we came across, gave me the insight to know how to get around it next time.”

Putting the Threads Together

To understand how service-learning participation shed light on the prospective second language teachers’ process of learning to teach, I analyzed the content of the participants’ reflective accounts with emphases on the coding categories of teacher knowledge, teacher beliefs, and evaluation to identify majors themes across all the participants’ reflective accounts. Findings showed promising evidence that the participants were developing into more theoretically and pedagogically informed second language teachers in their service-learning participation. More specifically, the participants learned to draw on peers as potential resources and were able to support one another in their process of learning to teach. The participants also learned the importance of using technology as a mediational means to facilitate their teaching and learning experience. Last but not least, the participants demonstrated a sense of multicultural awareness with enhanced cultural
understanding and appreciation in ESL teaching. To understand what service-learning meant to the participants, I also relied on the content analysis of the participants’ reflective accounts. Findings indicated that the participants considered the service-learning engagement a positive, practical learning experience that allowed them to put theory into practice and provided them a glimpse into ESL teaching as a real-life profession. Overall, the implementation of service-learning in the observed course had a positive impact on the students’ academic learning.

While the findings derived from the conceptual analysis of the participants’ reflective accounts showed promising evidence of the participants’ learning and development, viewing critically, the level of the participants’ reflection seemed to appear at the surface level based on Hatton and Smith’s (1995a, 1995b) hierarchy of reflection as presented in Chapter Two. Hatton and Smith (1995a, 1995b) defined descriptive reflection, dialogic reflection, and critical reflection in a hierarchy, from basic to advanced. Ideally, critical reflection is the desirable, advanced level that demonstrates high quality of reflective practice. In the present study, however, the participants’ quality of reflective practice did not reach the advanced level of critical reflection. More specifically, most of the participants’ reflective accounts found in the present study were descriptive reflection, some were dialogic reflection, and none were critical reflection based on Hatton and Smith’s (1995a, 1995b) hierarchical levels of reflection.

For the most part, the participants’ reflective accounts was characterized as descriptive reflection in which the prospective teachers provided descriptive accounts as to the procedures and instructional interactions of their teaching practices with rationale. One typical example of descriptive reflection is illustrated as follow:
The beginning level class began with a general introduction of the names of coins. So needed to make sure before she progressed further that her students had a grasp of the vocabulary she was going to be implementing. This included going over the fact that five cents equals a nickel, one cent equals a penny, etc. She then made sure that each student knew the different methods of payment in the United States. She produced visual examples of cash, debit cards, personal checks, traveler’s checks, and credit cards. This was extremely valuable because the students did not know what each was by name alone, having the realia created the connection in their mind.

Source: Diane, video analysis

There was, to a much lesser degree, evidence of dialogic reflection in the participants’ reflective accounts. Dialogic reflection was characterized as discourse that explores alternative point of views or evaluation of the past action, events, and experiences. In the following excerpt, the participant reflected on one of her ESL teaching in which her student did not complete assigned homework. She “talked” to herself to think it though what could possible be done to improve her ESL student’s learning.

I wonder what causes his laziness. Maybe it is because he is lack of interests in studying English. It seems that nothing motivated him to learn English. He probably studies English just for passing the TOEFL test. Maybe I should begin with fostering his learning
motivation. I hope his attitude toward English learning will be different once he is motivated to learn.

Source: Yolin, service-learning portfolio

What seemed to be lacking in the participants’ reflective practice was critical reflection that demonstrates an understanding of how the local action and events shape and are shaped by the broader historical and sociocultural contexts. Although a few reflective accounts demonstrated the participants’ critical thinking skills, they did not fully reflect the quality of critical reflection defined above. Here is one example:

When I created this lesson, I was skeptical about the “Grab Bag” game only because I wondered, “What does this game have to do with learning?” I wanted to make sure that each part of my lesson was meaningful and not just a time filler. I thought about it at work and concluded that it re-enforces vocabulary.

Source: Freya, video analysis

In sum, analyzing the content of the participants’ reflective practice allowed me to examine what learning occurred in service-learning and to depict what service-learning meant to the participants from their own points of view. The findings derived from the conceptual analysis indicated satisfactory learning outcomes. Therefore, the service-learning implementation in this course was proven to be an effective integration. When considering the level of the participants’ reflective practice from Hatton and Smith’s (1995a, 1995b) hierarchy of reflection, however, my preliminary analysis pointed to a need of
improvement in terms of instructional design to require the students to think and reflect more critically at the higher-order level in their reflective practice. It follows that more work in this area has to be done to examine how reflective practice in service-learning should be structured to help service-learning participating students advance the level of reflection.

Summary

This chapter has focused on presenting the content of the participants’ reflective accounts in response to the research question of how participation in service-learning impacts student academic learning. Specifically, I adopted the constant comparative method to conduct a conceptual analysis of the participants’ video analysis, portfolios, and course evaluations. In conducting the conceptual analysis, I was particularly concerned about what the service-learning experience meant to the participants from their own points of view. As shown by the findings, the participants regarded their participation in service-learning as a positive, facilitative experience from which they learned the importance of and benefited from peer support, technology mediation, and multicultural awareness in ESL teaching. Overall, the service-learning participating students reported to greatly appreciate the opportunities for putting theory into practice and gaining insights into second language teaching as a real-life profession.

The conceptual analysis of the participants’ reflection served as a means to assess the impact of the service-learning implementation on the participants’ academic learning and development. Unlike quantitative studies in which pre-tests and post-tests are normally employed to measure the developmental changes of the students in an “objective” manner, this qualitative case study favors a relatively “subjective” assessment. Based on my
constructivist philosophical belief, multiple realities are socially constructed by individuals. To put it differently, learning is all about constructing meaning – a fundamentally subjective activity. In this sense, the meaning of any lived experience is only “meaningful” if considered from the perspective of the participant who took part in the meaning construction process.

While the conceptual analysis of the participants’ reflective accounts, in the truest constructivist sense, provided me a window to understand what the service-learning experience meant to the participants, I was conscious that such self-reported data is by all means second hand or “the indirect evidence of what people know, feel, or think” (Herring, 2003, p.347). I therefore conducted the conceptual analysis with caution with triangulation strategies to enhance the credibility of my interpretations. In the following chapter, I shift my focus on to an analysis of direct evidence of what people do. By supplementing the conceptual analysis with the discourse analysis, I hope to gain a holistic understanding of what it means to participate in the observed curricular innovation, from “inside out” (i.e., inferring from what people think they know) and from “outside in” (i.e., inferring from what people do that indexes what they think).
CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS FROM DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results derived from the discourse analysis of the interactions that occurred in the WebCT environment. In this study, Ochs’ (1996) situational framework provides a methodological toolkit for analyzing and interpreting the data collected online. In what follows, I briefly introduce the situational framework, interwoven with descriptions and discussions of the identified episodes pertaining to my research question. Specifically, one section of the chapter demonstrates how language is used to index sociocultural information, and a following section shows how such use of linguistic indexing is constitutive of the (co)-construction of professional identity, in this case, second language teacher identity. Last, I conclude the chapter by considering the potential of reflection as social interaction (or praxis) for socializing prospective teachers into communities of practice that foster their professional identity development.

WebCT Participation and Professional Identity Development

In the previous chapter, I focused on analyzing the symbolic content of reflection to understand what the service-learning experience meant to the participants. The emphasis was on the symbolic content of language, i.e., the content of reflection, which contributed to the participants’ academic learning and development. However, as Ochs (1996) argued, “language socializes not only through its symbolic content but also through its use” (p.408). In this sense, it is imperative to examine the socializing power of language use or praxis and its role in the process of becoming a teacher. I therefore focus on language praxis, or more
specifically the praxis of reflection in this case, to examine my second research question: How does participation in WebCT impact the participants’ professional identity development integral to their ongoing professional development? In the present study, professional identity development refers to a prospective teacher’s construction of a second language teacher identity. This process of professional identity construction is an integral part to the more encompassing process of learning to teach and professional development. While the situative perspective that informed the present study holds that language, identity, and learning are interrelated, a close examination of the participants’ language use in their community of practice for becoming a teacher is anticipated to provide insights into their process of learning to teach and professional identity development. Therefore, I conducted a discourse analysis to explore the praxis of the prospective teachers’ reflective practice in an online community of practice, WebCT, based on Ochs’ (1996) situational framework.

