

LOCAL VOICES, GLOBAL ISSUES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS
STUDENT TEACHERS HOLD IN RELATION TO THEIR PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION IN
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ENGLAND, AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

by

DANIEL JOHN KIRK

(Under the Direction of James Marshall)

ABSTRACT

Teacher education is a global enterprise, and has far-reaching consequences throughout society. Student teachers find themselves working on two fronts; the university setting and the schools where they practice teach. Through talking to pre-service teachers in the United States, England and the United Arab Emirates, it was possible to identify themes regarding their perceptions of teacher education, and to examine how these thematic strands cross national, cultural and social borders. It was found that students across the three settings encountered many of the same concerns and issues as they navigated their way through the choppy waters of teacher education, towards entry into the teaching profession. Through allowing student teachers to talk, to explore their experiences through their use of language, it was possible to hear rich accounts of teacher education programs, the issues that arose and how these were contextualized. The study uses these narratives as the primary source of data, analyzing and exploring the voices of the student teachers.

INDEX WORDS: Teacher Education, Comparative Education, United Arab Emirates,
Student teacher narratives, United States of America, England

LOCAL VOICES, GLOBAL ISSUES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS
STUDENT TEACHERS HOLD IN RELATION TO THEIR PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION IN
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ENGLAND, AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

by

DANIEL JOHN KIRK

B. A. (Hons.), University of Sunderland, United Kingdom, 1996

P.G.C.E., University of Sunderland, United Kingdom, 1997

M. A., University of Sunderland, United Kingdom, 2002

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial

Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2008

© 2008

Daniel John Kirk

All Rights Reserved

LOCAL VOICES, GLOBAL ISSUES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS
STUDENT TEACHERS HOLD IN RELATION TO THEIR PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION IN
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ENGLAND, AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

by

DANIEL JOHN KIRK

Major Professor: James Marshall

Committee: Diane Napier
Mark Faust

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
December 2008

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving and supportive family:

Mum, for all your kind words, advice, support and endless love. I love you.

Dad, for being there and quietly willing me on in all I have done, and continue to do.

Joanne, for being a wonderful aunt to Gillian, a supportive and steadfast big sister, and for letting me know if I do something wrong!

Richard, for secretly being proud of his brother, keeping the jokes flowing and inspiring me to give things a try.

To my beautiful daughter **Gillian**, whose smiles, laughter and unconditional love continually remind me of what is most important in life. She came into the world and made mine complete.

Finally, to **Eliza**, my wife, friend, advocate, advisor, supporter, critic, and love of my life. All I do is possible because of your unerring support and willingness to 'give it a go'. To you, all my love.

Oh, the places we will go...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many individuals and groups have been instrumental in assisting me with my aim of completing the PhD program, and ultimately this dissertation, and it is to all of you that I send my thanks and wishes.

I would like to register my gratitude and thanks to the twenty-eight students who gave up their time to speak to me about their experiences as student teachers. Their candor, humor and insights allowed me to reflect on my own time as a teacher. In whatever you all decide to do, I wish you all the best.

Jim Marshall, my learned and patient committee chair, spent many hours assisting with this dissertation, teaching, talking, stimulating and guiding me as I fumbled my way through the process. His advice, emails and friendship are cherished and will always be remembered. Thanks Jim.

The committee members, Diane Napier and Mark Faust, helped steer my writing in ways that improved my thinking and highlighted issues that were fundamental to the development of this document. I hope I have followed your advice. Thanks for the wise counsel.

Finally, my thanks go to Eliza, Gillian, Pepper and Lucy, who endured a year of lost weekends, late nights and an often grumpy member of the family, yet who never complained and quietly kept me focused, fed, clothed and loved.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	
Background	1
Educational Change in Three Contexts	4
The Move Toward Standardization	6
The Institutionalization of Testing and Standards.....	11
The Globalization of Education	21
Research Questions	22
Definition of Terms	23
Organization of Study	24
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	
Introduction	26
Theoretical Perspectives.....	28
Teacher Education as Global Practice.....	39
The Problem of Homogeneity	43
The Structure of Teacher Education.....	46
Teacher Knowledge.....	50

	Practice Teaching	53
	Globalization and Education	59
	Summary	61
3	RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES.....	
	Introduction	63
	Research Sites and Participants	66
	Methods of Data Collection	74
	Role of the Researcher	78
	Data Analysis	80
	Ethics and Professional Considerations	84
	Summary	85
4	UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTHEAST	
	Sally.....	87
	Voices from the Cohort	97
	Summary	106
5	MIDDLE ENGLAND UNIVERSITY	
	Ailsa.....	108
	Ailsa’s Issues Echoed: Voices from her peer group.....	117
	Summary	128
6	NORTHERN GULF UNIVERSITY	
	Salwe	130
	Reflections from Classmates	141
	Summary	151

7	DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	
	Summary of the Study	153
	Sally, Ailsa, and Salwe.....	154
	Emergent Themes.....	155
	Discussion	156
	Global Practices in Educational lending and Borrowing: The case of the UAE...157	
	The Matrioshka Model	169
	Recommendations for Further Study	176
	A Personal Journey: Final Reflections	178
	REFERENCES	180
	APPENDICES	
A	TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.....	206

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: The Matrioshka Model	172

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

After nearly a decade of teaching secondary school English, I decided that I would return to higher education to obtain a doctoral degree. When I arrived at the University of Georgia, I had teaching experience in four geographically and culturally diverse locations (England, Qatar, Bermuda and Dubai), and wanted to explore in detail how teacher education was practiced in these vastly different contexts. Through my international experience, I had the privilege of seeing the work of teachers from many cultures and countries with students who were as diverse as the staffrooms. I wanted to know how those teachers were prepared for their work.

As a teacher, I was always searching for ways to improve the experience of my students as well as my own practice in the classroom and I tried to make explicit the *why* behind my practice. However, this was done very much at the level of ‘my classroom, my rationale’, and did not draw directly upon the research or theory that supported what I was doing, albeit unwittingly. As I began my graduate work at the University of Georgia (UGA), I slowly became familiar with theorists, researchers, and educators who were able to help explain my teaching

practice and situate what I was doing as a teacher within wider theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Lortie (1975), Dewey (1938), Vygotsky (1962), Apple (1996), Giroux (1988, 1981) and many others were suddenly giving me the tools to explore my practice and to think about teaching and teacher education from a wider perspective. Coupled with this was the opportunity to take classes and work with several faculty members who were influential in my academic development and supported my interests and ideas.

As I progressed through my coursework at UGA, I became interested in how teachers are educated and prepared in some of the various places I had worked. It became clear to me that I did not know very much about the process of teacher education in the countries I had worked in beyond my own experience as a student teacher in England during the mid-1990s. As I continued to study further and attend classes, I came to realize that the focus of my dissertation should be an examination of teacher education in various geographical locations. As I thought this through, and weighed various personal and practical implications, I settled on a comparative study of teacher education in the US, England and the United Arab Emirates, three places where I had an interest, personal experience and access to data sources.

During my teaching career, teaching itself was changing, and the notions of what a teacher does were shifting in profound ways. I entered the field of teaching in the mid-1990s in England, a time of historic political change, the end of a long-term Conservative government, heralding in a socialist administration with a strong history of social justice and support for education. Teachers, caught

in a deluge of educational initiatives, expected the aims of new initiatives to increase student learning and not teacher accountability. Teacher education was becoming more centralized and governed from the top, and teachers were losing autonomy and had to teach to a prescribed national curriculum. My cohort of student teachers was one of the first to be certified under new regulations, requiring us meet numerous ‘competencies’ during student teaching--a set of standards that all student teachers in the country had to meet, regardless of the context in which they taught. We followed the national curriculum to the letter, as instructed, and given seminars in the latest educational initiatives, such as inclusion, special education, gender, and race. Seminars, theoretically impoverished while also impractical, were mandated by the government and the requirements of the ‘taught’ competencies. One such seminar on how to identify and deal with suspected cases of child abuse among our students was delivered via a handout that we were ‘required’ to read, and therefore able to tick off on our competency checklist.

My experiences were similar to those of teachers in other parts of the world, where education was becoming a greater topic of discussion and concern among politicians and the public. At the same time, the role of teacher education was changing in profound ways, in both content and delivery. Governments in England, the US and the UAE all took a greater role in controlling the work of teachers and teacher educators. In the next section, I will examine the main changes that occurred in all three countries over the last quarter of a decade in order to ground this study in the historical and political context in which it sits.

Educational Change in Three Contexts

In the following section, I describe the major policy initiatives that played a part in shaping current educational practice in each of the countries under study, focusing on the last twenty-five years. I will then move on to explain how I will place the study within the sphere of globalized educational discourse, highlighting how international comparative studies can help us understand wider issues of educational development.

Kevin Harris (1994) provides an overview of the policy context

The present history of teachers in much of the Western world has become one of decreased status and control with relation to educational issues, loss of autonomy, worsening of conditions, loss of purpose and direction, destruction of health, increased anxiety and depression, lowering of morale, and, despite a continued proliferation of policy and rhetoric to the contrary, subjugation to increasing government and other external controls of schooling and curricula. The initiatives currently being imposed on teachers are serving, at one and the same time, to reduce the professional knowledge and critical scholarship which teachers bring to their work, and to decrease the political impact that teachers might bring to bear through instructional activities (Harris, 1994, p. 5)

In his observations, Harris paints a fairly bleak picture of teaching and the teaching profession at the end of the twentieth century. The arguments that Harris

makes, however, are symptomatic of the educational reforms and policies that were implemented over the last twenty-five years in all three of the sites of this study, namely the United States, England and the United Arab Emirates. When teachers in differing countries talk about their work and role as teachers, their concerns mirror those of their colleagues, regardless of where they are in the world (Hall, 2004). They talk about losing autonomy in their classrooms, a lack of resources and time to cover the increasing expectations placed upon them, issues of difficult and challenging behavior in the classrooms, loss of status and respect in the wider community, insufficient compensation for their work and an ever-growing number of mandated standardized tests to squeeze into an already crowded curriculum. All of these elements are a direct result of a general move toward top-down educational systems.

There is a general consensus among many respected educational commentators regarding the current trends taking hold in the work of teachers in developed countries (e.g., Apple, 1982, 1988, 1996; Bottery and Wright, 2000; Cross, 2004; Gee and Lankshear, 1995; Gideonse, 1992; Hargreaves, 1995; Harris, 1994; Lawn, 1996; Marshall, 2008; Seddon, 1997; Spring, 2000, 2008; Troman, 2000; Woodhead, 2002). These trends, as Harris (1994) argues, include teachers' loss of power in determining appropriate curricula, the rise in mandated standardized tests in public schools, changing conditions of service and a general lowering of teacher morale, with the effect of recruitment and retention having become a large scale problem. These trends are shaped by the legislative and

political changes to the work teachers do and by the cultural shift that has placed teaching and teachers in a defensive position in many societies.

The Move Toward Standardization

In 1983 in the US, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE), reporting to the Department of Education, under the presidency of Ronald Reagan, published a report titled *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (NCEE, 1983). At just thirty-six pages long, with an emotive title, *A Nation at Risk* opened with the following powerful rhetoric;

Our nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world... the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people... If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might have viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. (NCEE, 1983, p. 5)

Through the language used, Americans suddenly began to associate their school systems with failure and believed that this was tantamount to a threat to national security and the American way of life. The authors of the report “trump(ed) up the failures of public education” (Johnson et al, 2005, p. 69) and stressed the need for urgent educational reform. Parents and taxpayers took a far

greater interest in the school system, and the teachers who worked in them, and looked for ways to hold teachers and education administrators accountable for school progress and results (Cross, 2004), a situation that did not exist to the same extent before publication of the NCEE report. The national discourse surrounding education became a media event (Bruner, 1996), allowing for a public debate, often by commentators with little or no previous interest in educational matters. This was the beginning of the development of national standards for teaching (Johnson et al, 2005), with teachers becoming increasingly monitored and regulated, as well as blamed for the perceived drop in educational attainment.

The repercussions of this report were felt immediately, and continue to be felt in the US today. The report caused a furor and a host of educational reforms was proposed, not only by government but also by professional associations and interest groups (Wright, 2006). One of the main criticisms of the report was that international comparisons of student achievement were not justified, as the data could not be fairly compared on an ‘apples-to-apples’ basis. The data did not allow for contextual and structural elements to be taken into consideration, for example the open access policy of the American education system as opposed to selective systems, such as those employed in Japan and Korea. The US school system emphasized the role of the worker and competition in an ever-expanding global labor market (Spring, 2000), and this competitiveness was situated by the NCEE report as being under attack, playing heavily on the paranoia and emotions of an already fearful nation.

A Nation at Risk, therefore, played upon many of the contemporary fears of ordinary Americans, and this ricocheted into classrooms all across the country. Teachers were dealing with many political events that needed discussion and understanding among their students, youngsters who were entering a new global era, one of uncertainty and fear. Coming around the time of such events as Reagan's formal engagement of the Soviet Union in a nuclear-arms race (1983), the killing of over 200 US marines in Lebanon by Hezbollah terrorists, the development of the 'Star Wars' missile defense shield (1985), touted as being key to the security of the US, and 'Irangate' in 1986, it is little wonder that the NCEE report heightened fears among the population of the decline in US security and global dominance. Teachers, and teacher educators, had entered a new world, one that troubled and problematized their work and threw open what they did in their classrooms to a broader, and more critical, audience.

At around the same time as the NCEE was going public with its report, educational discourse in England focused on reform and the perceived failings of the system. As Lynton Robins dramatically states, "Britain's education system is in a state of near crisis" (1999, p.139), using language similar to the NCEE report. The early 1980s saw the Thatcher administration cut central government funding to state education and champion a vocational training initiative, aimed to appease the worries of employers' organizations. The grand climax of the Thatcherite education program was the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA), following hard on the heels of her success in the 1987 general election. The ERA introduced for the first time a National Curriculum for England and Wales (Scotland and Northern

Ireland having semi-autonomous systems) with the added enforcement of compulsory testing of pupils at several 'key stages' throughout their school careers (Robins, 1999). This testing was to follow a top-down, centrally set and mandated course of examinations, with the results for each school and district being made public (Jones, 2003). The new testing structure was to have huge implications for the teaching profession, which suddenly found itself under even greater scrutiny in the public eye, with test results openly published and schools (and by association, the teachers in the schools), judged and placed in league tables, according to purely quantitative data sets.

Through the way children were taught and assessed, along with funding for schools and teacher recruitment, the ERA altered the institutional pattern of schooling in England, and created a new educational culture (Jones, 2003) in which teachers lost power, autonomy and standing. Teacher education became formalized and centralized, with the creation of a new governmental body, the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) established in the early 1990s. The TTA was charged with "improving the quality and efficiency" (Gordon and Lawton, 2003, p. 242) of all routes into teaching, including initial teacher training in the colleges and universities of England, developing and regulating national skills tests for trainee teachers, and promoting teaching as a career among university graduates. Initially the TTA was viewed with suspicion by the major teaching unions, as standards were being implemented into teacher education programs, mirroring the 'competency culture' that was rife in the nations' schools.

The early 1980s also saw the rapid growth of the UAE as a nation, formally founded in 1971. The 1980s was a boom period for the UAE, fuelled by the further discovery of large oil reserves and the strategic position the country holds at the mouth of the Arabian (Persian) Gulf. As the government looked to develop the country and invest the petrodollars it was accumulating, it began to focus on expanding the educational infrastructure in the country. With virtually no indigenous educational system outside of a few religious schools attached to mosques and the royal courts (al-Misnad, 1985), the UAE began to ‘buy-in’ educational expertise and systems from overseas. The assistance in the establishment of schools by Egypt and Jordan, two countries with long-standing educational traditions, led to a reliance on foreign curricula. Through these partnerships, the UAE received curricula, teaching staff, administrators and the expertise required to build a fledgling national school system.

The reliance on expatriate teachers and the importation of foreign educational systems created a situation that still exists within the UAE today. Emiratis heading to university have never favored teaching as a career of choice. In the 1980s, the government of the UAE was committed to raising basic numeracy and literacy rates among the newly formed citizenry. As with many rentier states, especially those in the lower Gulf region, the aim of keeping the status quo, with the elite few ruling and controlling the masses, was uppermost in the minds of the ruling families. One way to achieve this stability was through large-scale social service programs, with a focus on education, healthcare, housing and employment. Schools were providing free education to the youth of

the country, even if the teachers were not national citizens and the curricula was culturally inappropriate for the needs of the nations' development. The initial role of the schools in the UAE, along with raising basic skills among the populace, was to attempt to exercise a form of social control. This situation meant that teachers in the system, all of whom were expatriates, were government employees on limited contracts, tasked with cultural transmission roles, a position they were clearly not equipped to carry out.

As the 1980s drew to a close, ominous signs of things to come were foreshadowed by numerous discussions and policy papers regarding further standardization of both public schools and teacher education and preparation, especially in the US and England. By framing the educational policies and concerns against the interest of the nation state, and the perceived benefits for the population of these countries, there was little anyone could argue against the rhetoric of improving schools, without fear of sounding 'unpatriotic'. As the 1990s approached, the monitoring of teachers' work and student performance increased, leading to a greater degree of centralization, despite opposition in the US and England from teacher unions and associations (Hall, 2004).

The Institutionalization of Testing and Standards

The 1990s heralded a new change in government in both the US and England, and a continuance of rapid development in all sectors of the UAE. The early 1990s saw a shift in the political landscape in the US, with the election of a Democratic president, Clinton, ending many years of Republican rule. In Britain,

the dominating reign of Thatcher ended in 1990, with the new Conservative Prime Minister, John Major, heralding the arrival of a new, softer form of Conservative rule.

In 1990, President George H. W. Bush, along with governors from across the country, formed the National Educational Goals Panel (NEGP), a precursor to Bush's *America 2000* policy for education. I was later to be signed into law by President Clinton, reworked as *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* of 1994 (Wright, 2006), which sought to improve access to education, educational standards and teaching and learning across all of the states. Although outwardly altruistic in motive and design, the legislation created a new set of issues for teachers and teacher educators. One of the major issues with the new legislation was the included provision to create a new government body, known rather ominously as the National Education Standards and Improvement Council (NESIC), with the name suggesting that the creation of national standards would lead to improvement. The plan was to give NESIC the authority to approve or reject educational attainment standards established by individual states. This federal involvement in the educational policies of the states was set against the autonomy that individual state legislatures had to develop standards that suited their localized purposes (Wright, 2006). The implications for teacher education were obvious: if standards for schools were monitored and, to some extent controlled, by the federal government, then possibly it was just a short hop to the implementation of national standards and competencies for teacher education institutions.

Goals 2000 was an important piece of legislation that had managed to link the requirements of business and commerce to education, by stressing the importance of creating an educated and trained workforce, able to compete on a global level (Spring, 2008), echoing the ‘national disaster’ that *A Nation at Risk* espoused. President Clinton, who championed the elements of *Goals 2000* that were less controversial in the public eye--such as increased funding for preschool programs--spoke a great deal about teacher accountability (Webb, 2006), much to the chagrin of teacher advocacy groups and teacher educators, the very same groups who supported his presidential campaign. *Goals 2000* signaled a shift in the relationship between federal and state education policy. As Goertz (2001) stated

Emphasis shifted from educational inputs to educational outcomes and from procedural accountability to educational accountability. Equity was reconceptualized as ensuring all students access to high-quality educational programs rather than providing supplemental and often compensatory services. (p. 62)

By the end of the 1990s the growing interest in educational matters, and calls for reform from many different groups, had become part of the public discourse, with continued debate and exposure in the public arena (Pulliam and Van Patten, 2003). Many influential thinkers and educators of the time weighed in on the debate, usually offering solutions, critique, and judgment on the current state of the education system. In *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them* (1996), E. D. Hirsch emphasized his belief in the importance of a coherent

curriculum, on that seeks to provide a universal and shared set of educational attainments aimed at lessening the cultural and social divide within American education. The reform efforts in the US during the 1990s called for a strengthening of the curriculum and a tightening of standards-based learning, at the school level as well as within Colleges and Schools of Education, charged with preparing the next generation of teachers.

In England, at the same time as the standards movement was gathering pace in the US, the Conservative government of John Major was promoting a greater degree of selectivity and tougher school inspections (Robins, 1999). A white paper, presented by the government in 1992, *Choice and Diversity*, proposed lessening the control local education authorities held over schools and expanding private and market-driven initiatives, such as specialized schools and areas of 'excellence' within schools. Teachers found themselves in a situation where many positions were cut or moved to different schools, as funding, linked to specialization, favored schools who re-branded as technology, sports, or language 'colleges'. These new colleges, although remaining firmly comprehensive 11-16 schools, attracted funding which allowed the upgrading of buildings, equipment and the hiring of new 'specialized' teachers.

Along with the movement to create specialized schools across the country, the national standardized test, the Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs), were causing problems, both practical and philosophical, among educators across the country. Testing was becoming a greater concern for schools, and the logistics of teaching toward a national test, and administering the examinations, led to a

decrease in effective classroom instruction time, as argued by teachers' groups. The situation came to a head for the government in the 1993-4 school year, when a nationwide boycott of the SATs examinations was instigated by English language arts teachers (mobilized through their professional body, the National Association of Teachers of English, NATE), with overt support from the teacher's unions (Jones, 2003). The refusal to teach to, and administer, the English SATs exams, brought the testing system to a halt, and resulted in a major publicity coup for teaching organizations. The government was backed into a corner, with teachers, parents, teacher educators and the political left calling for a redesign of the national curriculum, lessening its prescriptive detail and removing the conservative and traditionalist elements it contained. As the SATs and national curriculum were being overhauled by the government, Major lost the 1997 general election, when Labour, under Tony Blair swept to victory (in no small part due to a manifesto pledge of 'Education, education, education'), registering one of the largest post-war majorities and ending eighteen years of Conservative rule.

The situation in the UAE during the 1990s mirrored, to some extent, the move toward accountability and standardization that can be seen in both the US and England. It is not surprising that the development in the UAE followed the general trends seen in the US and England, as it was from these two countries that the UAE continued to look for educational models and initiatives. One key educational development that occurred during this time was the major expansion of higher education in the country. 1976 saw the formation of the UAE University

(UAEU), but it grew slowly, as primary and secondary education was not expansive enough to provide a pool of suitable undergraduates. The 1990s saw the growth in the higher education sector, and one area that blossomed was teacher education. The UAEU, as the nations' largest teacher education provider, took on the task of promoting teaching as a career and recruiting Emirati undergraduates to train as teachers in the national schools. This was no easy task, as historically the school system had relied on expatriate teachers, resulting in very few Emirati teachers to act as examples and role models to prospective teacher candidates.

The development of a nationalized workforce, 'Emiritization', encompassed all sectors of society, especially those traditionally reliant on short-term foreign labor. Education, and teaching, though included in this program, and afforded great importance in the speeches and publications of leaders of government, faced an uphill struggle to become a career of choice among young undergraduates. The 1990s was an extremely affluent period for the UAE, with oil prices generating vast revenue, the development of the cities, primarily Dubai and Abu Dhabi, and the continued policy of sharing the wealth among the citizenry, a situation that undermined to some extent the Emiritization program. Those undergraduates who chose to pursue an education degree, with teaching certification, were from wealthy Emirati families who saw teacher education as a 'safe' way for a young woman to spend a few years at university before settling down into the role of wife and mother. This cultural approach to teaching was not countered by the government, who paid lip service to the ideal of a national

teaching force, preferring instead to keep the status quo, and spending large amounts of the national budget on the recruitment of foreign teachers.

The 21st-Century: Globalized Standards and Competitiveness

The 21st-century began with many of the same issues and concerns regarding education as had existed in the previous two decades. Rising teacher shortages, a crisis of confidence in the profession, increasing accountability, a reliance on standardized, top-down assessment, attrition among the teaching workforce and a rise in global competitiveness among educational providers and systems came together in the educational ‘broth’ in which both students and teachers found themselves. Public education, viewed as both a key investment in economic growth, also became a mechanism for promoting social justice and wider political aims (Young, 2004).

In the US, in early 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB), which was intended to improve educational performance in elementary and high schools by increasing the standards of accountability of schools (Wright, 2006). NCLB has been vociferously criticized by teachers and teacher educators as the legislation relies heavily on the use of standardized tests to constantly monitor and record the progress of schools, pupils and, by association, teachers. The tests used are, it is argued, biased and unreliable, favoring certain groups within society and ‘testing out’ many students. The Bush administration has stood by the act and argues that accountability and raising attainment are the key concepts of the legislation, although there is a

suspicion that further centralization of the school system is one of the reasons behind the act (Johnson et al, 2005). Teacher education, and the professional status of teachers were once again placed foremost in the public eye, continuing a trend that began in the 1980s (Webb, 2006). NCLB required that all current teachers in core subjects, such as English, be “highly qualified” by the 2005-6 school year, and that all new teachers trained and recruited reach this designation at by the time of employment. Confusion and ambiguity arose concerning the designation of “highly qualified”, with experience, state licensure, professional development, graduate education or competency testing all having a part in the many ways the term could be interpreted.

The aspect of NCLB that dealt with teacher quality and certification reflected the ongoing public concern for teacher quality and accountability, a concern supported by research citing teacher quality as a key variable in student achievement (Manna, 2004). Teacher education programs had to revisit their curricula and mesh existing programs with the new federal and state legislation regarding teacher certification. Many school districts found that, according the “highly qualified” designation, many teachers were now teaching outside of their fields of expertise, a situation not allowed under the new policy. This led to a scramble by many states to examine how they determined what “highly qualified” meant, while juggling to keep classrooms staffed by teachers without breaking the law, which requires that states establish a universal set of standard and tests, as well as equity of access, for all public schools (Spring, 2008).

In the general election of 2001, Blair was re-elected as Prime Minister of Britain, after several years overhauling the education system in England, including an increase in legislation and structures for monitoring school progress. School administrators were complaining of an acute shortage of teachers, rising class sizes (despite an election pledge to lower the numbers of pupils in a class), and the very real prospect of running schools on a four day week (Smithers, 2005). The two largest, and most influential, of the teaching unions, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), became embroiled in a row with government over staffing proposals to increase the number of teaching assistants in schools, a backdoor solution to increasing teacher to pupil ratios. The government withdrew, finding extra funding to support student teachers, and the number of recruits to the profession improved. However, teaching shortages, it should be noted, can be dealt with relatively quickly in England (compared to many other countries), due to one of the primary certification routes, the Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), which is a one-year professional course, focused around practical in-school teaching experience that a student completes after a traditional bachelor's degree. It was through extra funding targeted at this route into teaching that averted the predicted shortage, although teacher numbers were still at critically low levels.

During both their first and second term in office, Labour's education policy was to continue a drive towards greater accountability and standards, without attaching any significant extra resources to the initiatives (Robins, 1999).

Pressures increased on classroom teachers to meet the educational targets as set by the central government, with blame firmly attached to the teachers, schools and districts, if they fail to meet the benchmarks set by government. The resulting publication of league tables, a real case of ‘naming and shaming’ was, predictably challenged by the teaching unions and teacher education providers, with the main argument against such publications being that the profession was undermined further in the public eye. Arguments relating to unfair comparability, urban versus suburban and rural settings, context and socio-economic situations increasingly appeared in public debate, which encompassed government, unions, media and education institutions. The morale of the profession, already at dangerously low levels, plummeted, and despite government salaries being paid to all student teachers (around \$18,000 a year during their education program), recruitment began once more to tumble.

The UAE, without the procedural and unionized resistance to educational policy that arose in the U.S and the U.K. still struggled to recruit teachers and promote the profession as being attractive to national teachers. The ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Rashid al Maktoum, proposed a government initiative to raise educational attainment and promote education among the citizenry. This policy, called *Vision2020*, was a major educational reform policy that would draw upon the best educational practice globally, and model the schools of the UAE on the elements that best suited the national development needs of the country. Although *Vision2020* was a policy that sought to raise school standards and attainment, the UAE’s need to look once more beyond the borders of the country highlighted the

lack of educational expertise that still exists. The UAE remains reliant on expatriate teachers, with teacher education programs staffed by foreign faculty, while teaching is still struggling to recruit an even small percentage of the yearly needs for Emiratis, and the government is all too willing to continue to buy-in the skills it requires.

The Globalization of Education

Globalization has had an impact upon many aspects of society and culture in ways that could not have been easily predicted or foreseen (Suarez-Orozco, 2007). With the growth in communication technology, inter-governmental cooperation and conflict, and the rise of global business and banking structures, it is hardly surprising that the field of education has also been swept away on the tide of globalization. Once nation-specific ideas and practice related to education have migrated to many countries of the world (Weber, 2007). Through globalization, the increase in social, economic and cultural integration has joined with a blending of educational policy.

As with any field or discipline that deals with the inexact and ‘messy’ subjects, teacher education is shifting, influenced by the local and global structures in which they exist (Cullingford and Gunn, 2006). As the teaching workforce becomes more mobile, moving both intra- and internationally to deal with the worldwide shortage of qualified teachers, there is a need to examine how cultural settings and the training that teachers receive prepares them to teach within culturally specific school systems. The movement of teachers, as well as

the general role of the teacher in society, makes it even more important to study the perceptions of student teachers. This will enable an evaluation of current teacher education programs and an examination of how they can meet the needs of the student as well as the requirements of the state (Fajet et al, 2005).

The benefits of studying differing systems and institutions from around the world are numerous and allow for a closer examination of the practice in a single setting. As individual governments and countries continue to compete for resources and economic success, many such states are able to shop around and borrow ideas and practical support from other countries (Christina et al, 2003). This can lead to a blending of systems, ideas and cultures, which can create issues for educational structures. Such a situation may open up questions as to the suitability of an imported educational provision for the indigenous population (Halloran, 1999).

Research Questions

This study will examine the following questions which, when combined, will give a composite view of the teacher education programs that are being examined. Through this study, I wanted to discover how pre-service teachers in the three target institutions viewed their teacher education experiences and how these perceptions became constructed by cultural, social and historical traditions of education. The following research questions guided my study:

- What perceptions do pre-service teachers have of their certification courses and how are these programs preparing new teachers for their professional role in society?
- How do the colleges of education transmit culture through the training of teachers for the public school system?
- Does government mandated curricula shape the teacher certification programs to the needs of society over the needs of the students?
- Are there a common set of concerns and worries held by pre-service teachers in all three settings? If so are they confronted and challenged?
- What do pre-service teachers think about the practical element of their education programs?

Definition of Terms

Below I list and define the terms as I use them throughout this study.

Pre-service teacher education: first formal teacher education provided to student teachers. This is referred to as Teacher Training in much of the literature from Britain.

Teacher education: a formal course of education, housed in a higher education institution, that leads to certification as a teacher.

Student: refers to pre-service teachers / students at the undergraduate level

Pupil: a young person in the classrooms of primary and secondary level schools.

Field experience / teaching practice / practicum: an element of teacher education programs during which student teachers take on the role of teacher and work in classrooms under the supervision of mentor teachers and/or university faculty.

Arabian Gulf / Gulf: area of the Arabian Peninsula that borders the Arabian Gulf (sometimes referred to as Persian Gulf) and consists of the countries Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Faculty: academic professionals who teach on the pre-service education programs and often have supervisory duties during the practice phase of the program.

Mentor teacher / cooperating teacher: an experienced teacher who supervises and mentors pre-service teachers during their school-based practicum.

University / College of Education: a site of higher education that houses the majority of teacher education programs.

Socio-cultural factors: the factors associated with the teaching profession that are inherent in the social and cultural context of the teacher, for example, customs and traditions, status, social mobility and role of teachers.

I have attempted to apply the above terms and definitions consistently throughout the study, but an eclectic use of literature from all parts of the world may have presented some difficulties in adhering to this. The spelling conventions follow standard American English, although some inconsistency is evident if quotations used are from literature originating from areas where British English is used.

Organization of the Study

I have divided the study into seven distinct chapters that combine to give an account of the rationale, methodology and results of the study. Chapter Two presents a review of the literature relating to teacher education that provided the conceptual framework against which I framed the examination of the student

narratives. Chapter Three details the research methodology that I used for this study and gives the rationale behind the choices made. Chapters Four, Five and Six present the results in form of case studies, one from each site, and allows the reader to 'hear' the voices of pre-service teachers who took part in the study. The final chapter, Chapter Seven, discusses the results, implications and recommendations for future research in the field. An appendix presents an overview of the educational and historical development that has taken place in the UAE over the last thirty years. I hope that this will place the UAE in context and give the reader background information that is useful to understanding the situation in the Gulf.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I reviewed the historical and political contexts in which teaching and teacher education have developed over the last twenty-five years in the US, England and the UAE. In this chapter, I will examine a selection of the literature that helps inform the perspectives of teachers regarding their initial teacher education programs. The literature I review here draws from the corpus of work relating to teacher education that provides the conceptual framework for my study.

