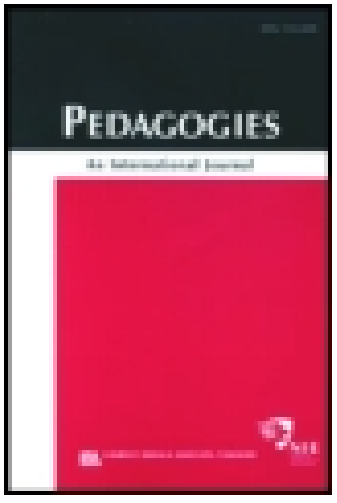

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This case study focuses on one beginning English teacher's work toward eupraxia, i.e., good practice informed by reflection in a setting in which a degree of free choice is available. The study uses a Vygotskian framework for studying concept development that focuses on the settings of human activity and how ambiguous social concepts are developed through engagement with others. Data include retrospective interviews for the reconstruction of prior educational experiences; and observations and interviews during student teaching and the first year of full-time teaching. Analysis focused on the problems attended to in teaching, the pedagogical tools employed to address those problems, and the attributions made to the source of those tools. Student teaching provided limits in terms of an incongruous curriculum and a laissez-faire mentor teacher. The first year of full-time teaching took place in a school that allowed teacher autonomy within limits, enabling the focal teacher to employ reflective practice to work toward eupraxis.

Keywords: concept development; eupraxis; teacher knowledge; Vygotsky; reflective practice

Researchers have found that shortly after graduating from teacher education programs and becoming immersed in school cultures, teachers tend to gravitate toward values and practices that violate what they have learned from their professors. Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985) describe a *two-worlds pitfall* in which student teachers are torn between university values of progressive methods and school values based on formalism, with school values ultimately having the greatest influence. Smagorinsky, Rhym, and Moore (2013) have documented a *multiple-worlds pitfall*, given the myriad influences they found affecting their focal teacher's practice. Rather than finding that a small set of factors produces effects that can be generalized across the beginning teaching population, their studies have found that multiple factors contribute to the conceptions of teaching that novice instructors develop, with individual cases set in unique environments producing different combinations and different outcomes.

A great deal of teacher education literature that examines novices' navigations of these various factors considers the role and importance of reflective practice. Modern usage of the term "reflection" in teacher education often follows from Dewey's (1904/1964) argument that achieving teaching expertise is a gradual process. Dewey insisted that practitioners should employ "thoughtful and alert" instruction that was "pursued primarily with reference to its reaction on the professional pupil" over the course of teaching, and

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not in a bid for "immediate proficiency" (qtd. in Adler, 1990, p. 3). Informed by Dewey, other scholars have explored the concept of reflection in greater depth, forming more specific definitions of the term as it relates to teaching.

Although there are a number of researchers who have worked to more specifically outline reflection as a concept in teaching, particular sources from the 1980s recur among contemporary scholars. Reflection, according to Shulman (1987) in his classic account of pedagogical content knowledge, stands among the critical dispositions involved in pedagogical reasoning and action, which he maintains involves "a cycle through the activities of comprehension, transformation, instruction, evaluation, and reflection" (p. 14). Reflection in Shulman's conception includes "Reviewing, reconstructing, reenacting and critically analyzing one's own and the class's performance, and grounding explanations in evidence" (p. 15). Cruikshank (1987) concurs, asserting that to reflect means to evaluate one's teaching practices, specifically in terms of learners' discernible growths and achievements.

Schön (1983, 1987) argued that teachers should be re-conceptualized as researchers (cf. Smagorinsky, 1995), and he introduced the concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (p. 25). Teachers who adjusted instruction in the heat of the moment while teaching were reflecting while in action; teachers who considered what had transpired and how they might adjust in the future were reflecting on their actions. A number of teacher education researchers focus particularly on reflection-on-action (see Marcos, Miguel, & Tilema, 2009, for a relevant literature review). Additionally, Schön's notion of reflection assumed learning by doing (e.g., field experience) while under the guidance of experienced mentors, which is the model of many teacher education programs today.