The Situational Framework as an Analytical Lens

According to Ochs (1996), situation “includes socio-cultural dimensions a member activates to be part of the situation at hand such as the temporal and spatial locus of the communicative situation, the social identities of participants, the social acts and activities taking place, and participants’ affective and epistemic stance” (p.410, emphasis in original). That is, the sociocultural dimensions of a “situation” include: time, space, epistemic stance, affective stance, social act, social activity, and social identity. In formulating a theory of socialization, Ochs (1996) drew on what she called “the Indexicality Principle” and argued for its central role in language socialization. To index, as she defined, “is to point to the presence of some entity in the immediate situation-at-hand” (Ochs, 1996, p.411). For
example, a statement with a raising voice may index the affective stance of surprise in one situation or the epistemic stance of doubt in another. Ochs (1996, p.410) argued that indexicality lies at the heart of language socialization because:

Socialization is in part a process of assigning situational, i.e., indexical, meanings (e.g., temporal, spatial, social identity, social act, social activity, affective or epistemic meanings) to particular forms (e.g., interrogative forms, diminutive affixes, raised pitch and the like).

Given the central role of language indexing in socialization, I analyzed my data to understand how the praxis of reflection was used to index meanings or perform functions pertaining to the situational dimensions outlined above. In the discussion to follow, I introduce Och’s (1996) situational framework with a focus on what she defined as epistemic stance, affective stance, social act, social activity, and social identity. These definitions are followed by examples identified in the participants’ reflective postings in WebCT as a starting point to get to my primary focus on the discourse analysis of the online interactions. More specifically, my analytical focus of this discourse analysis is on the role of language praxis in constituting or constructing professional identity of teachers through an examination of language use in an online community of practice by a group of prospective second language teachers.

Epistemic Stance

Epistemic stance is defined as “knowledge or belief vis-à-vis some focus on concern, including degrees of certainty of knowledge, degrees of commitment to truth of propositions, and sources of knowledge, among other epistemic qualities (Chafe & Nichols, 1986, cited in
Last week, in ELAN 7070 (Research Methods), I was introduced to Galileo by a fast-talking professor at the Learning Center. She reminded me of my quiz-kid son. I watched the young people in my class zip though the class likes experts. My brain could not move fast enough, and I left the class feeling embarrassed and defeated. To my surprise, I got home I figured much of it out on my own with my notes. I’m not sure, yet, that I will be able to do it all right, but I can do some. For sure, I will never learn all there is to know about computers.

Source: Message No.58, posted by Shirley

Shirley, a 62-year-old lady, once posted “I was forced to learn to use the computer at the age when most people are retiring.” She had basic computer literacy, such as word processing and email. The above episode revealed Shirley’s degree of certainty about her self-conceived level of computer literacy and uncertainty about her ability to troubleshoot future computer problems on her own. Through the expression of “I’m not sure…” Shirley
conveyed an uncertainty about whether she would be able to figured out computer questions and solved her technical difficulties by herself just like the one learning experience she had with Galileo. The emphatic stress of “For sure,” “never,” and “all” also indexed her belief that no one knows everything about computers.

*Affective Stance*

Affective stance is viewed as “a mood, attitude, feeling, and disposition, as well as degrees of emotional intensity vis-à-vis some focus of concern” (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Labov, 1984; Levy, 1984, cited in Ochs, 1996, p.410). In the following episode, Jessie expressed her emotional response toward her students’ writing skills based on an informal assessment. Her self-directed service-learning project was working with three Spanish-speaking students at an alternative high school to help them pass the High School Graduation Test.

| >> After class I read the essays and I thought, “oh what a disaster!” |
| >> My students are not even close to having the skills necessary to pass the test next week. I wonder how these students made it this far; who thinks they even stand a chance at writing a 5-paragraph essay. It’s frustrating to know that these students have no one to assist them with their writing. I doubt I will be able to work miracles; however, I hope that they learn something from me thus giving them somewhat of a better chance to pass the test. |

Source: Message No.237, posted by Jessie
As shown in the episode above, Jessie verbalized a mixed feeling of surprise, discouragement, disappointment, and frustration about the situation to an extreme degree, which revealed that she had little hope in her students’ ability to pass the test. Her use of the interjection “oh”, the exclamatory phrase “what a disaster”, the emphatic stress “even”, and the two contrasting nouns “disaster” and “miracles” contributed to index the intensity of her affective stance about her mixed emotions and attitudes toward her students’ learning situation with an aggravated tone. While in general Jessie’s wordings appeared to index negative affect, the last words in this episode “I hope that they learn something from me thus giving them somewhat of a better chance to pass the test” revealed somewhat positive attitude toward the situation – in the sense that there was still “hope.”

**Social Act**

Ochs (1996) defined social act as “a socially recognized goal-directed behavior, e.g., a request, an offer, a compliment” (p.410). This type of linguistic indexing of social act is in line with the Speech Act Theory originated by Austin (1962), which holds that language can be used to perform actions, i.e., doing things with words. For example, an expression of “I’m sorry” performs the function of apologizing to the addressee that makes a repair for the offense. Likewise, the following episode provides an instance of how social acts are indexed by language use. In the posting, Freya was seeking advice on teaching strategies of how to begin and end ESL classes from her more experienced peers and instructor.

| >> | What are some ways that ya'll begin/end class? To end class I was thinking of having my students either write |
or say what they learned/what as unclear/what they want
to learn, etc. Any other suggestions on how to begin/end
class? I'm asking because I want to know what works for
real teachers and real students.

Source: Message No.197, posted by Freya

Freya used the question of “What are some ways that ya'll begin/end class?” as an opening of her utterance to convey the focal point of her interest and purpose. It indexed a social act of seeking suggestions/advice/help in this situation. She then provided her initial pedagogical ideas and restated her interest of knowing additional ways that ESL teachers can do by asking “Any other suggestions on how to begin/end class?” She then provided her rationale for seeking help to reinforce her need of advice and to signal that she was interested in “best practices” that work in authentic context (which was indexed by her use of “real teachers” and “real students”). Taken together, Freya’s utterances can be considered as a verbal performance or behavior – a linguistic indexing of social act.

Social Activity

Social activity in Ochs’ (1996) situational framework for discourse analysis refers to a sequence of social acts. The previous episode provides evidence of how words are used to perform acts. This episode, which consists of a sequence of social acts, is taken from interaction among Jessie, Mary, and Jessica. First, Jessie’s posting indexed an act of sharing personal experience. The opening sentence of “I want to share my experience at an alternative high school” makes explicit the purpose of this posting and signals the
forthcoming storytelling of her teaching experience. Jessie then continued with a description of how her two teaching classes went and how her feeling and attitude has changed since the first class meeting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I want to share my experience at an alternative high school.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;&gt; After my first meeting I felt discouraged. (...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>However, after my 2nd class I feel AWESOME! As I have developed a better rapport with my students I feel much more like I am working with highly motivated adults. I guess developing such a rapport leads to more interactive learning which seemingly reflects higher motivation. My students are starting to ask me questions and show interest in my class. I even gave my e-mail and encouraged them to write me if they want outside the classroom practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;&gt; We'll see what happens. : )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Message No.111, posted by Jessie

In response to Jessie’s posting, Mary drew on her similar experience of working with high school students to encourage Jessie’s continuing efforts to help the students out. In this sense, Mary’s posting established a common bond of shared experience and served to perform a social act of peer support.
Taking the teacher role, Jessica first expressed a compliment on Jessie’s teaching progress by saying “so glad to hear that it went better last week than it had the week before” and then offered an advice to re-direct Jessie’s goal of her service-learning project. Jessica’s use of the indirect imperative “I think the most important thing to come from it will be what you learn from this experience” indexed an advising act to instruct Jessie to focus more on her academic learning and less worry about the somewhat “unrealistic expectations” imposed by the school principle of working to assure that all the students pass the test, especially given the time limit of the service-learning project.
principal about realistic expectations for these students. I know that you will help the students improve their writing. However, I think the most important thing to come from it will be what you learn from this experience. Keep us posted as it progresses.