Historically, division in the study of teacher education programs has been along structural lines, focusing on the length of program, on the curricular context of the program (at the undergraduate or graduate level) and on the type of institution where the program is delivered (Zeichner and Conklin, 2005). Teacher education programs, housed within university departments and colleges of education, have traditionally been at the forefront of the preparation of teachers within industrialized countries (Davis and Moely, 2007; Gimmestad and Hall, 1995). Increasingly scrutinized by policy makers, these very institutions, however, face criticism for the way they prepare teachers and for the perceived

lack of impact of that preparation on the academic achievement of students. As much of the recent debate concerning teacher education has examined the role of education programs in the overall development of teachers and the efficacy of classroom practice (Dulude et al, 2005), a focus on the experiences of pre-service teachers may illuminate the disputed claims over the preparation of new teachers.

The range of studies that I discuss below examine teaching and teacher education in a variety of cultural and social settings. A comparative study of the similarities and differences in teacher perceptions allows for a more generalized discussion focusing on the issues that arise for new teachers during their initial preparation (Altbach et al, 1982). The literature also highlights some of the themes that become visible when looking comparatively at teacher education programs. They include the cultural context and setting of the delivery institution, the educational structures that exist (centralized governance and curricula), the demographics of the student body and the communities they serve as well as the status and role of teachers within the social hierarchy. The themes stem from the unusual nature of teaching itself, along with those who decide to enter the profession. Teachers, unlike other professionals, have had the opportunity to observe teaching and teachers for a number of years (Lortie, 1975; Goodlad, 1990), which brings pre-service teachers to the profession with pre-conceived notions of how to teach.

Theoretical Perspectives

This project begins with the assumption that the cultural and historical contexts in which teachers and teacher education are situated shape the experiences of those preparing to teach. The sections that follow explain the three overlapping theoretical frames that I employed in the categorization and reporting of the interview data. Through a combination of the three theoretical frameworks, I was able to explore the data and research questions in a way that allowed themes to emerge, giving breadth and depth to the interviews with teacher candidates in the three contexts under study (Creswell, 2002).

Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory provides an epistemology that explains the nature of knowledge and how people make sense of their experiences. Educational practices and teacher identity, constructed by societies in specific settings, are central features of this research project. Sociocultural theory takes a critical stance towards the taken-for-granted ways in which we understand and present the world (Burr, 1995).

As Gee (1996) argues, knowledge production, along with the use of produced knowledge, shaped by the specific cultural context in which the construction takes place, becomes context specific. Knowledge is not a fixed object but constructed by an individual's own experience of the object. The social and cultural contexts in which student teachers 'know' help them to give voice to their understandings of the profession, and I see this as a fundamental element in

the social construction of teacher identity. My understanding of sociocultural theory, and its place in teacher education and the development of pre-service teacher identity, are primarily informed by Gee (1996, 2000), Burr, (1995), Vygotsky (1978, 1986) and Giroux (1981, 1988, 1992).

Sociocultural theory, as developed by Vygotsky (1978) and as elaborated by Gee (1996) and Wertsch (1991) is an epistemological framework that places the learner at the center of the construction of knowledge (Shaw, 2008). Vygotsky (1978) focused the construction of knowledge on the social interactions and settings in which the learner was operating. Socially mediated learning is central to my understanding of how pre-service teachers understand their own personal construct of teaching. This understanding places student teachers in the position of learners, allowing them to draw on the context to make sense of their own teaching. Understanding of teaching, then, depends on the teachers' social interaction with people (educators, peers, pupils, parents) along with the cultural tools that are available to form the construction.

Kafai and Resnick (1996) highlight the educational implications of this perspective, by stating that it is “a theory of learning and a strategy for education” (p.1). This idea is supported by Bruner (2000), when he states that “the ‘reality’ that we impute to the ‘worlds’ we inhabit is a constructed one” (p.19). Teacher education, from this perspective, sits in direct opposition to the transmission model of teaching, in which the information given by an ‘expert’ or a text is taken for granted by the learner (pre-service teacher) and becomes ‘learned’ (Nuthall, 2002). Teacher educators, it follows, believe that pre-service teachers should

construct knowledge for themselves, and regardless of how well language is used to frame a concept or abstract idea, individual student teachers should make their own sense of the idea, drawing upon their previously acquired knowledge and experience (Hogan et al, 2000). As Burr (1995) states, “social constructionism involves challenging most of our commonsense knowledge of ourselves and the world we live in” (p.17).

Of particular relevance to my study is the emphasis sociocultural theory places on the use of language and speech. The theory posits that there is no meaning in the world until we, as individuals, construct it, and this is often done through language, as Burr (1995) points out when she states that “when people talk to each other, the world gets constructed” (p.7). It is through language, through communication and learning as an interactive process, that people learn from each other, construct meaning and make sense of their surroundings (Bruner, 2000). Pre-service teachers, like all learners, are deeply involved in this process. Language is a social tool, used to build a world view and understanding of the social context, and it is through the use of language that I gained an understanding of the socially constructed perceptions that each of the participants in this study held in relation to their places in society, teacher education programs and contextual settings. It is this interaction, an awareness of language that Ackermann (2001) refers to in relation to education.

Learning, especially today, is much less about acquiring information or submitting to other people’s ideas or values, than it

is about putting one's own words to the worlds, or finding one's own voice, and exchanging our ideas with others". (p.2)

Gee (1996) takes the use of language further, by offering his concept of Discourses/discourses. This idea provides a useful lens through which to examine the different narratives collected across the research sites. Gee (1996) differentiates between the two different discourses, with Discourses (with an upper case D) as "ways of being in the world, or forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes and social identities" (p. 127). These elements of Gee's Discourses, socially and culturally constructed, create an understanding of the context through language use and practice. In addition, Gee states that discourses (with a lower case d) are stretches of connected, meaningful language, which would allow the pre-service teacher to vocalize their understandings. As Gee (1996) states

A Discourse is a socially accepted association among ways of using language, other symbolic expressions, and artifacts, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or social network, or to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful role. (p. 131)

By examining and reviewing many of the assumptions made about teachers and the practice of teachers, it may be possible to see how the construction of the role of teacher takes place in each of the different research

sites. The social construction of the image that teachers hold of themselves occurs within the context of society (Burr, 1995). In different cultural settings, the image of a *teacher* will be different. I am interested in examining how this construction takes place between the learner (pre-service teacher), the educators (faculty) and the wider society.

Structural Functionalism

Structural Functionalism will play an overlapping but narrower role by focusing on how each of the institutions studied operate within in their unique contexts. Structural Functionalism is a theoretical perspective that addresses the relationship of social activity to an overall social system (Layton, 1997). Functionalism analyzes the way that social processes and institutional arrangements contribute to the effective maintenance of society and the elements that combine to produce the society. Structural Functionalism rests upon the theoretical ideas developed by French sociologist Emile Durkheim, and in terms of education, view the institutionalized educational structures (for example, schools, universities, teacher education, assessment) as a contributing factor to the smooth functioning of society. This theoretical approach, further developed by Parsons (1951), focuses on the structures of society and their functional significance in relation to other societal structures, for example the relation between education and family.

Durkheim (1976) elaborated on his earlier ideas regarding Structural Functionalism and related the theory to the use of language in a broader social

structure. This element of the theory is where I will be exploring the voices of the participants and how the structural position of each participant, program and institution are, to some degree, a product of the their structural space. This element of language, a collective series of thoughts and social organization based on agreed upon or accepted universality among the social context, illustrate that language is a system whose laws express the “manner in which society as a whole represents experience” (Durkheim, 1976, p. 434).

Structural Functionalism also helps place the institutional context within broader global education structures. Education is becoming an ever-increasingly important and influential factor in the globalized world order, and many of the ideas associated with educational reform have shifted between countries around the world (Weber, 2007). Education allows for the generation of a sense of national and cultural identity (McGovern, 1999), and structural and functional elements of the education system play a role in this generation.

Globalization, addressed as a structural element of current education system and seen from a Structural Functionalist approach, helps explain the situation in the UAE. Shaped through the process of globalization in terms of the importation of educational programs and practices, the UAE is a developing country and the national education system is still evolving. This process is part of a global trend toward a more ‘globalized’ education system, (Olssen et al, 2004), a situation that exporting nations, such as the US and UK are fueling through the internationalization of curricula and methods. Set against the practice of lending and borrowing, globalization has established new ways of looking at teacher

education through comparative study, the international movement of teachers, accrediting agencies, international academic achievement tests, and a rise in the public profile of the profession. Structural Functionalism will allow me to distinguish between the differing systems in different countries and see the similarities and differences that exist.

Schools and educational institutions are part of the fabric of a society, and within the countries where the research sites are located, they play a central role in cultural transmission and the delivery of a mandated curriculum. Teaching, when productively viewed through the lens of Structural Functionalism, is a social activity that operates within broader structural frameworks. It is the notion of the order of society that I will question when asking pre-service teachers and administrators about their roles in a governmental education system and how they fit into the wider educational structures.

Grounded Theory

My research questions, framed by the methodology and rationale of Grounded Theory, offers a way to build upon data as the source for a developing theory rather than imposing a methodological system directly on the data (Charmaz, 1983; 1994). Before I began to interview pre-service teachers in the three contexts, I had few firm ideas as to the content of the data I would collect. Such 'blank canvases', although intriguing, meant I did not have a clear notion of how to interpret the data before it was collected. Grounded Theory, then, allowed me to make sense of the data as the study progressed from the ground up.

My study is also qualitative by design, relying on the spoken words of the participants, which aims to use language as the main data set and the source of description regarding the views each participant holds (McVee, 2004), and allow me to explore the understanding of personal experience and the construction of self. Grounded Theory, as a framework for interpreting and exploring language based data, has become a favored approach of many researchers investigating language and literacy issues (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis, 2005), a paradigm in which my study fits.

I sought to develop Grounded Theory and to establish emergent themes regarding the perceptions student teachers held in relation to their experiences on pre-service teacher education programs. I employed the constant comparison method to assist with the collection and analysis of data. Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed constant comparison as a “method of joint coding and analysis to generate theory more systematically... by using explicit coding and analytic procedures” (p. 102). Grounded Theory is, however, built around a conceptual irony in that it is a theory that states that theoretical understanding is only achieved thorough empirical investigation. This was later addressed by Strauss and Corbin, who clarified the approach by stating, “in this method, data collection, analysis, and eventual theory stand in close relationship to one another” (1998, p.12). Glaser and Strauss (1967) stated that Grounded Theory highlighted “how the discovery of theory from data – systematically obtained and analyzed in social research – can be furthered” (p.1). Grounded Theory requires a systematic collection of data and methodology that allows the researcher to see

exactly how the theory develops over the course of data collection and analysis. The Grounded Theory method involves collecting and analyzing many different forms of data, with the aim of discovering themes within the different sets through a system of coding and constant analysis (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis, 2005).

The methodology suits the collection of data as part of an ongoing process over a period of time and this leads to theoretical perspectives empirically situated in the collected data. Grounded Theory sits well within my study as it examines what people do naturally and extends this into a methodology that allows for variance through an inductive process. The methodology of my research relies almost exclusively on observation, interviews and conversations with pre-service teachers undergoing teacher education programs. Ideas, understanding and questions that I raised throughout the data collection process allowed me to examine responses on a rolling basis. Grounded Theory offered me the flexibility to be open to ideas and situations as they emerged, responding and analyzing in an appropriate and methodological way (Dey, 1999).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) rejected previous theoretical designs due to the decontextualization of the data, and in this study, the contextual elements are at the forefront on my understanding of each participant. As my data and the contexts in which my participants exist do not occur in a vacuum, I felt it important to use a theoretical method that allowed me to look at how the many facets of each participant were interconnected. The contextual element that Grounded Theory allows aims to not “reduce complexity by breaking it down into

variables but rather to increase complexity by including context” (Flick, 1998, p.41).

Despite the flexibility and the allowances made within Grounded Theory to explore contextual aspects of the data, it is a theory that relies on a systematic method, including constant comparison, triangulation, coding and categorization (Cohen et al, 2007). Through these different, yet complementary, aspects of the method, the data, immersed within the arising themes, in turn, focuses the interpretation of the data.

Grounded Theory has become, as Miller and Fredericks (1999) state, the ‘paradigm of choice’, for researchers carrying out qualitative work, especially in the field of education. Grounded Theory offers the freedom to explore the data as part of an ongoing process and affords me the opportunity and time to plot patterns within the data that I collected. Theory needs to be included to frame the study, and Grounded Theory offered me a way of generating a theory that supports and explains the findings, reported later in this study.

The Intersection of the Three Frameworks

To help explain the world and our relationship to it, we often employ differing theories, understandings and paradigms to make sense of our situations. Guba and Lincoln (1994) refer to this understanding as “a worldview that defines, for its holder, the nature of the world” (p. 118). The three frameworks detailed above converge to help me make sense of the data and the narratives that I collected through the study.

Vygotsky (1962) described the process of learning and understanding the world as firmly embedded within social events. My interviews with pre-service teachers were social events, an opportunity for myself and the student to gain a deeper understanding of our thoughts. Through the narrative data that I collected and viewed using a Sociocultural framework, it was possible to comprehend to some extent the understandings that each pre-service teacher constructed regarding their teacher education programs. Only by placing the constructed narrative in the setting and space in which it existed, through examining the structural placement, could I access the narrative data.

The three intersecting frameworks combined to help me to understand teacher education in three different contexts, the US, England and the UAE, as well as make sense of the narrative data I collected. Through the Sociocultural analysis of pre-service teachers' identity, I was able to place their experiences within the wider social and structural context in which they exist. Structural Functionalism, through which social norms and institutions can be explained by their beneficial effects on the reproduction and survival of society (Gibson et al, 2005), allowed me to place each narrative into its institutional and cultural setting. Both of these frameworks, underpinned by the use of Grounded Theory, allowed me to explore the data and understand thematic developments as they arose.

I now move on to look in more detail at the literature dealing with teacher education that informs my study. As my study is global in context, and teacher education takes place around the world, I will approach the literature review from

a global stance, drawing on work from different countries and settings, which will assist in framing this study.

Teacher Education as a Global Practice

Teacher education is a widely institutionalized practice that is situated in particular political and cultural contexts. Who decides to become a teacher, how teacher education is conducted, and what teachers do after they have been inducted into the profession are in many ways similar as we cross national boundaries, but not so similar that they can be described easily in global terms. Teacher education is a social phenomenon; it happens within the sphere of cultural, social and political contexts, controlled by a few and always directed to meet a political or ideological goal. In the section that follows, I will review a selection of relevant literature that helps to place my study within the wider discourse surrounding teacher education.

The preparation of pre-service teachers to teach in national schools is a policy priority in almost every state and country (Giroux, 1981; Avalos, 2002; Cochran-Smith, 2005; Akiba et al, 2007). The need for teachers and the role of the state in providing them is an issue faced by every nation. The recruitment and retention of teachers has been a problem for many developing and developed countries (Al Kaabi, 2005; Gardner, 1995). As Troen and Boles (2003) state, in order for education to work and be effective “there *must* be a teacher in every classroom” (p. 47). There is, moreover, a broad consensus that teacher education is a fundamental element of increasing economic, social and political

development (Brock, 1996). As noted by the National Academies (2007) in its *Study of Teacher Preparation Programs*, there is an understanding regarding the importance of teacher education on the overall quality of the teaching workforce. The report states that “teacher quality is widely recognized by policymakers, practitioners, and researchers alike to be the most powerful school-related influence on a child’s academic performance” (National Academies, np).

So, what is teacher education? In addition, how does teacher education stand distinct from other professional training and education? Moreover, as Darling-Hammond et al (2005) ask, “how can we create teacher education programs that are effective in enabling teachers to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that will allow them to succeed?” (p. 390).

Katz and Rath (1990) attempted to define teacher education programs as “a set of phenomena deliberately intended to help candidates acquire the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and norms of the occupation of teaching” (p. 241). This definition, however, presupposes a planned set of phenomena, ignoring the fact that teaching is subject to many unplanned factors. These elements, among others, make defining teacher education problematic. In fact Jackson (1986) views any attempt to define teacher education as a flawed process due to multifaceted elements and context-dependent aspects of teaching that are specific to time and place, although Jackson also concedes that there may be some common threads of practice that run through teaching in general. Pearson (1989) also attempts to define a set of universal features for teacher education, stating that such a program would contain four key elements; general education, specialized knowledge,

professional knowledge and practice. Such a set of elements seem sensible enough, yet as shall be discussed later, the issue of what constitutes knowledge in teaching is problematic and contested.

The complex nature of teacher education programs and the preparation of teachers mean that a simplistic or generalized discussion of what constitutes teacher education is problematic (Winch, 2004). The nature of teaching and the role of those who practice it, mean that a teacher works predominantly in isolation, in their classroom with their students, which makes teaching often a solitary activity (Lortie, 1975; Chism, 1999; Avalos, 2002). This can lead to a mystification of what it is that teachers actually *do* and create misunderstandings and problems when trying to define, and support the notion of teaching as a profession (Lortie, 1975; Giroux, 1981; Spindler, 1997).

Much of the criticism aimed at the quality of teaching targets the institutions that train teachers. In quoting Steiner and Rozen (2003), Townsend and Bates (2007) draw attention to some of the issues that relate to the process of teacher education.

Schools of Education ... are neither preparing teachers adequately to use the concrete findings of the best research in education, nor are they providing their students with a thoughtful and academically rich background in the fundamentals of what it means to be an outstanding educator. (Steiner and Rozen, 2003, np)

It is such criticism that has contributed to the lowering of teacher morale and status with the resultant effect of discouraging graduates to enter the teaching profession (Townsend and Bates, 2007; Apple, 2000). Such a low status leads to academically stronger students shunning teaching as a career (Hess, 2001), a situation that is only going to exacerbate the perceived status and low morale of the profession (Leigh and Mead, 2005). Others have highlighted criticism leveled at teacher education policy for program changes and new curriculum implementation without little thought as to the upgrading of skills and training required by teachers (Brook Napier, 2005). These reforms and changes have often occurred in response to public demands rather than as the result of a rational assessment of the needs of teacher education within a society (Tulasiewicz, 1996).

As I argued in Chapter One, teacher education functions within a politically charged environment, with political decisions controlling and influencing the process of teacher preparation. Governments often implement policy initiatives to appeal to populist views (Sharpe and Ning, 1998). Notions of power, culture and ideology shape the form and content of teacher education programs. (Giroux, 1981). This has led, in some instances, to a perception that teacher education programs and their parent institutions are out of touch with the day-to-day reality of teaching and learning in schools (Menter, 1989).

Yet there are those who strongly advocate on behalf of teacher education programs and defend the notion that “what teachers do, matters” (Zyngier, 2007, p.205). An effective teacher, in this view, has usually undertaken a teacher education program that was itself effective. Programs that do not rely solely on

standards and mandated assessments, but instead acknowledge the wider social and cultural space in which teachers work, are more likely to produce teachers who are effective practitioners (Avalos, 2002). It is this understanding of the context in teacher education that I now turn to.

The Problem of Homogeneity

As in any comparative study, context is vital to understanding the realm in which a teacher education program operates. The context links closely to the functions and demands of a host society (Giroux, 1981). Vaughan (1979) defines context in an educational setting as

the interaction of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors of educational personnel, students and other with factors and conditions such as type of training activities, physical setting, role-expectations, socialization processes and stages of adult development and is not seen simply as structural or organizational conditions although these certainly are viewed as one part of context. (p. 70)

Teacher education programs are part of a larger educational framework, usually governed either directly or indirectly by governmental agencies that seek to train and recruit enough teachers to fill the need of society. These programs are then required to fulfill certification requirements and standards before certifying new teachers (Wideen and Grimmer, 1995; Morrow and Torres, 2000; Troen and Boles, 2003; Townsend and Bates, 2007). Due to the contextual factors in each

setting and situation, pre-service teacher education programs are not easy to bracket as a single homogeneous grouping. Discussions relating to teacher education and the programs that produce new teachers, therefore, must acknowledge the broader picture in which the student teacher exists, and the many elements that influence the development of a new teacher (Grimmett, 1995).

Teacher education, traditionally viewed as an academic endeavor, and often regarded as a field of lower academic standing than most others within the world of academe (Iredale, 1996), has an image problem among many institutions. The situational context, therefore, in which pre-service or newly qualified teachers find themselves, is a determining factor in their ultimate success as an effective practitioner (Gold, 1996; Ingersoll, 2003).

An educational program that is deemed effective or 'good' in one situation does not necessarily mean that it can be transplanted into a different setting and work just as well, in fact such an assumption takes a very simplistic view of the process of educational development (Phillips, 2005). The notion of educational borrowing and lending in the field of teacher education and training becomes problematic when viewed as the wholesale transplanting of one system and program into a foreign and contextually divergent setting (Shaw, 2005). Politicians often lay claim to the effectiveness of foreign education systems and policies to help support change in their own jurisdictions (Phillips, 1989). This often leads to a version of 'educational olympics', in which nations compete for results and policy initiatives.

There are certain elements, however, of teacher education courses that are generic and culturally transferable. One example of this may be that teacher education programs should allow for a process of reflection on the arts of teaching and allow the pre-service teacher a chance to evaluate just what they believe about education and their role as teachers (Grant and Murray, 1999). Using this reflection as a way to situate the teacher within the larger educational and societal structure under which they will need to operate as educators would prove to be a useful endeavor.

In the UAE, for example, there has been recent debate and discussion regarding the role of men in primary and secondary education and an examination of whether it is desirable to ‘de-feminize’ the profession to a certain extent (Clarke and Otaky, 2006). This evaluation of the internal system within the state has led to a discussion of wider issues as well as a comparative look at systems globally to attempt to learn from others who have a more balanced teaching workforce (although it must be remembered that teaching is still highly feminized throughout the world, particularly at the primary and secondary levels). In the American contemporary educational landscape, where teachers are still overwhelmingly white, female and middle class (McVee, 2004), teachers face a student body that is increasingly diverse in culture, ethnicity and socio-economic status. This situation, although different from that in the UAE, also requires that teachers understand and reflect upon their practice.

Another aspect of teacher education that is almost universal is the idea that teachers work within a wider framework, dictated to by governmental policy and

non-educationalists (Lortie, 1975). This leads to a situation where teachers are only able to exert what little power they have within their own classrooms (Troen and Boles, 2003). Pre-service teachers soon become aware of this situation as they are immediately subject to state and local licensing regulations, university standards and the policies of practice schools.

Teacher education programs are complex, as along with the contextual issues mentioned above, there are structural elements of programs that problematized the notion of a homogeneous understanding of such programs. In the following section, I will explore some of the issues that arise when examining a variety of teacher education programs.

The Structure of Teacher Education

In his work in developing countries, Perraton (2000) noticed that nearly all teacher education programs contain four key elements; general education, teaching about content, developing and understanding knowledge regarding children, and teaching practice. In an earlier work Naish (1990) also highlighted four elements of teacher education; the process of teaching, educational theory, practical teaching experience, and content area study. Although these core elements give us some useful indicators as to the process of teacher education, they seem disjointed and do not appear to combine method and content in a way that provides coherence and detail. When searching for a broader set of elements that applied greater integration and coherence, Darling-Hammond (1999) offered an approach that takes into account the values and judgments regarding the work

of teachers. In her description of the core elements, she recognized the need for integration between the many factors of teacher education, pointing to the need for teachers to be able to teach students with an understanding of the cultural, social and pedagogical context in which they are working. If this cultural understanding, or capital, is absent, as is the case with expatriate teachers in the UAE, then teachers are in a weaker position when it comes to teaching effectively to a diverse student body.

When talking about the role of expatriates working in Africa, Leach states that there is often a 'perception gap' between the national and expatriate worker as to what was seen as sufficient and the 'correct' thing to do in a given situation (Leach, 1994). This often had more to do with the training each of the respective groups had received, rather than any real cultural or social differences in working practices. Teacher training institutions and courses may well have the equivalent of the 'perception gap' between student teachers, faculty and the cooperating or mentoring teacher in schools.

This binary of theory and practice is evident in many of the studies relating to teacher education (Honan, 2000), and it is an issue that is often raised by pre-service teachers. The 'perception gap', when seen within teacher training courses, is a theme that is often mentioned by student teachers, albeit stated in different terms (Hess, 2001). Many student teachers are not able to link the theoretical training delivered by a university with the practical realities that they encounter during their teaching practice (Lortie, 1975). There is a fine balancing act in mastering certification courses that mix theory and practice. This is an area

that many institutions are examining, to allow for a sufficient process of socialization of new teachers into the professional group that they will become a part of (Howey, 1996).

One theme that continues to be raised when examining the research related to student perceptions is the perceived disconnect between the university or higher education certification course and the 'reality' of the situation encountered in the classroom during the practice phase of pre-service education (Hall and Schulz, 2003). Student teachers often cite that the university 'theory' work has done little to prepare them for the classroom (Jones et al, 1997). The main thrust of this 'complaint' is that the trainee teacher is often entering a world never discussed in the university setting. They often state that there was too much theory in their preparation (Labaree, 1947).

In the UK, student teachers have reported that they feel the university preparation was valid but did not focus on the wider role of the teacher (Jones et al, 1997). There is a view that Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs,) need training not only in the theory of education and pedagogy and in their role as classroom managers, but also in their wider professional commitments (Hall and Schulz, 2003). Linked to this was a feeling that there was not enough time on the education course to cover all aspects of the professional training (Goodlad, 1990). This highlights the possible 'perception gap' between what the university feels that students need to know before entering the classroom and the types of information and training that the student teacher would like to have before they arrive at the school.

This concern, mirrored in studies carried out in other geographical locations, is common. In the UAE, research carried out by the Higher Colleges of Technology, a state sponsored college offering teacher education programs to Emirati nationals, illustrated that teacher candidates, when asked to reflect on their course and the effectiveness of the preparation they received, cited that they felt that the course could have been more practical in nature (Clarke and Otaky, 2006). For example, students stated that they probably would have benefited from a series of workshops examining how to deal with problem behavior and how to set up a classroom, two elements that they felt were missing from their course (Clarke and Otaky, 2006; Shaw, 1993). This practical knowledge could have helped them initially as they entered their full teaching practice where they were responsible for everything that the class did as they assumed the role of the teacher in place of the regular practitioner.

There have also been experimental or professional practice schools set-up and administered by colleges of education, employing experienced teachers to model practice, where student teachers can learn their craft in a space somewhere between the university and 'real' schools (Daly, 2004). These schools also serve a different purpose, one that aids research into education. Many of the practice schools also serve as permanent sites for educational research and pedagogical studies that allow university faculty access to school sites that may otherwise be difficult or burdensome to obtain. There are arguments both in favor of such schools as well as in favor of those who criticize schools for being too insular and contrived (Gardner and Abu Libde, 1995). Whatever the view of such schools, it

is an area that has grown in interest to educators over the last fifteen years and an option for teacher educators to consider when looking at how best to deliver a balanced theory versus practice curriculum.

Another element that is similar to all teacher education programs is the process of selection and quality of new pre-service teachers. Cochran-Smith (2005) reports that entrance requirements for teacher education courses are on the rise along with the provision of alternative certification routes. Troen and Boles (2003) claim that the rise in alternative certification routes is due to a need to secure new sources for teacher recruitment in an attempt to fill the teacher shortage in many parts of the world. They also state, however, that due to the complicity of teacher education programs and governmental bodies that “the general quality of teachers entering the classroom is kept low” (p. 39).

One of the contested areas of research dealing with teacher education circles the notion of ‘teacher knowledge’. Can teaching skills be taught, or are they more abstract, inherent traits in certain individuals? Below I set out the arguments on either side of this question, highlighting the problematic nature of the concept of ‘teacher knowledge’.

Teacher Knowledge

There are several key questions to be addressed relating to teacher preparation regardless of the location and context of the program. As Darling-Hammond and colleagues (2005) ask, how can we design and implement pre-service education programs that are successful in giving teachers the skill set and

understanding they need to be successful in the classroom? In each situation, educators need to try to answer the question; what is it that student teachers need to know? This question is problematic as it leads to an assumption that there is a body of knowledge, a tangible set of competencies or skills needed to become a certified and successful teacher (Pearson, 1989). The question also highlights the debate about whether we should place greater emphasis upon content knowledge or skill and pedagogy (Harvard and Hodkinson, 1994).

Many compare teaching to the professions of law and medicine, yet unlike these two examples where the existence of an accepted and predominantly universal set of knowledge allows for standardized certification and licensing, education cannot call upon such a canon (Hess, 2001). Teacher education, as a distinct field of study and a professionally educative process, is problematic to define and understand in terms of a knowledge base or academic area in which to be housed (Cheng et al, 2001).

In 1986 Shulman introduced his idea of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) as a way to allow for the content of a subject area to be comprehensible to other learners (Shulman, 1986). A year later, he listed the PCK as one of seven knowledge bases for teaching, which set out the elements he considered key to the idea of knowledge in teacher education and the practice of teaching. The seven areas were; content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curricular knowledge, knowledge of learners, knowledge of educational context, and knowledge of the philosophical and historical aims of education (Shulman, 1986). These elements gave a framework to the study of teacher education and the ‘what’

of teacher knowledge, although Shulman's knowledge bases are still open to debate and interpretation (Gess-Newsome, 2001). In fact, for Shulman, a key problem in efforts to improve teaching has been a lack in understanding what exactly constitutes the knowledge and skills required to teach (Hatch, 2006).

As is often the case in comparisons with teaching, other professions have highlighted their corpus of knowledge in direct comparison to teaching, and this creates a problematic situation as the 'knowledge of teaching' is an increasingly abstract idea that is difficult to define (Winch, 2004). In teaching there is often a binary created concerning knowledge between the declarative and procedural knowledge that is fundamental to teaching. Noddings (1984) attempts to collapse and trouble this binary by examining how we can relate the content knowledge to the 'real' world of classroom teaching and, in the process, create an applied knowledge that has practical purpose within the practical field of teaching. This may be possible, but the lack of organization to order relevant knowledge related to teaching is a limiting factor in the field (Goodlad, 1991).

Like many other professions, teaching, and learning to teach, is cumulative in nature and teachers learn from their previous experiences and, ideally, use this gained knowledge to filter future teaching and learning (Greene and Magliaro, 2005). This constructivist approach to teaching, the formation of the practice as one progresses through the experience (Chen, 2001), follows a view that teaching is an extension of individual personality (Smith, 1971). If this is the case, is it possible to have a knowledge base for teaching? If teaching is a personal endeavor, albeit carried out in a very public arena, where can a teacher or

student teacher go to access the knowledge of teaching? In reality there is a strong argument that teaching may not be conducive to having a body of knowledge upon which to rest (Cochran-Smith and Fries, 2006), just as there is no body of knowledge to describe the act of parenting. Through collaborative practice, however, reflective inquiry and dialogue among the profession may lead to a shared knowledge base on which to begin construction of an individual teaching identity (Little, 1993). The range of different methods and approaches, along with varying theories of teaching and learning, mean that teachers need to engage in continual learning and understanding of their practice (Wiske, 1998), although this is very much context specific to the needs of a localized situation.

Regardless of one's understanding or belief regarding teacher knowledge, one constant that exists in all teacher education programs is the principle that teaching practice is a core element in the progression from student to teacher. In the following section, I examine the notion of teaching practice, illustrating how teaching practice, approached in different ways, is dependent upon the context of the particular program.

Practice Teaching

Teacher education programs link closely with the world of classrooms through the practice period student teachers undergo (Berliner, 2000; Darling – Hammond et al, 1995; Goodlad, 1999; Ishler et al, 1996). Gaining experience in the classroom is critical to the development and learning of the skills required to teach (Morine-Dershimer and Leighfield, 1995). In most locations where teachers

are prepared for a career in the classroom, those who wish to teach must undergo some type of formal teacher certification program, predominantly delivered through a university or other higher education institution (Anderson, 1995).

Although this structural element is common to teacher education programs, teaching is a complex and involved task, shaped by many external and internal factors, including the beliefs held by the individual teachers as well as their socio-cultural background (Hancock and Gallard, 2004). It is this wide-ranging set of beliefs, experience, backgrounds and understandings that make comparative studies problematic when dealing with individuals. Although a possible barrier to an understanding of what it takes to become a teacher, these human variables enrich a study that aims to synthesize the similarities and differences in student teacher perceptions of their teacher training courses from an international comparative position (Hall and Schulz, 2003).