Zeichner (1981; Zeichner & Liston, 1987) presented reflective practice as having three levels of application. The first level is similar to Cruikshank's (1987) concept, in that the purpose of reflection is to determine whether students have achieved specific learning outcomes. The second level considers how a wide range of factors, including institutional and historical issues in education, influence teachers' actions. The third level, guided by moral and ethical concerns, asks the teacher to examine how current practice might move beyond what has happened toward what might ideally be.

When present-day teacher education researchers discuss reflective practice and reflection in specific ways, they typically borrow from one or more of these three sources. Some do so deliberately, such as Camburn's (2010) understanding of reflective practice being directly informed by Zeichner's (1981) work, and Connell (2014) basing his discussion of reflection on Schön's earlier work and the work of scholars informed by Schön. Others, such as Ebert and Crippen (2010), with their efforts to measure learning and effectiveness, make assumptions consistent with Cruikshank's (1987) insistence that reflection's effects be discernible. Kennedy-Lewis's (2012) discussion of teachers as researchers being critical to reflective practice does not mention Schön but discusses concepts from his work.

Because there is extensive literature on teacher reflection, despite traceable foundations to earlier scholars in the body of knowledge, the overall conversation might leave readers unsure of what researchers mean when they discuss reflection. Hatton and Smith (1995) note that the terms "reflection" and "critical reflection" are often "ill-defined and used rather loosely to embrace a wide range of concepts and strategies" (p. 33). Nearly 20 years later, Connell (2014) noted in a literature review that "it was nearly impossible to find a teacher educator not emphasizing the importance of reflection," although there was "a paucity of research establishing its benefits" and an uncertainty of what various scholars meant when they wrote about reflection (p. 5). Even when scholars are explicit, there is a great deal of contradiction. For example, while Hu and Smith (2011) discuss reflective practice as necessarily collaborative, Zeichner and Liu (2010) are concerned that reflection, as it is taught in teacher education

programs, is isolating and removes teachers from learning communities. Ebert and Crippen (2010) approach reflection as something measurable and determinable through a professional development model; other researchers consider reflective practice to be intensely personal and at least partly intangible (Choi, 2013; Hu & Smith, 2011).

Given the wide range of conceptions of reflection, it is necessary to establish what we mean when we discuss reflection in this paper. Similar to Dewey and others who have drawn on Aristotle's discussion of reflective teaching, we return to antiquity for our foundational construct of *eupraxia* (εὐπραξία, meaning good praxis or right action) (Aristotle, 350 BCE) to characterize the forms of activity toward which the focal teacher in our case study, Lila, strove in her teaching. Aristotle emphasized the need for disciplined reflection upon practice so as to understand it and improve it in future iterations. In highly constrained settings such as schools with prescriptive curricula, this reflection may be available, but may be limited in its potential for affecting practice (Smagorinsky, Cook, Jackson, Moore, & Fry, 2004). Eupraxia is available if a teacher has agency to act upon her reflection, which for student-oriented teachers requires attention to how students experience the curriculum. Praxis refers to a cyclical process of experiential learning through which reflection may lead to transformation of practice, a value that was central to the teacher education program that enrolled Lila. Thus, eupraxia characterizes what is available to people who are free to choose, a condition that is rarely available because all human action is channelled by routine, tradition, imperatives, rules, and other constraints, a tenet of cultural psychology, for which Vygotsky's work provides core assumptions (Cole, 1996). Eupraxia thus serves as an ideal toward which to strive rather than an achievable state in a complex social environment.

In this study we focus on Lila (a pseudonym, as are the names of all people and places in this study), who was credentialed to teach English, which in the US is the discipline concerned with the study of literature and other textual forms, composition through writing and other symbol systems, and language study, particularly English grammar. We focus on her student teaching and her first job, with each setting of learning to teach emphasizing different notions of good instructional practice. To investigate her pedagogical pathway, we investigate the following questions:

(1) In the various settings of learning to teach – her own experiences as a student, the pedagogical approach emphasized in her teacher education program, the site of her student teaching, and the site of her first job – what attributions did Lila make in accounting for her teaching decisions?
(2) In each setting, what pedagogical value systems influenced Lila's decision-making, and to what degree was she able to teach in a conceptually coherent way given the availability of competing value systems?
(3) What pedagogical tools did Lila employ in her student teaching and first job, and to what degree did the settings of instruction enable her to teach (a) in ways consistent with her initial idealized vision of effective teaching, and (b) in ways that enabled her to enact a coherent conception of teaching?
(4) What conception of teaching and related set of practices did Lila develop over the two-year course of data collection, what factors in her experience and environment helped to shape it, and to what extent did the availability of relative freedom of choice enable her to teach in conceptually coherent ways consistent with the value system she espoused?