Source: Message No.185, posted by Jessica

Taken as a whole, this episode of interaction collectively indexed a social activity of information sharing and discussion in the sequence of Jessie’s act of sharing experience, Mary’s act of peer support, and Jessica’s act of advising. In this activity, Mary’s and Jessica’s responses to Jessie’s initial act of sharing experience functioned to sustain the conversation. More specifically, Mary wrote that “I would be very interested to read about your ongoing experience with these students” and similarly, Jessica commented that “so glad to hear that it went better last week than it had the week before” – both signaled the interest and pleasantness of reading Jessie’s narrative, in particular the emphatic stress of “very interested” and “so glad”. Furthermore, the use of emoticon “: )” in the dialogues not only indexed an affective stance but performed a function of rapport building in this interactional context. Along the same line, Jessie ended her posting with the expression “We'll see what happens”, Mary with “Keep us posted!” and Jessica with “Keep us posted as it progresses.” These consistent closings across the three postings served to reinforce the social function of sustaining conversation and maintaining solidarity of this discursive activity. In short, the linguistic indexing of social activity is a sequenced, interactionally accomplished performance.
Social Identity

For Ochs (1996), social identity encompasses all dimensions or properties of social personae, such as roles, relationships, and rank. The linguistic structure of “as a” followed by a self-perception or categorization of social structure (e.g., gender or other social groups) is commonly used to index or represent one’s social identity. For example, in a discussion of classroom management problems, one participant who was a practicing teacher in a high school commented, “As a teacher already, I find that I struggle a great deal with finding a comfortable place between being overly strict and being run over by the students.” The use of “as a teacher” explicitly indexed her self-perceived, professional identity of teacher. In most cases, however, indexing of social identity is not encoded by certain linguistic structures and requires inference to some extent. As Ochs (1996) noted, “While social identity is indexed across the world’s language communities through pronominal systems and honorific morphology among the structures, social identity does not appear to be grammaticized through a wide diversity of grammatical structures” (p.413). In part, this has to do with the complexity of social identity given that it is not prescribed but socially (co)-constructed in interaction, therefore, linguistic indexing of social identity is less grammaticized. It is important to stress that while linguistic indexing of situational dimensions (i.e., time, space, epistemic stance, affective stance, social act, social activity, and social identity) contributes to social reproduction, it does not explain the phenomenon of social change and production that is often achieved through the mediation of language. In other words, language not only indexes or points to the presence of certain entity but has the potential for transforming social order.
In introducing Och’s (1996) situational framework as an analytical lens for discourse analysis, I demonstrated the potential for social reproduction of language socialization by examining how language practices were used to index sociocultural information. In the discussion to follow, I focus on the social production dimension of language socialization to examine how language use or praxis in Ochs’ (1996) term contributes to social change.

**Constitutiveness of language praxis**

As mentioned earlier, indexicality is at the core of language socialization. According to Ochs (1996), language socialization involves social reproduction and social production through language use. The former draws from an encoding perspective on indexicality that focuses on how language with its symbolic content encodes sociocultural knowledge that is transmitted generation by generation. The latter relies on a constitutive perspective on indexicality to account for the potential of language praxis for transforming sociocultural knowledge in terms of the paradigm of person-society relations. As Ochs (1996, p.416) argued,

Socialization in this constitutive view is not a uni-directional transaction from member to novice but rather a synthetic, interactional achievement where novice is an active contributor. In this view as well, while language is a socio-historical product, language is also an instrument for forming and transforming social order.

The constitutive perspective on indexicality allows us to understand “situational dimensions entailed by some other situational dimension as components that help to constitute the meaning of that situational dimension” (Ochs, 1996, p.419). Ochs (1996)
further proposed that epistemic and affective stances are central meaning components of social identity. These two stances are often expressed with linguistic markers in a continuum of degrees of certainty as shown in the following figure.

*Figure 6: Continuum of Epistemic Stance as Expressed with Certainty of Knowledge*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uncertainty</th>
<th>Certainty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For example:</td>
<td>For example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know…</td>
<td>I think…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure…</td>
<td>I wonder…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figures 7: Continuum of Affective Stance as Expressed with Emotional Intensity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low Emotion</th>
<th>High Emotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For example,</td>
<td>For example,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am …</td>
<td>I feel…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A continuum of an epistemic stance shows the degrees of certainty of knowledge or other epistemic qualities. Likewise, a continuum of an affective stance indicates the degrees of emotional intensity. These continuums of epistemic and affective stances are useful in considering the extent to which epistemic and affective stances are indexed by language practice.

Given that the focus of the present study is on the prospective teachers’ process of learning to teach, in this section, I examine how epistemic and affective stances constitute professional identity of teachers. Specifically, I used the continuums of epistemic and affective stances portrayed above as a guide to determine the participants’ degrees of
certainty of epistemic knowledge and emotional intensity in their reflective practice. In the
following excerpts, omissions of conversation are indicated by (…).

Discussion Episodes on Gender Equity

This interaction taken from WebCT was a discussion on gender equity in the second
language classroom. This topical discussion, which yielded a thread of 15 postings, was the
most interactive and engaged discussion occurred in the WebCT. This topical discussion
began with exchanges about whether to correct third person pronoun in English grammar
and then extended to a negotiation of the role of second language teacher in (re)producing
gender (in)equity. The interactional process contributed to the participants’ co-construction
of teacher identity. Table 8 provides an overview of the interlocutory context of the focal
discussion postings.

Table 8: Contextual Overview of the Discussion on Gender Equity (Selected examples)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time:</th>
<th>November 18 through November 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interlocutors:</td>
<td>Shirley (female American)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freya (female African American)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amy (female American)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mary (female American)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects of discussion thread:</td>
<td>Our group’s thoughts about gender equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response to Fe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn-taking and sequencing:</td>
<td>9 turns: Shirley ➔ Freya ➔ Amy ➔ Mary ➔ Shirley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of postings in the focal discussion threads:</td>
<td>9 postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total word count:</td>
<td>1179 words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The focal discussion postings was initiated by Shirley’s concern about an overcorrection of third person pronoun in English grammar influenced by the prevalence of feminist movement across fields.

Poster by: Shirley  
Time posted: November 18, 2004 12:00am  
Subject line of posting: our group’s thoughts about gender equity  
Word count (of the original posting): 187 words  
Message No.569

I wanted to ask someone who knows more than I about this. Is it really acceptable and correct and not wrong to use "their" as a singular possessive adjective? (…)

Dr. White told me it is okay to use "she" but never "he" as a subject pronoun when a noun antecedent is not given. How is that considered correct? Is it what Vandrick means when she writes, "Even a slight "overcorrection" in favor of feminine names, pronouns, and example is justifiable, considering the many years during which students have been exposed to instructional materials with a gender-neutral manner..."(p. 83). As a female, in my opinion, such a lame argument hurts the cause. Why do we insist on shooting ourselves in the leg, so to speak? It's just an
example of overkill or, even worse, another example of
the lack of gender equity. We don't need to overcorrect
anything.

Shirley raised a question for discussion, “Is it really acceptable and correct and not
wrong to use ‘their’ as a singular possessive adjective?” A heightened epistemic stance is
indexed through her use of emphatic stress “really” and repetition of three adjectives of
similar meaning or position “acceptable” “correct” and “not wrong.” From this, we can
infer that Shirley was somewhat in doubt with the use of “their” as a singular possessive
adjective. She then provided a rationale in support of the proposition by quoting two
authority figures, including one university professor (i.e., “Dr. White told me…”) and a
textbook author (i.e., the quotation of Vandrick), from which her doubts arose.

As she sought legitimacy for the correction of third person voice in favor of feminist
movement (i.e., “How is that considered correct?”), she explicitly aligned herself with the
counter position. Shirley invoked her insider role of female as a means to intensify her
position against what she considered to be an overcorrection of third person pronoun in
English grammar (i.e., “As a female, in my opinion…”). In addition, the marked
expressions of “lame argument”, “shooting ourselves in the leg”, “overkill”, “another
example of lack of gender equity” also indexed her epistemic stance toward the issue of
gender equity and revealed the focus of her concern.

Last, she concluded with the statement “We don’t need to overcorrect anything”
which powerfully summarized her argument and contributed to a construction of an in-group
identity “we.” Technically speaking, the meaning of “we” was indeterminate since it was
not made explicit whether “we” referred to members in the class, females, second language teachers, and/or human beings as a whole. At least, the use of “we” opened up room for meaning construction of certain collective identity, which required further consideration of follow-up postings.

Under the same discussion thread, Freya posted her response in support of Shirley’s thinking as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posted by: Freya</th>
<th>Time posted: November 18, 2004 12:05am</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject line of posting: our group’s thoughts about gender equity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word count (of the original posting): 133 words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message No.572</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lots of times I believe that gender equity in the US is overplayed. For example, if I was a police officer, I wouldn't care if someone calls me a policeMAN. It's obvious I'm a woman, right? I think it's important to teach gender equity/roles but it's important to tell students that men and women ARE different and it's not logical or "smart" to try and make us the same.

I enjoy being a woman. I don't want a "man's role/job". I don't want to build houses, be a police officer or fire fighter, join the military, or be a pilot. It has nothing to do with those roles being seen as "men's
Freya stated her belief that “gender equity in the US is overplayed” and then connected this epistemic stance to make sense of the role second language teachers play with related to this issue. As she commented, “it's important to teach gender equity/roles but it's important to tell students that men and women ARE different…” At this point, it is manifested that the indeterminate meaning of “we” in Shirley’s concluding remark “We don’t need to overcorrect anything” is constructed to specifically refer to a collective identity of second language teachers.