The teaching practice element of a certification course is a key aspect of any teacher education program (Beck and Kosnik, 2002; Morine-Dersheimer and Leighfield, 1995) and is a regular component in virtually all teacher education programs (Goodlad, 1991). This practice varies in length, frequency and placement in the course structure. For example, in the UK a student on the traditional secondary school level Post Graduate Certificate of Education, a one year post-baccalaureate Master's level certification course, will undergo four weeks of compulsory observation in a primary school. Then they will move to a first teaching practice block of eight weeks consisting mainly of observation and planning followed by a sixteen-week teaching block during which time the

student will assume the full responsibilities of a classroom teacher (University of Sunderland, 2007). Compare this with a South African route into teaching, such as the course delivered by the University of the Western Cape. Here the student teacher does not get the opportunity to enter the classroom until the last semester of their certification course during which time there is an observation period and a teaching block, combined lasting no more than ten weeks (Fataar, 2001). Some argue, however, that it is not the duration of the teacher education program and the practice element that has the greatest influence on a person's ability to teach, but the courses a student teacher takes (Allen, 2003).

Although the methods and structures may be different, the aim is the same; to move the trainee teacher from the theoretical 'comfort zone' of the university into the 'reality' of the school classroom. This often has surprising consequences for the student teacher and can result in a form of culture shock (Cullingford and Gunn, 2006). The problem often arises when the student teacher realizes that the teaching practice element of certification is a complex and stressful time. There are many expectations placed upon the student teacher by the university supervising staff, the cooperating teacher or mentor and the pupils within the classes (Hobson et al, 2004). This can often become overwhelming, as Feiman-Nemser points out, "new teachers really have two jobs to do – they have to teach and they have to learn to teach" (2001, p8.).

This double expectation can be difficult to overcome and student teachers often feel that they are under prepared for the many demands of teaching. As reported in a study carried out in Portugal, trainee teachers often felt that

expectations were high during their long practice, which lasts for an entire academic year of nine months after four years of university-based training (Caires and Almeida, 2005). This same report does also state that the student teachers reported that the practice was the one element of the course that they felt they gained the most from, yet at the time of going through the practice there were too many expectations placed upon them.

Student teachers, like many university students, are keen to succeed and student teachers are particularly sensitive to things that bring about a feeling of success (Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann, 1985). It may be this desire to succeed makes student teachers worry about the expectations placed upon them during the practice stages of their training. In the eyes of a student teacher, anything not involved with the direct instruction of the students is irrelevant or peripheral to the 'real' task of teaching. Unlike other professions, newly qualified teachers must perform at the same level as veteran teachers, with little time assigned to the developing of teaching skills. Pre-service teachers must also develop skills, almost immediately, that will have direct benefits for their pupils in the present (Hatch, 2006).

The relationship between cooperating teachers, (sometimes referred to as the mentor teacher) based in the school where the trainee teachers carry out their teaching practice, and the student teachers can often be the site of conflict and resistance. It seems this is a problem that reaches around the world. There are reports from all of the countries examined in my research that allude to the often uncomfortable position a student teacher finds themselves in when the ideas of the

cooperating teacher and the requirements of the university certification course do not match up (Adams and Tulasiewicz, 1989; Ashraf, 1985; Haidar, 1999).

In Australia, a study on student teachers' perceptions of successful and unsuccessful events that occur during teaching practice has evidence from student teachers regarding their mentor teacher and the difficulties that they encountered in forming a professional working relationship (Killen, 1994). Disconnect often occurred when the student teacher tried to introduce a topic or methodology supplied by a university tutor, yet the mentor teacher would not allow this to happen. There were often some logical reasons for the dismissal of the task, such as it did not fit the overall aims of the scheme of work or the school students had already carried out a similar task. Yet there was a perception among the student teachers that the mentor teachers dismissed the task as they felt that they 'knew better' and that the student teacher, now situated in the real seat of learning, would learn the craft or art of teaching. There was a perception among some mentors that it was their role to pass on the skills needed to become a teacher in real situations, these being the messy world of the classroom (Cooper, 1995). The student teacher then felt obliged to follow the mentor and conform to what the school was expecting of them rather than go with their own ideas or something that the university had asked them to do. School culture often rewards such conformity and stifles creativity on the part of the teacher (Hatch, 2006).

Student teachers often report a sense of being placed in a subordinate position in relation to the mentor teacher and falling in line to please, as the mentor teachers are in a position that is vital to the aspirations of the trainees

becoming certified and securing a position upon graduation (Myles et al, 2006; Sands and Goodwin, 2005; Manduk et al, 2003). In one American study, student teachers most frequently cited a mismatch between themselves and their mentors as leading to problems during the teaching practice phase of their training (Scott, 1999). This seems to point to personality differences as well as differing opinions and outlooks on teaching, but we cannot ignore the role of the mentor or cooperating teachers as being a vital ingredient in the success, and perceived quality of the experience, that a student teacher will take from their time in schools.

In America, mentor teachers who surveyed in a study by Clinard et al, (1997) stated that they saw their role as providing student teachers with discipline and management skills. Although important to learn and master, this may not be in keeping with the ideas that the student teacher has regarding their practice and may result in the disaffection of new teachers.

The act of ‘assigning’ student teachers to particular schools and mentor teachers is also an area that needs further examination. As with any matching of individuals, there is a lottery involved in the pairing of student teacher with mentor teacher. Often the matching takes place before the university education department and the schools who will host pre-service teachers have even met the individuals concerned. There has not yet been an effective and trouble-free way to assign students to schools and mentor teachers, especially as there are many factors to consider when placing students, such as the needs of the school, the requests of the student and the availability of placements.

Teachers work in isolation for much of the time (Lortie, 1975) and the ‘team teaching’ approach is often alien to both student and teacher. One way to avoid this situation is to examine and discuss the issues by all stakeholders before the practice begins. There is insufficient research to suggest any proven and effective strategies to help prepare mentor teachers for their role with student teachers and this can often lead to problems when trying to devise ways to assist the transition for a student teacher from the university to the classroom setting (Little, 1990).

Teaching practice, then, is a uniform element of teacher education globally, an aspect of the process that is important and a requirement for those individuals aiming to become teachers. Teacher education also exists within wider global structures, and globalizing structures influence how teachers are prepared. Below I briefly set out the link between globalization and education, paying attention to the role of the teacher in an ever-globalizing world system of education.

Globalization and Education

As my study is concerned with teacher education in three different parts of the world, it would be wise for me briefly to examine the literature related to the globalization of education, as this directly influences my understanding of teacher education. Increasing globalization has influenced teacher education in terms of teachers requiring preparation and an awareness of the teaching and learning needs of diverse populations (Townsend and Bates, 2007). One effect of such

globalization is that it has become easier to access information about schools and educational performance in many diverse parts of the world, with such a situation helping to shape educational policy around the world (Baker and Wiseman, 2005). Globalization and the growth in the production of a knowledge economy (Zajda, 2005) means that education needs to approach and understand the process of educational development from two different angles. First, teachers need to be educated as global citizens, with an awareness of the wider global society in which they and their students belong (Cullingford and Gunn, 2005). Second, global perspectives, incorporated into teacher education programs, will allow reflection on the wider role of teachers and education (Gal, 2005). The increased globalization of education has resulted in the increased potential for curricular diversity, an effect embraced by educators.

At its very basic and fundamental level, globalization is concerned with change (Gunn, 2005). With this change comes cultural diversity on an unprecedented scale. By developing teacher education programs that are sensitive to cultural diversity on a global scale, teacher education can become more relevant and forward looking (Thomas, 2005). There is a growing understanding, in educational terms, of the impact globalization is having (Townsend and Bates, 2007; Baker and Wiseman, 2005; Zajda, 2005; Burbules and Torres, 2000). Teacher education, when viewed from a global stance, affords the opportunity to highlight good practice and learn from other regions that will in turn benefit programs on a local level.

The teacher as a transmitter of culture is a theme that many studies have examined and that directly relates to the idea of globalization and education, as culture becomes more globalized through rapid growth in communications technology (Al-Hinai, 2007; Angus, 2007; Cullingford and Gunn, 2005; Zajda, 2005). Either state or central government supervises all three of the teacher education programs examined in this study and this has far-reaching implications for the freedom that each institution has to explore alternative structures for delivering their programs. It also needs to be remembered that the actual task of preparing student teachers to master the wide array of competencies that they will need when they enter the classroom is a daunting one (Wood and Nahmias, 2005). Through comparative studies, researchers can examine both the positive and negative aspects of various courses and highlight what is working and what is failing to have an impact. This may, in time, lead to greater understanding of what 'makes' a teacher and how this can be successfully achieved to serve the students within society (Hatch, 2006).

Summary

Teaching, generally considered by society to be a caring profession, is concerned with the education of youth for the betterment of the society as a whole. To achieve this, teachers need to be in control of specialized knowledge and a set of skills that allow them to learn and practice (Hirst, 1996).

The literature review set out in this chapter allows only a brief examination of some of the main issues that student teachers report when asked

about their teacher education programs, as well as the larger framework and considerations that influence education. It is interesting to note that many of the same themes occur from different studies undertaken around the world. Comparative studies of student teacher perceptions regarding their training courses can often lead to a wider understanding, or at the very least begin a dialogue, examining how teachers are involved in the transmission and perpetuation of a cultural tradition.

There are many common elements in teacher education programs around the globe: the structure of colleges of education, the positioning of theory and pedagogy in training courses, entrance requirements for certification courses and the inclusion of some form of teaching practice that will allow the student teachers to ‘prove’ themselves. Teaching institutions and the societies that they serve are, however, unique. It is at this ‘uniqueness’ where a comparative study will need to look beyond the structures of the course and examine the wider aims that education has within particular cultures and countries (Vandewalle, 2000).

In Chapter Three, I will set out the methodological process followed in my study. I will explore the research questions that guided my study, and illustrate how I designed the project to address the questions that I had. I will also introduce the participants who spoke to me about their teacher education experiences. Pre-service teachers, placed within the context of their program and institution, will give the reader a greater sense of each individual’s history.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

In this chapter, I present an overview of the development, design, and analysis of this comparative study. I set out to investigate the views of pre-service teachers and the factors that affected their perceptions of their teacher education experiences. I was interested in how pre-service teachers viewed their education courses and how their university experience interacted with their personal and professional socialization into the role of ‘teacher’. My study also explored the powerful and complex issues of social and cultural expectations and values that shape and constrain all aspects of the pre-service experience, especially the developing stances, identities, and roles of novice teachers.

The decision to focus my study on the experiences of pre-service teachers in three different countries evolved as a result of my own personal teaching history combined with my interest in the process of teacher education. This interest heightened during my role as a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Language and Literacy at the University of Georgia (UGA). This valuable experience afforded me the opportunity to work closely with pre-service teacher candidates and watch them grow and develop as teachers within the academic

year. The work at UGA gave me a platform from which to design my research for an international study and guide my questions in a way that would allow for a comparative examination of pre-service teacher education across the three countries.

In order to be able to investigate the perceptions of pre-service teachers in relation to their education, I identified twenty-four (24) pre-service teachers, eight (8) from each of the three countries, as participants in the study. I explain the selection process later in this chapter. Together we explored their personal experiences as student teachers, which involved talking about their perceptions of their evolving professional identities, the role of the colleges of education and practice schools, professional relationships, the freedoms and constraints of their programs, their perceived efficacy of the professional training they received, and the joys and pressures they faced throughout the year. The data collection and analysis for this study occurred in five distinct phases

Phase one took place while I was a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Language and Literacy at the University of Georgia during the fall semester of 2006. During this time I observed student teachers and began to gather and read course syllabi and policy documents from the three target institutions; The University of the Southeast (UOS), Middle England University (MEU), and Northern Gulf University (NGU). I also selected the participants for the study and communicated with them regarding the purpose and scope of the study, as well as their involvement in it

Phase two occurred in December 2006 as I traveled to England and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to collect data while also continuing data collection at UOS. Data sources included digital audio recordings of a selection of interviews, transcripts of interviews, policy documents, course syllabi, institutional demographic data, a personal field journal, field notes and promotional materials of the different institutions.

Phase three, January to March 2007, involved a review and analysis of the collected data. This work produced a set of emerging themes that helped me focus the study more tightly and arrive at a clearer understanding of the ways in which teacher education in the three contexts was alike and different. These developments, in turn, allowed me to identify areas and themes for further investigation during the next phase.

Phase four consisted of a second round of data collection in all three countries and involved traveling once more to England and the UAE. The data collection took the form of further interviews with the same set of pre-service teachers as well as an opportunity to clarify institutional data with administrators and faculty if needed (Tuckman, 1978). This was particularly useful in the UAE as documents and demographic data were hard to find through print and internet sources.

Phase five involved the final collation, coding and analysis of the data, along with further document review and email communication with university personnel to fill in any missing information (such as up to date student enrolment figures).

Alongside this, and all the other phases, I continued to read the literature in the fields of teacher education, comparative education and research methodology.

Research Sites and Participants

This study is an international comparative inquiry into teacher education programs and, more specifically, the experiences of the students who are undertaking professional education and preparation. The research sites for this study can be viewed and described from two differing angles: the physical, political, and geographical location of the education program and the nationality, culture, and location of the student participants

All of the students who participated in the study enrolled on an undergraduate or post-graduate certification course in English Education, and they had all completed three years of undergraduate level coursework, primarily in English. All of participants formed part of an undergraduate cohort of pre-service English Language Arts teachers who were undergoing their professional certification year, which involved university based courses in English Education and school based teaching practice where they were able to work in school settings and teach classes. The selection of the participants involved several factors. Firstly, I arranged access to pre-service teachers in all locations through a contact faculty member, who allowed me access to the cohort. I then randomly selected eight students and approached them, formally asking if they would agree to take part in my study. All of the students I approached consented, and I after

explaining the research in detail, I asked them to read the requirements of their participation and sign consent forms.

The respective programs ran for a full academic year and consisted of university-based coursework and seminars along with two separate blocks of teaching practice. I interviewed each student twice, at two separate points in the program, once just after their first teaching practice experience, in December 2006, and again toward to end of the academic year and the program, in the spring of 2007.

University of the Southeast, USA¹

The University of the Southeast (UOS) is a large, public university in the South Eastern corner of the United States. UOS, founded in 1785, established a charter that set out to provide tertiary education within the State. The university currently awards degrees to the level of Doctorate and is the flagship institution of the state. The university consists of a wide variety of colleges and schools, one of the largest being the College of Education, which provides undergraduate and graduate education courses and professional certification while also engaging in educational research and consulting. In line with its status as a Research I institution, the College of Education is particularly active in examining education with a view to improving the educational experiences of youngsters in the state and further afield. Faculty and graduate students are prolific producers of research, publishing and presenting widely in the fields of education.

¹ All institutions and students in my study have been allocated pseudonyms.

The table below gives a brief overview of the students from UOS who participated in my study.

Name	Age	Gender	Biographical information
Jane	20	Female	Has always wanted to be a teacher, and moved to UOS to become an educator. From a family of teachers and wants to be an English teacher to share her passion for literature.
Sally	20	Female	Decided on teacher education program well into her undergraduate degree course. Feels teaching will give her options as career choice is limited for an English graduate.
Eliza	21	Female	Attends UOS on a scholarship. Father is a retired high-school teacher, and feels that this influenced her decision to be certified. Is looking to graduate school, and still not sure if she will go into teaching.
Claire	22	Female	Worked in retail for a year before entering university. Has a passion for literature and feels teaching is worthwhile career, although does have reservations about teaching long-term.
Sue	20	Female	She is a self-confessed ‘teacher’, who knew she wanted to teach from a very early age. Thinks her desire to teach stems from a “brilliant and inspiring” 5 th grade teacher.
Tamara	21	Female	Admits teaching may not be the career for her, although entered program with high hopes. Had a tough time in first practice school. First generation student, so wants to do something worthwhile for her family.
James	21	Male	Comes from a family of teachers and he chose teaching as he wants to coach sports at high school. Content with teaching English, although sees this as a way in to the system, allowing him to coach.
David	21	Male	Enjoyed English at school and this led him to an English degree. David has a couple

			of friends who did the education course and enjoyed it, so he decided to have a go. Not sure of he will teach straight after graduation, although thinks he will end up in schools.
--	--	--	---

Middle England University, UK

Middle England University (MEU) is a large and established institution in the geographical heart of the UK. The university has a good reputation and attracts students from all over the UK, Europe and beyond, to undertake undergraduate and graduate degrees as well as professional training courses. The campus is primarily located in the heart of an historical medieval city and provides educational and social support for the surrounding population in the form of a teaching hospital and social services. The School of Education is a large and established section of the university. It serves as one of the largest teacher education centers in the region and places hundreds of student teachers in local schools each year. The school both nationally and internationally known for the undergraduate and postgraduate courses on offer, and it is home to a UNESCO center that focuses on international education.

As with all teacher-training institutions in the UK, the curricula offered follows a central set of standards laid out by the UK government. This ensures that all pre-service teachers receive a similar experience regardless of the institution they attend. Many institutions specialize in graduate studies as a way to offer new and innovative programs, and the School of Education at MEU has a strong graduate studies and research culture.

The participants for this study were from the year long secondary school level Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), during which time the students take a minimal number of education classes and spend the large part of the academic year in their practice schools. All of the students held Bachelor degrees in their subject and were following the PGCE route to certification, as is the norm for secondary school teachers.

Middle England University graduates a large number of teachers at all levels every year. The eight students from MEU who agreed to participate in my study enrolled on a post-baccalaureate certification course, known as a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). With the exception of one student, all of the students had completed a Bachelor's degree, predominantly a Bachelor of Arts in English or Literature, and were completing a PGCE in secondary English. The PGCE is a Master's level program that lasts a full academic year, weighted heavily in favor of the practice phases in local schools. Of the thirty-eight weeks of a standard PGCE, around thirty are in practice schools.

Name	Age	Gender	Biographical information
Ailsa	22	Female	From Scotland, decided to train as a teacher in England as current teacher shortage means good employment opportunities. Thinks she will teach for a few years to "pay off all the bloody student loans I have".
Deborah	22	Female	Wanted to be a teacher since before her undergraduate degree. Volunteered as a school assistant in local area. Training to be a secondary teacher, although thinks she may switch to primary level.
Cindy	30	Female	Employed in commercial and retail business

			for past seven years. Became disillusioned with corporate life and felt teaching would give her the change she needed. Recruited to teacher education course by central government recruiting campaign that offered significant financial incentives.
Caroline	22	Female	Wanted to be an English teacher ever since secondary school, due in part to a teacher who inspired her. Looking forward to having the opportunity to pass on her passion for literature, with the aim of teaching in an urban 'high-needs' school
Joanne	23	Female	Would like to stay in the area of MEU upon certification, with a job locally, but maybe not as a teacher. Application to the course was a last minute decision, with her feeling that career options are limited with a degree in English. Ultimate goal is to work for a publishing company.
Tony	23	Male	Went to university to study "anything", before aiming to enter the air force as an officer. Application to the military was unsuccessful, so he "fell" into teaching as an alternative option. Thinks certification will make him more marketable, and not sure if teaching is where he will head. Looking at options of substitute teaching (which pays nearly \$200 a day) as a way to finance some travel.
Richard	21	Male	Has a passion for studying and decided on education as a way to remain at university for another year. Considering a Master's degree in education, with a view to gaining a non-teaching role in education.
Phil	24	Male	A non-traditional student, who left school at 16, took an access course and entered a degree course. Is committed to teaching in a local school and giving back to his community. Volunteers at local school.

Northern Gulf University, UAE

Northern Gulf University (NGU), established in the oasis town of Al Ain by royal decree in 1976, is under the direction of the president of the UAE. It was the first higher education institution within the newly formed UAE and was open to national citizens who sought further education but who could not travel to the UK or USA for their university level education. The College of Education has a faculty of over sixty professors and a student body that number around one thousand and nine hundred. The demographic makeup of the undergraduate population mirrors very closely that of the national teaching force in the country with all undergraduates being female. These pre-service teachers are encouraged to enter the workforce in education, as the current teaching workforce in the UAE consists overwhelmingly of expatriates (97%).

The College of Education was the first outside of the US to gain accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and this is a constant point of pride for the administration at the university. The College administration, along with the rest of the university, falls under the control of the central government of the UAE and draws all of its funding from this source. The students who participated in this study were in their final year of a Bachelor of Education degree and were undertaking a practice year, during which they spend the majority of the year in local schools with some courses taken at the College.

The eight students who took part in the study at NGU were female and were completing the certification year of a Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree. The program takes four years to complete, but the students do not have the opportunity to practice teach until the final year of the course. The students are all Emirati and attend the university, free of charge, on government scholarships and bursaries.

Name	Age	Gender	Biographical information
Salwe	21	Female	Feels education is important for the growth of the UAE and that there is a need for more Emirati teachers. She has a strong sense of social justice and hopes to be able to have a positive impact on the lives of her students.
Lana	20	Female	Wanted to attend university overseas, like her brothers, but this was not allowed. Lana hoped to attend medical school, but her family chose education for her. She has slowly come to enjoy teaching.
Sawsan	21	Female	Is unsure if she will teach, and thinks that upon graduation she will return home to marry and raise a family. She has little desire to teach in government schools but thinks the course will help her as a mother.
Mais	20	Female	She is looking forward to being a teacher and thinks it is important for local schools to be staffed by local teachers. Switched to education from business major through sense of social responsibility. Hopes to become a school administrator.
Hala	20	Female	She is adamant that she will not teach upon graduation. Her courses at university were chosen by her parents. She hopes to gain high grades to allow her to get into a graduate program in business,

			possibly overseas.
Noorah	20	Female	Enjoys NGU and knew she wanted to be a teacher from an early age. Believes in the importance of education for the good of the country and feels there are too many foreign teachers.
Amy	21	Female	She is pleased with her decision to train as a teacher, although initially she did not want to attend university. She went to a selective private school in the UAE and wanted to go to the UK to study. Her family would not support this, but she is not ruling it out for the future.
Fatima	20	female	Comes from a “very traditional Emirati family”, which led to her being told where and what she would study at university. Does not think she will enter the workforce, but will get married instead.

Methods of Data Collection

Interviews

I began the formal interview process of students during December 2006. This involved both individual interviews and group discussions at each institution. The purpose of the first round of interviews was to have the pre-service teachers examine and summarize their routes into teaching and reflect on their first semester in the respective programs. These processes allowed the raising of issues as well as give useful biographic information that assisted me with contextualizing the students as individuals. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) described an effective interview as one “in which the subjects are at ease and talk freely

about their points of view” (p. 97) and which produce useable and rich data in language that reveals the views of the participants.

It was my aim to allow the participants to talk freely and, hopefully, be at ease during the process (Robson, 1983; 1999). The use of a semi-structured interview facilitated this approach. Each individual interview lasted between fifty and seventy-five minutes, during which time I took detailed notes and, whenever possible, audio taped the conversation.

Before the interview began, and any recording took place, I explained the purpose of the interview and the questions I would ask, also explaining how their interview would fit into the broader study. If I taped the interview, I transcribed it fully within two days to ensure that the context and interview were fresh in my mind (Merriam and Associates, 2002). Students were sent electronic copies of the transcribed interviews and were offered an opportunity to comment or correct any errors or misunderstandings that might have occurred. This was particularly important for the interviews in the UAE where English was the medium of the interview but not the first language of the pre-service teachers (Potter, 2004).

Due to the international nature of the study, I was only able to offer email and telephone correspondence with the participants in the UK and UAE for follow-up discussions, but access to the participants at UGA, facilitated by my position as a Teaching Assistant in the program, was much easier.

The interviews took place during the first phase of the fieldwork, and I structured the interviews in a way that allowed me to pose specific questions to

the pre-service teachers, yet also allowing the flexibility to follow interesting responses or themes that arose. I asked the questions as they were written to allow for comparability between participants and to ensure that the same questions were asked to each student (Miller and Glassner, 2004; Potter, 2004). However, the participants and I did talk about themes and issues that arose in response to the set questions and the interviews sometimes took an unplanned route as each pre-service teacher spoke of their experiences. This led to data collection in response to all of the planned questions with the added benefit of collecting further rich and interesting data.

Written Artifacts and Documents

The written artifacts I examined in this study consisted primarily of official documents from each institution, as well as publicly available documentation, such as governmental data, and institution promotional materials. The documents included course schedules and syllabi, program outlines, program policy documents and assessment procedures, institutional demographic data and policies and any course texts used. The documents, although not used as primary sources of data, were fundamental to my gaining a greater understanding of the context of the programs and experiences in which the pre-service teachers were involved. The documents and written artifacts that I collected proved to be an invaluable source in describing and understanding the contextual features of each institution.

Classroom Observations

I observed classrooms at both the university and practice school level. At the university level, I observed the pre-service teachers in the role of student as they took part in education classes that formed part of their professional education and certification programs. Around half of all classes observed were specific to the teaching of subject matter at the secondary school level, such as English Language Arts, with the remaining observed classes dealing with what could be generically termed 'methods courses', which dealt with broader and general issues such as classroom management, pedagogical methods and planning. The observed lessons also varied between traditional lecture-style presentations to a student-centered approach with lots of discussion and group work. I was also able to observe a small sample of the pre-service teachers as they themselves assumed the role of teacher in their practice schools. This offered the opportunity to contextualize many of the concerns and comments that had arisen during the interview stages. I recorded these observations as field notes.

I was cognizant of the fact that many of the students were a little apprehensive about an extra set of eyes on them as they practiced their teaching, so I sought to make it very clear that I would not judge in any way what took place in the classroom and was there purely to observe. I did find, however, that this was difficult to do. My presence in these classrooms was, undoubtedly, an intrusion into the space where the pre-service teacher was practice teaching. I altered the dynamics of the classroom for both the teacher and students, often observing with the critical eye of an insider, another teacher. Such intrusion is an

inescapable fact of such research and it reinforced my awareness of me, the researcher, and the inescapable role I played in such a situation.

All of the observations, both at the university and school sites, provided me with rich data about the nature of the programs, the students themselves, and the wider educational community in each geographic location. The observations were a wonderful source of information that informed the data collected through interviews.

Field Notes

I made it a priority to keep detailed field notes for each phase of the data collection. I collected the notes in journal-style notebooks throughout the day and then reviewed them after each session. I then summarized the notes each day on a laptop computer while adding context-based comments and additional observations from memory. I did not replicate exactly what I had written by hand when typing on the computer, as to allow for a second level of interpretation to take place by identifying interesting and important points from each day and collating these on the computer. The notebooks were always my primary source of data and reflections, along with audio recordings of interviews, which I used if permitted (Woods, 1999).

Role of the Researcher

This study involved twenty-four pre-service teachers who enrolled in education courses at the three institutions that were the focus of this work, UOS, MEU and NGU. During the 2006-7 academic year, the year of the data collection,

I served as a university teaching assistant at UGA, where I was responsible for mentoring and observing a small number of pre-service teachers who were in their final year at university, during which they were gaining certification to teach middle and high school English Language Arts.

My personal history and experience as a high school English teacher allowed me entry into dialogue with pre-service teachers, as well as their university instructors, mentor teachers and other school and college based personnel. The fact that I was an ‘insider’, someone who had taught for a decade and could engage in ‘teacher talk’, allowed me a certain acceptance with educators. Often when I observed in classrooms where pre-service teachers were learning their craft, I found it difficult to remain a distant observer and reign in the impulse to offer practical advice, especially when the student teacher was having some difficulty. I was aware of this situation and tried my best to remain an observer. Although I never became involved in a class whilst observing, or did anything other than observe and take notes during the time a pre-service teacher was practicing their craft, I did discuss issues and dilemmas with the student teachers after the event, but only if they initiated the conversation or asked directly for my opinion.

I was aware that my presence as an ‘other’ (Said, 1978), in the classroom sometimes disturbed the established balance, often precarious, between the pre-service (classroom) teacher and the students. Although not an evaluator, my university connection and teaching experience cast me in the unsolicited role of ‘expert’ in the eyes of some of the pre-service teachers. Despite my efforts to set

out clearly my role and aims, I felt that I was viewed, at times, as an official representative of the university as opposed to an onlooker, attempting to glean information rather than make judgments. This position was difficult to explain, particularly as I was seen in some institutions with senior and ranking members of the faculty and administration, such as the Dean of the College of Education. This often linked me with the officials at the setting, both in the eyes of the students and faculty, who often viewed me with suspicion. This situation was particularly the case in the UAE, where the added dimension of being a European male visitor also aroused interest. The circumstances also raised cultural barriers that did not exist to the same degree within England and US.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for the study took place in the two different and distinct stages. First, I reconstructed the voices of the pre-service teachers and the issues that they raised through the interviews. I tried to gather the collected narratives into a coherent unit that made sense and gave a unified voice to the various voices that I heard through the many hours of talking and listening with the student teachers. The narrative data was refined and revised to allow for proper and just representation through this research report (Kvale, 1996).

Second, I analyzed the data through the lens of my own professional experience to allow for the thematic grouping of the responses given by the pre-service teachers. My personal and professional experience as a teacher allowed me to frame my understanding and categorization of the responses using a teacher

socialization framework, which enabled me to examine the responses of the pre-service teachers through the changes in the social person, the shift from student to teacher. In the teacher socialization framework, I paid attention to the changes that took place within the context of institutional settings and the specific context that the pre-service teacher found themselves in (Veenman, 1984). This framework and lens seemed appropriate as it allowed the context to be at the forefront of analysis, an element that was crucial in this cross-cultural comparative study.

Analysis Method

Because my study was exploratory, based on examining the perceptions and ideas of pre-service teachers, I analyzed the data using the constant comparative method as set out by Glaser and Strauss (1967). They defined the constant comparative method as one that is concerned with “generating and plausibly suggesting many categories, properties, and hypotheses about general problems” (p. 104). The method requires the researcher to compare previously coded data alongside new data to draw similarities and themes across the collected data. I used this method of analysis to produce Grounded Theory. Grounded Theory requires a systematic collection of data and a methodology that allows the researcher to see exactly how the theory develops over the course of data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 1994).

Structural Functionalism played a role in the data analysis when examining how each of the three different institutions work and the structures that

are in place within each teacher education program. Functionalism analyzes the way that societal processes and institutional arrangements contribute to the effective maintenance of society and the elements that combine to produce the societal structures.

I also employed a sociocultural framework when analyzing the data based on the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed and that pre-service teachers are able to learn more effectively when they take part in student-centered learning experiences. The construction of educational practices and teacher identity occurs in societies in specific settings, and this is an important and complex aspect of the comparative element of my research. Knowledge production and the use of the resulting knowledge, links to the specific cultural context in which the construction takes place (Gee, 1996). By examining and critiquing many of the assumptions made about teachers and their practice, it was possible for me to see how the construction of the role of the teacher occurred in each of the sites.

After collecting the data, I coded and analyzed it both as individual pieces of data (an interview narrative) as well as part of the larger data set. During this time, I made a cross-case comparison to examine the overarching themes, similarities, and differences that had emerged across all sites and all interviews.

Coding and Categorization

Once I had transcribed and reviewed, all of the data I began the task of coding the sets according to the themes and ideas that emerged. When I had

completed coding the themes, I attempted to find patterns within the data (classroom management issues, status concerns, rationale for entry into teaching, etc.) that I could use in the constant comparison approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Once I identified the themes, it was relatively easy to sort the data to allow for comparison as the pre-service teachers in all three locations spoke about similar issues, concerns and aspirations.

All of the interviewed participants seemed to be experiencing many of the same problems, regardless of the institution they attended, the placement of their teaching practice or the location of their program. What made these experiences different, however, were the ways that pre-service teachers dealt with the issues they faced and how cultural and social constraints and structures played a role in the outcome. As an example, all of the pre-service teachers had concerns regarding classroom management and had reported that they faced some difficulty keeping a class in order, on task and engaged. The way the students dealt with the issues varied between sites.

Students at NGU were able to draw upon a tradition of physical punishment often administered by a school principal or other senior teacher. The case of students at MEU was different, as corporal punishment was not an option they would choose to use, or indeed were allowed to use, so the approach was one of collaboration with students and veteran teachers to negotiate and support students who exhibited unruly or disruptive behavior. At UOS, pre-service teachers were able to make use of policies that allowed for the removal of a student from the room, which allowed the teacher to continue with the class.

These very different approaches to dealing with a very similar problem highlight the contextual factors in the study.

Ethics and Professional Considerations

I tried to be mindful of what I brought to the interviews and the research as a whole. Being British, male, a former high school teacher and an expatriate teacher all play a role in defining who I am, and producing my world view. This view needed to be as separate from the study as possible. The ideal aim was to keep the voice of the researcher completely out of the process.