Theoretical framework

We frame our study through scholarship that focuses on how an individual's conceptions are mediated by social, cultural, and historical factors. This approach, based on the complexity of reflection to achieve eupraxia, finds grounding in Vygotsky's (1934/1987) outline of concept development in relation to social contexts, which Smagorinsky (2013) has adapted to emphasize how the settings of activity provide conflicting influences that pull teachers in a variety of different and often competing directions. Tulviste (1991) described this inevitable diffusion of conceptual pathways as a consequence of the *heterogeneity principle*, which acknowledges how people may hold conflicting beliefs developed through engagement with problems and settings that suggest the appropriateness of different perspectives and approaches.

In the realm of education, these incongruent settings impress divergent conceptions of effective instruction on beginning teachers, often leading toward social conceptions that themselves are open to multiple interpretations (Smagorinsky, 2013). We acknowledge the ambiguity of *social concepts* to illuminate Lila's process of attempting to grow toward a conception of teaching in the contradictory contexts of her prior academic experiences, her university program's values and recommended practices, her site of student teaching, and the site of her first job; and by means of her reflection on her practice, with a particular emphasis on how her students responded to instruction in relation to how it was positioned in terms of their interests, moods, needs, and other emotional and interpersonal factors.

Several issues are salient to our adoption of Vygotsky's (Vygotsky, 1934/1987) outline of concept development. He emphasizes that concepts may be learned both formally and informally (or scientifically and spontaneously, in his terms), with the most robust concepts being informed by the interplay of knowledge learned through both formal academic learning and worldly experience. In learning to teach, the academic concepts would likely come from formal instruction in a teacher education program and professional reading. Such concepts tend to work at an abstract, often idealized level that suggests greater ease of implementation than is available in the teeming world of classrooms. Spontaneous or informal learning would occur *in situ*, initially through exposure to teaching and through teaching experiences that are solely informed by the immediacy of the situation rather than abstracted, generalizable principles of effective instruction. These concepts are primarily applicable in settings identical to those in which they are learned, but are difficult to adapt to new circumstances without the abstract principles of formal, academic understandings.

University programs are often thought to be "too theoretical" and thus overly ideal in their conceptions of students and teaching practices (Kallos, 1999), a problem that, as we will review, Lila felt characterized her own teacher education experience. From Vygotsky's (Vygotsky, 1934/1987) perspective, such conceptions, when ungrounded in worldly experience, remain hollow and useless. Typically this problem is addressed in teacher education through practicum experiences that are designed to provide teacher candidates opportunities to either observe or practice instruction. Their theoretical knowledge is illustrated and tested with students whose response is often far from ideal, leading (theoretically) to a reflection on and reconsideration of theoretical principles. The integration of theoretical and practical experience, argues Vygotsky, enables one to produce an increasingly coherent conception of a target construct such that it becomes durable when applied across settings and populations.

Vygotsky (1934/1987) describes concept development as a long-term process that moves toward a unity of elements in a conceptual set. This process of arriving at a concept is not linear, but follows a twisting path that involves false starts and detours (Smagorinsky, Cook, & Johnson, 2003). The problem becomes exacerbated given the ambiguous nature of social concepts (Smagorinsky, 2013). Social concepts have no official meaning but are constructed differently by different communities of practice, placing novices in the path of incompatible notions of the best means by which to teach. This problem is evident in the *two-worlds pitfall* (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985) that places beginning teachers between the conflicting values of schools and universities, and the *multiple-worlds pitfall* that Smagorinsky et al. (2013) argue is evident in the contradictory values at work within schools and within university faculties and with the increasing influence of factors external to school and universities such as policy initiatives. This conundrum helps explain why beginning teachers experience such dissonance when moving between universities and schools, and from professor to professor in universities and colleague to colleague in schools, when trying to develop for themselves a conception of effective instruction. A critical factor in their gravitation to any approach is their reflection on how the various ideas impressed on them from different sources work in the context of current students in relation to the requirements of the curriculum, and how they might be adapted to have the greatest instructional impact.