For Freya, the fundamental difference between men and women lies in physical capability, which is scientifically evident and has become commonsense knowledge. Her capitalization “ARE” was a means of emphatic stress that indexed the degree of her epistemic stance intensity. The examples she drew on in support of her epistemic position on gender equity (i.e., “build houses”, “police officer”, “fire fighter”, “join the military” “be a pilot”) were all physically demanding jobs that were traditionally considered men’s territory. In Freya’s argument, it is illogical to make the “un-equitable” gender roles equivalent as men and women are fundamentally different. In addition, Freya’s expressions of “I enjoy being a women”, “I don’t want”, and “what I feel comfortable with” indexed a stance of affect in line with her epistemic stance.

Amy replied directly to Freya’s comments and strategically changed the subject line of the discussion thread to “response to Fe” to emphasize the focal point of her concern.
I totally agree with you. I think that it has gotten ridiculous having to use "he/she," "him/her," and "----man/woman," just so you don't offend anyone.

(…) I do not, however, think that these people should get so offended when they accidentally get called the wrong thing…it comes with the territory.

Amy’s posting indexed her epistemic stance in agreement with Freya’s thinking (e.g., “I totally agree with you” and “I think that it has gotten ridiculous having to use ‘he/she’…”). Specifically, Amy’s expression “it comes with the territory” echoed Freya’s approach to understanding gender equity through the lens of physical difference. This linguistic indexing of epistemic stance made explicit Amy’s belief that gender roles are defined by social structures and therefore, one is not inferior to the other but both are fundamentally different by nature.

To summarize the above episodes, Shirley’s posting revealed a point of view against the emergent treatment of third person pronoun in English grammar in a generic sense. Freya and Amy, while taking the same position as Shirley, further justified gender inequity from a perspective on innate physical difference of the two sexes. Freya and Amy’s arguments agreeably convey a proposition that men and women are different but equal as each role has its gender-specific territory.
While the three persons (i.e., Shirley, Freya, and Amy) who were involved in the discussion so far appeared to share a common standpoint, Mary posted an alternative point of view as follows.

**Posted by:** Mary  
**Time posted:** November 18, 2004 4:10pm  
**Subject line of posting:** Re: response to Fe  
**Word count (of the original posting):** 462 words  
**Message No.579**

I’ve been taking a course in Language and Gender this semester and have been thinking about these issues quite a bit as a result. At the beginning of the course I would have agreed completely with Freya and Amy; however, now I feel differently.

I do agree that getting hung up on the nomenclature can be annoying—and “overcorrecting” the “he” to “she” doesn’t solve anything—however, there’s a reason people take these things seriously. Our use of language reflects our cultural attitudes towards women and men, what they are capable of, and what rights they have. There are still countless aspects in American culture where gender biases have great influence, and females are the ones most frequently disadvantaged. For example, the unfortunate stereotypes that characterize women as
“overemotional” or gossips who incessantly chatter about trivial matters still persist. (…) There’s still a pervasive misconception that males are somehow better at math and science, at doing mechanical things or things that rely on physical strength. A lot of this has simply been taught to us, and continues to be taught to young girls and boys growing up now. (…) I absolutely agree that the cultures of ESL students must be considered and valued. I think it is part of our responsibility to provide learners with information about our culture and to actively learn more about theirs at the same time. (…) I think it might be valuable to discuss cultural differences and gender roles. I also think that specifics like the he/she thing would be worth discussing, especially if students are or will be speaking or writing in particular contexts where this issue would be important.

As indicated in the excerpt above, Mary constructed a challenge specifically to Freya and Amy’s proposition of looking at the gender equity issue from the physical difference point of view. Mary’s expressions “I would have agreed completely with Freya and Amy; however, now I feel differently” and “however, there’s a reason people take these things seriously” indexed an epistemic stance contrary to Freya and Amy’s. In particular, the
transition word “however” forecasted the contrasting standpoint Mary was proposing. Her statements “Our use of language reflects our cultural attitudes towards women and men, what they are capable of, and what rights they have” and “A lot of this has simply been taught to us, and continues to be taught to young girls and boys growing up now” indexed an epistemic stance that language played an important role in knowledge-transmitting and cultural persistence.

The point Mary was trying to make was that language use (i.e., the correction of third person pronoun) and physical difference of the two sexes and gender equity were not three separate things but interrelated matters. The examples she gave and her marked expressions “gender biases”, “unfortunate stereotypes”, and “misconception” indexed an epistemic stance that conventional language use defined by social structure has resulted in gender inequity in the society.

For Mary, the correction of third person pronoun was not “overcorrection” or “ridiculous” as considered by Shirley, Freya, and Amy but “part of our responsibility” and “valuable to discuss.” Here the first person possessive form “our” referred to a collective identity of we as second language teachers. By linking language use to the social structure of gender, Mary shifted the focus of the discussion on gender equity away from the standpoint of physical knowledge to philosophical knowledge that is more concerned about human right rather than human body. From this point of view, Mary constructed a teacher identity that was responsible for: (1) “provid[ing] learners with information about our culture and actively learn[ing] more about theirs at the same time” and (2) “discuss[ing] cultural differences and gender roles.” Clearly, Mary’s meaning construction of teacher identity was contrary to that of Shirley, Freya, and Amy’s as she considered that the
nomenclature regarding third person voice reflected part of American culture and attitudes toward gender roles and therefore was worth discussing in the second language classroom.

In Mary’s argumentation, however, it remained unclear in what ways and what exactly second language teachers should teach their ESL learners about the conventional use of third person pronoun in English grammar. Despite the indeterminacy, Mary significantly legitimized the correction of third person pronoun as a means in reaction to the conventional, value-laden language use in favor of male. Simply put, such correction was not and should not be considered “overcorrection.”

While Mary’s argumentation attempted to negotiate a standpoint of human rights as opposed to physical difference in addressing gender equity, it shaped Shirley’s epistemic stance accordingly. This is evident in Shirley’s follow-up posting as she stated, “For sure, I think men and women should have equal rights.”

| Posted by: Shirley                      |
| Time posted: November 18, 2004 9:36pm  |
| Subject line of posting: Re: response to Fe |
| Word count (of the original posting): 157 words |
| Message No.581                          |

For sure, I think men and women should have equal rights. Woman are capable of doing many great things, and should have the freedom to pursue all possibilities. A classroom teacher can do much to promote equity in the classroom and show respect to all present, thus modeling a behavior that is to be desired.

The idea that ESL teachers must be active advocates for
social change against injustices of all kinds comes across very strongly from time to time in different courses and readings. We don't all go about it in the same way.

The phrase “for sure” indexed Shirley’s degree of certainty and conviction as to Mary’s proposition. In Shirley’s initial posting, she considered the correction of third person pronoun to be redundant “e.g., We don’t need to overcorrect anything” and implied that second language teachers should teach the conventional use of third person pronoun in English grammar. This epistemic stance was constitutive of a teacher identity as transmitter of cultural-historical knowledge. Later in the discussion, Shirley shifted her epistemic stance to be in line with Mary’s proposition, which helped construct a teacher identity as “active advocates for social change against injustices.” And as Shirley noted, “A classroom teacher can do much to promote equity”, the correction of third person pronoun was no longer considered as overreaction but one of many possible means to promote gender equity. Apparently, Shirley’s shifting position reflects the negotiation of what role second language teachers play in promoting gender equity. It should be noted that the teacher identity co-constructed so far was more of a collective identity of second language teachers as a whole with little attention to individual variations. Shirley’s concluding remark “We don’t all go about it in the same way” revealed her attitude toward the epistemic stance co-constructed in their discussion. It conveys a caution that to correct or not to correct is possibly a personal choice.

In addition to Shirley’s shift of positioning (e.g., Message no.581), Freya also changed her initial standpoint to as indicated in the following episode. Although her short
comments “Well said Mary” and “Well said Shirley” did not elaborate on her thinking in detail, these expressions noticeably indexed acts of complimenting and agreeing which helped constitute an epistemic stance that was different as reflected from her initial argumentation (e.g., Message no.572).