Language and cultural issues were also a potential area for research bias that I identified as the project progressed. Research in the field of education in the Middle East can be published in Arabic or English, but very rarely both. As I do not have a level of Arabic that would allow an understanding of the Arabic language publications, for the most part I excluded this research from the literature review process. Fortunately, many Arabic scholars and educationists publish in the English language in accessible peer reviewed journals.

I was also very aware of the level of subjectivity that I brought to the study, particularly my experience as a teacher and, at an earlier point, a pre-service teacher. This experience meant that I empathized with, and wanted the pre-service teachers to succeed and become the great teachers I felt they could be, and that they wanted to be. This bias and influence led me to continually assess and question my role in the research and my personal position within the study. I was able to deal with the various settings in which I found myself. In some ways,

I was more able and competent in negotiating the school settings that the pre-service teachers found themselves in, yet I had to try to detach this section of my persona to allow me to examine the situation and listen to the voices of the participants. I think I have managed to address these concerns through the design of the study, through the use of multiple data collection points, various data sources and the use of triangulation.

Summary

I have drawn upon a variety of methodologies to create a study of pre-service teachers that allows the collection of rich data from their experiences and voices within a framework. I attempted to explore a variety of issues related to pre-service education and the perceptions student teachers have of their programs, in an effort to discover how context and culture play a part in the process. Pre-service teachers have a difficult situation to negotiate. They undergo what White (1989) termed a rite of passage. She described the process of new and beginning teachers and the socialization process they go through to enter fully the teaching profession. As she states:

Like other rites of passage, student teaching functions as the boundary marker between the worlds of teaching and nonteaching. Student teaching is a transition from one social group to another. Applicants must successfully undergo this passage if they wish to become a teacher, a member of a professional group with a set of specialized practices, knowledge, and beliefs. (p. 177).

It is the transition process from one group to the next, the shift from student to teacher identity, which I have tried to capture in the study through an investigation into how pre-service teachers perceive their professional preparation. This study captures, I feel, some of the complex processes and cultural contexts that place pre-service teachers in a unique, yet overlapping, mode of experience (Schriewer and Holmes, 1988).

In the following chapters, I will examine the narratives I collected from each of the institutions, with a focus on one central voice. This focus allowed me to look at the issues raised in each setting, and explore the themes that emerged as I spoke to the pre-service teachers.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTHEAST

Sally

Consider the observations of Sally, a teacher candidate at the University of the Southeast,

I really enjoyed my time doing English [as an undergraduate] and loved to read and talk about books and stuff, that's why I came to [UOS], to learn more about literature and stuff, and to see if I could get a job that allowed me to use my interest... But as I came to the end of my English coursework, I suddenly realized that there may not be too many jobs I could do that would let me use my degree and stuff, you know, I thought, maybe stupidly, that I'll end up in working for a big publisher, maybe even as a writer, but I guess I was kinda fooling myself.

Sally was a student who more-or-less 'fell' into the teacher education program at UOS. She had entered the university with a clear idea that she wanted to study the subject of English and literature, as this fed her passion and interest in reading. Sally was not excited about being in the teacher education program,

although she did see that it as interesting and she considered teaching as a career option for when she graduates.

I was like, er, what do I want to do, what can I do? ... I loved doing the English classes, it was what I wanted, and I was going to major in English and get my undergrad in English... And then it hit me, what can I do with English? ... I need to work after I graduate, and I know that people say there are jobs for English grads in journalism, publishing, and all that but really, who gets those jobs, probably not me! ... So I heard about the education stuff, thought it would help me get a useful qualification and, who knows, I may even like it... And, here I am and I do like it and I do think I might teach.

Sally made the decision to apply to the program late in her undergraduate education studies. Growing up and completing all of her schooling in the town where UOS is located, she recognized the need for teachers, but she also appreciated that teaching may not be a career choice that was right for her.

I think that teachers have a really tough job, I mean, all that work and all that time spent with kids, it can be really tough... In my first [teaching practice] school it was, like, oh my god, what the hell is going on here, how do I deal with these kids, what do I do, how can I get the hell out?.. I think I pretty much figured out then

that maybe this route was a mistake, maybe I should've gone to grad school or something... I just don't think teaching is for me.

Sally's acknowledgment that the role of teacher is a difficult one mirrors the complicated image of teaching embedded in wider society. Those outside of the profession view teachers as individuals who are committed to the education system and who, in some ways, are 'made' for the role. Despite this general assumption, teaching is not an attractive career for many, and this leads to issues related to teacher recruitment and retention. When asked about her place in the program, especially as she stated that she would probably not seek a teaching position after graduation, Sally told me that she would see the course out "as a kinda insurance policy", which I took to mean that in the absence of a preferential job, she would teach in the short-term.

One of the disappointments that Sally recognized was her failure to look at all her options before deciding what to do after her English coursework was completed. She took the teacher education program to be her only real option at the time, and in retrospect she wishes that she had investigated the possibility of graduating with an English degree and then looking about for graduate courses that may have been more in keeping with her career aspirations. The situation Sally found herself in was not uncommon, as several of the other participants in the study stated that teacher education was a way to either give themselves more time to look at career options, or as a way to secure a job and earn a salary for a few years, before moving on to something else. This situation made the time Sally spent on the teacher education program sometimes unpleasant for her. Although

Sally respected her peers, especially those who seemed committed to teaching, and though she acknowledged that the program was a lot more demanding than she had imagined it would be, she was ultimately just biding her time to graduation.

There were many guys there who really had a passion for the job, I mean, really wanted to learn to help kids and be great teachers, and I think a lot of them will be great teachers, although I reckon there're some really bad ones there as well... The [professors and graduate assistants] who taught the courses seemed to know a lot. They'd a lot of advice and practical stuff to tell, like how to plan effectively and what to do with kids who're causing problems, and this was a cool part of the program. But some of the theory and readings were just like blah!.. I mean, even with just the short time I spent in school [during first teaching practice] I could see that a lot of it was just, well, you know, crap, not practical, written by folks who taught, like, years ago. But I guess that's part of the game, reading stuff that people agree is important, even if it isn't.

Sally, as she was speaking, went from a positive account of some of her peers and the instructors on the program, to a critical assessment of parts of the course content. The interesting aspect of this switch is that Sally identified herself with 'teachers', and by talking about her experience in schools, she critically analyzed what she had been taught in the program on campus and how this did, or in her case did not, match the reality of her experience. Reflecting on this process,

Sally was exhibiting Gee's (1996) notion of personal knowledge, shaped by the lived reality of an experience. In her criticism of the effectiveness of the theory discussed on the course, Sally mirrored the views of several of her peers, which placed theory as a low priority for a new teacher trying to cope with the day-to-day issues of working in a school. Sally also refers to aspects of the program as a "game" When I asked her to elaborate on this, she said

Well, it's like, we [the instructors] read this, and liked it and this is an academic program, so we have to try and read and apply hard stuff, even if it doesn't fit with your reality in school... It's like the English professor who tells us that Chaucer or someone was the greatest ever writer, well, you know what, why? Who says so? What if I don't agree?

I had to admit that I did not have an answer for Sally, other than that teacher education, just like most other formalized programs, followed established curricula, just as a teacher would use with a class and that such questions were valid as part of the teaching and learning process. However, Sally did not seem convinced by this response. To be honest, on reflection I too realized that my response to her questions did little to help her make sense of the situation. Sally wanted to find a way to put her own stamp and identity on her teaching, and sought to do this through her use of language. As Ackermann (2001) sets out, using words to help make sense of the world around us, allows us to feel in control of our actions, a feeling Sally wanted. At times in our conversations, she did not want to seem overly negative about the program and teachers in general,

as she stated that she had respect for the profession and first-hand experience of how difficult the job can be.

Sally came from a family of university graduates, although no one in her family had been a teacher. Sally's only previous experience of teachers was as a student in a local public system. She could not remember any teachers who stood out as being inspirational or as having a profound impact upon her. Although she had done well at school, and had earned the grades needed to enter the competitive environment of UOS, she did not attribute this success to any particular teachers, but more to her family pushing her to study. Sally took part in a number of extracurricular activities, but felt coerced into many of these by her parents, who knew the application process for a good university looked at non-academic achievements as well as subject grades. In terms of her own perceptions of her years as a student, Sally said she went to a "regular, normal school, which was the closest to my house". At high school, she had never doubted that she would attend university, and was sure it would be UOS since she did not want to leave home and the group of friends she had grown up with, although she admitted that many of these friends had since moved to out-of-town institutions.

My teachers were OK, I mean, they were nothing special, they did their jobs and I got good grades, so I guess I was happy there... I think that I have a bit more of an appreciation for them [the teachers] who taught me now, but none of them stands out as being really influential or great at what they did... Others [students in the cohort] talk of these wonderful, inspirational teachers who inspired

them to teach, and I'm like, really? I think that there are [teachers] like that out there, but I've never met one, and I think there's a lot of bullshit about these great teachers.

Even though Sally had grown to appreciate her teachers a little more since beginning the teacher education program, she was still skeptical about many of the stories she heard about teachers who had a profound effect on her peers. Most students do not mention such an inspiration as part of their rationale for entering teaching, although a small handful of the participants stated that a memorable teacher was a positive factor in their decision to enter education programs. Sally did not buy-in to the notion of aspiring teachers entering the profession due to the influences of inspirational educators. McGovern (1999) illustrated how identification with a cultural or social role model was an important factor in the decision making process to enter teaching. Sally could not identify, overtly at least, with any such role model.

Although for much of the time in our conversations Sally wanted to vent her displeasure with the program and the situation in which she found herself, several times the conversation switched back to the role of teachers in society and the status of the profession.

It'd be pretty hard to say that teachers had it easy, I mean it would be difficult not to appreciate what they do every day in schools, I think everyone knows that. But seeing what they do as important and tough isn't the same as wanting to do it... Sure, teachers

deserve more money, they don't get the same sort of prestige in society that others do, like doctors and lawyers and others like that, but that's because their job is different. It's like everybody knows what they do and how they do it... Would you go to a doctor and tell him how to examine you for an illness? Of course not, because we don't know what he does. But we all know what teachers do because we've all sat in front of them for years. This is something we talked about in class... Teachers have it hard, and now with all the testing and stuff, it seems as if everyone is just telling them what to do.

Sally touches on an important aspect of the work teachers do in her comments and highlights one of the problems related to the professionalization of teaching. It is difficult to agree on what makes a good teacher and whether we can 'teach' teachers to do a teacher's work. Medicine, law, the hard sciences and other professional fields depend on an agreed-upon body of knowledge, which forms the framework for the practice of the skills of the profession. Medical doctors attend medical school where they study and learn from a prescriptive corpus of understanding and knowledge, and to apply this is reasonably straightforward, if one follows agreed procedures. The context-bound nature of teaching, on the other hand, the often unique qualities of students, school and community, combine to make each teaching environment different, and this is the challenge for a new teacher. Teachers deal with the "messy" problems associated with dealing with young individuals (Cullingford and Gunn. 2006), and the context

changes daily, according to the students, the subject taught, external factors in students' lives, and a whole host of other influences. Sally is aware of this and appreciates that wider society does not appreciate the multifaceted aspects of teaching, often seeing schools, teachers, students, teacher education and school systems as homogeneous.

Sally had some issues with the way that the content of the program did not always have practical relevance to her needs as a student teacher in her practice school.

In college no one said how you do it ... this is how to break it down. I felt I got all these theories and everyone skirted around the issues but no one had really said this is how it's done step by step, no one told me a step by step how you do it. The school would say we want you to plan something that fits with the topics that need to be covered, but the [university instructors] would tell me to do things in a different way... I somehow felt there was this void and I was... I don't know what went there.

These sentiments led to Sally berating her university instructors, as well as her mentor teacher in her practice school, for a perceived lack of coherence between the two the school site and the university. Sally, at times, seemed to blame the support, or lack thereof, for her difficulties in the classroom. The problems she experienced "in action" (Atkinson, 2004, p. 390), in her role as

teacher, were layered upon a perceived lack of guidance or a comprehensive set of guidelines between the two sites.

Another focus of Sally's comments relate to the increase in standardized testing in schools, and the effect that this has on the work teachers do. Many teachers in the US, as well as the UAE and England, are under increasing pressure from centralized systems that are enforcing a drive for higher accountability through the implementation of standardized testing. Teachers are beginning to feel deprofessionalized as the effects of countless reform movements and increasing structure to the school day begin to affect negatively the autonomy of the classroom teacher (Hargreaves, 2003). Sally witnessed the effect on the drive for greater standardization first-hand in her position as a student teacher. She had followed a certification course directed by state and federal mandates, and had to meet certain standards that, if not achieved, would keep her from certification.

Teacher education is openly under attack from policymakers directly through the control of teacher education programs, which are reliant on state and federal funding and exist as an arm of departments of education. This situation leads to certification often being linked to ideological interpretations of what makes a 'good' and 'effective' teacher, and opens up questions relating to the content of teacher education programs.

Sally presented me with some interesting issues to think about as I explored the narratives from the other students. Several of the themes and issues that Sally raised came up in my conversations with other pre-service teachers,

across all three of the research sites. In the following section, I select narrative extracts from different participants at UOS that help reinforce the emergent themes that came through talking with Sally.

Voices from the Cohort

One of the problems Sally encountered with her teacher education program was that she recognized that teaching was not the career for her. This realization, early on in a program, made it difficult to invest much time, energy, or enthusiasm in the process. In several of my conversations with pre-service teachers, it became clear that teaching was also not their first option. In fact, it surprised me a little at how many of the participants felt that teaching was not for them, or that it was a short-term option while exploring other career paths. My reaction, one of surprise, may have stemmed from my own experience, as I too chose teaching towards the end of an undergraduate English degree, as the realization that the world of work approached and I had not given much thought to my post-university options.

In the following section, I will explore several of the themes that were raised through talking with Sally, and draw upon other voices from UOS that also spoke to these thematic similarities. The three themes that were the primary focus of Sally's narrative were: 1) 'falling' into a teacher education program; 2) deciding finally against entry into the teaching profession; and 3) responding to the status and role of teachers.

'Falling' into Teaching

David had similar responses to Sally when asked about his reasons for entering the program.

I got to near the end of my [English program] and started to look about at what to do after graduating... Well, ya'know, I was not sure what I could do with an English degree, so I thought being a teacher... I liked school and was good at English--well, writing and stuff--so it seemed a good idea [to enter a teacher education program]... I have a couple of friends who did the program, enjoyed it and got jobs... They work hard, real hard, but get a good summer vacation, and the salary ain't bad... I don't know if I'll go get a [teaching] job straight out of [UOS], but I think I will teach, someday. (David).

David was one of a group which I termed the 'reluctant teachers', as he did not feel as though he wanted to teach, and, like Sally, fell into teaching through a lack of any other clear choice of career after graduation. He saw teacher certification as a safety net, something he could use to earn money and remain employed while he decided on his options. David was committed to teaching at some point, although he thought that he was "way too young" to go into the profession fulltime. David saw himself doing something else after graduation, falling back on teaching when needed.

One issue that David's situation raised stemmed from the limited number of places available on the UOS teacher education program. At UOS, like many other state institutions, program enrollment is competitive, with many students applying for limited places. Enrolling students who are not wholly committed to teaching and entering the profession is not productive, yet screening out such applicants is problematic and inexact.

Tamara also admitted that teaching might not be the career for her, although she entered the program committed to becoming a teacher. Her views changed during her teaching practice, a time in which she encountered difficulties and began to evaluate her desire to teach. According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), our view of the world changes and shifts according to our experiences, and Tamara illustrated this phenomenon, as her time in school altered her perception and desire to teach.

It was hard... I don't think I was ready for how tough, how long it would be... The students were tough and hard to deal with... I think this has really made me think, think hard about teaching... In our college education classes we're always told 'reflect', think about your practice and what you are doing, try and make sense of what you're doing, well, this, this time at school has made me think about if teaching is something I want to do. (Tamara)

Tamara began to doubt if she wanted to teach from very early on in her first practice school. She found the students difficult to deal with and the demands

of juggling college coursework and the requirements of teaching challenging. Tamara was experiencing college as a first generation student and did not have any terms of reference regarding being at college, especially as a pre-service teacher, to draw upon. Tamara struggled in her undergraduate English coursework before entry onto the teacher education program, and it is possible that the anxiety and difficulty she experienced during her teaching practice was a continuation of her earlier issues.

Unlike Sally and David, Tamara entered the teacher education program at UOS excited about becoming a teacher, committed to public education, and wanting to do something “worthwhile” with her education. During our conversations, it was difficult to listen to Tamara talk about her experiences as she was despondent and negative regarding her time in the practice schools. It was problematic for me, as I wanted to reassure her and let her know that her experience was common, but in my role as researcher, unfortunately this was not possible.

To Teach or Not to Teach?

Eliza had similar views to Sally, David and Tamara, in that she was unsure about teaching after graduation. Eliza’s father was a teacher in the state, and she felt that this influenced her decision to follow an education route through college. She wanted to attend graduate school after her certification program and was sure she did not want to teach, although she would like to stay in the field of education. Unlike Tamara, however, Eliza saw positive aspects of her teaching practice.

I think that we had a good opportunity to learn during the time in the schools... I know some people had a bad time, but I enjoyed it, especially the second time, I mean, that is what we did the course for, to teach, not to sit in a classroom on campus and talk about teaching... I know the campus stuff's important, I don't want you to think I don't, but it is not really doing, and teaching is *doing* isn't it? [My emphasis]... I think I would've liked to have more time in schools, maybe doing the college stuff online or something... It was a problem to travel to campus every week, as my school was a one hour drive, so I was really tired and didn't want to be on campus at all... And, honestly, a lot of it wasn't useful. (Eliza)

Eliza valued the practice teaching that she did, and the experiences allowed her to reflect on her own practice and the role she assumed as a classroom teacher. This reflection, as Burr (1995) explained, allowed Eliza to use language to make sense of her shifting role as a teacher. Eliza highlighted, however, a distinction between the different roles college and schools play in the preparation of teachers. This issue was a theme throughout my conversations with all the pre-service teachers in all three sites. Eliza, along with others, would like to have spent more time in classrooms in the practice schools and less time on campus taking education courses. Eliza did not wholly value the campus-based courses, and saw the requirement to attend such classes as an intrusion on her time and a burden due to travel times and fatigue.

Eliza's distinction between the practice teaching as the 'doing' and the campus-based classes as not related to the direct practice of teaching is interesting and highlights a shift in identity that many of the student teachers made. The change from a student identity to a teacher identity takes place during the education program, often during the first teaching practice. Many of the participants shifted to viewing and referring to themselves as teachers during the first teaching practice, and with this came certain expectations and changes in professional outlook. The language that many of the participants began to use highlighted their shift in persona, identifying themselves as teachers as opposed to students. This allowed many of the students to understand and make sense of their experiences as teachers, following Bruner's (2000) contention that language helps us make connections to the world in which we function.

Unlike Sally's experience of entering teacher education for lack of any other options, there were a number of student teachers who felt that teaching was the only career for them. These pre-service teachers had a strong desire to teach and entered the university expecting to follow a route to teacher certification. Two such students were Sue and Claire. Sue was a self-confessed 'teacher', who recognized that she wanted to teach from a very early age. Having a close relative who was a teacher influenced her decision, but she also thought her desire to teach stemmed from a "brilliant and inspiring" fifth grade teacher she had.

I just knew it was what I wanted to do, to teach, and to help kids see how much fun English and reading can be... I spent time around teachers, my aunt is one, and I guess I just thought what a

cool job... in fifth grade I had this great teacher, she made us read and read, and I saw how much fun it can be, so later on I thought, yeah, I want to be her... Hopefully, one day, I will be. (Sue)

Claire, who was the oldest of the students I spoke to, had spent time working in retail and business for a year after graduating from high school. Claire found her time at UOS rewarding, and her passion for literature led her to teaching. She felt that teaching was a good career change for her, and that it was a worthwhile job, allowing her to share her interests in reading with youngsters. When talking about her reasons for choosing teaching, Claire was able to draw upon her own experience with an influential and inspiring teacher.

He just made sense... the subject came alive and I think he managed to hook many of us in the class. I mean, I don't... umm... don't know how to explain but he made the subject fun and made it seem as if it was really important to us. (Claire).

The Role and Status of the Profession

Jane, a student teacher who was committed to teaching and had a sense of teachers as agents for change, spoke for many of the students concerning the status and role of teachers.

Teachers can make a difference... I want to be a teacher who helps my students to learn and to get better jobs and have options when they leave school... There are a lot of folks who think that schools do a bad job, but they don't, they just do a difficult job... People

want nice, behaved, educated kids to graduate high school and that is part of the job I want to do. (Jane)

A student with clear ideas of what a teacher is and the type of teacher she would like to be, Jane equated teaching with the production of “nice, behaved, educated kids”, and believes this is a central pillar in her role as a teacher. Jane hails from a long line of teachers and her recognition that schools, and by association teachers, have a difficult job may well be as much an indication of her familial discourse and history as it is of her personal experience and beliefs.

Many of the students spoke of the political context in which teachers carry out their work and how this influences both the status of teachers in society and how they are able to carry out their job. James spoke at length about these issues. He came from a family of teachers, with many close relatives having spent their entire careers in the same school district. James’s views on the wider issues surrounding the work of teachers, may be a result of growing in a very teacherly environment.

I guess we [teachers] are seen as pretty important but we are not treated that way... What I mean by this is that, well, er, you know, like, money and stuff, Teachers are not paid really well yet they have a real important job to do... People think that teachers can make kids better and stuff but that isn’t the case... Everyone thinks that they know what teachers do and how to teach, we spoke about this in a class on campus, ‘cos everyone has been to school and

seen teachers and they think, well, how hard can it be? ... I keep hearing that teaching is a profession but so is medicine and law and look at what them guys get paid, and how they're treated, I mean, would you ever go to a doctor and question what he is saying? I doubt it, but we get it all the time, from parents and politicians and stuff... It can piss you off if you think too much about it... But I still think it's one of the most important jobs there is, I just wish others saw that. (James)

James had several frustrations regarding teachers and the status of the profession. He valued the role of teacher and regarded the job as important to the betterment of society. Yet, frustrated by the perceived lack of recognition, both financially and in less tangible ways, he was able to explore his own teacher identity. James made the classic comparison of teaching with the fields of law and medicine, two other professions that are held by high esteem within society. While it may be true that in most societies lawyers and medical doctors earn more than teachers do, James does not make the link between private and public sector roles in the US context. Most teachers work in the public sector, where they are subject to the scrutiny of the wider society and paid from the public purse. Although James has valid concerns and observations, teachers do work in a very public space and this makes them easy prey for those seeking a scapegoat for many of the ills of society.

Summary

Sally was adamant that she did not want to become a career teacher and that she would look around for a non-teaching position after she completed the program. She did not view teaching negatively as a career for others in a negative way, yet her experiences and lack of interest in pursuing a position as a teacher influenced her attitude towards teaching. Throughout my study, the interviews with Sally were the most troublesome to conduct. Although she had some interesting and positive things to say about the program, and teaching in general, her overall tone and approach was downbeat, which meant that the interviews were often shrouded in a tone that seemed to spiral downwards as the questions progressed. The discussion would focus on negative aspects of the program, and Sally's unhappiness with the situation that forced a decision to enter the program, which detracted from some of the positive things Sally was doing in the classroom. The nature of such a study as this, however, prevented me from trying to redirect the conversations to reflect more positive aspects of the process and, in the end, I am satisfied and grateful that Sally spoke honestly to many issues that were of concern to other pre-service teachers.

In the following chapter, I will introduce Ailsa, a student from MEU, who spoke openly about her experiences on a teacher education program, and her ideas regarding teaching in England. Ailsa presented me with some interesting issues to ponder, and I will reflect on these through a brief examination of some of the responses of other participants. As was the case with Sally, in Chapter Five I will examine the predominant themes that arose when speaking with Ailsa. Her main

concerns related to her experiences during her teaching practice and her worry regarding the centralized control government exercises over the work of teachers. These themes mirror the political situation in England, with greater accountability expected of those who work in the public domain, and consequences for any perceived failings.

CHAPTER FIVE

MIDDLE ENGLAND UNIVERSITY

Ailsa

Ailsa was an anomaly among her cohort of pre-service teachers. She was from Scotland, a part of Britain known for its successful and autonomous education system, and for providing completely free higher education to Scottish students. She was the only non-English student teacher on her program, a source of much friendly banter and teasing among her fellow students. Ailsa made a conscious decision to move south of the border after completing her undergraduate degree, a move driven primarily by economic and professional reasons.

I loved being a student at [the University of Glasgow], and it was a really good course with loads of interesting stuff to look at... But once I was nearly done, I looked about and thought to myself ‘what shall I do?’... I was always interested in teaching, I mean, I’d some great teachers at school, so I looked about to see about training and getting on a [post-graduate teacher training course]. I knew that England had a real shortage of teachers, and that they

paid bursaries to student teachers, and I figured that this would be a good way to avoid getting further student loans, as well as give myself a wider set of possibilities to teach once I was done.

Teachers in Ailsa's native Scotland follow a different program of study than their peers in England, with certification to teach in the unique education system that Scottish schools follow. Although crossover between the Scottish and English systems is possible for students, teachers must recertify to move across the border, in either direction. Although this process is relatively simple, there is a perception that Scottish-trained teachers may find it a little more difficult to find a position in England and vice versa. Ailsa looked upon this situation logically, and realized that the relative wealth of teaching positions were in England since Scotland did not have as an acute need for teachers. Following the ideas of Layton (1997) regarding the place of professions within social structures, Ailsa realized that teaching was part of the wider social system, which is expansive in England, and offers greater opportunities. Ailsa also decided that teaching opportunities in England were more diverse than in Scotland, which has a much smaller education system. Ailsa felt that in England she would be open to greater diversity among the student body than is present in Scotland, even in the large cities. This, coupled with the large number of schools in various settings, rural, semi-rural, urban and sub-urban, that exist in England, gave Ailsa opportunities and options.

Even in my home city [Glasgow], which is big and vibrant, the schools are all very much the same, you know, with Scottish kids, many with problems. Don't get me wrong, it's not all rosy, but,

well, you know, they're all white and there is pretty much no diversity in the students except for a few schools across the city.

Ailsa had obviously thought this aspect of teaching through, and it played into her decision to undertake her certification in England. Ailsa had a fairly standard sense of the social justice issues that related to her role as a teacher. She wanted to encounter students from diverse groups and she felt that she had a part to play in the education of all the students she would face. Although Ailsa was interested in teaching and was pleased to be training as a teacher, she did not consider becoming a teacher until relatively late on in her undergraduate studies. Hogan et al (2000) would see Ailsa's reasoning as evidence of previously acquired knowledge (her undergraduate experience) helping form her own set of ideas leading to her decision to train as a teacher. Ailsa believed that teachers do an important job and in some ways form the foundation for the future success of the British economy. She also felt that teachers play a vital role in giving their pupils the tools that will afford those youngsters options and choices in their futures.

If I didn't think it was a job worth doing then I probably would not have got onto the course... I think I would like to do this for a few years, pay off some debt and try to have some nice holidays not want to live in England for ages... I think after maybe four or five years I'll head back home to Glasgow... I may stay in teaching up there but who knows? I may hate it and decide to work in a chippie [she laughs]... Seriously, I think teachers have a tough time, ya

know, with all the bad press and the stuff... The pay is not great but it goes up a fair bit each year, which is more than a lot of my friends get in other jobs... Discipline is a real problem some places and that that could be a killer, I mean going in every day to face really bad kids. That's why I will choose very carefully where I teach.

Ailsa's perceived ability to choose where she will ultimately work is a function of the shortage of teachers that blights England at the present time. Ailsa made a decision to teach in England based primarily on the varied opportunities that exist. This does, however, lead to a worrying situation in some parts of the country. With teaching positions available across the nation, teachers are able to target particular schools and areas in which to teach. Many new teachers, who are concerned with increasing class sizes, rising discipline and violence issues, and cost of living, are seeking out 'better' schools, often in semi-rural areas, where the student body is often homogeneous, league table placement is respectable, parental involvement is greater, and salaries can stretch a little farther. The result of this flight from city schools means that urban areas often have the highest turnover of teachers. In some inner London schools, a reliance on expatriate teachers, drawn primarily from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, reflects to some extent the situation in the United Arab Emirates. These overseas teachers are often using their jobs as a way to fund working overseas for a short period of time, often leaving after two or three years.

Ailsa recognized that teachers do not hold a particularly favored status in society. This perception is, as Ailsa states, filtered down to the students in the schools, who often lack respect for teachers.

We [teachers] have no rights anymore. The kids have all the rights and they know it... It used to be that teachers were respected, pillars of the community. You would say “I’m a teacher” and people would be impressed and respectful of what you did. But now they just look at you, as if saying ‘I am a teacher’ is like saying “I’ve got cancer.” You get the same response of sympathy... No one wants to be a teacher. Every person you speak to says what a difficult job it is, how tough kids are, how underpaid teachers are but they don’t step in to help sort it out... We [teachers] have become scapegoats, whipping posts for the problems in society and this is a theme that we’ve talked a lot about on the [teacher education program]. I don’t see it getting any better, and the large numbers of people leaving [teaching] to do something else is evidence of the problem.

The fact that Ailsa had discussions regarding the low status of teaching as perceived by society in her education classes at university highlights the level of concern among the teaching profession. It is very interesting that this discussion is formalized in an academic setting. Teachers have always bemoaned their status and roles to one another in staffrooms and informal meetings in schools across the country, but the tone and context was very localized and in keeping with

professional anecdotal tradition, much like a group of lawyers may ‘complain’ about a local judge or doctors discuss the funding crisis in their hospital. The discussions held formally on campus allowed the students to address concerns that were not related directly to pedagogical matters, yet were high on the list of issues that worried new teachers, such as discipline and salary. Ailsa rated these types of discussions above more theoretical approaches to teaching.

Theory is fine if you like that sort of thing, I mean if you want to go on and study it in more detail, like as a postgrad. But it doesn’t really apply to my everyday experience, how to manage a class full of rowdy kids and how to deal with rude parents, all the marking and continual assessing we have to do all the time... I’m sure that later on, once it all settles down, in a year maybe, then I can look back and try to apply some of the theory, but now, no way!

Ailsa’s realization that there is just too much to handle as a new teacher when coping with the day to day issues related to teaching in an active school highlights the pressures and increasing role of central government in the nation’s schools. Ailsa alludes to the considerable amount of time that teachers are required to spend on assessment and monitoring of student progress. This stems from the national curriculum, and the numerous documentation and paperwork exercises that teachers are required to undertake for each student.

The last decade has seen a rise in the burden of paperwork, meetings, conferences and after-school work carried out by teachers just to keep on top of

government-mandated initiatives. The situation reached such a critical level that the unions have fought to boycott certain requirements set by government. This came to a head several times over the last few years. A cross-union agreement was reached to limit the number of meetings a teacher is to attend to one a week, for no more than ninety minutes, refusal to complete much of the official paperwork set by government, a ban on teachers carrying out extracurricular activities (which in England are not compensated) and a limit on the amount of homework that is to be set. More recently, in April 2008, the National Union of Teachers (NUT), England's largest teachers' union, called a national strike over pay and conditions which resulted in a third of all schools being closed and two thirds of all schools in England reporting considerable disruption (BBC, 24th April, 2008). It is into such a confrontational situation that Ailsa, along with her peers, are attempting to begin their professional careers.

Ailsa reflects many of the issues raised in my conversations with student teachers in all three settings. Although some doubted their desire or commitment to teaching, there was a general consensus that teachers do important work, play a role in the development of community and nation, and that this is no easy task, especially in today's world of standardized tests and accountability. Although Ailsa, along with others, criticized the status of teachers, the bad press they receive, and the perception of low compensation for such a difficult and complex task, there was also an understanding that these elements were now an entrenched part of the job, and that to either ignore them or to hope that things would change soon would be imprudent and self-defeating.

It's hard, there's absolutely no denying that. It's a job that has wider implications, long hours, little down time, and that means I've to be committed, maybe even devoted, to it... That's where many of the new teachers fall down. They think that once they're in schools it gets easier, and I'm not sure it does, I think we'll get better at what we do, and that may mean we're wiser and learn to cut a few corners here and there, but what we have to do each day is really out of our hands, I mean, we're given a curriculum in which to work, we're told what to test and when, the schools are full of as many rules for the teachers as they are for the kids... I take the job, I get paid, I do what I have to do, I have nice long holidays [laughs]. If I'm not happy with it then maybe I'll look for something else... One good thing about getting a degree and then a [postgraduate teaching certificate] is that I can use either, or both, and teaching for a few years makes me very employable in business, so that's worth thinking about.

It seems a little sad that before she gained her first full-time teaching position, Ailsa was already looking ahead to possible routes out of the profession. In talking to her, it seems that Ailsa believes that teaching is a worthwhile and important career, but she is not devoted or committed to it, ideologically or emotionally. Ailsa looks to teaching from a realistic and pragmatic point of view, one that sees her choice of entering the profession as a way to use her degree, earn a reasonable wage, and bide time while she looks to other options. This, sadly, is

an oft repeated situation, with teacher attrition in the first three to five years of a new entrants' career at its highest rate, illustrates, possibly, that teaching is a short-term option for many who use the time to decide on more appealing (possibly profitable) careers and employment. Ailsa sees her teaching certificate as an extra string to her bow, something to use or not as she sees fit, and as a positive aspect in her chances of moving out of teaching in the future. The irony here, then, that having teacher certification makes it easier to move out of teaching into other areas, is not lost on Ailsa.

Strange as it sounds, it's almost like, well, ya know, having the extra bit of paper [teaching qualification], showing that I have something over and above a bachelor's degree makes me better placed to get a job outside of the classroom, probably outside of education, strange eh?

Ailsa had concerns about her own teaching, the issues she would face in her classroom and how she will manage all of the expectations placed upon her. Ailsa will be a new teacher working within defined boundaries; she will be part of a large, centrally controlled education system, and will need not only to mould to the context of the specific school in which she works, but also to the demands of the structure of schooling in England. Ailsa will need to be able to juggle the many different tasks expected of her, as well as maintaining discipline in her classroom and trying to ensure the learning of all students in what will almost certainly be a fully inclusive classroom.

I'm not stupid; I don't have this real idealistic belief that I can make much of a difference... I can help the kids I have, if they want to be helped, and I can do my best to teach them what I have to teach them, but beyond that there is not much I can guarantee... Years ago teachers were feared by their pupils, but now, if a kid doesn't want to work, really, what can I do about it? I am just a cog in a wheel in some ways, part of the school and the rules it has... It is a little sad when you look at it like that, but, as I said, I'm a realist, what can I do?

Ailsa's Issues Echoed: Voices from Her Peer Group

Ailsa spoke openly about her perceptions of the teaching practice element of the program. In the following section, I will present some of the other voices that mirrored similar thematic issues discussed by Ailsa. These themes raised by Ailsa deal with the university setting and practice experience, the job of a teacher, and centralized control over teacher's work in England.

The University and the Practical Experience

Ailsa, as with all the participants, took part in two different blocks of teaching practice as part of her teacher education program. Not surprisingly, nearly all of the participants reported a more positive experience during the second teaching block, probably due to a greater understanding of the role of classroom teacher and an awareness of lessons learnt during block one of teaching practice (Hogan et al, 2000). Deborah, who entered the program committed to

teaching in local schools, enjoyed her teaching practice, and felt that she gained from the experience.

It was tricky, you know, juggling everything and getting to school and doing all the other stuff we do... Like, I have a little job I do to give me a little extra money so that I can run my car... I need the car as my school is a bit of a way from where I live... But as teachers we'll need to have so many things going on at once that it is probably good to get used to it all being mad now... There is probably not a good time for the student teaching as it's always going to be busy and full of stuff to do on top of the stuff at school, and then trying to have a life as well... It is definitely not as laid back as when I did my [undergraduate] degree because then I only had about six hours of lectures a week, so could go out all night, drink too much, sleep in and do all the other stuff... Now I find myself having to go shopping at eight at night and only going to the pub on a weekend. (Deborah)

Deborah's comments are revealing in that she saw the teaching practice as a process that altered her lifestyle and that led to her working longer hours. For traditional students, those who are in their early twenties and have had an unbroken university career, the transition from student to working professional is as much a transformation of lifestyle and outlook, as it is of that from student to teacher. Guba and Lincoln (1994) explain such a rapid shift in outlook, in their explanation of individuals existing in shifting paradigmatic spaces, resulting in

altering understandings and worldviews. Teacher candidates exist in such a multi-paradigmatic place, as they move between different settings and expectations throughout their program, leading to shifting identities and understandings.

Deborah enjoyed her practice teaching, and the experiences gave her time to reflect on her own practice and the role she assumed when stepping into the classroom. There was, however, some discussion among student teachers regarding the split between university expectations and the practice teaching blocks. Teacher education programs take place, generally, in two very distinct and often-conflicting settings, the university or college and the practice school. With each site comes a host of characters who have a role to play in the program, and through their roles they influence the student teachers in differing ways. At the university site, it is the role of faculty (or teaching assistants) to prepare students to enter practice schools and introduce them to research relating to practice and teaching and learning. The practice schools offer students the chance to teach under the guidance of a mentor teacher, tasked with assisting in the development of teaching in real classrooms and negotiating the many tasks required of a teacher. This situation, where expectations arise from different entities, can lead to confusion and unnecessary stress for the pre-service teacher. Cindy, who has experience of working in a professional business environment, spoke about some of the issues.

There seems to be a lot of crossover and some conflict regarding what to do... I worked for several years in a business where communication was always key, and we had to talk to other people

and departments to make sure we all followed the same path... We get different messages depending on who is doing the talking and where we are... At college I'm told about the importance of being a reflective teacher, looking at my practice and using current research and ideas to help me teach better,. But at the school I'm now at several of the teachers totally disregard the ideas, laugh at them and tell me that once I get out of the ivory tower of college, I'll learn enough about teaching in the real world... There is a real perception among, I would say, the majority of teachers at the school, that the college lecturers are out of touch with the reality of teaching in a school. (Cindy)

The comments by Cindy arose during a lengthy conversation throughout which she voiced strong opinions about what she perceived as being a form of disconnect between the university and school sites. The anecdotes regarding mentor teachers telling student teachers that the school is where they will do the real learning about teaching are numerous and, to a certain extent, ring true for many of the participants in this study. Cindy, with her previous experience working in a commercial environment, was more willing to examine the working practices of the program and discuss the issues she had.

Cindy did not have a solid grounding in the subject matter related to English, as her first degree was science based, and this meant that she often struggled with much of the discussion regarding literature and English that took place at university. Her frustration with this led her to focus on the practice

element of the program, and here she was critical. Her comments regarding communication between the two different sites of the program are important. Cindy states that her school mentor was never present at any of the university classes and that the college lecturers only met with the mentor when they visited the school for observations (typically about twice per practice; four times in the whole program). Cindy felt strongly that this arrangement was not rigorous enough, with too little time allocated for university and school personnel to collaborate. She believed that this led to a disjointed program, with many conflicting and shifting expectations.

In each school setting where pre-service teachers carry out their teaching practice, there is a mentor or cooperating teacher. This person is usually the regular classroom teacher of the group that the student will be teaching. In England, several teachers often supervise a single student teacher at the secondary (high school) level, as they will teach across all grades in a subject, as a regular schoolteacher would. This complicates matters a little for the student teacher, as with multiple personalities and styles to negotiate and work with, it can often cause conflict, misunderstanding, and confusion. The positive aspect of this situation is the exposure of the student teacher to different learning and teaching styles, and a wider range of students.

One of Cindy's peers, Phil, was also vocal regarding the university and practice divide as perceived among the student teachers. Phil was similar to Cindy in that he had returned to education after several years working in private business, and he had a strong personal sense of the value of education. When

talking about his teaching practice Phil concentrated on what he saw as the weakness with the practice school placement.

It was tricky, like, to try and please everyone as, you know, they do have quite a bit of a say in my passing this thing [the PGCE program]... The class teachers I work with are OK, on the whole, but, er, well, as you can imagine, there're some pretty shitty things that happen in classrooms, things you'd never do yourself, so, in some ways, it's good to see and think, 'I don't want to be that teacher'... On a personal level, everyone seems fine, but there is a bit of game going on here, a bit of a struggle in the department to see who gets the student teacher and, therefore, time off teaching... That's how we are seen at times, you know, like a body in the room who gives the teacher a break... I don't want to sound too negative,--there are some good things here and I have learned from most of the teachers here... I just think that the supervision has, at times, been a little weak, but, you know, teachers are busy, I bet if I get the chance to have a student in my classroom I'd jump at it, more time for a coffee in the staffroom [laughs]. (Phil)

Phil seemed to have a realistic view of his mentor teachers during his time at the school. He recognized that overworked and tired teachers would often appreciate a student teacher in their place as it allowed them time away from the front of the class. The reality that a mentor teacher is not there to help, supervise and support all the time is something that Phil understands, and even supports to a

certain extent. Yet this absence is not something all student teachers appreciate or support. In fact, Caroline, was very unhappy with the support she received from her in-school mentor. Phil, however, feels positive about the teachers he worked with and appreciates that he possibly learnt as much about how he does not want to teach as he did about the type of teacher he is comfortable being.

The divide between the requirements of the university and the expectations and demands of the teaching practice was a constant cause of debate and concern for the student teachers. Many, including Cindy and Phil, found that the constant positioning needed between the two competing entities was tiring and, in some cases, perceived as contradictory.

The Work of Teaching

In each of the settings where student teachers undertook their education programs, there are cultural and social norms and constructions related to the profession of teaching. Teaching is a social practice and is, as Shulman (1993) argues, the property of the community in which it takes place. This opens teachers and teacher education to criticism and public scrutiny, possibly more so than any other profession. The participants in this study were acutely aware that they were entering a profession shaped, in part, by politics. In fact, all the student teachers recognized the job of the teacher as a socially constructed one that serves the schools of a particular society and therefore must adapt to the needs and wishes of that social group. Such a situation, where teachers are in the public eye, led many

of the pre-service teachers to whom I spoke to be understandably nervous about assuming such a high profile, and high-stakes, role.

I was concerned that I wouldn't be a good enough teacher... I was worried that I wouldn't have sufficient subject knowledge, that I would not be inspiring enough and that I would have difficulty standing up in front of a class... I did it, I stood there and I did the lesson I planned... The students were OK and they listened and they worked, I think... I thought, wow, I can do this and I want to do this, it felt really good... I got some of the boys on side by talking about footie and stuff and they seemed to listen a little more after that... I wouldn't say that I am super-teacher or anything, but I don't think I cocked it up either, it was just fine... There is just so much pressure, you know, test scores and stuff, that we work under, and with all the parents moaning, special needs stuff, meetings, marking, well, it is a lot, right? I mean, if I fuck it up, then everyone knows. (Richard)

Richard enjoyed his first time teaching during the practice block of his program. However, by his own admission, he was a nervous person who tended to over think and over plan. Academically, in terms of formal qualifications, Richard was the most qualified of his cohort, with background that offered opportunities to move into graduate school or other professional opportunities outside of education. While Richard's concern over his subject knowledge seemed a little unfounded, his concerns stemmed more from a worry about being able to get

across what he wanted to say to his students. In our interviews, at first, he was reluctant to talk and it took time for him to ‘warm up’ to the situation. Richard had a positive experience and was able to link what he did in his teaching practice to much of the theory and methods courses he had taken at MEU, unlike many of his peers.

Tony, who entered teacher education after a failed bid to join the Royal Air Force as an officer, was keen to talk about the role of central government in teacher education.

All these bloody competencies and stuff, like, jumping through hoops and ticking boxes because some faceless fool in London says to be a teacher you must do this and that... I mean, it’s silly, ain’t it, and you can be sure that teachers weren’t asked about this stuff... I spend more time trying to meet these goals set by [the Department for Education and Skills] than I do marking my kid’s work Is that bad? I think it is. (Tony)

Tony was angry at the set of competencies that each pre-service teacher in England must meet and have completed before they are certified. Such an artificial measure of teaching seemed to mirror the standards movement that is in full swing in England, as well as the US and UAE. Teacher education in England is not able to escape the movement toward greater mandated assessment and accountability that is rife in the education system, and many pre-service teachers recognize the burden of such initiatives. The move toward a competency based

system, which came to fruition several years ago, is part of the wider move by central government to control access to, and success in, teacher education. This growing public interest and mistrust in the nation's schools is driven and fueled by media interest in mandated assessment and publication of test scores and school league tables. A colleague of Tony, Joanne, feels that teaching is the plaything of politicians, removed from the realities of schools and the needs of students.

I think teachers get a bit of a rough deal, to be honest... I know it is all very easy to whine on about stuff, but really, when you think a teacher in this city starts on less than a policeman, then you have to question the importance put on education by politicians... They [politicians] are all just in it to make themselves look good, I mean, they know sod all about kids and schools and what we do, but all the time, new stuff comes down from [Department for Education and Skills] without any understanding... Friends of mine who are not teachers say, well, you get six bloody weeks off in the summer plus all the other holidays and stuff so really only work half the year... But what they don't see is all the stuff we take home, the marking, especially in English, and all the after school stuff we do. It really isn't easy... It used to be great, like way back, in the fifties, when teachers were really well respected and were, like, pillars of the community, who were well looked after and who people listened to... Now it's not like that, it's nothing like that.

Teachers are targets for everyone--politicians, students, parents, people who know nothing about schools... The status just isn't there anymore... People ask what you do and you say, I'm a teacher, and they look at you like they feel sorry for you, or say something like, 'Oh, that's nice", which is pretty patronizing... I don't think I can do this [teaching] for too long. (Joanne)

Joanne's comments show in detail how she places the profession of teaching within wider societal frameworks (Layton, 1997) that include other professions and occupations. The point she makes about police officers having a higher starting salary places teaching against the police, which is a social and community service. During our conversations, Joanne was concerned with the status and perception of teachers as held by wider society. Teacher salaries were one aspect of this that Joanne cited as a way to highlight her view of the value of teachers by the societies they serve. Teaching as a form of social service also entered Joanne's discourse, and it was here that she was able to place teaching against other social forms of employment, such as police and medical staff. Medical personnel in the UK are employees of the National Health Service, and paid from public funds, as are teachers. This lends a little more weight to the issue of salary parity, although sourcing of the funding required would create a public policy challenge.

Summary

Ailsa was honest and clear about her rationale for entering a teacher education program at MEU. She had obviously spent some time weighing her options toward the end of her undergraduate program in Scotland, and she had examined the various aspects of teaching as a career. Although not able to look beyond the first few years of teaching, Ailsa was able to see the merits of the job and the importance that it held in terms of social development. Ailsa, though, like Sally at UOS, did not think that a full career in teaching was for her. Ailsa and Sally mirror the statistical reality that large numbers of teachers leave the profession within the first five years. This high rate of teacher attrition, due to a number of factors such as salary, workload and status, is common in both America and England.

The teaching practice component of the program was an area that Ailsa, along with others, recognized as a potential source of conflict and problems. The duality of the program, having both university and in-school requirements and expectations, caused many of the student teachers to question its coherence, realizing that it was disjointed in many ways. Ailsa also recognized that teachers assumed a privileged role in their work, yet this role was undermined to some extent by the centralized control over the profession, including increasingly demanding expectations. This political aspect of the job, which Ailsa understood in some detail, gave cause for concern, particularly among the pre-service teachers who were committed to the profession and held ideals of social justice and educational provision for all.

In the following chapter, I will present the responses of Salwe, a pre-service teacher at Northern Gulf University in the UAE, who spoke candidly about her experiences as a student teacher. Salwe raised many issues, focusing on the status of teachers, social justice in teaching and cultural perceptions of teachers in the UAE. Her opinions and experiences on the program when viewed in relation to the issues raised by Sally and Ailsa, gave me a deeper understanding of the themes and issues raised throughout my conversations with the student teachers.

CHAPTER SIX

NORTHERN GULF UNIVERSITY

Salwe

In the UAE there is a real need for teachers who know about the students and the country... We have a lot of foreign people here in our schools and many do not know about us and our country. How can our children learn from such people? ... There are many good teacher [sic] in this country but not many enough [sic]... Teachers are important to help the country grow and be better and to be strong in the world, so we need make people come to teach [sic], Emirati people.

Salwe was a student who was very aware of the issues surrounding the recruitment and retention of teachers for the public schools in the UAE. A product of the Emirati national school system, Salwe had personal experience of expatriate teachers, recruited primarily from Egypt, Sudan and several Arab Gulf states. Throughout her school career, Salwe had only been taught by one Emirati teacher, when she was in third grade. This had an effect on Salwe's personal construction of a teacher identity, as unlike her peers at both UOS and MEU, Salwe did not experience a culturally relevant or specific role model as a teacher

upon which to construct a teacher identity (Atkinson, 2004). Salwe could not link the notion of teacher identity, her sense of a unique self in the role of teacher as different from others, to a collective group of Emirati teachers. She expressed a sense of isolation, of being an anomaly among her friends, as she was one of only a handful of student teachers in her cohort who felt that teaching was a worthwhile endeavor, and one that she would like to follow.

Salwe spoke of non-Emirati teachers in schools in the UAE, stating how students are lacking cultural identification with teachers who do not share their sociocultural heritage. As a student teacher, aware of the role education has and the national potential linked to educational development, Salwe became disheartened at the low recruitment rates of indigenous teachers.

We need to make being a teacher good, a job Emiratis want to do and respect... To be a teacher in UAE is very important but the universities don't get good students or many students... Too many foreign teachers in the [government] schools means that UAE people do not have teachers that are like them, from the same town or place and who understand what it is to be an Emirati... The [central government] must make teaching better, with more pay and more benefits so that my friends will want to be teachers and help build our country.

The perception of teaching as a career among the citizenry of the UAE is a mixed one. Although respecting and promoting the role of a teacher, the

government actually assigns the role of teaching to an almost exclusively imported labor force. This situation has an impact upon the cultural relevance of the teaching workforce in the UAE, as Emirati teachers are a minority in their own schools, often working under the control and supervision of non-indigenous managers. This creates a dearth of role models for possible future teachers, as youngsters predominantly identify teachers as foreign workers, not as someone who shares their cultural and social heritage and understanding. Salwe feels that this situation cannot continue. She strongly believes that the engagement of national citizens needs to be active, and rising investment in the education of young Emiratis should increase if the country is to continue to grow and become a major economic force globally, a stated policy goal of the government.

One of the issues related to the reliance on expatriate teachers is the mistrust that often exists between the foreign teachers and the government education department. Foreign teachers are on limited contracts, usually for two or three years, and paid significantly less than their Emirati colleagues. This can make expatriate teachers seem reluctant to go beyond their contracted duties, with the effect that most schools do not offer any type of extracurricular activities or enrichment programs. On the other side of this divide is the government's reluctance to involve a predominantly alien workforce in the discussions and machinations regarding schooling and educational reform. As Salwe states below, this leads to a two-tier system of educational managers and workers, which results in teachers being relegated to technical implementers of a centrally mandated set of reform objectives and initiatives, as opposed to being partners in reform efforts.

We just get told what to do from the principal or the local education officer, and there is never any chance to talk about why we must do this or how we must do this... The foreign teachers all complain about salary and housing and how much work they have to do, but they never say good thing about the children or stay to help children... The [central Ministry of Education] do not really look after all the teachers and they just want us to do what we are told, but this is not easy because the [foreign] teachers do very little work.

Salwe did not express a great deal of respect for the expatriate teachers in the school system, although she has limited professional experience of working alongside them. Despite this, she has formed rigid assumptions regarding the efficacy and role of the foreign teachers in the UAE schools. These assumptions and perceptions help Salwe construct her own teaching identity, placing herself in opposition to the foreign teachers. Salwe has constructed her teaching identity against the social context in which she is functioning as a teacher candidate. Through her language, the words that she employs in the discussions I had with her, Salwe made it clear that foreign teachers are socially and culturally different from her and from other Emirati teachers. She privileges the place of Emirati teachers above that of expatriate teaching faculty. This is an understandable perception for Salwe to have, especially as she has a strong sense of the social justice elements of education and the need to develop a larger and more respected indigenous teaching workforce.

I think that teachers have responsibility to the children and they have to make a good impression on their students... I hope I will be good teacher and that my children will learn from me and be good people in our country... UAE is going to be an important and rich place and Emiratis need to be able to work to keep the country developing, and I think my job as teacher will help children learn be good Muslims and good Emiratis.

Salwe, although unknowingly, is equating the role of UAE national schools to institutions that create, as Kumashiro (2004) stated, a “social movement against oppression” (p. xxv). Kumashiro focused on oppression in terms of political dominance and viewed schools as being places of struggle and enlightenment against many forms of political injustice. Salwe’s take on oppression relates more to her culture and social setting, with a focus on religion and economic prosperity. Salwe’s indication that part of her role as a teacher is to help students be “good Muslims” positions the school setting as a branch of the Islamic faith and learning, becoming a social movement against repression or ignorance of the Muslim traditions of her country and culture. The link between national and cultural identity, as referred to by McGovern (1999), is a concern for Salwe, as in our conversations she saw the two as inextricably linked.

Salwe’s belief that schools in the UAE should promote its national culture and religion could stem from her experiences growing up in the UAE. Taught by foreign teachers, she became an adult who is a minority within her own country, with expatriate residents outnumbering national Emiratis by almost three to one

(ECSSR, 2005). Due to the relatively recent influx of petrodollars and the ambitious plans of the UAE government, Salwe grew up in a prosperous and rapidly changing country, which relied heavily on buying-in the labor force and overseas experts required to build a modern and successful nation in a less than three decades. As with other rapidly developing economies, the socioeconomic need for skilled workers far outstripped the local supply (Clarke, 2006) leading, in turn, to a reliance on expatriate workers in all areas of development.

Education did not escape this rapid development, with the purchase of educational provision from foreign entities, mainly in the form of expatriate teachers, consultants, school managers and curricula. The demand for teaching staff, as highlighted by Salwe's own experiences, rose as the school system flourished. From a humble start in 1971 with just 74 schools in the country, 2004 saw over 750 schools, all needing to be fully staffed (Clarke, 2006). Partly in response to this situation, although not confined merely to the education sector, the UAE government promoted a policy of Emiratization, or nationalization of the workforce.

There are not enough teachers from this country and there never will be unless we get better pay and conditions... Why would many want to teach when they can have a much easy job [sic] in Etisalat [national telecommunications company] with much more money and status?.. But too many teachers from different places, not Emirati, and this is no good... My friends who are also at

university [training to be teachers] many will not be teachers, they will get married and stay at home... This is very bad.

Salwe is also aware that she is part of a wider political context, a political situation where the aims and desires of the ruling elite have a profound effect on every facet of Emirati life, including education. Nations establish policies to recruit train and retain teachers (Gideonse, 1995), and this governance of teacher education and teaching is laden with political, social and moral elements. The governance of the UAE education system follows a top down approach, with policy and practice mandated from the federal government based in the capital, Abu Dhabi. Salwe is cognizant of the place she has within the educational structure in the UAE, that of a student teacher operating in a centrally governed system, with little or no autonomy relating to educational policy or practice. This situation does not concern Salwe to any great extent. She is studying, free of charge, at a government institution, with free accommodation and a monthly stipend to help cover living expenses. Her professors are all government employees, with the majority being expatriate faculty on short-term contracts. Salwe, upon certification, will get a teaching position with a reasonable salary, although she has little say in where she will teach in the country once she graduates. As one of only a handful of education graduates in her cohort who will choose to enter teaching, she is at the mercy of the central Ministry of Education, when it comes to teaching assignment, grade level and location.

I hope to be near my family [in her teaching assignment] as I will miss my mother and brothers if I am too far away... I think that

[the Ministry of Education] will try and put us near our homes, especially if we are not married... I think I'm allowed to request a grade level, but it is not for sure, as it will depend on where the need is... I would like to teach upper secondary in Dubai, but I'll have to wait to see what happens... My [cooperating teacher from teaching practice] wants me to go there as they need teachers, but I wouldn't like that, I didn't like the school and the teachers were not very nice to me.

Salwe's inability to choose where she teaches reflects the dominance of the centralized system in which she is functioning. Like in many other countries and systems, education and politics are inseparable in the UAE, with a central Supreme Council ruling on most matters, from curriculum to reform efforts, from teacher certification to mandated national assessments. This politically controlled environment has an effect on the social status of teachers in the UAE, as Salwe alluded to earlier. The social status of teachers is relative to the standing that teaching has as an occupation in the hierarchical social order. Such social standing is often a reflection of the perceived importance that a field has on the well-being of society (Hoyle, 1995). In the UAE, although education is valued and teachers viewed with a certain amount of deference, teaching as a career is not highly regarded. The social identification and acceptance of teaching as a valued aspect of social development is an important factor in the promotion and privileging of teaching (Diaz et al, 1999). Salwe is acutely aware that she is

choosing to enter a profession that many of her contemporaries regard as an inferior choice for an educated Emirati.

When I go home at the weekends and see my friends, many want to know why I want to be a teacher. I tell them how important teachers are and that we need people to work in schools and help with the development of our country, but many just laugh at me and say that I will leave [university], get married and have a family... I don't know why people can't see that our schools and children will be very much better if [Emiratis] be teachers. In this country we have too many people from other countries doing the work, the important work that we should be doing and should be proud of. Islam tells us of the importance of passing on knowledge and learning to read, so teachers are doing [sic] the word of Allah.

Giroux (1992) states that the “most important questions facing education are moral and political” (p. 89). This is certainly the case in the UAE, although we can add one other important factor to the equation, that of religion. The role of Islam in the decision making process at all levels of the education system in the UAE is paramount. Salwe's own reflections on teaching are guided by the fundamental teachings of Islam, especially the directives held within the Qur'an that stress that it is the duty of every good Muslim to learn to read and become educated, initially to allow them access to the written text of the Qur'an. It is impossible to view political, moral and religious elements of education in isolation in the context of the UAE.

Salwe can see a need to modernize, yet her views, tempered by an acknowledgement that the rulers of the UAE are the guardians of the social and cultural heritage of the country and will make wise decisions, keeps centrally in her mind the best interests of the nation. However, a striking a balance between modern, western, cultural pressures in education and defending the revered traditions of Islam is not easy (Griffin, 2006). As certain areas of the UAE (Dubai and Abu Dhabi in particular) develop and diversify, many view the rapid changes more as westernization than modernization, essentially stating that modernity is a western concept. The modernization program put in place by the rulers of the country has recognized the strategic role played by education in developing indigenous human resources (Weber, 2007) and Salwe, along with many of her peers, has to walk a fine line between the old and the new, personal and national expectations.

Salwe, like all new teachers, faces certain pressures and expectations. She is on the verge of entering a profession that involves high-stakes elements, both for her as a new professional and her students. When Salwe graduates, she will have reached the standards of certification as set out by the UAE government. Often, licensure and certification standards depend on the relationship of teacher supply and demand (Scannell and Scannell, 1995), and this is evident in the relatively low scores required to enter teacher education in the UAE, when compared to other disciplines--a factor that does little to raise the social status of teachers.

It will be hard work and long hours, I know that, but there are also lots of other things I have to do to be a good teacher... The government tests are very important and my students must do good [sic] in them or I'll look like a bad teacher and not be promoted... Pressure comes from the [principal of the school] as the results of the national exams are important for him and his salary. I want my students to do well but what if they don't? What do I do if my students fail? This is something that I worry about and I think is a problem... If I am at a boys school they do not so good as girls and this makes me look bad.

Salwe has the same concerns as new teachers all over the world. New teachers are concerned about student learning, national and local mandated testing, and gender disparity in test scores, classroom management and a whole plethora of related issues. Salwe has an added pressure in that the salary structures of individual school teachers and administrators is linked, in some ways, to achievement on national tests. As the UAE continues down the track to 'modernization', educational practices from several western countries have influenced the widespread implementation of mandated testing at key stages in the educational career of a child. Drawn primarily from England, America and Australia, such testing models have been clumsily transplanted into local customs and traditions, although the western format, rationale and practice are still evident.

Reflections from Classmates

Salwe was an interesting case and had many opinions regarding the place of teachers in Emirati society, as well as the state of teacher education in the UAE. Salwe wanted to be a teacher. In talking with her, it became clear that she regarded the development of national teachers as crucial to the sustained development of her country. Salwe's discussions focused on three themes, teachers as agents of social justice, cultural perceptions of teaching, and the status and role of teachers. In the following section, I will explore these themes, drawing briefly on comments made by NGU student teachers.

Teachers as Agents of Social Justice

Salwe had a strong sense of social justice and saw the benefits to her own culture of having well prepared teachers in the nation's schools. Several of the other pre-service teachers stated that they too had altruistic reasons for their decisions to enter teaching. Although I have broadly categorized the theme as 'social justice', this term encompasses a whole host of elements, as can be seen in the following comments from two of the participants.

Teachers are important to our children, they will help them grow and learn and make our country better... But we need more, more teachers who are like us, and who know our children, but this is not the way, we too many [sic] foreign teachers, from Egypt, Sudan, Oman... What do these people know of us and our country?.. Teachers make big change, they make big change in

helping our children and helping us be strong and more rich, this is what teacher do. (Sawsan)

Sawsan is a young pre-service teacher who comes from a wealthy family and will probably not teach after she graduates. The interesting thing about what she says, however, is that she speaks of teachers from a detached stance, almost not recognizing that, albeit briefly during her teaching practice, she is 'one of them'. Sawsan recognizes the need for teachers drawn from the national population, reflecting Salwe's beliefs, but she does not identify herself as helping to fill such a need. She spoke to me in detail about the reliance on expatriate teachers and had strong opinions on the employment of these "foreign people". She viewed expatriate teachers as inferior, almost as service workers, providing a needed service but not invested in the process.

To some extent, she was correct, as many of the expatriate staff were on limited short-term contracts, usually two or three years, and would leave the country after one or two contract periods. This highlights a wider problem, recognized by Salwe and Sawsan, although not made explicit in our conversations. This problem is high teacher turnover rates, with many teachers leaving the system each year, replaced by other expatriates. This situation, to some extent, negates the element of teaching as a tool to be used in promoting social justice and fostering a sense of nationalized understanding, as transient teachers, from outside of the UAE, do not promote such causes. Although teacher attrition is high and a public policy problem in both England and the US, it is

compounded in the UAE as expatriate teachers not only leave the profession, but also they depart the country also, resulting in a double loss in the workforce.

Mais, who is Emirati and looking forward to being a teacher, thinks that it is important for local schools to have national teachers. Mais was interesting as she initially enrolled on a business degree, but transferred to education during her second year as she recognized the need for teachers in the UAE. Mais was also acutely aware of the shortage of national teachers and expressed a hope to become a school administrator within a few years of graduation. Through the policy of Emiritization, the favoring of nationals for government positions, she will likely reach her goal of an administrative position within a couple of years of entering teaching.

There needs to be more [Emirati teachers] in the schools, so that out students see school and teaching as important, as something that they must work hard at... I did not have any teachers from my country, and this is big problem for me, we need to have people who know our children, our history and country and who want UAE to be good... There are too much [sic] teachers from other places here. (Mais)

Cultural and social knowledge in teachers seems to be an important factor for Salwe, Sawsan and Mais. In our conversations, they all referred to teachers being able to know and identify with the students, and they agreed that it was not possible for an expatriate teacher to make this connection. This was interesting, as

it presented me with an understanding, albeit basic, of how young nationals viewed their country. It seemed to me that national pride, and a desire to see the country grow, flourish and develop, is inherently linked to their wish to see schools staffed by nationals.

Cultural Perceptions of Teaching

Salwe also spoke openly and in detail about the cultural and social perceptions of teaching in the country, and how it was these perceptions that made it difficult to achieve a greater number of national teachers in public schools. I heard Salwe's ideas reflected in discussions I had with many of the other participants, who also stated that teaching struggles to compete for national graduates, when placed against the more lucrative, and perceived prestige, of other government jobs.

In this country [UAE] teachers have lot of respect for the job they do, but it is not a job that many people from here will do... The teacher is a foreigner, usually, and is seen as educated person... Emirates has lots of money so we buy our experts and teachers, that is how we develop over last thirty-six years... But now government wants more teacher from Emirates, as they want to develop the youth of the country, this is good thing but not many people want to be teacher... Teacher is seen as being woman, not a job for man, man does the business and the government, but woman should teach... many of the girls here [on the education

program at NGU] will not go to teach, they are here because their families send them and then they will leave and get married... Until teaching is seen as a good job, not many people here will do it, why, why will they when they can earn three times more working for Etisalat [national telecommunications company – owned by government] and job is easy... Men want to work for government, not in schools... Teachers here can earn a good salary, but it is a lot of work and this is bad thing. (Lana)

Lana is in an interesting situation as she is in an education program that graduates a large number of teachers each year, yet only a small percentage take up full-time teaching positions in the national schools. The cultural understanding that teaching is a role for females is relatively new in the UAE, as before the introduction of formal education, teaching was the preserve of men as carried out in informal schools attached to mosques. As Emiratis have prospered, and as the state imported labor, the national workforce has been able to choose employment opportunities that suited them. Teaching, heavily promoted as an option for nationals through the Emiritization program, included financial incentives going in-hand with positions in good schools and rapid promotion prospects. Nevertheless, as Lana mentions, teaching is still not seen as a career of choice for nationals graduating from university.