As noted earlier, while Shirley shifted her position to agree on Mary’s proposition, she also brought up an alternative thinking. To be more specifically, in constructing the meaning of second language teachers, the interlocutors appeared to approach the role of second language teachers in promoting gender equity in dichotomy – to correct or not to correct third person pronoun and if such correction is overcorrection or legitimate correction. Shirley’s argument “We don’t all go about it in the same way” (in Message no.581) opened up a third space that allowed for individual variations in the co-construction of the collective identity of second language teachers.
Shirley’s proposition influenced Mary’s initial epistemic stance, as Mary’s statement
“I don’t know if it is possible for us to advocate on behalf of all injustices while being
language instructors” indexed relatively uncertainty and a re-consideration of second
language teachers as advocates for social change, in particular “on behalf of all injustices.”

| Posted by: Mary |
| Time posted: November 19, 2004 12:23pm |
| Subject line of posting: Re: response to Fe |
| Word count (of the original posting): 83 words |
| Message No.585 |

I agree, well said Shirley. I don't know if it is
possible for us to advocate on behalf of all injustices
while being language instructors. But I do think it's
helpful to learn about and discuss these things; I think
it will help prepare us for situations we will encounter
with our diverse students.

Although at the end no “right” answer to this inquiry was sought, Mary emphasized
the value of their discussion as she noted “it will help prepare us for situations we will
encounter with our diverse students.” The emphatic stress “I do think” indexed the degree
of her certainty in this matter.

At the end of this discussion thread, the interlocutors reached in total agreement (e.g.,
“you are so right”, “I agree”) as shown in the following excerpt.

| Posted by: Shirley |
| Time posted: November 20, 2004 12:25am |
| Subject line of posting: Re: response to Fe |
| Word count (of the original posting): 32 words |
| Message No.595 |
Mary, you are so right. You are good with words!

I agree that it's good to learn about and discuss matters such as these. We owe it to ourselves and our students.

In particular, Shirley reiterated Mary’s statement “it's helpful to learn about and discuss these things” in the paraphrase “it’s good to learn about and discuss matters such as these.” Shirley’s concluding remark “We owe it to ourselves and our students” stressed the value of understanding the role of second language teachers in promoting gender equity (and social change) – it is, like Mary noted earlier “part of our responsibility,” one that is constitutive of the identity of second language teachers.

Discussion Episodes on Classroom Management

This discussion thread was an interaction between Rachel, a high school ESL teacher, and Atsuro, a teaching assistant who taught Japanese to college students. They were the only two practicing teachers in the present study. This discussion thread was on a topic about classroom management with a focus on how to deal with test cheating behaviors in the classroom. Table 8 provides an overview of the interlocutory context.

Table 9: Contextual Overview of the Discussion on Classroom Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time:</th>
<th>September 7 through September 13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interlocutors:</td>
<td>Rachel (female American)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atsuro (male Japanese)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject of discussion:</td>
<td>Management in future teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn-taking and sequencing:</td>
<td>3 turns: Rachel ➔ Atsuro ➔ Rachel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of postings in the discussion thread:</td>
<td>3 postings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total word count:</td>
<td>704 words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This discussion began with Rachel’s reflection on her classroom teaching experience as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posted by: Rachel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time posted:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject line of posting: Management in future teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word count (of the original posting): 415 words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One issue that I have faced in a small way, but I see as a potential problem this year is cheating.

I run a pretty tight ship, if I catch someone cheating I am pretty firm about it. I spread my kids out and monitor them while they are testing. I do not allow them to even look around while testing. I do have clear lines in my room because the lessons and instructions are usually geared towards their level and they are able to understand what I want them to do or are confident enough with me that they ask me what they do not understand. (…)

In a discussion on classroom management, Rachel brought up an issue about cheating that the prospective second language teacher might encounter in their future teaching practice. The topic sentence, “One issue that I have faced in a small way, but I see as a potential problem this year is cheating” indexes an epistemic stance in reaction to students’ cheating behaviors. In other words, she conveyed certainty about what students would do if not closely monitored. She then conveyed her attitude vis-à-vis her focus of concern by stating,
“if I catch someone cheating I am pretty firm about it”, “I do not allow them to even look around while testing”, “I do have clear lines in my room….” Additionally, the emphatic stress (e.g., “pretty”, “even”, and “do have”) indexes an intensive degree of commitment to her belief. She also provided her rationale for not allowing any cheating in her classroom (e.g., “because the lessons and instructions are usually geared toward their level…”). Her strategy then was to “spread my kids out and monitor them while they are testing.” In this posting, Rachel presented an identity of teacher who was rather authoritative and strict with students in terms of classroom behaviors. Inferring from Rachel’s discourse, the role of student and the role of teacher are prescribed with certain rules and conventions that must be obeyed.

Atsuro posted a message in response to Rachel’s posting as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posted by: Atsuro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time posted:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject line of posting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word count (of the original posting):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message No.104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rachel,

Yes, cheating is certainly against the academic honesty. (…) As a teacher, we know what "cheating" is, but how would you deal with situations such as intentional cheating? (but the student still says "What!? I didn't do that!"). My concern is that our relationship (teacher and student) will be deteriorated and lost trust relationship if we are constantly suspicious for fear they'll cheat.
The statement “Yes, cheating is certainly against the academic honesty” indexes Atsuro’s epistemic stance in agreement with that of Rachel’s. His use of “we know…” conveyed certainty about what cheating is. The question of “how would you deal with situations such as intentional cheating?” conveyed Atsuro’s uncertainty about how to address the perceived cheating problem. His use of “as a teacher” and the “we-they” distinction was a discoursive strategy for in-group solidarity and for playing up the teacher identity. In addressing Rachel’s strategy for preventing cheating in the classroom (e.g., “I spread my kids out and monitor them while they are testing”), Atsuro opened up dialogue by taking up a relatively uncertain stance about the “right” thing to do. As he noted, “My concern is that our relationship (teacher and student) will be deteriorated and lost trust relationship if we are constantly suspicious for fear they’ll cheat.” Atsuro strategically used a different lens to consider teacher-student relationship with focus on affective (rather than academic) relations between teacher and students. While cheat-proofing strategies are often based on an assumption that all students tend to cheat if given opportunities, for Atsuro, this belief might hinder trust building in the classroom. Through the discoursive presentation, Atsuro conveyed an identity of teacher who values affective relations with students in the classroom but is also aware of academic honesty as one of the norms that defines teacher-student relationship.

Rachel responded to Atsuro’s concern by providing a student case in her classroom as follows:
Atsuro,

(…) I had a kid in my class that would not stop until I gave him a 0 on a test. Now, when I ask him, "why are you talking?" He will still act innocent and say, "oh, is this a test?" "YES," I say very firmly and that is clearly understood as a stern warning. After getting a 0 now he stops. I hated to do that to him, but he refused to change. I think he just cannot stand the idea of being so far behind, but if he would relax he would realize that I will meet him where he is in the language and test him over what I cover with him.

Rachel used the student case as evidence to support her belief that stern discipline in the classroom is required to achieve desired learning outcomes that reflect the value of academic honesty. Rachel’s statement, “I hated to do that to him” indexes her affective stance that was in line with Atsuro’s concern that strict procedures for dealing with cheating behaviors might have negative influences on the teacher-student relationship.

However, Rachel’s affective stance is apparently secondary to her epistemic stance about what the teacher and students do in the classroom. In this discussion thread, Rachel conveyed a slightly shifting identity of a teacher who established and exerted stern guidelines in the classroom (e.g., “I do have clear lines”) to who was willing to be flexible if
the students showed self-discipline (e.g., “I will meet him where he is in the language and test him over what I cover with him”). Although in the follow-up posting (i.e., Message No.156), Rachel’s positioning and attitude toward test cheating behaviors in the classroom was not different from that of her initial posting (i.e., Message No.104), a new dimension of teacher identity with regard to teacher-student affective relations was presented. In short, this interaction adds new insight into the role of teacher in managing classroom behaviors, or at least, brings such understanding to the conscious level, if not new to the prospective second language teachers.

Putting the threads together

The two series of episodes discussed above (i.e., the discussion on gender equity and the discussion on student cheating behaviors) provide evidence of how social identity as one situational dimension can be entailed by other situational dimensions (in particular, epistemic and affective stance) as components that help constitute the meaning of social identity. In other words, epistemic and affective stance has a privileged role in the constitution of social identity (Ochs, 1996).

As evident in the participants’ textual communications, their meaning construction of teacher identity was an interactional achievement that often involved negotiation of meaning. In the online interaction, the participants exchanged their opinions and understandings to figure out what professional second language teachers do in the classroom. They learned from one another’s experiences, thinking, and beliefs about what counted as “bad” “good” and “best” practices of teaching. For instance, in the discussion on gender equity, the participants negotiated the legitimacy of to correct or not to correct third person pronoun in
English grammar. Through linguistic indexing of epistemic and affective stance, their discussion entailed a negotiation of teacher identity as a culture transmitter or culture transformer. Another instance about the construction of teacher identity was provided by the discussion on cheating, which led to a consideration of teacher-student relationship from different perspectives.