As well as general perceptions regarding the status of teachers that Salwe, Lana, and others made, I was also able to hear first-hand from several students who did not want to teach, and yet did view teaching as a worthwhile career.

Many of these young women followed a teacher education program on instructions from their families, who believed that it was a fitting and culturally acceptable way to spend time at university.

Fatima, who comes from what she terms a “very traditional Emirati family”, entered the teacher education program on the instructions of her father, who informed her that after graduation she would marry. Fatima did not seem too concerned about this path mapped out for her by her family, and viewed her time at NGU as “time to enjoy, make friends, please my father and be ready to make good wife”. It was common for me to hear of students wanting to study in other fields and areas, pushed into teaching by the patriarchal system, which saw teaching as a way for a young woman to prepare for motherhood and running a household. Hala was one such student.

I do not like to be teacher [sic]... I like business and want to be business person... My father tell me to be teacher in UAE [sic]... I want to go to university in America and look at how to do business... The teacher is not a good job, and I do not like it, people in my country see teacher as job for foreign man... My father makes me come to university here at [NGU] and makes me be teacher. I like so much many of the girls here who are my friends but I do not want to be teacher... I know UAE needs teachers but not me. (Hala)

Hala was not happy as a student in the College of Education. She was instructed to attend NGU by her father (an influential and wealthy member of Emirati society), who also told her which course she would take. Hala was adamant that she would not teach and that she still wanted to attend university in the United States. Hala was probably the unhappiest of all the pre-service teachers with her time on the education program. The interesting aspect of Hala's experience is that she recognized that teachers were in short supply in the UAE, and that teachers were instrumental in the development of the country, yet she did not wish to be a teacher herself. Hala will complete her degree in education, mainly due to the insistence of her father, but she also hoped that having the degree might possibly allow her to seek a university place overseas at some point in the future.

The Status of Teachers in the UAE

Salwe had some interesting things to say about the status and nature of teaching in the UAE, and the way that the government and local administrators influenced the day-to-day aspects of teaching. Although the status of teachers, closely tied to cultural beliefs and the social order of the UAE, is low, I realized through talking to the students that the status, further undermined by structural elements of the education system and the unwieldy administration system that was in place, is of concern to many teachers. This occurs during teaching practice, when young teachers, farmed out to learn in poorly administered schools, do not receive any support or advice.

The first experience of the element of supervision, or 'control' as many felt it to be, was through their relationships with mentor teachers in the practice schools. All of the pre-service teachers I spoke to had something to say on the issue of mentor teachers, some positive, others less so. Amy had a particularly negative experience, mirrored by those of most of her peers at NGU.

Never there... If I was lucky I might've seen the teacher first thing in the morning as the Principal had a staff briefing each day, but that was it, gone, out of school I think... It was very difficult as I didn't have anyone to go to, to ask questions, for help... The Principal was always busy, and I would've felt bad complaining to him because then I may get bad grades... I just went on, doing what I could on my own... She [the mentor teacher] would come maybe once a week, maybe a little more, but she just sat there or read a book or did something else...She was from Egypt, and did not want to help me... I think she saw me as a problem, someone who may take her job or get paid a lot more money... The only time she gave me advice was to tell me when I was doing it wrong.

(Amy)

It is fair to say that Amy had a negative experience regarding her mentor teacher during her first teaching practice. Although Amy managed to have a far more successful experience during her second teaching practice, in subsequent conversations she always referred to the issues with her first mentor. Amy recognized that there are cultural reasons and practices to explain the absent

mentor teacher, and she is aware that this is part of the problem in Emirati schools. Many of the staff view the process of educating new teachers in the school system to be the role of the university faculty, particularly expatriate teachers whose salary is considerably less than that of Emirati teachers. The expatriate teachers often view new national teachers as a threat to their own positions, and resent the contractual conditions of new teachers, which result in a first year national teacher earning almost four times as much as a foreign teacher with ten years classroom teaching.

Mentor teachers often viewed the presence of a student teacher as an opportunity to be absent from the classroom and in many cases the school site. Mentor teachers are, if possible, Emirati teachers, and this policy is encouraged as a way to highlight teaching as a career for Emiratis. In reality, none of the student teachers I spoke to had experienced an Emirati acting as a mentor. Another issue is that, culturally, absenteeism is rife within the school system and this is doing a disservice to many young teachers, who do not have a constant point of contact to go to for advice.

Part of the problem related to the perceived status of teachers among Emirati society mirrors the situation in other parts of the world. A widely held view of teacher education is that it is academically less rigorous than many other, more traditional fields, and because of this entrance requirements are often lower. This is the case in the UAE, where the grades needed to gain a place on the teacher education program at NGU are the lowest in the university.

When leaving [high school in the UAE], my grades were not as good as some of my friends... I wanted to go to university but I didn't have good grades for business or science... so, I went to be teacher... the grades for the education course are lot lower than for others... I think, er, that engineering want high grades and very good school results... I couldn't do engineering or science because my grades are low. (Noorah)

Noorah stated in our conversations that she is now happy on the education program and thinks that she will go into teaching when she graduates. She does realize, however, that her options for entry to university were limited due to her high school graduation results. Noorah had teachers she admired and liked, and this led her to consider teaching, but she felt that if she had not taken a place on the education program, she would not have found it easy to gain an undergraduate place at NGU. Noorah's views were confirmed when I examined the admission requirements at NGU. The documentation showed that the grade point average (GPA) required for enrollment to the engineering and science programs at NGU is 3.4, whereas to enter an undergraduate pre-service education course a student required a GPA of just 2.0. This difference is considerable and supports much of the research that highlights low entry requirements for education programs as a symptom of the further de-professionalization of teaching and low status it holds among Emirati society.

Summary

Salwe, as a case study of a student teacher nearing the end of her education program, highlighted many of the issues presented by pre-service teachers when reflecting on their education programs and role as new teachers. Salwe's cultural and social context is unique, as are the contexts that all of the participants experienced, and we cannot overlook these contextual aspects when examining education programs and their place in society.

Salwe is clearly a product of the cultural and political situation that exists in her home country, and she is in a position that will further enhance her role as part of the establishment. Salwe's interests and firmly held convictions have led her to teacher education and a career in teaching. This is not always the case in the UAE, and wider Gulf region, where women's families enrolled many of Salwe's peers in the teacher education program because it was an acceptable choice for young, single women.

Social justice in teaching seemed important for several of the student teachers at NGU, more so than students at UOS and MEU. This may stem from the fact that the UAE is a relatively new country, only thirty-seven years old, with social services still finding their feet in a rapidly changing nation. The reliance on expatriate faculty, and the rapid rise in the number of private schools in the country, leads to questions of access and equity in the national school system. Many wealthy nationals follow the lead of expatriates and send their young to

private, foreign-curricula schools for their education. This drains the public school system of students and teachers, and creates a two-tier system among Emiratis

The status and cultural perception of teachers are closely linked to the history and religion of the region, with teachers still facing an image problem within the UAE. Although student teachers recognized that education, and teachers, are highly valued in Islamic society, the role of teacher is still seen as little more than a provider, a role usually played by an employed 'foreigner'. The government has so far done little to help improve this situation, despite public policy statements to the contrary, and pre-service teachers understand their place within the fast-paced, ultra-modern, commercially driven country.

In the final chapter of my study, I will discuss what I learnt through talking to the twenty-eight pre-service teachers from the three different sites. I will also set out areas that I consider to be of interest in further study and reflection, particularly in relation to the themes that emerged through talking to the students.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

My purpose in this final chapter is to present a summary of my study, to draw conclusions and implications from the results, to make recommendations for further research into student teacher perceptions of their education programs, and to reflect personally on the journey that this study gave me the opportunity to make.

Summary of the Study

The current reform efforts driving the agenda in education have created a turbulent time for teacher education and for the pre-service teachers who have to negotiate the changing requirements and policies. The three case studies, Sally, Ailsa and Salwe exemplify the themes that were made explicit in my wider discussion of current educational policy set out in Chapter One. In the first chapter I highlighted the changing face of education, focusing on the last twenty-five years of educational upheaval, particularly in England and the US, and how this foreshadows education policy in the UAE. The issues that were raised at the beginning of my study illuminate and explain the current situation in which pre-service teachers find themselves, and help me to understand and contextualize the narratives that I collected from the participants with whom I spoke.

All of the pre-service teachers I interviewed were encountering political forces shaping their educational programs and entry into the profession. Sally was required to teach an ever-increasingly prescribed curriculum in the public schools where she completed her practice teaching, and she was entering a workforce that was ever more scrutinized by the public. Ailsa, whose teacher education program fell under the tight control of the central British government, began her career within a top-down system where student teachers took part in high-stakes assessment through an ill-informed competency system acting as a gatekeeper to the profession. Salwe stumbled through her teacher preparation confused as the federal government introduced disjointed reforms and initiatives, all the while being ‘trained’ by non-national faculty and teachers who were working under pressure from government, on limited and insecure contracts. All three of these students struggled to negotiate the political terrain of higher education, and were at the core of their own construction of teacher identity (Shaw, 2008).

Sally, Ailsa and Salwe

Sally was different from both Salwe and Ailsa in that she took her place in a teacher education program as a last resort, as a way to buy herself some time to explore other options and as a way to avoid unemployment. The refreshing aspect of Sally’s situation, however, was her honesty and firm conviction that teaching was not for her; she strongly disliked her time in teaching practice, a good indication for her that teaching was not the right career. Ailsa was a pragmatist, choosing teacher education in England over her native Scotland, as she was aware of the teacher shortage and higher salaries in English schools.

Although Ailsa may not stay in teaching for long, she felt that her teacher education program was worthwhile and it afforded her options in the near future. Salwe was committed to teaching and to raising the profile of the profession among her peers. She firmly believed in the need to improve the schools of the UAE through the recruitment of national teachers, a process firmly supported, on paper at least, by the central government.

Sally, Salwe and Ailsa all had different perspectives on their teacher education programs, understandable given the very different contexts in which they were functioning. Salwe wanted to teach and help with the development of her country, Ailsa viewed teaching as a way to earn some money for a few years before exploring other career options, and Sally was hoping to graduate and find a non-teaching position that allowed her to follow her interest in literature. Despite, or maybe because of, these different outlooks, many of the same experiences, fears, concerns and issues arose among the three students.

Emergent Themes

Through my conversations with the pre-service teachers, and a set of themes emerged from the data as I attempted to understand the educational and cultural spaces in which they functioned. I used a grounded theory design to examine the perceptions of the students and explored the data through triangulation, constant comparison, coding and analysis. I collected the data primarily through face-to-face interviews, conducted at each research site, over two visits approximately four months apart. Along with the interviews, I collected

written artifacts and observed several university education classes and practice school lessons taught by some of the student teachers. The data, analyzed through a sociocultural and structural functionalist approach, allowed an insight into the constructions each student teacher made in relation to their teaching identity, and place within the larger educational framework.

We can group the four major themes that emerged from the study under the following headings:

- Rationale for entry into a teacher education program
- Concerns and issues experienced during student teaching practice
- Critique regarding the structure and efficacy of the program
- Socio-cultural factors on teaching and teachers

Through these themes, it became clear that there was a sharing of many issues, ideas and concerns among the participants regardless of their age, location or gender. The students spoke about their views on teaching as a profession generally, as well as the role and status that teachers have in their own societies. The use of focused case studies from each research site helped place the narratives and issues in context.

Discussion

In the following section, I examine and elaborate on the four themes that emerged through my conversations with the pre-service teachers. I will also

explore the broader issues and contextual factors that played an important part in helping me make sense of the narratives. My discussion of the narratives is framed by Hargreaves (2003) who states that

We are living in a defining moment of educational history, when the world in which teachers do their work is changing profoundly, and the demographic composition of teaching is turning dramatically. (p. 2)

The student teachers who took part in my study were aware of the many educational changes that were going on around them, and they saw these as part of the discourse on teaching and learning that was a fundamental element in the job of a teacher. They seemed to be aware of their educational heritage, and they could speak to the current reform initiatives that affected them directly, such as *No Child Left Behind* (US), the *National Literacy Strategy* (England) or *Vision2020* (UAE).

The themes that arose in the interviews were anticipated in the research literature discussed in Chapter Two . For example, Marlow and Inman (1997), in talking about social appreciation of teachers, a theme that arose in my own discussions with pre-service teachers, wrote that

Teachers who do not feel supported by [the] community are likely to become disillusioned with [their] chosen profession... they often feel pressure to improve in some undefined and sometimes

unrealistic way, a feeling that can contribute to the decision to leave teaching. (p. 211)

Many of the students that I spoke to had strong beliefs regarding the status and role of teachers in society. Sally and Ailsa had an admiration for the profession, strengthened through their time ‘in the trenches’ of teaching practice, whereas Salwe had a more firm conviction regarding the importance of the role teacher play in national development. There were firm beliefs regarding the support, or lack of support, that a particular social group gives to teaching. The central issues relating to financial compensation, status and autonomy had a profound impact on the desire and will of young teachers to remain in, or even enter, the classroom. The way that society views teaching influences the teacher identity that each participant constructs since a teaching persona cannot exist without the recognition in a social space of a ‘teacher’ (Burr, 1995).

Rationale for Entry into a Teacher Education Program

Throughout my conversations with pre-service teachers, it became very clear that there were many different reasons behind their decision to enter a teacher education program, but the location of the teacher education program did not play a significant part in influencing enrollment decisions. However, several similarities and differences occurred across the research sites. Although a portion of students in education programs are often there, as Hess (2001) puts it, because teaching attracts the less academically strong student, very few of the student teachers who took part in my study recognized this or self-identified as having

lower grades than peers have in other disciplines. In fact, some participants in England, such as Ailsa, viewed the chance to take a further degree as a post-graduate student as a prestigious and beneficial aspect of the program.

Of the reasons stated for entering a teacher education program, the responses given by the student teachers fell into two general categories. First, there was a firm belief and desire to teach among several of the student teachers, for example Salwe and Caroline. These beliefs and aspirations stemmed from several different sources: family members who were teachers and role models; inspirational or influential teachers when the student teachers were at school; a genuine passion for the subject to be taught and, therefore, a desire to share this with others. Student teachers in all three settings cited such reasons for entering the program, although more students in England and the US acknowledged that inspirational teachers created a desire to teach a particular subject, and that these teachers were a major factor in their choices. The reliance on expatriate teachers in the UAE, leading to a dearth of cultural role models in teaching for Emiratis, may explain the non-reporting of influential teachers as a factor for UAE participants. The similarities of response across contexts was interesting, as it pointed to several areas of shared experience and understanding of the nature of teaching, regardless of cultural or social influence.

But the fact that each of the participants drew upon different sources, beliefs and experiences in their decision to enter teacher education highlights the way that each of the students constructed their own understanding of what a teacher is. This construction was shaped by the social and cultural norms (Bruner,

2000), where the students were situated, and the many different routes and decisions that led to the participants choosing a teacher education program illustrates the many different interpretations of teaching represented through the voices of the participants.

A second group of student teachers had less positive reasons for entering a teacher education program. These students either ‘fell’ or were pushed into enrolling on the education program. I termed this group ‘reluctant teachers.’ Of those pushed into a teacher education program, the majority were in the UAE. Due to cultural and social values and traditions, many conservative families were still unsure about the place of women within higher education settings. This meant that many young women were not able to apply to educational institutions beyond the high school level. Those that did make it to higher education attended the universities based in the UAE, while their male peers were encouraged to head to Europe or North America to continue their studies.

The young women who enter university in the UAE are often ‘guided’ by their families into particular fields, education being the most popular. Teacher education is viewed by many as a safe option for young female students as they will be taught in gender segregated classes and carry out their practice in schools staffed by women with an all female student body. It is a firmly held belief within the conservative Emirati culture that teaching, along with child raising and housekeeping, is a female occupation and that the skills and practices learnt during the education program will be of benefit within the familial setting. This

belief juxtaposes with the idea that national teachers would be of benefit to the wider Emirati society, a belief that Salwe held dear.

Another aspect of the reluctant teacher's decision to enter education programs was the perception that alternative career and money earning options were limited, particularly for those who had a degree in English or a related field. Several of the student teachers recognized the fact that they had entered the education program as a way to gain a further qualification that would make them marketable or to give them time to explore other opportunities. This was particularly the case in England, where the education program is free of charge to students, and the government supports each participant with limited bursaries to cover housing, transport and living expenses.

Although it is possible to point to general themes behind the reasons student teachers stated for entering the program, the individualized routes that each participant had followed was evident. The student teachers who took part in this study had personal stories that explained their path to teacher education. These personal narratives were interesting and rich in detail. Although I am able to generalize using thematic links, the personal reasons for entering teaching should not be lost.

Student Concerns and Issues

Many students, such as Phil and Amy, spoke about the role of their mentors during their teaching practice, and this was a prevalent aspect of the theme regarding teaching practice. Although many of the comments were

negative, or highlighted a disconnect between the program and the schools, mentors play a pivotal role in the development of new teachers. (Holden, 1995; Zamprelli, 1992). Student teachers were often unable to see the role the mentor played, along with any immediate positive outcomes, other than possibly contradicting their own views of teaching or the position of teachers as discussed in their college classes. It seemed that in all three sites, the university and practice schools, and therefore, faculty and school-based mentors, had little opportunity to collaborate and work as a unified unit in supporting the pre-service teacher. This was obvious to the students and caused several of them considerable frustration.

One notable issue in the concerns expressed by students arose from the participants in the UAE. The UAE Ministry of Education has had a history of neglecting the continuing education of teachers and has not offered many opportunities for in-service and professional development. Student teachers in the UAE were aware of the need to continue to reflect on the practice of teaching and to keep abreast of developments in the field. In fact Salwe, who was wholly committed to teaching as a tool for national development, agreed in full with the idea put forward by Freire (1970), when he encouraged the act of “reflecting and acting on the world to transform it”. Salwe felt that teachers in her country did not spend enough time examining the professional aspects of their role as teachers, and this stunted the growth of the profession in the UAE. The opportunities to spend time in reflection and talk about teaching with other teachers do not really exist in the country. A couple of master’s programs offered in education, through British and American universities, are unsuitable for national teachers as they do

not deal with local issues, instruction is in English, and access is difficult as entrance requirements and costs are set to attract expatriate teachers.

In the US and England, student teachers took professional development for granted and were aware that opportunities were available. This was particularly the case at UOS, where teachers in the state have to re-certify every five years, with professional learning units and credits available through school systems. In England, although teaching certification does not expire once awarded, the central government offers numerous funded opportunities to take part in professional development, along with certain mandated training, usually connected to changes in the National Curriculum.

Unlike the rationale given for entering the program, which was not vastly different across contexts, the concerns and issues raised regarding teaching practice was shaped by the context and cultural space in which the students were operating. There is a consensus in the literature that students consider the practicum to be a highly valued component of their teacher education degree. Nevertheless, there are wide-ranging concerns reported by students in England, the US and UAE related to their teaching practice. Stress experienced by student teachers during their practicum is a finding in enough studies to indicate that it is not an isolated phenomenon, and the responses of the students in my study support this issue. In order to maximize the benefits of the teaching practicum for student teachers and for teacher educators, we need to address the concerns students have. This is problematic, however, as concerns, issues and contexts associated with the teaching practice experience become interconnected.

The student teachers at UOS were placed in a variety of practice schools, though there were often a limited number of places available. At MEU, the students recognized that schools were required to provide practice experiences for student teachers and the central government provided financial support for this, while also enforcing the legislation mandating that schools take student teachers. Although this assured a broad spectrum of schools available (urban, suburban, rural and private), it often meant schools were only taking students because it was mandated, and often viewed as an inconvenience. In the UAE, schools were also required to take student teachers, yet the location of the college of education at NGU meant that students were limited to conducting their practicum in urban schools. This was a problem for several of the student teachers as they recognized that most new entrants to the national school system teach in rural or suburban schools. This led to a perception that the practice teaching experience was not overly authentic or beneficial.

Perceptions and Critiques of Program Structure

The structure of the education programs was also an area where conflict and concerns arose. It became apparent that the students had similar issues, regardless of their location and context. All of the participants stated that they felt more time in practice schools would have been beneficial to their growth as educators and to their understanding of teaching. It was interesting to hear student teachers describe their reasons behind wanting more time in the schools, when in the same interviews they would bemoan the amount of work and time involved in

student teaching. This was not context specific; in fact, it was a constant among all the sites.

The conflict of wanting more time in the classrooms to practice and less time at the university setting was not lost on the student teachers. When asked about this situation none of the participants could think of a solution other than reducing the required workload from the university site. In fact, this was the only solution offered even though work and expectation reduction in the schools could be an option. My understanding of this is that the practice element of the program was highly privileged by the participants and that any attempt to disentangle them from what they perceived a 'real' teaching would be perceived as a negative outcome.

The pre-service teachers from each location highlighted many concerns and perceptions related to their education programs. I was able to draw upon the similarities and differences between the narrative accounts given to me by the participants, yet there was little to distinguish the ideas stated between the different contexts. This was a surprise to me, as at the start of the study I believed that the contextual factors would play a large part in the types of issues raised, whereas this was not the case. However, the cultural context of the participants was important in some issues. For example, at NGU the number of students placed into their programs at the will of the family was relatively high. This was not a factor at MEU or UOS, although some of the students at these universities were on the program due to their perception of limited opportunities elsewhere.

Socio-cultural Factors and Influences

One area where the students had a mixed response was in the connection between their ideals and beliefs and the actual practice of teaching. Some students said that they had always wanted to teach and that they felt the role of a teacher was important and central to society. Those who thought this tended to be female and have personal links to teaching, such as a parent or other relation who was in the profession. This idea of teaching as a social service was what Lortie (1975) termed “service appeal”. The participants who felt this way believed that teaching was more than a career and a profession, and that teachers, as a set of professionals, held a valued and privileged place in society. The notion of service along with preservation of culture and ideals, was strong among the participants at NGU, although many still felt that teaching was not an extended career option.

Tied in with teaching as a social activity and service to society, some of the pre-service teachers were attracted to teaching because of a desire to work with young people and develop what I would call a youth-centric approach to the role of teacher. This is different from the social service reasoning as stated above, as the participants who leaned toward a youth-centric approach to teaching saw the role more as a job rather than a career or vocation. Several of the pre-service teachers who took this view, such as Sally and Caroline, also had a high regard for schools and schooling and had positive experiences of their own time at school to draw upon.

Global Practices in Educational Lending and Borrowing: The case of the UAE

Through talking to the pre-service teachers in the UAE, it was obvious that they were functioning in a system that was a hybrid of many imported ideas and practice. In listening to what Salwe had to say regarding her non-Emirati university professors, and the high numbers of foreign teachers in the schools, it is clear that we need an understanding of the educational practice of borrowing and buying education systems to place Salwe, and her peers, in context. In this short section, I hope to situate the UAE in relation to the importation of educational structures, and aim to highlight the issues that such a practice raises.

The use of western systems in the UAE has much to do with the ambitions of the country and the human resource development needed for these aims to be met (Hatch, 2006). A new global awareness and the international context in which it now must survive has forced the UAE, and the academic institutions within the country, to look beyond their own national needs and cultural confines and place themselves within a larger global framework (Findlow, 2005). The UAE has traditionally relied on expatriate workers to carry out both professional and manual labor work in the country (Haider, 1999). The importation of labor has been possible because of the wealth of the country and the favorable taxation and economic structures that are in place. As the realization that oil wealth is finite and that expatriates are transitional and do little to develop the long-term sustainability of a country, the UAE government set in place an educational system that it hoped would help meet the needs of the country through creating an educated and trained workforce. The need for expatriate workers will not stop in

the near future. The Emirati population is too small to fill the needs of the workforce and there are sectors of the economy in which Emiratis will not work. This makes the aim of universal schooling and mass access to higher education an important factor in going some way to allow the local population to play a larger role in the development of the economy and the country (Leach, 1994).

Alongside the development of a national workforce is the desire by the UAE authorities to make the country competitive on a world stage. Once the formation of the UAE was complete and the British ceased overt support for the country, the government realized that the new state needed an education system. Historically, the leaders and elite of the UAE sent their male heirs overseas to be educated, with a preference for Britain and, more recently, the US. This had implications for the design and importation of an educational structure for the UAE. The experiences of the ruling elite, shaped by the systems they went through, were British and American in design.

The modern UAE education structure, modeled very closely on a British university, transplants of the structure of courses and syllabi from various British sources, via consultants recruited from the United Kingdom. Although there was adoption of the British model, the staffing of the institutions came from within the Arab world, with most of the faculty drawn from Egypt, Syria and Lebanon. The decision to rely on Arab faculty was for logistical reasons, one of these being the language of instruction. Although today English is the first language of

instruction, during the early years very few students had English to a standard that would allow for a high level of instruction to take place (Halloran, 1999).

The use of Arab, and mainly Egyptian, faculty led to the creation of a hybrid system that developed over the formative years of the state. This was not a planned development but one that was inevitable. When two foreign systems, the British structure and Egyptian pedagogy, merged in a new institution, the result was a unique hybridization that may have worked against the aim of creating a unique Emirati educational institution. What transpired over the early years of the development of higher education was a new form of colonization, that of 'Edu-colonization', where the system was directed by those who were in the classrooms and delivering the curricula, thus an Arabic institution developed as opposed to the Emirati one that was desired. The system of national higher education, then, is one that is still seen as the way to create higher education opportunities for nationals, yet some world argue that it has never really achieved the goal of being a truly Emirati system which delivers a curriculum tailored to the exact needs of the country (Bahgat, 1999). What has developed is a university system that delivers a pan-Arabic education to students that meets some of the human resource needs of the country but that does not achieve the goals of an indigenous system.

The Matrioshka Model

The teaching profession alone has the responsibility to educate critical citizens whereas we might argue that the first responsibility

of, say the medical profession, is healing. Educators have a public responsibility that by its very nature involves them in the struggle for democracy. This makes the teaching profession a unique and powerful resource. (Giroux, 1992, p. 15)

In *Border Crossings* (1992), Giroux makes the case in support of teachers as transformative intellectuals, members of society who have the responsibility and power to inform the next generation of citizens, and to influence them in ways that other members of society are unable to do. I found Giroux a source of ideas and beliefs that helped me to explain my thoughts and rationalize my understanding regarding teaching. This in turn allowed me to look at the narratives I had collected, think about the voices I had heard, and try to make sense of the data I had collected. I think Giroux is right. I believe that teachers, and therefore teacher educators, hold a privileged and powerful social position, which if used wisely can work for the betterment of a social group. I frame my beliefs against these ideas as I explored the words of pre-service teachers. However, the work of teachers is not isolated and is not able to shape its own destiny. Giroux's notion of the power teachers have does not allow for the burdensome oversight that policymakers have over teachers and teacher education. Teachers, and the institutions that prepare new entrants to the profession, are politically controlled and monitored in all three of the countries that I examined. So, although I feel Giroux to be right regarding the role and social responsibilities of the teaching profession, I also think that we need to place the work of teachers firmly into the regulating framework that exists.

The situating of student teachers within wider society, and the associated factors that influence them in their programs, led me to develop an image of a pre-service teacher in the middle of ever-increasing realms of influence and interaction. I called this the *Matrioshka Model*. The model is named after the well-known Russian dolls that have at their center a small doll with each subsequent doll being larger and enveloping the smaller, so that each doll, apart from the largest, is contained. The important aspect of this structure is that for the model doll to be complete, all parts need to be present, yet each individual doll exists as a whole outside of the shell. Student teachers exist as individuals outside of the shell, created by society, school, university and other elements, yet as a student teacher and educator, they can only really exist when all the parts are together. As Burr (1995) confirms, a teacher can only exist if there are social interactions, classrooms, schools, students, and the constructed persona of 'teacher'.

In Figure 1, I have tried to show graphically how I viewed the student teachers and their places in their programs and the perceptions of their role, as understood from my time talking to them. This graphical framework was a way to help me connect the theoretical understanding I had gained through reading the likes of Britzman (2003), Burr (1995), Gee (1990; 1996), and Giroux (1981; 1988; 1992), with the words spoken by the students. The narratives collected from the students, viewed through the model and theoretical background allowed me access to the perceptions and developmental aspects of the participants.

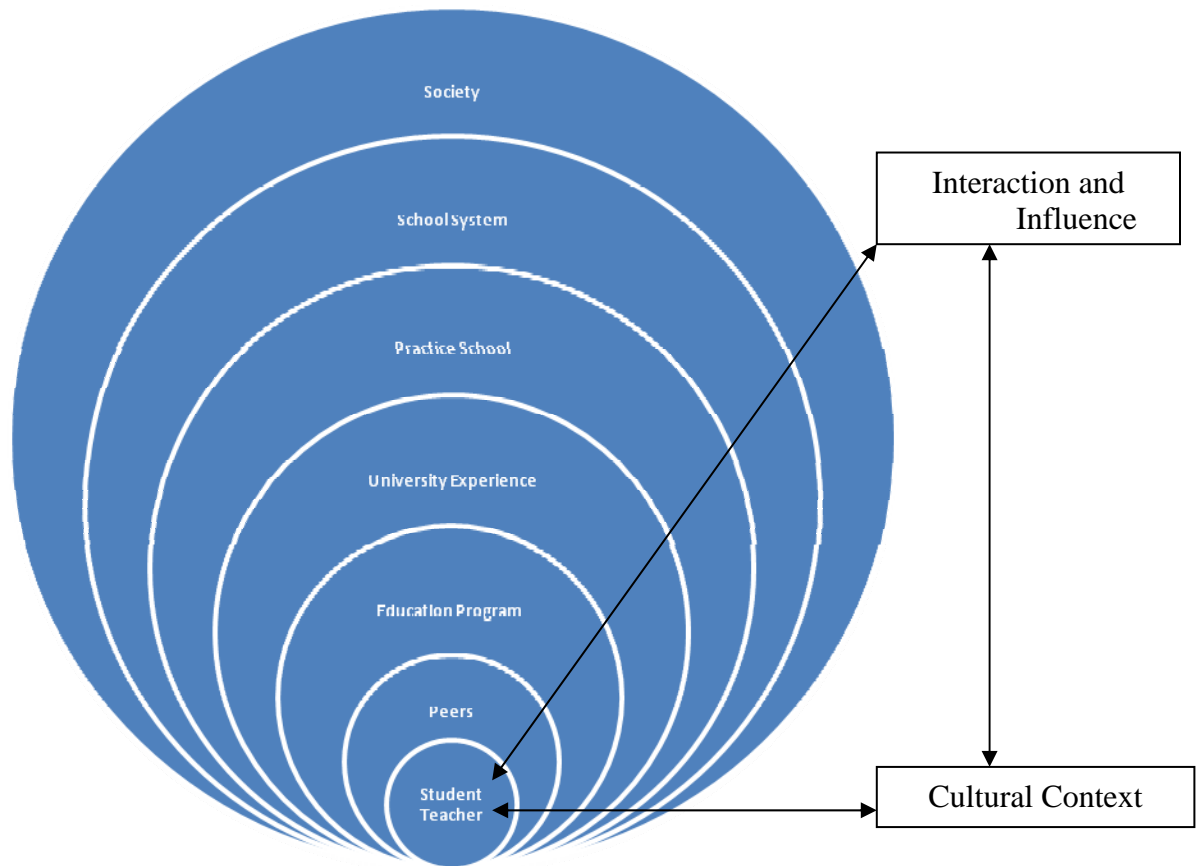


Figure 1. The Matrioshka Model: My framework for understanding the influencing factors and place of pre-service teachers in diverse settings.

In the Matrioshka Model, the student teacher is at the heart of their education program, in keeping with the idea that the learner is at the center of the construction of meaning (Shaw, 2008). They are responsible for interacting with the many agents that they come into contact with, as well as attempt to ‘fit’ into the broader societal notions of what a teacher is and how a teacher should perform. As this idea was developing, I shared my thoughts with several of the pre-service teachers to see if they would agree with my notion of ever-increasing

factors of influence and interaction that were a part, although often invisible, of their pre-service education.

Through these discussions, I was able to amend my ideas and the graphic representation of them to reflect the views of the students. One aspect that became apparent, and led to a redesign of my model, was the idea that the pre-service teachers moved back and forth along a continuum between the different factors that influence their program and development. Gee (1996) puts across the idea that knowledge, shaped by a culturally specific context, alters as the learner moves within settings. The pre-service teacher, when placed within my model, alters contexts dependent on the layers of interaction and influence, yet at all times is shaping their understanding and knowledge by drawing on their context.

On reflection, I added the double-headed arrows to the model, to indicate that at all times students are influencing, and influenced by, many different agents. This tied in with my understanding of Britzman's (2003) theories regarding learning and multiple interactions within a pre-service education course. Britzman's ideas with regard to being situated in two worlds, for example the world of university student and that of school teacher was an important factor in helping me to understand the place of the pre-service teachers and the context of their narratives.

As I developed the model, and thought about the place of pre-service teachers among the conflicting and, often contradictory, forces that act upon them, it became obvious that the model could also be used to help me understand the

role of teacher education programs, and their place in the educational landscape. Teacher education programs, housed within formal higher education institutions, work within an atmosphere of regulation, influence, cultural context and mandated reform. Policy acts upon education, which in turn, shapes the preparation of those who will work within education and follow the prescribed policy. An example of this is the program at MEU, where Ailsa trained as a teacher. As the central government takes an increasing role in the monitoring of schools and the national curriculum, schools and teachers must bend and flex to keep within the mandated government criteria. In reaction to this, teacher education must morph to fit the needs of schools and students under developing policy, or risk being reprimanded by the government, and possibly producing teachers unable to work within current frameworks.

If I frame my discussion against the Matrioshka Model, and use the influencing factors as a way to highlight the themes that emerged, I believe this is a useful way to situate the perceptions of pre-service teachers. The model, and its underlying ideas, also expands in detail at a macro level, for example, outside of a particular society there are broader frameworks, which influence the pre-service teacher, such as international standards and assessments, against which many countries compete.

The model helped me to think about the themes that arose in the discussions with the pre-service teachers, and to see how many different aspects create the multilayered cocoon in which the student teacher exists during the education program. One such aspect that is present in several of the layers, and

that the pre-service teachers spoke about, was the perceived disconnect between theory and practice. As was stated through the words of student teachers, the gap between theory and practice was problematic. If, as Lortie (1975) and Britzman (1991) believe, pre-service teachers already have encountered the theory / practice dichotomy before entering their education programs, through their own culturally defined perceptions and experiences of teachers, then the education program may have little effect on the socialization and preparation of new teachers.

The idea that new teachers are influenced more by the practice schools than by the classroom work and theory of the university program is discussed by Eisner (1992):

When a university teacher education program tries to promulgate a new image of teaching, but send its young, would-be teachers back to schools that are essentially like the ones in which they were socialized, the prospects for replacing the old ideals in the all too familiar contexts in which the new teachers work is dimmed: The new wine is changed when it is poured into the old bottle. (p. 611).

Eisner's metaphorical take on the socialization process of new teachers was shared by many of the pre-service teachers I spoke to in this study. Yet, as the Matrioshka Model shows, there are wider factors and complex ways that new ideas, understanding and the methods of new teachers mix in education programs and schools. This mixing with the older and established way of being will bring

about change and reflection, a steady process of moving back and forth along the arrow shown in the diagram.

Recommendations for Further Study

As mentioned in previous chapters, there have thus far been few if any comparative studies of teacher education focusing on the US, England and UAE. I hope that through my study a greater understanding of teacher education across the three locations can be developed. I felt that the most effective way to examine teacher education was to speak to those who were directly involved in it, the pre-service teachers. Although the study reported here has begun a dialogue with teachers in the three countries and allows comparisons to be drawn, I am aware that this study is small in scope and that there are areas for development in building a greater understanding of what is taking place.

Below I set out several ideas for further study in this area that I think would develop and build upon the modest start made in this study. I would recommend directing further study in this area toward the following areas of inquiry:

- A study to examine the perceptions of student teachers across a wider geographical space would allow a larger number of narratives to be collected and inform practice on a more global level.
- Within the UAE, and wider Gulf region, there are now several different universities offering education programs, including pre-service education. A timely study of the different programs and the types of students enrolled

would reveal interesting aspects of educational development in the Middle East.

- As school enrollment continues to grow in the UAE, government policy is to develop an indigenous teaching force, with nationals in the majority of teaching positions by 2020. A study examining the progress made towards this goal, along with educational development in general, would reveal the efficacy of the scheme.
- Another area of research, with a more applied factor, would be to conduct a feasibility study of teacher exchanges between the Gulf and western countries, as such a scheme does not exist. This would allow for cross-cultural learning as well as the sharing of practice and ideas.
- Education and the globalization of the education sector could be examined from the stance of educational borrowing and lending (Philips and Ochs, 2004), with a focus on the Gulf, where several American and European universities have established satellite campuses. Is this 'Edu-colonialism' benefiting the host culture?
- Although there is wealth of literature and research relating to teacher education in England and America, further cross-national study, and interstate inquiry, into pre-service teachers and their perceptions of their education programs would benefit the development of the field of teacher education. As policies, requirements and needs change, so does teacher education and the research needs to be current.

- There is a need for a longitudinal international comparative study that tracks groups of students through their education programs and into their future careers, to examine the influence of contextual and cultural factors on teacher attrition.

A Personal Journey: Final Reflections

I find myself at a crossroad. The pre-service teachers who spoke so honestly to me about their experiences have left me with more questions than answers. Their candor, humor, openness, willingness to share and insights into teaching and learning, gave me reason to pause and examine my own teaching and my own history as a teacher. I feel that talking to the participants in this study has left me with more to reflect upon and that I want to investigate and examine. This is a good thing, I feel, yet also daunting, as I also am aware that there is so much more I need and want to know.

Although deeply grateful for the time that the pre-service teachers gave to me, the burden is upon me to give them voice and to learn from what they have to say. I hope, in some small way, that through this study I have accomplished what I set out to do; attempt to learn more about what student teachers think and feel about their education programs through a cross-national comparative study. There is scope to go further, to speak to ever more students, to expand the study across even more locations, yet this is for the future. The narratives collected for this study will continue to inspire me and cause me to question what I have learned. No doubt, I will revisit the data and hear again the voices of these new teachers.

Ideally I would like to see where they are in several years time, to see if they are teaching and to speak to them as they have a chance to reflect again on their education programs but with the benefit of several years experience.

I have a great deal to consider as I finish this study and look ahead to future research interests and ideas. I hope that this study will form the base from which I can build a wider understanding of teacher education within a comparative framework, with a special focus on the Gulf region.

REFERENCES

- Abdulla, A. (2000). *The Arab Gulf States: Old Approaches and New Realities*. Abu Dhabi. Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research
- Abdullah, A. (2006, October 23). A giant stride towards reform. *Gulf News*. p.8.
- Abdullah, A. (2007, April 14). UAE's demographic imbalance. *Gulf News*. p. 8.
- Ackermann, E. (2001). *Piaget's Constructivism, Papert's Constructionism: What's the Difference?* Retrieved 12 April 2008, from <http://learning.media.mit.edu/content/publications/EA.Piaget%20%20Papert.pdf>
- Adams, A. & Tulasiewicz, W. (1995). *The Crisis in teacher Education: A European Concern?* London. Falmer Press
- Akiba, M., LeTendre, G. K. & Scribner, J. P. (2007). Teacher Quality, Opportunity Gap, and National Achievement in 46 Countries. *Educational Researcher*, 36(7), 369-387
- Ali, F. (2007, June 3). Fujairah pupils blame home and school. *Gulf News*. p. 8.
- Al-Hinai, A. M. (2007). *The interplay between culture, teacher professionalism and teachers' professional development in times of change*. In, T. Townsend & R. Bates (Eds), *Handbook of Teacher Education*. Dordrecht, Netherlands. Springer. 41-52
- Al-Kaabi, A. (2005) *Factors influencing teacher attrition in the United Arab Emirates*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Pittsburgh

- Al-Khatib, M. A. (2006). Aspects of bilingualism in the Arab world: An introduction. *The International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 9 (1) 1-6.
- Al-Mikhalfi, A. G. (1988). *The Transformation of the Arab Nation: The Role of Democracy and Education*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Georgia
- Al-Misnad, S. (1985) *The Development of Modern Education in the Gulf*. London. Ithaca Press
- Allen, M. (2003). *Eight Questions on Teacher Preparation: What does the research say?* The Education Commission of the States (ECS)
- Altbach, P.G, Arnove, R. F. & Kelly, G. P. (Eds), (1982). *Comparative Education*. New York. Macmillan Publishing Co.
- Anderson, L. W. (Ed). (1995). *International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education*. Oxford. Pergamon Press
- Angus, L. (2007). *Globalisation and the reshaping of teacher professional culture: Do we train competent technicians or informed players in the policy process?* In, T. Townsend & R. Bates (Eds), *Handbook of Teacher Education*. Doordrecht, Netherlands. Springer. 141-156
- Apple, N. (1996). *Cultural Politics and Education*. New York. Teachers College Press
- Apple. N. (2000). *Between neoliberalism and neoconservatism: education and conservatism in a global context*. In, N. C. Burbules and C. A. Torres (eds), *Globalization and Education*. New York. Routledge. 57-77
- Ashraf, S. A. (1985) *New Horizons in Muslim Education*. London. Hodder and Stoughton

- Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G. & Tiffin, H. (Eds). (2004). *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*. London. Routledge
- Atkinson, D. (2004). Theorising how student teachers form their identities in initial teacher education. *British Educational Research Journal*, 30 (3), 379-394
- Avalos, B. (2002). Teacher Education: Reflections, Debates, Challenges and Innovations. *Prospects*, 32(3), 265-271
- Azzam, H., Abu Nasr, J. & Lorfing, I. (1985). *An overview of Arab women in population, employment and economic development*. In, J. Abu Nasr, F. Nabil, H. Khoury & T. Azzam (Eds), *Women, Employment and Development in the Arab World*. Berlin. Mouton
- Bahgat, G. (1999). Education in the Gulf Monarchies: Retrospect and Prospect. *International Review of Education*, 45(2), 127-136
- Baker, D. & Wiseman, A. (Eds) (2005). *Global trends in educational policy. International perspectives on education and society*. Amsterdam. Elsevier / JAI
- Barakat, H. (1993). *The Arab World. Society, Culture and State*. Berkeley, CA. University of California Press
- BBC News online (24th April, 2008). *Schools shut in public pay unrest*, from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/7363718.stm
- Beck, C. & Kosnik, C. (2002). Components of a good practicum placement: Student teacher perceptions. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 29 (2) Spring 2002, 81-98
- Berliner, D. C. (2000). A personal response to those who bash teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 65(1), 8-13

- Berliner, D. & Biddle, B. (1995). *The Manufactured Crisis: Myths, Fraud and the Attack on America's Public Schools*. Reading, MA. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company
- Birks, J. S. & Rimmer, J. A. (1984). *Developing Education Systems in the Oil States of Arabia: Conflicts of Purpose and Focus*. Durham, UK. University of Durham Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies
- Bogdan, R. C. & Bicklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative research for education*. Boston. Allyn and Bacon
- Bottery, M. & Wright, N. (2000). *Teachers and the State: International Perspectives*. London. Routledge
- Britzman, D. P. (1991). *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach*. Albany, New York. State University of New York Press
- Brock, C. (Ed). (1996). *Global Perspectives on Teacher Education*. Oxford. Triangle Books
- Brook Napier, D. (2005). Implementing Educational Transformation Policies: Investigating issues of ideal versus real in developing countries. *International Perspectives on Education and Society*, 6, 59-98
- Bruner, J. (2000). *The Culture of Education*. Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press
- Burbules, N. C. & Torres, C. A. (Eds). (2000). *Globalization and Education. Critical perspectives*. New York. Routledge
- Burr, V. (1995). *An Introduction to Social Constructionism*. London. Routledge

- Caires, S. & Almeida, L. (2005). Teaching practice in Initial Teacher Education: its impact on student teachers' professional skills and development. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 31(2), 111-120
- Charmaz, K. (1983). *The Grounded Theory Method: an explication and interpretation*. In, R. M. Emerson (Ed), *Contemporary Field Research: a book of readings*. Boston, MA. Little Brown
- Charmaz, K. (1994). *Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods*. In, N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage
- Chen, S. H. L. (2001). *Constructing a constructivist teacher education: A Taiwan experience*. In, Cheng, Y. C., Chow, K. W. & Tsui, K. T. (Eds), *New Teacher Education for the Future: International perspectives*. Hong Kong. Hong Kong Institute of Education. 261-290
- Cheng, Y. C., Chow, K. W. & Tsui, K. T. (Eds). (2001). *New Teacher Education for the Future: International Perspectives*. Hong Kong. Hong Kong Institute of Education
- Chism, N. (1999). *Peer Review of Teaching*. Bolton, MA. Anker Publishing
- Christina, R., Mehran, G. & Mir, S. (2003). *Education in the Middle East. Challenges and Opportunities*. In Arnove, R. & Torres, A. (Eds.). *Comparative Education. The Dialectic of the Global and Local*. Maryland, VA. Rowman & Littlefield
- Clarke, M. (2006). Beyond antagonism? The discursive construction of 'new' teachers in the United Arab Emirates. *Teaching Education*, 17 (3), 225-237
- Clarke, M. & Otaky, D. (2006). Reflection 'on' and 'in' teacher education in the United Arab Emirates. *International Journal of Educational Development*. 26(2006), 111-122

- Clinard, L., Miron, L., Ariav, T., Botzer, I., Conroy, J., Laycock, K. & Yule, K. (1997, March). *A Cross-Cultural Perspective of Teachers' Perceptions: What Contributions are Exchanged Between Cooperating Teachers and Student Teachers?* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago
- Cochran-Smith, M. & Fries, M. K. (2002). The discourse of reform in teacher education: Extending the dialogue. *Educational Researcher*, 31(6), 26-28
- Cochran-Smith, M. & Zeichner, K. (Eds). (2005). *Studying Teacher Education: The Report of the AERA panel on Research in Teacher Education*. Washington, DC. American Educational Research Association
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education*. 6th Edition. London. Routledge
- Coombs, P. H. (1985). *The World Crisis in Education. The view from the eighties*. Oxford. Oxford University Press
- Cooper, J. M. (1995). *Supervision in Teacher Education*. In, L. W. Anderson (Ed), *International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education*. Cambridge, UK. Pergamon. 593-598
- Cresswell, J. W. (2002). *Educational Research*. New Jersey. Merrill Prentice Hall
- Cross, C. T. (2004). *Political Education: national policy comes of age*. New York. Teachers College Press
- Cullingford, C. & Gunn, S. (Eds). (2005) *Globalization, Education and Culture Shock*. Aldershot, UK. Ashgate
- Daly, C. (2004). Trainee English teachers and the struggle for subject knowledge. *Changing English*, 11(2), 189-204

Darling-Hammond, L. (1999). *The case for university-based teacher education*. In, R. A. Roth (Ed.), *The role of the university in the preparation of teachers*. London, Falmer Press. 13-30

Darling-Hammond, L., Hammerness, K., Grossman, P., Rust, F., & Shulman, L. (2005) *The Design of Teacher Education Programs*. In, L. Darling-Hammond & J. Bransford (Eds), *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World. What teachers should learn and be able to do*. San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass. 390-441

Daun, H. & Walford, G. (Eds). (2004). *Educational Strategies Among Muslims in the Context of Globalization: some national case studies*. Boston, MA. Leiden Publishers

Davidson, C. M. (2005). *The United Arab Emirates. A study in survival*. Boulder, CO. Lynne Reinner Publishers

Davies, L. (1996). *Teacher Education, Gender and Development*. In, C. Brock (Ed), *Global Perspectives on Teacher Education*. Oxford. Triangle Books. 47-64

Davis, T. C. & Moely, B. (2007). *Preparing pre-service teachers and meeting the diversity challenge through structured service-learning*. In, T. Townsend & R. Bates, *Handbook of Teacher Education*. Doordrecht, Netherlands. Springer. 283-300

Department of Education and Employment (1999) *The National Curriculum for England: English: Key Stages 1-4*. London. Her Majesty's Stationary Office (HMSO)

Denzin, N. K. (1983). A note on emotionality, self, and interaction. *American Journal of Sociology* 89 2, 402-409

Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Interpretive interactionism*. Newbury Park, CA. Sage

- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and Education*. New York. Touchstone
- Dey, I. (1999). *Grounding grounded Theory: guidelines for qualitative inquiry*. San Diego, CA. Academic Press
- Diaz, C. F., Massialas, B. G. & Xanthopoulos, J. A. (1999). *Global Perspectives for Educators*. Boston, MA. Allyn & Bacon
- Dulude, L. A. Y. C., Pinnegar, S., Reed, M., Wheeler, E. & Wilkes, C. (2005). *The positioning of pre-service teacher candidates entering teacher education*. In, J. Brophy & S. Pinnegar (Eds.), *Learning from Research on Teaching: Perspectives, Methodology, and Representation*. Boston, MA. Elsevier Ltd. 235-252
- Dunkin, M. J. (Ed). (1987). *International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education*. Oxford. Pergamon Press
- Durkheim, E. (1976). *The elementary forms of religious life*. London. Allen and Unwin
- ECSSR (2005; 2002; 1992) Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, website, <http://www.ecssr.com>
- Eisner, E. (1992). Educational reform and the ecology of schooling. *Teachers College Record*. 93 (4), 610-627
- El-Sanbury, N. (1992). *Education in the Arab Gulf States and the Arab World. An annotated bibliographic guide*. New York. Garland Publishing
- Fajet, W., Bello, M., Leftwich, S., Mesler, J. & Shaver, A. (2005). Pre-service teachers' perceptions in beginning education classes. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21 (2005), 717-727

- Fataar, S. (Ed). (2001). *Becoming a teachers at UWC: The case of the Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE)*. University of the Western Cape, Papers in Education
- Feiman-Nemser, S. (2001). Helping novices learn to teach: Lessons from an exemplary support teacher. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 52, 17-30
- Feiman-Nemser, S. & Buchmann, M. (1985). Pitfalls of experience in teacher preparation. *Teachers College Record*, 87(1), 53-65
- Findlow, S. (2000). *The United Arab Emirates: Nationalism and Arab-Islamic Identity*. Abu Dhabi. Emirates centre for Strategic Studies and Research
- Findlow, S. (2005). International networking in the United Arab Emirates higher education system: global-local tensions. *Compare*, 35(3), 285-302
- Flick, U. (1998). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. London. Sage
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York. Continuum
- Fox, J., Mourtada-Sabbah, N., & al-Mutawa, M. (Eds.) (2006). *Globalization and the Gulf*. London, Routledge.
- Gaad, E., Arif, M. & Scott, F. (2006). Systems analysis of the UAE education system. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 20 (4), 291-303
- Gal, D. G. (2005). *Global Perspectives for Teacher Education*. In, D. P. Baker & A. W. Wiseman (Eds), *Global Trends in Educational Policy*. New York. Elsevier. 259-287
- Gardner, W. (1995). Developing a Quality Teaching Force for the United Arab Emirates: mission improbable. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 21 (3), 289-301

- Gardner, W. & Abu Libde, A. (1995). Professional Development Schools: how well will they travel? *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 21(3), 303-315
- Gee, J. P. (1996) *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology and discourse*. Bristol, PA. Taylor & Francis
- Gee, J. P. & Lankshear, C. (1995). The new work order: critical language awareness and “fast capitalism”. *Texts Discourse: Studies in the cultural politics of education*, 16 (1), 5-20
- Gess-Newsome, J. (2001). *Examining Pedagogical Content Knowledge*. London. Kluwer Academic Publishers
- Ghazal, S. (1997). *Indigenous manpower in the private sector of the Arabian Peninsula: a guide to effective achievement*. London. Kegan Paul International
- Gibson, B., Gregory, J., & Robinson, P. G. (2005). The intersection between systems theory and grounded theory: the emergence of the grounded systems observer. *Qualitative Sociology review*, 1 (2)
- Gideonse, H. D. (1992). *Teacher Education Policy: Narratives, stories and cases*. New York. State University of New York Press
- Gideonse, H. D. (1995). *Governance of Teacher Education*, in L. W. Anderson (Ed), *International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education*. Oxford. Pergamon Press. 556-560
- Gimmestad, M. J. & Hall, G. E. (1995). *Structure of Teacher Education Programs*. In, L. W. Anderson (Ed), *International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education*. Cambridge, UK. Pergamon. 548-551

- Giroux, H. A. (1981). *Ideology, Culture, and the Process of Schooling*. Philadelphia, PA. Temple University Press.
- Giroux, H. A. (1988). *Teachers as Intellectuals. Toward a Critical Pedagogy of Learning*. Westport, CT. Bergin & Garvey
- Giroux, H. A. (1992). *Border Crossings. Cultural workers and the politics of education*. New York. Routledge
- Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *Discovery of Grounded Theory: strategies for qualitative research*. Hawthorne, NY. Aldine Transaction
- Goertz, M. E. (2001). Redefining Government Roles in an Era of Standards-Based Reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 83 (1), 62-66
- Gold, Y. (1996). *Beginning Teacher Support. Attrition, mentoring and Induction*. In, J. Sikula (Ed), *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*. New York. Association of Teacher Educators. 548-594
- Goodlad, J. I. (1990). *Teachers for Our Nation's Schools*. San Francisco, CA. Jossey Bass
- Goodlad, J. I. (1999). Why we need a complete redesign of teacher education. *Educational Leadership*, 49(3), 4-10
- Gordan, P. & Lawton, D. (2003). *Dictionary of British Education*. London. Woburn Press
- Grant, G. & Murray, C. (1999). *Teaching in America. The Slow Revolution*. Cambridge, MA. Harvard University Press

- Green, A. (2006) *Education, Globalization and the Nation States*. In, H. Lauder, P. Brown, J. Dillabough & A. H. Halsey (Eds.) *Education, Globalization and Social Change*. Oxford. Oxford University Press
- Greene, C. H. & Magliaro, S. G. (2005). *Pre-service teachers' images of teaching*. In, J. Brophy & S. Pinnegar (Eds), *Learning from Research on Teaching*. New York. Elsevier. 207-234
- Griffin, R. (Ed). (2006). *Education in the Muslim World. Different Perspectives*. Oxford. Symposium Books
- Grimmett, P. (1995). *Reconceptualizing Teacher Education: preparing teachers for revitalized schools*. In, M. F. Wideen & P. Grimmett (Eds). *Changing Times in Teacher Education*. London. Falmer Press. 202-225
- Guba, E. G. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). *Competing paradigms in qualitative research*. In, N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London. Sage. 105-117
- Gunn, S. (2005). *Introduction*. In, C. Cullingford & S. Gunn (Eds), *Globalisation, Education and Culture Shock*. Aldershot, UK. Ashgate. 1-9
- Haider, A. (1999). Emirates pre-service and in-service teachers' views about the nature of science. *International Journal of Science Education*, 21(8), 807-822
- Hall, C. (2004). Theorising Change in Teachers' Work. *Canadian Journal of Education Administration and Policy*, 32 (July)
- Hall, C. & Schulz, R. (2003). Tensions in Teaching and Teacher Education: professionalism and professionalization in England and Canada. *Compare*, 33(3), 369-383

- Halloran, W. (1999). *Zayed University: A New Model for Higher Education in the United Arab Emirates*. In Davies, D. (Ed). *Education in the Arab World: Challenges of the Next Millennium*. Abu Dhabi, UAE. Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research
- Hancock, E. & Gallard, A. (2004). Pre-service Science Teachers' Beliefs About Teaching and Learning: The Influence of K-12 Field Experiences. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*. 15(4), 281-291
- Hargreaves, A. (1995). *Beyond Collaboration: critical teacher development in the post-modern age*. In, J. Smyth (Ed), *Critical Discourses in Teacher Education*. London. Cassell
- Hargreaves, A. (2003). *Teaching in the knowledge society. Education in the age of insecurity*. New York. Teachers College Press
- Harris, K. (1994). *Teachers: constructing the future*. London. Falmer Press
- Harvard, G. & Hodkinson, P. (Eds) (1994). *Action and reflection in teacher education*. Norwood, NJ. Ablex Publishing
- Hatch, T. (2006). *Into the Classroom. Developing the scholarship of teaching and learning*. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass
- Hess, F. M. (2001). *Tear Down This Wall. The case for a radical overhaul of teacher certification*. Washington, D. C. Progressive Policy Institute
- Hirsch, E. D. (1996). *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't have Them*. New York. Doubleday
- Hirst, P. H. (1996). *The demands of a professional practice and preparation for teaching*. In, J. Furlong & R. Smith (Eds). *The rise of higher education in initial teacher training*. London. Kegan Paul. 166-178

- Hobson, A., Tracey, L., Kerr, K., Malderez, A., Pell, G., Simm, C. & Johnson, F. (2004). *Why people choose to become teachers and the factors influencing their choice of initial teacher training route: Early findings from the Becoming a Teacher (BaT) project*. (Research Brief No. RBX08-04) London. Department for Education and Skills
- Hogan, K., Nastasi, B.K., & Pressley, M. (2000). Discourse patterns and collaborative scientific reasoning in peer and teacher-guided discussions. *Cognition and Instruction* 17 (4), 379-432.
- Holden, J. (1995). *Mentoring Frameworks for Texas Teachers*. Austin, TX. Texas Education Agency
- Honan, E. (2000). *Teachers Engaging in Research as Professional Development*. In, N. C. Burbules & C. A. Torres (Eds), *Globalization and Education*. New York. Routledge. 613-624
- Howey, K. (1996). *Designing coherent and effective teacher education programs*. In, J. Sikula (Ed), *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*. New York. Macmillan. 143-170
- Hoyle, E. (1995). *The Social Status of Teachers*. In Anderson, L. W. (Ed) *International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education*. Oxford, UK. Pergamon
- Ingersoll, R. M. (2003). *Who Controls Teachers' Work?* Cambridge MA. Harvard University Press
- Iredale, R. (1996). *The Significance of Teacher Education for International Educational Development*. In, C. Brock (Ed), *Global Perspectives on Teacher Education*. Oxford, UK. Triangle Books. 9-17

- Ishler, R. E., Edens, K. M. & Berry, B. W. (1996). *Elementary Education*. In, J. Sikula (Ed), *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*. New York. Macmillan. 348-277
- Jackson, P. W. (1986). *The practice of teaching*. New York. Teachers College Press
- Johnson, D. D, Johnson, B, Farenga, S. J. & Ness, D. (2005). *Trivializing Teacher Education. The Accreditation Squeeze*. New York. Rowan & Littlefield
- Jones, K. (2003). *Education in Britain 1944 to present*. Cambridge. Polity
- Jones, L., Reid, D. & Bevins, S. (1997). Teachers' Perceptions of Mentoring in a Collaborative Model of Initial Teacher Training. *Journal of Education for Teaching*. 23(3), 253-262
- Kafai, Y. & Resnick, M. (1996). *Construction in Practice: Designing, thinking, and learning in a digital world*. Mahwah, NJ. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates
- Kamberlis, G. & Dimitriadis, G. (2005). *Qualitative Inquiry. Approaches to language and literacy research*. New York. Teachers College Press
- Kapiszewski, A. (2001). *Nationals and Expatriates. Population and Labour Dilemmas of the Gulf Cooperation Council States*. Reading, UK. Ithaca Press
- Katz, L. G. & Raths, D. (1990). *A framework for research on teacher education programs*. In, R. P. Tischer & M. F. Wideen (Eds), *Research in Teacher Education: International Perspectives*. Basingstoke, UK. Falmer Press
- Khoury, N. F. & Moghadam, V. M. (Eds). (1995). *Gender Development in the Arab World: Women's Economic Participation: Patterns and Policies*. London. United Nations University Press

- Killen, R. (1994, July). *Student teachers' perceptions of successful and unsuccessful events during practice teaching*. Paper presented at Conference of Australian Teacher Education Association, Brisbane, Australia
- Kirk, D. (April, 2007) *Global Education for a Local Population: An international study of pre-service teachers' perceptions of professional training in the United States, United Kingdom and United Arab Emirates*. A paper presented at the conference *School Reform: Challenges and Aspirations*, United Arab Emirates University, Dubai, UAE
- Kumashiro, K. (2004). *Against Common Sense: Teaching and learning toward social justice*. New York. Routledge Falmer
- Kvale, S. (1996). *InterViews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage
- Labaree, D. (1947). *The Trouble with Ed Schools*. New Haven. Yale University Press
- Lawn, M. (1996). *Modern Times? Work, professionalism and citizenship*. London. Falmer
- Layton, R. (1997) *An Introduction to Theory in Anthropology*. Cambridge, UK. Cambridge University Press
- Leach, F. (1994). Expatriates as agents of cross-cultural transmission. *Compare*. 24(3), 217-232
- Leigh, A. & Mead, S. (2005). *Lifting Teacher Performance. Progressive Policy Institute, policy report*. Retrieved on 7th January 2008 from, www.ppionline.org/ppi_ci.cfm?KnlgAreaID=110&SubSecID=135&contentID=253286

- Little, J. (1993). Teacher's professional development in a climate of educational reform. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 15(2), 129-151
- Little, J. W. (1990). *The Mentor Phenomenon and the Social Organization of Teaching*. In C. Casden (Ed), *Review of Research in Education*, 16 (297-351). Washington DC. American Educational Research Association
- Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher*. Chicago. Chicago University Press
- Malallah, S. (2000). English in an Arabic environment: Current attitudes to English among Kuwait University students. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 3 (1), 19-43.
- Majali, A. S. (1976). *The Development of Higher Education in the Arab World*. The 6th Carreras Arab Lecture, University of Essex, 30th November 1972. Longman
- Manduk, D., Hasinoff, S. & Seifert, K. (2003). Inside a student cohort: Teacher education from a social capital perspective. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 28(1+2), 168-184
- Marlow, L. & Inman, D. (1997). Beginning teachers: are they still leaving the profession? *Clearing House*, 70(4), 211-215
- Marshall, J. (2008). *Divided Against Ourselves: Assessments and adolescent literacy*. In, R. Bomer, L. Christenbury & P. Smagorinsky (eds), *The Handbook of Adolescent Research*. Guilford Press
- Marshall, J. & Smith, J. (1997) Teaching as we're taught: The university's role in the education of English teachers. *English Education*. 29 (4), 245-271
- Massialas, B. G. & Jarrar, S. A. (1983). *Education in the Arab World*. New York. Praeger

- Massialas, B. & Jarrar, S. (1991). *Arab Education in Transition: a source book*. New York. Garland Publishing
- McGovern, S. (1999). *Education, modern development and indigenous knowledge*. New York. Garland.
- McVee, M. B. (2004) Narrative and the exploration of culture in teachers' discussions of literacy, identity, self and others. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20, 881-899
- Merriam, S. B & Associates (2002). *Qualitative Research in Practice. Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass
- Menter, I. (1989). Teaching Practice Stasis: racism, sexism and school experience in initial teacher training. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 10, 459-474
- Miller, J. & Glassner, B. (2004). *The "inside" and the "outside". Finding realities in interviews*. In, D. Silverman (Ed), *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and practice*. London. Sage
- Miller, S. & Fredericks, M. (1999). How does grounded theory explain? *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9, 538-551
- Morine-Dersheimer, G. & Leighfield, K. (1995). *Student Teaching and Field Experiences*. In, L. Anderson (Ed), *International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education*. Cambridge, UK. Pergamon. 588-593
- Morrow, R. A. & Torres, C. A. (2000). *The State, Globalization, and Educational Policy*. In, N. C. Burbules & C. A. Torres (Eds), *Globalization and Education. Critical Perspectives*. New York. Routledge. 27-56
- Myles, J., Cheng, L. & Wang, H. (2006). Teaching in elementary school: Perceptions of foreign-trained teacher candidates on their teaching practicum. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(2), 233-245

- Naish, M. (1990). *Teacher Education Today*. In, N. J. Graves (Ed), *Initial Teacher Education*. London. Kogan Paul. 25-44
- National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) *A Nation at Risk: The imperative for educational reform*. Washington, DC. Government Printing Office
- National Academies (2007). *Study of Teacher Preparation Programs in the United States*, retrieved 7 January, 2008, from <http://www.nationalacademies.org/teacherprep/>
- Noddings, N. (1984). *Caring: A feminine approach to ethics and care*. Berkeley, CA. University of California Press
- Nuthall, G. (2002). *Social Constructionist Teaching and the Shaping of Students Knowledge Thinking*. In, J. Brophy (Ed), *Social Constructionist Teaching: Affordances and Constraints*. Oxford. Elsevier. 43-79
- Olsson, M., O'Neill, A. & Codd, J. A. (2004). *Education Policy: Globalization, Citizenship and Democracy*. London. Sage
- Parsons, T. (1951). *The Social System*. New York. Free Press
- Pearson, A. T. (1989). *The Teacher. Theory and practice in teacher Education*. New York. Routledge
- Peck, M. C. (1986). *The United Arab Emirates: A venture in unity*. Colorado: Westview Press.
- Perraton, H. (2000). *Open and Distance Learning in the Developing World*. London. Routledge