In the participants’ reflective practice as social interaction, what it means to be a second language teacher is entailed by their exchanges of what a second language teacher does in the classroom. It should be noted that the construction of teacher identity that occurred in the interaction was not a uni-directional but dynamic process in which the each interlocutor was an active contributor whose reflective practice shape and were shaped by others’ reflective practice. In this sense, the boundaries between reflection at the intrapersonal level and reflection at the interpersonal level are blurred through reflective practice in communities of practice.

Table 10: Level of Interactivity of Textual Communications in WebCT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turn-takings in each subject of discussion</th>
<th>Number of discussion threads</th>
<th>Percentage of discussion threads</th>
<th>Number of postings</th>
<th>Percentage of postings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 turn</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>70 %</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>47 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 turns</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>21 %</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>28 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 turns</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 turns</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2 %</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 turns</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 %</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 turns</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5 %</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 turns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2 %</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 turns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2 %</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total: 469</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total: 696</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While the discourse analysis of the participants’ textual communications in WebCT showed the potential of reflection as social interaction for facilitating teacher identity development, the low interactivity in WebCT revealed a limitation. The above table provides information on the level of interactivity in the WebCT discussion boards. As indicated in Table 10, 70% of the discussion threads contained only 1 interactional turn-taking, i.e., an initial posting without any follow-up interaction. The second highest category of interactivity, which yielded 21%, was discussion threads that contained 2 interactional turn-takings, i.e., an initial posting with one response. As the frequency of turn-taking increased, the number of discussion threads decreased. The low interactivity in WebCT actually resulted from the fact that WebCT was used as a supplement to the course, and the participation in online discussions was optional rather than mandatory. Despite the low interactivity in the interlocutory environment, WebCT is a potentially rich environment that can foster professional identity development. While (co)-construction of teacher identity is understood as an interactional achievement, it goes without saying that higher interactivity of exchanges is the desired condition for enriching professional identity development.

Summary

This chapter has examined the participants’ reflective practice in the WebCT interlocutory environment. In addressing my second research question regarding how participation in WebCT impacted the prospective second language teachers’ professional identity development, I focused on the participants’ reflective practice in WebCT to examine the interplay among language praxis, teacher learning, and professional identity development.
development of the prospective second language teachers. In conducting the discourse analysis, Ochs’ (1996) situational framework provided an analytical lens through which to make sense of the prospective second language teachers’ participation in WebCT.

Findings of the discourse analysis indicated that the participants’ construction of professional identity was an interactional achievement that emerged out of the online community of practice. More specifically, the WebCT community of practice provided the prospective second language teachers with a space for co-construction of teacher identity in and through language use. In this sense, professional identity development appears to hinge on the level of interactivity of online communication. Higher level of interactivity establishes better interlocutory contexts that allow for professional identity development. Although in the present study the low interactivity in WebCT due to the nature of the course posting requirement did not generate a great deal of data for discourse analysis, the potential of participation in WebCT for fostering the prospective second language teachers’ professional identity development cannot be overlooked.
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Summary of the Study

The present study examined a group of prospective second language teachers’ processes of learning to teach in a curricular innovation featuring implementations of service-learning and WebCT. The overarching research questions guiding this study include:

(1) How does participation in service-learning impact academic learning from the participants’ points of view?

(2) How does participation in WebCT impact participants’ professional identity development integral to their ongoing professional development?

I adopted the situative perspective on learning as my theoretical framework to understand the phenomenon of interest, i.e., the process of learning to teach. The situative perspective provided me specific lenses with which to consider four dimensions of the nature of learning: learning as social, learning as situated, learning as distributed, and learning as legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice. This encompassing perspective allowed me to think in new terms about the concept of reflection historically conceived in literature on service-learning as well as on teacher learning.

I observed and investigated a service-learning curricular innovation in a TESOL methods course at a university in the southeastern United States. The methodology employed was a qualitative case design – The case was defined as the curricular innovation, which contained the service-learning and WebCT components. I adopted intensity sampling, stratified sampling, and maximum variation sampling strategies to select among the students enrolled in the observed class as my research participants. The 10 participants selected for the present study were master’s students in TESOL. Their ages ranged from 23 to 62 years.
These participants were predominantly female (9 out of 10) with rather heterogeneous cultural backgrounds (4 European American, 1 African American, 2 Korean, 2 Taiwanese, and 1 Japanese). The data collection methods for the present study involved classroom observation, document collection, and online data collection. These methods collectively yielded field notes on 10 observation sessions, 83 on-site photographs, 10 student video analysis papers, 10 student service-learning portfolios, 2 course evaluations (i.e., 1 mid-term evaluation and 1 end-of-term evaluation results), 696 WebCT discussion postings, and WebCT generated statistics (i.e., collective and individual student tracking records). The collected data were analyzed using a constant comparative method and a discourse analysis method in response to my two research questions, respectively.

I used the constant comparative method to analyze the conceptual data, in particular, the student video analyses, the service-learning portfolios, and the course evaluations. While I was particularly interested in what learning occurred and what the service-learning experience meant to the participants from their own points of view, I focused on analyzing the content of their reflective practice. Findings derived from the conceptual analysis indicated that the participants considered the service-learning engagement a positive and facilitative learning experience that allowed for theory into practice and provided insights into teaching profession. Specifically, the results of the conceptual analysis revealed three major themes: (1) In the service-learning participation, peer support and opportunities to learn from peers facilitated the participants' process of learning to teach, (2) In the service-learning participation, technology served as a mediational tool that was facilitative of the participants’ process of learning to teach, and (3) In the service-learning participation, the participants were immersed in a culturally diverse learning environment that opened up
opportunities for enhancing their sense of multicultural awareness. In brief, the implementation of service-learning in this curricular innovation was proven to enhance the prospective teachers’ process of learning to teach.

Focusing on the content of reflection allowed me to elicit the meaning of the participants’ lived experience of service-learning, but it only gave me some picture of the participants’ learning process in becoming a teacher. I therefore adopted the discourse analysis to examine the participants’ reflection as social interaction (i.e., language praxis) in the WebCT environment. I reviewed the textual communication retrieved from WebCT discussion boards to identify episodes that manifested the participants’ meaning construction of teacher identity. Findings derived from the discourse analysis indicated that the online interaction provided the participants a space to negotiate the meaning of being a second language teacher. In other words, the participants co-constructed a collective teacher identity through their reflective practice via computer-mediated communication in WebCT. Despite the fact that the online reflective practice was proven to have the potential for fostering the prospective second language teachers’ professional identity development, the low interactivity of the participants’ online discussions pointed to an area in need of improvement.

In the discussions to follow, I adopt the theoretical lens of the situative perspective on learning to interpret my research findings. Drawing on my interpretations, I then provide pedagogical and research implications for service-learning and teacher learning.
Discussion

In examining how the prospective second language teachers’ participation in service-learning and in WebCT impact on their process of learning to teach, the present study relies heavily on the participant’s reflective practice to gain a fuller understanding their lived experience in the curricular innovation. It goes without saying that participation in service-learning or WebCT by itself does not lead to quality learning. It is the reflective practice involved in service-learning and the WebCT community of practice that operates to do the transformation work.

Reflective practice is not merely about remembering the experience but is a higher-order thinking activity that requires the individual to internalize and construct meaning out of his or her experience through personal efforts. In this sense, reflective practice at the intrapersonal level has a social origin and serves to bring knowledge or meaning to a conscious level since meaning is constructed only when consciousness is engaged. Furthermore, reflective practice as it is conceived and implemented in the present study has a socializing function that operates at the interpersonal level – it leverages on the role of language in the social world to socialize people into communities of practice in and through language use. In short, reflective practice functions at both the intrapersonal and the interpersonal level in the process of meaning construction – a negotiated process constantly changing in response to the interplay of mind and society. Therefore, it is through recognition of reflection as both higher-order thinking activity and social practice that the curricular innovation characterized in the present study serves to enhance teacher learning and bring about change. Given the centrality of reflective practice in this curricular
innovation, the prospective teachers who participated in the present study were engaged to develop as reflective practitioners in the process of learning.