- Phillips, D. (1989). *Neither a Borrower nor a Lender Be? The problems of cross-national attraction in education*. In, D. Phillips (Ed), *Cross-national Attraction in Education*, special Issue of *Comparative Education*. 25(3), 267-274
- Phillips, D. (2005). *Policy Borrowing in Education: Frameworks for analysis*. In, J. Zajda (Ed), *International Handbook on Globalizations, Education and Policy Research*. Doordrecht, Netherlands. Springer. 23-34
- Phillips, D. & Ochs, K. (Eds). (2004). *Educational Policy Borrowing. Historical perspectives*. Oxford. Symposium Books
- Postlethwaite, T. N. (Ed). (1995). *Encyclopedia of Comparative Education and National Systems of Education*. Oxford. Pergamon
- Potter, J. (2004). *Discourse analysis as a way of analyzing naturally occurring talk*. In, D. Silverman (Ed), *Qualitative research. Theory, method and practice*. London. Sage
- Pulliman, J. D. & Van Patten, J. J. (2003). *History of Education in America*. Upper Saddle River, NJ. Pearson
- Raduntz, H. (2005). *The Marketization of Education within a Global Capitalist Economy*. In, M. W. Apple, J. Kenway & M. Singh (Eds), *Globalizing Education. Policies, Pedagogies and Politics*. New York. Peter Lang Publishing
- Rasheed, M. & Hengst, H. (1983). *Improving Education in the Arabian Gulf Region*. *Journal of Thought*. 18 (2), 97-103
- Robins, L. (1999). *The Education Issue: raising the standard or beating a retreat*. In, B. Jones (Ed), *Political issues in Britain today*. Manchester. Manchester University Press

- Robson, C. (1983). *Real World Research: a resource for social scientists and practitioner-researchers*. Oxford. Blackwell
- Robson, C. (1999). *Experiment, Design and Statistics in Psychology*. Harmondsworth, UK. Penguin
- Rugh, W. A. (2002) Arab Education: Tradition, Growth and Reform. *The Middle East Journal*, 56 (3), 396-414
- Sabour, M. (2001). *The Ontology and Status of Intellectuals in Arab Academia and Society*. Aldershot, UK. Ashgate
- Said, E. W. (1978) *Orientalism*. New York. Random House
- Sands, D. & Goodwin, L. (2005). Shared responsibility for teacher preparation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21(7), 817-828
- Scannell, M. M. & Scannell, D. P. (1995) *Teacher Certification and Standards*. In Anderson, L. W. (Ed) *International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education*. Oxford, UK. Pergamon
- Schmida, L. C. (Ed) (1983). *Education in the Middle East*. Washington, DC. America-Mideast Educational and Training Services
- Schriewer, J. & Holmes, B. (Eds). (1988). *Theories and Methods in Comparative Education*. Frankfurt. Verlag Peter Lang
- Scott, N. (1999). *Supporting New Teachers: A report on the 1998-99 Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick*.
- Sharpe, K. & Ning, Q. (1998) The Training of Secondary Modern Languages Teachers in England and China. *Compare*, 28(1), 57-75

- Shaw, A. (2008). *Social Construction and the Inner City*. Retrieved 28th April, 2008, from, <http://xenia.media.mit.edu/~acs/chapter1.html>
- Shaw, K. E. (1993). Higher Education and Development in the lower Gulf States. *The Higher Education Review*. 25 (3), 36-47
- Shaw, K. E. (1997). *Higher Education in the Gulf. Problems and prospects*. Exeter, UK. University of Exeter Press
- Shaw, K. E. (2005). *Cross-cultural Transference in Educational Management*. In, C. Cullingford & S. Gunn (Eds), *Globalization, Education and Culture Shock*. Aldershot, UK. Ashgate. 48-67
- Shaw, K. E., Badri, A. A. M. A. & Hukul, A. (1995). Management concerns in the United Arab Emirates state schools. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 9 (4), 8-13
- Shouly, E. (1995). 16,000 national apply for jobs. *Gulf News*, 19th June, p18
- Shulman, L. (1986). Those who understand: Knowledge growth in teaching. *Educational Researcher*, 15, 4-14
- Shulman, L. (1993). Teaching as community property: Putting an end to pedagogical solitude. *Change*, 25(6), 6-7
- Smith, B. O. (Ed). (1971). *Research in Teacher Education. A Symposium*. Englewood, NJ. Prentice-Hall
- Smithers, A. (2005). *Education*. In, A. Seldon & D. Kavanagh (Eds), *The Blair Effect 2001-5*. Cambridge. Cambridge University press

- Spindler, G. D. (1997). *Education and Cultural process*. Prospect Heights, IL. Waveland Press
- Spring, J. (2000). *American Education*. Boston. McGraw Hill
- Spring, J. (2008). *The American School*. Boston. McGraw Hill
- Steiner-Khamsi, G. (1999). Teacher Education Reform. Essay review. *Comparative Education Review*, 43 (8), 353-361
- Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage.
- Suarez-Orozco, M. M. (Ed) (2007). *Learning in the Global Era*. Berkeley, CA. University of California Press
- Taha-Thomure, H. (2003). *Academic Freedom in Arab Universities. Understanding Practice and Discrepancies*. Oxford, UK. University press of America
- Taifour, M. (1994). UAE gearing up for the 21st century, Gulf News, 3 January, p.18
- Talhami, G. (2004). *Women, Education and Development in the Arab Gulf Countries*. Abu Dhabi. Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research
- Thomas, E. (2005). *Globalisation, Cultural Diversity and Teacher Education*. In, C. Cullingford & S. Gunn (Eds), *Globalisation, Education and Culture Shock*. Aldershot, UK. Ashgate. 139-156
- Tickle, L. (1994). *The Induction of New Teachers. Reflective Professional Practice*. London. Cassel

- Tischer, R. P. & Wideen, M. F. (Eds). (1990). *Research in Teacher Education: International Perspectives*. London. Falmer Press
- Touq, M. (1992). *United Arab Emirates*. In, W. Wickremasinghe (Ed), *Handbook of World Education*. Houston, TX. American Collegiate Service
- Townsend, T. & Bates, R. (Eds). (2007). *Handbook of Teacher Education. Globalization, Standards and Professionalism in Times of Change*. Doordrecht, Netherlands. Springer
- Troen, V. & Boles, K. C. (2003). *Who's teaching your children?* London. Yale University Press
- Troman, G. (2000). Teacher Stress in the Low-Trust Society. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*. 21 (3)
- Tuckman, B. W. (1978). *Conducting Educational Research*. New York. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
- Tulasiewicz, W. (1996). *Is there a crisis in teacher education?* In, C. Brock (Ed), *Global Perspectives on Teacher Education*. Oxford, UK. Triangle Books. 19-34
- Vandewalle, D. (2000, April). *Higher Education and Development in Arab Oil Exporters: The UAE in Comparative Perspective*. Paper presented at the Technological Education and National Development Conference, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
- Vaughan, C. A. (1979). *Identifying course goals: domains and levels of learning*. In, P. J. Baker & E. K Wilson (Eds.), *Knowledge Available and Knowledge Needed to Improve Instruction in Sociology*. Washington, D. C. ASA Resource Center
- Veenman, S. (1984). Perceived problems of beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Research*, 54 (2), 143-178

- Vygotsky, L. S. (1962). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA. MIT Press
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society*. Cambridge. Harvard University Press
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1986). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA. MIT Press
- Webb, L. D. (2006). *The History of American Education*. Upper saddle River, NJ. Pearson
- Weber, E. (2007). Globalization, “Glocal” Development, and Teachers’ Work: A Research Agenda. *Review of Educational Research*, 77 (3), 279-309
- Wertsch, J. V. (1991). *Voices of the Mind*. New York. Oxford University Press
- White, J. J. (1989). Student teaching as a rite of passage. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 20 (3), 177-195
- Wideen, M. F. & Grimmert, P. P. (1995). *Changing Times in Teacher Education: Restructuring or Reconceptualization*. London. Falmer Press
- Winch, C. (2004). What do teachers need to know about teaching? A critical examination of the occupational knowledge of teachers. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 52(2), 180-196
- Wiske, M. (Ed) (1998). *Teaching for understanding: Linking research with practice*. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass
- Wood, S. & Nahmias, C. (2005). Perceptions of classroom realities: Case pedagogy in an English education methods course. *Action in Teacher Education*, 26(4), 74-84

- Woodhead, C. (2002). *Class War*. London. Little, Brown
- Woods, P. (1999). *Successful Writing for Qualitative Researchers*. London. Routledge
- Wright, R. O. (2006). *Chronology of Education in the United States*. Jefferson, NC. McFarland & Co
- Wu, S, & Rubin D. (2000). Evaluating the impact of collectivism and individualism on argumentative writing by Chinese and North American college students. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 35 (2000), 148–178
- Young, J. (2004). How is teacher education changing? *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*.
- Zajda, J. (2005). *International Handbook on Globalization, Education and Policy Research*. Doordrecht, Netherlands. Springer
- Zamprelli, D. (1992). *Teacher assistance program: A developmental induction program for beginning teachers*. Practicum report. Nova University
- Zeichner, K. & Conklin, H. (2005). *Teacher Education Programs*. In Cochran-Smith, M. & Zeichner, K. (Eds). *Studying Teacher Education. The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education*. Washington, DC. AERA
- Zia, R. (Ed). (2006). *Globalization, Modernization and Education in Muslim Countries*. New York. Nova Science Publishers
- Zyngier, D. (2007). *Productive Pedagogies: Seeking a common vocabulary and framework for talking about pedagogy with pre-service teachers*. In, T. Townsend & R. Bates (Eds), *Handbook of Teacher Education*. Doordrecht, Netherlands. Springer. 205-218

APPENDIX A

TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

In this appended section to my dissertation, I set out the historical and educational background of the UAE, drawing upon the development of the nation and its education system. An insightful examination of teacher education must place a particular program within the specific cultural context in which it exists. This is an issue for a researcher who needs to be cognizant of the culture, setting, context and a vast array of other factors that are often hidden, intangible and difficult to state. The cross-cultural aspects of a comparative study highlights many of the differences in educational practices that are more to do with belief systems than they are with the actual ‘doing’ of teaching. This is evident when comparing western Anglophile systems, such as those of the US and England with eastern cultures within the Middle East and Asia (Wu and Rubin, 2000).

The United Arab Emirates

The Gulf region of the Middle East is still very much in its infancy as an educational system (Zia, 2006). In regards to the UAE, the state is only thirty-six years old and many of the school structures are under reform at present (Christina et al, 2003; Abdulla, 2000; Shaw, 1993, 1997; Al-Misnad, 1985). Teaching, when culturally viewed, is a career and role for women and the entrance requirements

for teacher education at the government-administered universities are not nearly as demanding as those required for women to enter other academic fields (Clarke and Otaky, 2006). Many women do not choose teacher education as their field of study (Schmida, 1983), but rather it is often chosen for them by family members, primarily the father and older male siblings, who retain a certain degree of control over such decisions for young Emirati women (Halloran, 1999). This situation holds certain value components that create a power structure that empowers a patriarchal social system and disenfranchises the female members of the group (Freire, 1970)

Country Background and History

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a relatively new nation, formed in December, 1971, through the union of seven existing sheikhdoms; Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm al-Quwain, Ajman, Fujairah and Ras al-Khaimah. The country is predominantly desert, an arid area of land bordered by Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and both the Arabian Gulf and Gulf of Oman. The Emirates characterized, until relatively recent times, by long-standing disputes, feuds and rebellion, coupled with fighting between the various tribal groups. The impetus for putting aside the quarreling and fighting and uniting the sheikhdoms was the discovery and commercial development of profitable oil fields, and the realization by several sheikhs of the dangers inherent in small, separate, oil rich emirates attempting to survive in a volatile region of the world, thus attempting to keep the “bullies at bay” (ECSSR, 2002).

Since the formation of the state, the United Arab Emirates has developed a system of governance that reflects the teachings and interpretation of Islam adhered to by the dominant group, Sunni Muslims. The scope and influence of religion underpins all aspects of society in the UAE, with social policy based on religious doctrine (Findlow, 2000; 2005). Although religion plays a central role in the development of the UAE, it is rarely as overt an influence as can be seen in other Arab states, such as Saudi Arabia, where religion and governance are consciously made visible and interlinked (Barakat, 1993). While it is the case in the UAE that religion is formally institutionalized, the religion is such a part of the fabric of society and everyday life in the country that there is not a need to 'advertise' the religious aspects of the culture as it is ingrained in Emirati cultural identity.

The exploitation of oil in the UAE fueled a rapid period of growth and modernization in the country. The UAE, traditionally dependent on fishing, pearl diving, trading and wadi agriculture, transformed from a sleepy desert backwater to a complex, modern, consumer economy supported by developed infrastructure and communications systems. The country has developed an economy, based on diversification, and the major cities of Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah, have developed extensive links with international trade. Despite the economy developing and diversifying, oil remains the mainstay of the economy and, like financial wealth, oil distributed unevenly between the seven Emirates (Taifour, 1994). Despite this imbalance, the federation has remained firmly resolute to develop nationally, with the richer Emirates subsidizing the poorer areas of the

country. Under the presidency of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayan, president of the UAE from its formation in 1971 until his death in 2004, the ruling elite balanced traditional elements of the various tribal groups. Development of the country to benefit the needs of national citizens and establishing its position and influence in both regional and international organizations became a priority (Peck, 1986).

The fast-paced economic expansion of the country has benefited the citizens of the UAE, but growth has been reliant on imported foreign workers who have the necessary skills and are attracted by the high salaries and benefits that expatriates could demand. The result of this practice means that the UAE relies almost entirely on expatriate labor in all sectors of the economy, with the exception of government sector positions, which actively recruits nationals. UAE nationals, therefore, make up only 10 per cent of the workforce in the country (ECSSR, 2002). The most recent census data, from 2005, shows that although the growth in population of the UAE topped 4 million, the number of UAE Nationals consist of only 20 per cent of those living in the country (Abdullah, 2007; 2006; Davidson, 2005).

This situation, where Emiratis become outnumbered twice, once in the general population and again in the workforce, is an ongoing concern for the leaders of the country as well as the citizens themselves (Al-Mikhalfi, 1988). There is a perception among Emiratis that too much of the nation's present and future remains in the hands of foreigners. The government has introduced a campaign to attempt to attract larger numbers of Emiratis to enter the workforce

and, therefore, play a more prominent role in the machinations of the state (Shouly, 1995). The aim of this program is to educate and train Emiratis to make them more competitive in the job market and to allow a greater proportion of Nationals entry into the economy (El-Sanbury, 1992). This effort has put a tremendous strain on the national education system to produce a growing number of nationals who are ready and willing to enter the workforce, including larger numbers of national teachers into the nation's schools (Al Kaabi, 2005; Birks and Rimmer, 1984). An argument often made, and that relates to the teacher situation in the UAE, is that one of the key elements to the development of an indigenous workforce is the nationalization of teachers and the production of a teaching force that is dominated by national citizens (Findlow, 2000). Teachers hold a special place in the development and building of societies and this is a central element of nation building and human resource development. Efforts to attract more nationals into the teaching profession has become a priority of government and is driving various incentives and promotions to market teaching as an attractive career, although this has had little success to date.

Education in the UAE

Since the founding of the UAE, a little over thirty-five years ago, education was a fundamental element of the nation's development plans. There was a recognition that investment in human resource development would help secure the future workforce needs of the national economy (ECSSR, 2002), as well as support the development of a coherent and 'new' society, formed from the old tribal groupings. Education was viewed by the new leadership as playing a

key role in the development aims of the country (Ghazal, 1997), alongside establishing a new national identity and coherent society. Alongside the perceptions related to education that the government hold, public education occupies an important role and position among the citizenry of most nations (Tischer and Wideen, 1990). In fact, as Weber (2007) argues, referencing McGovern (1999), education has a role in the political and social development of a society, stating that

Politically, education “aids in generating a sense of national identity among people living in a country... the diffusion of certain knowledge through a formal education is believed... to intensify the modernization or development of traditional societies (McGovern, 1999, p.8).

Teachers recruited, in the early days from Arab Muslim countries, filled the need for a teaching force in the rapidly expanding school system (Findlow, 2000). The education system has continued to evolve and develop. There is now a system of schooling that is universal and free to all citizens, from kindergarten through to university. Compared to other countries, the education system of the UAE is a relatively new one that has seen rapid investment and growth over the last two decades (Rugh, 2002; Rasheed and Hengst, 1983). The education sector is dichotomous, as it consists of two distinct groups of schools, public and private. The central government funds the public sector, with some discretionary local funding often provided by the individual Emirates where the school is located. Public schools are open to all UAE national citizens, with the structure and

curricula based on Islamic and Arabic principles (Gaad et al, 2006). The central government administers the public sector with each school separated by gender, with either different schools for boys and girls, or separation through school design and regulation. With very few exceptions, public schools are not open to the children of expatriates in the country. This creates a contrast between a national student body and a teaching force reliant of expatriate faculty (Shaw et al, 1995).

Another factor in the public / private school contrast is that government schools are primarily Arabic language centered, with English taught to a limited extent in high school. The decision to promote and mandate English language instruction in all schools met with some resistance in the UAE, as the government moved away from a system of schooling based on the Qur'an (Al-Khatib, 2006; Malallah, 2000). Findlow (2000) sees the expansion of education in Arab countries, and the Gulf in particular, as characterized by "tension between imitation of, and resistance against, Imperial models... [as while reforming] its own education system governments have had to decide whether to follow the inherited colonial model, to opt for the nearest Arab cultural influence... or attempt to build a more or less indigenous framework" (p.5). The model, which the UAE decided to draw upon, was the Egyptian system and this is apparent in the curricula and staffing of public schools and the dominance of Egyptians in the Ministry of Education (Findlow, 2000). However, the UAE government has put pressure on the Ministry to modernize and reform, especially in light of the governmental aim to Emiratize the national workforce.

This reliance on expatriate faculty in the national schools has been an issue since the formation of government schools (Shaw et al, 1995; Sabour, 2001). Since the 1950s, the UAE has been reliant of expatriate faculty for schools (Coombs, 1985), with a large proportion of the teaching staff at all levels drawn from Egypt, where there is a surplus of teachers. The recruitment of teachers was, originally, focused on other Arab Muslim countries, as the teachers were accessible, relatively inexpensive and culturally close to Emirati society (Findlow, 2000). However, more recently, the recruitment of large numbers of American, British, Australian, Canadian and New Zealand faculty to staff the growing higher and tertiary level sector took place. The government does not see any conflicts of interest with the recruiting of such faculty and their national development goals, as they view such staff as temporary and able to assist with the Emiriaization process.

The private sector, alongside government schools, developed to provide education for non-national children, with these schools funded through the fees paid by parents. Many of the private schools opened to meet the cultural, religious and educational needs of certain national groups or sectors of the UAE society. The private sector is growing at a very fast pace, with more schools opening each year, and the number will overtake that of public schools within the next few years (Postlethwaite, 1995). Many of the private schools model foreign national systems, with a very large number of schools offering British, Indian and American curricula. Although the establishment of these schools was to meet the needs of a particular group, they now tend to have a very multicultural student

body, with many nationalities in one school. For example, Jumeirah College, a British curriculum school in Dubai offers private education that follows the National Curriculum of England and Wales. The school, staffed with mainly British teachers, with a few exceptions in the Arabic department, requires all teachers and administrators must have experience of teaching in British schools. Although the admission policy favors British passport holders, the school has over forty nationalities, with entrance gained through a competitive examination, along with registration fees and, at times, interviews. The school has a student body with around 70 per cent being British, the remainder coming from northern Europe, India, Australia, and New Zealand, along with various Arab countries. In fact, wealthy national families who see a western-style education as affording more opportunities than the national schools favor Jumeirah College, as with many of the established British and American curricula schools. Such families are willing to forego free state education and pay the high fees (currently \$20,000 USD per annum at Jumeirah College) to gain exposure to the foreign system.

Structural Elements of the System

In the UAE, most teachers follow the BEd route, with a primary or secondary focus, with female students training in colleges and schools of education and selecting education as their choice of profession from the start of their university careers (Halloran, 1999). Along with the US and England, the UAE offers forms of further academic opportunities in education, mainly through Master's and Doctoral programs, but these are not required for new teachers.

Currently, in these three countries, mirroring the global situation, educational systems are restructuring. (Steiner-Khamsi, 1999).

The forces of globalization, decentralization and market driven economies are examples of the external influences that cut across many public policy sectors and affect all levels of education, including teacher education (Fox et al, 2006; Gimmetstad and Hall, 1995). As this is taking place, many governments and education institutions are looking overseas and to other locales to try and make their teacher education programs competitive and relevant in a time when students are more mobile and willing to travel than ever before. Problems in education often become questions of teacher education and it is understandable that society turns to the preparation of teachers when problems arise in the education system as a whole (Green, 2006; Pearson, 1989). Teacher education is a fundamental element in the overhaul of education more generally. The restructuring of primary and high schools, the content and elements of national and provincial curricula, the development of benchmark and mandated assessments, all are of little value and will not succeed unless teacher education factors into the process (Tickle, 1994).

Higher and Tertiary Education in the UAE

Unlike Lebanon and Egypt (Majali, 1976), where higher education has been long established, the existence of higher and tertiary education in the UAE is a relatively new concept (Massialas and Jarrar, 1991; 1983). Higher education in the UAE dates back to 1977, six years after the formation of the state, when the

United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) opened as the first national university in the country (Touq, 1992). The UAE University opened to students in the academic year 1977/8 with four colleges and has continued to grow and play a leading role in the higher education development of the country. Over the last couple of decades, the higher education sector has seen rapid growth, both in government and private institutions. In 1988, the government owned and operated Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) opened to offer three-year postsecondary courses, along with a four-year Bachelor of Education degree to aspiring national teachers. HCT is an English medium institution and provides mainly vocational training, largely based on a Canadian model. HCT has campuses in all of the emirates and are gender segregated, with the result that all pre-service teachers are female. Zayed University, located on two campuses in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, offers a liberal arts style education to an exclusively female student body, based on a hybrid of a UK and Australian curriculum. The recruitment of faculty members draws primarily from UK and Australian institutions, with a small number of Arab nationals who have higher degrees from Europe or Australia.

The higher education sector has been allowed to open up to overseas and private organizations (Taha-Thomure, 2003), and this has resulted in a recent growth spurt in degree awarding institutions in the UAE (Raduntz, 2005). In 1997 the Ruler of Sharjah opened the American University of Sharjah, an overtly US style institution that offers Bachelor's and Master's level degrees based on a US curriculum. The faculty represents many nationalities, although the vast majority are US citizens, with one of the main recruitment criteria being that all faculty

must have received their terminal degree from a US institution and/or has experience teaching at a North American college or university. This means that among the faculty are Arab nationals, Europeans, Indian and Asian faculty, alongside North American colleagues.

All of the individual Emirates are expanding their educational provision and opening up the education sector to both public and private institutions. The investment of large sums of money, along with the development of land to house the wide range of institutions that are both operating and planned, is taking place in the country. The Ruler of Sharjah demonstrated a commitment to education with a project to house several higher and tertiary level institutions in an area of the Emirate known as University City. This area, on the outskirts of the city of Sharjah, is tailor-made to house the six institutions that are set into the manicured, park-like grounds, including the University of Sharjah, a government funded, Arabic medium and gender segregated college and the American University of Sharjah, which is coeducational with English as the language of instruction. Dubai, the Emirate that borders Sharjah to the south, is also following Sharjah by establishing two educational zones in the city. Knowledge Village will house the growing number of private and foreign institutions setting up in Dubai, and Academic City is the new home to Zayed University and HCT in Dubai, along with private and government schools and colleges.

Teacher Education in the UAE

Teacher Education, driven in the Middle East region by the same concerns and aims as elsewhere in the world, is primarily the education of nationals to fulfill national development goals and human resource needs. In the UAE this is also the case, however, the chronic shortage of national teachers leads to an education system that is heavily reliant on expatriate staff. This situation is a cause of concern to the government of the UAE, resulting in the setting of goals and targets to attract and retain national teachers. The Ministry of Education (MoE) set three major goals for a teacher supply policy. These were:

1. To provide enough teachers for schools
2. To increase the number and percentage of national teachers
3. To increase the level of qualification and training for teachers generally

Although these goals address the concerns the government has regarding teacher supply and retention in the country, they have not succeeded, to date, in increasing the profile of teaching as a career to sufficient levels to attract nationals to the profession. The government attempted various strategies to meet the goals of employing national teachers. One of the routes taken was to accept a basic level of teaching qualification to gain entry into the profession (Al Kaabi, 2005). This allowed nationals to enter the teaching workforce with little, if any, formal training in education or pedagogy. As noted in relation to teachers in the USA exiting teacher education programs without the necessary skills to cope in a 'real'

classroom situation (Goodlad, 1999), this is mirrored in the UAE by teachers who have a minimal skill set required for entering the classrooms of government schools. Historically, nationals were not required to complete formal teacher education or a college degree to teach in schools, particularly at the primary level. Gardner, who noticed and highlighted this practice, wrote, “thousands have entered classrooms without formal training of any kind. Even today there is no specified training level for a national to get a teaching job, and nothing like a teaching certificate exists in the UAE” (1995, p.294). Although this situation has changed, and the UAE now has three institutions offering various formal routes into teaching, this process is still very much in its infancy and has yet to have an impact on the demographics of the teaching workforce.

Another tool employed by the government to promote teaching among nationals is the appealing prospect of rapid advancement through promotion in the system. Once employed as a teacher, after only a few years, there is rapid promotion of nationals into school and ministry administrative positions, a policy that has put most of the schools in the UAE under national leadership. According to MoE data, over seventy per cent of all principals and vice-principals are nationals, yet the proportion of nationals in the whole teaching workforce is under twenty per cent. Although there is conceptually nothing wrong with a policy that aims to ‘nationalize’ the teaching and administrative profession, as this is in keeping with national development goals and aims, it does become problematic when positions are filled with little regard for merit, experience, expertise or knowledge. Such a policy also has an adverse effect on expatriate teachers in the

system, often overlooked for promotion and extra responsibility in favor of less qualified and experienced national educators. However, that the MoE is not alone in this regard. It is common practice, and widely acknowledged, that among all governmental sectors in the UAE, national employees are quickly promoted and effortlessly. There is a strong cultural belief in the UAE that a national citizen has the right to a better position than expatriate workers in the same sector. This belief fuels the 'Emiritization' program that supports the favoring of national workers, often regardless of qualification and suitability. This has led to what could be termed a "promotion culture" among nationals, who view it as a right to be employed, primarily in the governmental sectors, in high status, high paid posts. This situation has further heightened the recruitment and retention issues faced by the teaching profession among nationals.

The Role and Status of Teachers in the UAE

Within the Middle East region, the role of 'teacher' has various meanings, ranging from the role played by religious institutions, such as mosques, in religious and moral education to a more modern understanding of an individual who has received some formal training in pedagogical and methodological issues and who works in a school setting. This diverse understanding of what a teacher is leads to differing views and perceptions of teachers when placed within a culture that is undergoing a rapid drive toward modernity. For the purpose of this study, a teacher was defined as an individual who had completed formal training and education and was placed in the role of 'teacher' by the government of the country in which they were working. Within the UAE, this definition led the

research to focus on national and expatriate teachers in both government and private schools.

There is a general agreement that teachers are the most important and influential component in any education system (Griffin, 2006). This belief is one held by the government of the UAE who are attempting to raise the profile and status of the profession to help achieve a greater number of national teachers. Teaching in the UAE, viewed for a long time as a profession for foreigners, both within the public and private sectors (Ali, 2007). In fact, foreign teachers almost exclusively staff the private school sector. Historically, in public schools, foreign teachers had a low status both socially and economically (Al Kaabi, 2005). Although private school teachers often earn a good salary with additional benefits such as global health insurance, free accommodation and annual flights to home country, public school teachers in the government sector receive low salaries with no additional incentives. This situation does not do very much to promote public school teaching as a career for nationals, even though Emirati teachers earn a far more generous salary than their foreign colleagues do.

The image of the 'foreign teacher' still exists strongly among the national population of the UAE. In fact, most adults will have gone through their schooling, whether private or public, with little or no contact with national Emirati teachers. The social pressure of higher paying opportunities elsewhere leads to a high rate of teacher attrition and discourages potential entrants to the profession to become a teacher (Kapiszewski, 2001). This situation is more acute when looking at the number of national males who enter the profession. The

number is in decline and the national Emirati teaching force is almost exclusively female, with most male teachers drawn from other Arab countries. As Gardner (1995) states, “the lack of interest by national males to enter teaching” (p. 295) is an ever growing problem for the development of the teaching profession in the country.

Issues of Gender in Education in the UAE

The notion of teaching among nationals in the UAE is one heavily influenced by gender issues. When viewed among Emirati nationals, teaching is a role for women, one that often does not acknowledge any professional or educated status. As Davies (1996) points out, there has been little research on gender issues in teacher education in developing countries, yet gender plays an important role in teacher education, which, in turn, has implications for a country’s development. The traditional role of women in Emirati society guided, in part, by the teachings of Islam and the Qur’an and viewed as the source for guidelines as to gender roles within the family and wider society (Khoury and Moghadam, 1995). Within traditional familial structures, women are responsible for the upbringing of children, alongside the management of the home and the passing on of domestic knowledge to female children. This role continues within the wider societal organization, with women taking on roles in the ‘caring’ sectors of society, such as education and nursing. The education that women are traditionally involved in is separate from the teaching that takes place in the mosques, where a male Imam is responsible for Qur’anic teaching to the young males of the society. With the roles split along gender lines, it is easy to see how

the perception of teaching in formal schools is as a role for women. With entry into teacher education programs in the UAE linked to the role, status, prestige, salary, career and availability of other jobs, many male undergraduates choose courses that are in keeping with the traditional gender divisions of the culture.

Alongside the traditional and religious aspects of gender roles in the UAE, teaching as a profession, influenced by questions of power and authority, is a conservative institution. With the teaching profession in the UAE consisting of women in the vast majority, it is surprising to find that the senior positions in schools and within the Ministry of Education are taken predominantly by men (ECSSR, 1992). In part, the limited educational and professional opportunities available to women by the traditional and conservative attitudes of the society of the UAE, despite the UAE governments' commitment to liberalization has created many more opportunities for women (Talhami, 2004). Classroom teaching, viewed as an acceptable profession for women by a society, which, in the words of Azzam et al (1985) "deems only certain activities appropriate for women to pursue outside the traditional roles of marriage and childbearing" (Azzam et al, 1985, p.5). This situation leads to a wider questioning of the treatment of gender within education and the wider society. The social agenda, set in the UAE by a patriarchal system, sets teaching within the framework of social change in the country and the role of schools and teachers is central to the success, or failure, of any such change. Although the government of the UAE is attempting to 'sell' teaching to Emiratis, view of the profession by those setting policy is as a feminized one. In fact, female student choice of degree courses are still influenced

to some extent by a rather narrow range of employment options that are considered culturally appropriate for women to pursue (Shaw, 1997). This cultural norm also excludes the vast majority of women from study abroad opportunities unless accompanied by a male family member, in direct contrast to male students who are often encouraged to seek degrees in Western institutions.

Issues of gender in education generally, and teaching in particular, are bound up with questions relating to power and authority (Ashcroft et al, 2004) and, in the case of the UAE, the power and authority lies with central government, the Supreme Council, all of whom are male (Dunkin, 1987). Despite the patriarchal nature of the UAE governance, the status and promotions of women's rights has been a public policy initiative of government over the last twenty years. Linked to education, this has had the effect of a rapid rise in female enrolment in school and university institutions, though the segregation in the teaching of women is still exists (Shaw, 1997).

The Future of Education in the UAE

The development of the education sector in the UAE categorized by a continued rapid growth in education provision and choice for students in the country runs parallel with a public policy commitment to attempt to Emiratize the teaching and education sectors. Education in the UAE, as part of government policy, is undergoing a careful reexamination and evaluation in order to improve its efficiency, effectiveness and adaptability to rapidly changing global conditions (Touq, 1992), and this can be seen in formal policy such as Vision2020, which

aims to have ninety per cent of all government teachers drawn from national citizens by 2020. Reform efforts, driven by central government, cover all aspects of the educational system including teacher education, and have sparked a national debate regarding the path education should take in the country, as discussed at the first ever School Reform Conference held in Dubai in 2007 (Kirk, 2007). Despite the drive for a more indigenous teaching force, the UAE will continue to depend on expatriate teachers in the coming years (Daun and Walford, 2004), despite its generous spending on education in general and its emphasis on the education of women (Talhami, 2004).