In considering the participants’ learning process of becoming more theoretically and pedagogically informed second language teachers, I adopted the situative perspective on learning to understand the potential of the observed curricular innovation for enriching the participants’ process of learning to teach. Specifically, the situative perspective provided a set of theoretical lenses through which to consider: How is teachers’ learning fundamentally social? How is teachers’ learning distributed? How is teachers’ learning situated? How is teachers’ learning a process of legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice? In what follows, I draw on these themes as a guide to determine if they are realized in the curricular innovation portrayed in the present study – a curricular innovation that features an implementation of service-learning and an implementation of WebCT, with an emphasis on the role of reflective practice in prospective teachers’ process of learning to teach.

How is teachers’ learning fundamentally social? The implementation of service-learning amplifies the notion of learning as social in two senses. First, the service or experience is by itself a social engagement. It forms the foundation and provides cognitive tools (e.g., ideas, feelings, and thoughts) for the participants’ meaning construction. In this sense, the prospective teachers’ learning has a social origin in the service-learning engagement. Secondly, their process of learning to teach is also social since the instructional activities in the classroom, the collaborative assignments, the social interactions in WebCT, etc., collectively constitute the social interactions in which learning is embedded. Therefore, the prospective teachers’ learning process in this curricular innovation is fundamentally social.
How is teachers’ learning distributed? In the present study, the prospective teachers’ learning was distributed in the sense that they “think in conjunction and partnership with others and with the help of culturally provided tools and implements” (Salomon, 1993, p.xiii). This distributed nature of learning highlights the importance of mediation (of artifacts and people) that makes it possible for an individual to accomplish learning beyond his or her own capabilities. For instance, the peer support, the video recordings, the portfolios, the use of WebCT, and the Internet resources all provided the mediational means that contributed to the prospective teachers’ learning. Specifically, I shall emphasize that the implementation of WebCT provides learning opportunities beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom. The social interactions in WebCT that take place in non-centralized locations allow learning to occur independently of time and place and be distributed among individuals, artifacts, and the environment.

How is teachers’ learning situated? In the present study, the learning that emerged out of the curricular innovation was situated in the multiple communities of practice as portrayed in Figure 4 in Chapter Three. In a broad sense, the curricular innovation involved the prospective second language teachers in a discourse community of second language teaching. More specifically, the goal of the curricular innovation characterized in the present study was to enhance the prospective teachers’ process of learning to teach through direct involvement of coming to know what teachers know and learning to think, talk, and act the way teachers do. For instance, the content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical-content knowledge that the prospective teachers developed out of their reflective practice provided them with the necessary vocabulary and cognitive tools for participating in the discourse community of teaching. Simply put, participation in a
discourse community requires one to “talk the talk” of the community. Putnam and Borko (2000) pointed out that “a central goal of schooling is to enculturate students into various discourse communities, equipping them with competence in using the concepts and the forms of reasoning and argument that characterize those communities” (p.5). By the same token, this curricular innovation situated the prospective second language teachers in multiple communities of practice that equipped them with the discourse of teaching as a means to enculturate them into theoretically and pedagogically informed second language teachers.

How is teachers’ learning a process of legitimate peripheral participation in communities of practice, i.e., a process of becoming a member of a community? Central to this inquiry is the idea that learning is closely tied to identity. As Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, and Johnson (2005) pointed out, “It views learning not primarily as the cognitive acquisition of knowledge but as a process of identification – that is, of acquiring an identity, of becoming someone or something” (p.37). While identity is only embodied by language practice, it entails the central role of language in the process of identification. Taken together, learning, identity, and language practice are interrelated constructs. In the present study, the participants’ discursive interactions in the WebCT community of practice provided a window to gain insights into their process of professional identity construction. In the WebCT community of practice, the participants negotiated personal perceptions of teacher identity and co-constructed a collective professional identity of teacher through their language use. The process of participation in the WebCT community of practice was actually a process of socializing the prospective second language teachers to what it meant to be professional second language teachers.
All in all, the situative perspective on learning helps us think in new ways about how teacher learning can be better facilitated with appropriate instructional design. Specifically, the four principles of the situative perspective outlined in the present study provide a set of theoretical lenses to see more clearly the potential of the curricular innovation for enhancing the prospective second language teachers’ academic learning and professional identity development.

**Pedagogical Implications**

The present study delineates a curricular innovation in a TESOL methods course, which has been proven to be an affirmative achievement that contributes to the participants’ academic learning and professional identity development. Drawing from the instructional design of the observed classroom, in particular the implementations of service-learning and WebCT, I would like to address the following pedagogical implications for teacher educators from the level of individual course to as broad as the field of teacher education.

First, this course was designed and carried out in the spirit of the “reflective practice movement” in teacher education resulting from the growing interest in teacher learning and teacher empowerment (Sikula, Buttery, & Guyton, 1996). The concept of reflection was central to the instructional design of the course – the video analysis in the collaborative service-learning project, the portfolio in the self-directed service-learning project out of the classroom, and the asynchronous discussions in the WebCT environment collectively reveal the centrality of reflection. In incorporating service-learning, this course was designed to educate prospective teachers as reflective practitioners who constantly and critically reflect on their teaching practice for professional growth. To be sure, service or experience alone
does not lead to learning – it is reflection that links experience to learning. For this reason, many service-learning researchers have worked to develop guidelines for reflection to ensure that the learning in service-learning is connected to the course content. Some guiding principles as to the implementation of reflection include: (1) reflection must be continuous throughout the course; (2) reflection must be included as an assessment component of the course; and (3) reflection must make explicit connections to the course content (e.g., Williams, & Driscoll, 1997; Eyler, Giles, & Schmiede, 1996). Of course, these guidelines, were reflected in the instructional design of the observed classroom and yielded positive outcomes of the prospective teachers’ academic learning.

In line with previous research, findings of the present study also imply that structured reflection is the key to satisfy teacher educators’ primary intent of engaging prospective teachers in service-learning. More significantly, one pedagogical implication that can be drawn from the present study is that reflection must be implemented with a juxtaposition of individualistic and collective foci. Reflective practice with an individualistic focus, such as the use of personal journals and portfolios in this study, allows prospective teachers to represent, explore, and construct their belief systems. This format of reflective practice is facilitative in that it provides teacher educators a window to understand what prospective teachers know and more importantly, it raises prospective teachers’ awareness of their teaching practice and contributes to better understanding of self-perception. From the situative perspective on learning, however, reflection as an individual activity falls short to account for the principle of learning as participation in communities of practice. By contrast, reflective practice with a collective focus amplifies on the participatory nature of learning because it is social interaction. For instance, the
asynchronous online discussions in the present study reveal the socializing power of the praxis of reflection. Reflection of this kind unfolds the dynamic relations and the bidirectional influences between the individual and the community or the social world through negotiation and co-construction of meaning. Nevertheless, collective reflection is somewhat limiting in allowing for elaborations on individual differences and variations since the analytical focus is on the collective construct as a whole, rather than individualistic meaning construction. In light of the situative perspective on learning, I therefore suggest a more nuanced understanding of reflection as both an individual and a collective matter. A robust concept of reflection with integrated implementation methods will have a profound effect on prospective teachers’ process of learning to teach and their ongoing professional development in the long run.

Secondly, a gap between theory and practice has been the persisting issue in teacher education curricula at the program-wide level across different times and contexts. In reviewing the effects of teacher education programs and their impacts on the development of graduates, Brouwer and Korthagen (2005) conclude with a call for integrative curricular and teacher preparation approaches. The service-learning implementation in this methods course has been proven to be a relevant endeavor that optimizes the integration between theory and practice. As shown by the findings, the prospective teachers who participated in the service-learning engagement greatly benefited from the opportunities of practical experience while developing their content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and more importantly, pedagogical-content knowledge. Clearly, the learning that emerged out of the service-learning engagement reflects an academic achievement, a desired learning outcome sought by teacher educators. The importance of the research findings is that a service-learning
implementation deliberately aiming at bridging the gap between theory and practice with a proper design of reflective practice serves as a promising pedagogy for educating prospective teachers. These findings disconfirm the misconception or the commonly held concern about service-learning watering down the academic content of teacher education curricular. Drawing from the findings of the present study, one possible implication for teacher educators is to extend the success of service-learning integration in methods course to institutionalize it as part of the program-wide teacher preparation model. As service-learning researchers Erickson and Anderson (1997) noted, “this integration is a process that moves over time from peripheral service-learning in one course to a systemic redesign of teacher preparation with service-learning at the core” (Erickson & Anderson, 1997, p.149). If teacher educators are to move beyond the lack of integration between abstract and practical components in teacher preparation, more endeavors of service-learning implementations for creating learning environments that promote theory-to-practice connections are needed – not only in a random and isolated manner at the individual course level but in a sustained and holistic fashion at the program-wide level.

A third implication that I would like to address concerns the orientation of teacher education. With an understanding that teacher education is not a synonym for teacher training, the present study examines the development of prospective teachers and focuses on their process of learning to teach. The situative perspective on learning provides a holistic view to re-conceptualize teacher learning and professional development. In the field of teacher education, these two concepts have been realized and carried out in a linear sequence set by the boundaries of teacher preparation programs. That is, preservice teachers are expected to acquire knowledge of teaching and learn best teaching practices during their
teacher preparation programs and after graduation they receive in-service training or participate in workshops for professional development. Numerous researchers have commented on limitations of this linear view of teacher learning and professional development and called for a re-conceptualization or reform of teacher professional development (e.g., Hatton & Smith, 1995a, 1995b; Richard, 1998; Freeman, 2002; Hoffman-Kipp, Artiles, & Lopez-Torres, 2003). Informed by the situative perspective on learning, I have come to an understanding that teacher learning should be viewed as a lifelong process of professional identity construction. This encompassing view on teacher learning considers professional development as an integral part of the process of learning to teach, not an ancillary remedy to it. In the present study, participation in WebCT, or more specifically the asynchronous, reflective practice in WebCT, provided a space for co-construction of teacher identity. The research findings have implications for the importance of asynchronous learning network and technology-mediated professional development as means of reform for developing teacher learning and professional development hand in hand instead of treating them as separate matters.

Asynchronous learning network (ALN), a recent application of technology integration in education, allows for anytime and anywhere learning in a collaborative fashion that ideally leads to the development of a learning community (Hiltz & Goldman, 2005). What distinguishes ALN from other forms of e-learning, such as Web-Based Instruction (WBI) and Computer-Assisted Learning (CAL), is its emphasis on the notion of community. Based on the situative perspective on learning, I hold the view that students involved in an asynchronous learning network actually function as a “community of learners” that share responsibility for their learning and collaboratively work toward a
shared goal of mutual growth. That is, asynchronous learning network can be viewed as an application that promotes Rogoff’s (1994) concept of community of learners. Taking a step further, if teacher learning and professional development should be conceptualized as an integral process, the notion of professional development must be included as one shared goal in any asynchronous learning networks or communities of learners. The implication for teacher educators is that teacher professional development begins as early as prospective teachers enter the journey of learning to teach not after they graduate from teacher preparation programs. While the asynchronous learning network enabled by WebCT in the present study showed the potential for fostering professional identity development and provide a means of early socialization into the teaching profession, like other course-based learning networks, it diminished as the course came to an end. Therefore, it is critical for teacher educators to not only incorporate asynchronous learning networks into teacher preparation curricula (e.g., the use of WebCT as a supplement to coursework) but also work to identify better ways of reaching out to the broader community or asynchronous learning network consisting of teacher professionals that transcends the boundaries of individual courses or teacher preparation programs.

To conclude on a pedagogical note for teacher educators, if the orientation of teacher education is to shift away from a “training” perspective to a more holistic and integrative view, a re-conceptualization of teacher learning and professional development as an integral process must be the starting point as a reform effort in teacher education. Integrative teacher preparation approaches and models, such as service-learning implementations, that reflect an education rather than training perspective are ideal alternatives to linear models of teacher preparation. Along the same line, asynchronous learning network and technology-mediated
professional development that foster reflective practice and the notion of community of learners open up possibilities to bring teacher learning and professional development into a cohesive whole.

**Research Implications**

In the present study, the situative perspective provides the lens through which to understand a group of prospective teachers’ process of learning to teach in and through communities of practice. While the situative perspective is relatively recent, its implications for the dynamics of education raise some uncertainty and unanswered questions that require additional research efforts. In what follows, I would like to outline directions for future investigations with related to educational research in general and the two lines of research that are of immediate relevance to the present study, the research on teacher learning and the research on service-learning.

The situative perspective unfolds the complexity of learning in terms of its social, situated, distributed, and participatory natures. It follows that its methodological unit of analysis must be as encompassing as the theoretical concerns for the research to be conceptually and methodologically sound. As Lave and Wenger (1991) stated, the emergence of the situative perspective in educational research leads to a shift of “the analytic focus from the individual as learner to learning as participation in the social world” (p.43). For this reason, community of practice as unit of analysis is gaining popularity in qualitative studies that adopt the situative perspective as theoretical framework. While community of practice is portrayed as a micro-sphere of the social world that is broad enough to encompass the complex nature of learning proposed in the situated perspective, a
pragmatic concern lies in the vagueness and abstraction of its definition. Some researchers have attempted to conceptualize the inherently abstract term of community of practice. For example, Wenger (1998) proposed to define community of practice in terms of its joint enterprise, mutual engagement, and shared repertoire of communal resources. However, given that the concept of community of practice is newly introduced to educational research, it is not surprising that researchers have not reached an agreement as to what constitutes a community of practice. To complicate matters, the situative perspective holds that people are generally involved in multiple communities of practice. Whether a researcher should endeavor to develop a universally accepted definition of community of practice or work to identify structures and norms constitutive of context-specific communities of practice remains a challenging judgment call. Therefore, a task for educational researchers following the situative perspective is to articulate an operational, if not universal, definition of community of practice in a contextualized manner to avoid overgeneralization and confusion in interpreting research findings. In addition, more research has to be done to determine properties of communities of practice in a variety of social contexts, such as virtual communities of teaching professionals, if different communities of practice are assumed to possess individual uniqueness while sharing certain commonality with others.

The shift in learning perspective in educational research has implications for research on teacher learning. Studies on teacher education traditionally focus on the nature of knowledge, the process of knowledge acquisition, and effects of different knowledge-acquisition models. From the situative perspective on learning, however, teacher learning is conceptualized as a process of becoming a member of communities of practice of teaching professionals. This re-conceptualization of teacher learning draws researchers’ attention to
understanding teacher identity with related to the process of learning to teach and the impacts on teaching performance and professional development. While identity construction is closely linked to language practice or discourse since language is an inherently value-laden system of signs that embodies identity, it follows that all learning that has to do with language practice involves “identity work” to some extent (Gee, 2003, p.51). As illustrated in Norton’s (1997) view of language learning, “every time language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with their interlocutors; they are also constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. They are, in other words, engaged in identity construction and negotiation (p.410).” In this sense, it is only by acknowledging the centrality of identity construction in learning that we can place teachers as learners at the center of the educational process. By examining language practice in an online community, the present study provides an understanding of how a group of prospective teachers co-construct and negotiate a collective identity of language teacher in their process of learning to teach. This research serves as a starting point to comprehend the interplays of language, identity, and teacher learning, but more research efforts in this direction remains to be done.

One important implication of the situative perspective for research on service-learning is a need for re-conceptualization of reflection. Service-learning researchers are generally in agreement on the centrality of reflection. Much of the work on service-learning are drawn from Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning model and grounded in the theoretical framework of experiential learning perspective. For the past decades, service-learning has been understood as a four-part experiential learning process that involves concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.
This view reveals a focus on how an individual makes sense of his or her experience through reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation. It does little more than acknowledge that learning is fundamentally social in nature, i.e., the experience/service forms the foundation of learning. By contrast, the situative perspective on learning embeds service-learning in communities of practice to illuminate complex aspects and dimensions of the learning process. While the situative perspective is more encompassing than experiential learning conventionally adopted to guide service-learning research, service-learning components and implementation methods should reflect this inclusive feature of the new theoretical framework accordingly. From the situative perspective, the reflection component in service-learning should be realized as both an individual and social matter, not to be limited to exclusively a thinking or cognitive activity with individualistic focus that are enforced by the experiential learning perspective.

My argument is that service-learning researchers need to find ways to juxtapose reflection as higher-order thinking activity and social practice rather than advancing one at the expense of the other. At present, little research has been devoted to examine the reflection component of service-learning as social practice, which points to an important direction for future research on service-learning. In contrast to reflective practice with overly individualistic focus, asynchronous social interactions mediated by information communication technologies, such as email, listserv, and bulletin board systems appear to be fertile areas for service-learning researchers who aim to explore new insights opened up by the situative perspective on learning.
Concluding Remarks

This dissertation provides an insight to teacher learning that learning must be situated in communities of practice in which (1) theory and practice are blended, not separated and (2) professional development is understood to be an integral part of the process of learning to teach, not an ancillary remedy to it. To achieve the optimal goal of learning in and through communities of practice, we need to consider the concept of reflection as both cognitive and social collective practices rather than advancing one at the expense of the other. The re-conceptualization of reflective practice, from the situative perspective on learning, allows for not only personal transformation but also brings about social change since person and society are constitutive of each other.
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