Context of the investigation

Participant

Lila was a volunteer participant in the research. As such, she was not selected for the study. Rather, she was among a subset of teacher candidates from her university cohort who, when recruited for the research, elected to participate. The approach to the data corpus has been to study how the different participants experienced the same basic university preparation and then differentiated their teaching in relation to the influences of the particular settings in which their practicum placements and job destinations located their teaching; and to see how participants from three different programs drew on their preparation in their subsequent teaching.

By *settings* we mean the whole of the physical and social environments in which they were immersed, including material locations and constraints, discursively channelled social contours, rule-oriented means of control, social resistance and compliance, the personal guidance of mentors and other veteran educators, and any other environmental factor that helped guide thinking and acting. These influences were available through the *attributions* that participants made to the sources of their teaching ideas. This case study is thus designed to analyse the experiences of one White, middle-class young woman – the modal trait of the US teaching population in general (Guarino, Santibañez, & Daley, 2006), of the population in each program studied, and of the sample who volunteered for the research – who self-selected to have her pedagogical developmental path traced in the research.

Beliefs about teaching

Lila described herself as more interested in practice than in theory, saying during her gateway interview prior to the student teaching that in her university classes, "Sometimes we start talking about theory, and I get kind of bogged down. My brain gets really full really fast of theory. . . . It is the practical stuff that sticks with you."

Lila drew on teachers from her experiences as a student for exemplars on which to base her own teaching. She appreciated teachers who were fair and light-hearted, and who respected students' individual differences and took students' efforts into account when grading. Such teachers, she said, "were really funny. They were really fair. . . . You didn't just read something and answer questions. They did a lot of different activities. You never really knew what exactly what we were going to do that day when we went in there." Lila further referred to the influences of her experiences teaching in a Montessori school, whose methods involved a set of practices distinguished by an orientation toward honouring children's self-directed learning, as affecting her beliefs about teaching–learning relationships.

In contrast, she described teachers who were "very dry, very dull, and if you were struggling you didn't seem to get much sympathy." Such teachers, she said, were "very traditional, very, 'Let's do this and answer the questions, and let's do that'" instead of teaching through "multidisciplinary, hands on sorts of things." During a recent practicum she had been appalled by a teacher who was "very sarcastic to her kids." She contrasted teachers who were fair and understanding of students' life situations with those who were unsympathetic with why students might not engage enthusiastically with school.

Lila's apprenticeship of observation – Lortie's (1975) term for how experiences as a student shape beliefs about teaching – thus provided her with both positive and negative examples and experiences from which she drew lessons about the kind of teacher she did and did not hope to become. As we will document, regardless of what she aspired to become in the ideal, at times she mindfully took on the traits of the negative examples from her past in relation to students for whom open-ended environments proved unproductive. Her apprenticeship of observation thus had less of the fatalistic socialization influence sometimes attributed to it, and provided more of a panoply of possibilities that she enacted in relation to different environmental challenges (cf. Mewborn & Tyminski, 2006; Smagorinsky & Barnes, in press; for a similar critique of how Lortie's findings have been interpreted).

University program

We next review the key influences that we identified in the teacher education program and related field experiences.

Faculty

Lila attended an English education program in her south-eastern US state's namesake university, which carried a Carnegie classification of *Research University –*

Very High

Her program was team-taught by two tenured professors and their teaching assistants, one of whom, Rhoda, supervised Lila's student teaching. (None of these instructors is a co-author of this study.) The English education program was heavily field-based. Each teacher candidate spent a year-long field placement in the classroom of one mentor teacher, devoting roughly 12 hours each week in the school during the fall semester and being on site full-time for 10 weeks of the spring semester.

Lila described her mentor teacher at Garfield County High School, Willa, as being open-ended and *laissez-faire*: "She gives me enough freedom and . . . has enough confidence in me to make decisions that she doesn't feel like we have to go over my plans with a fine-toothed comb . . . She does in some ways have a tough love approach . . . [S]he

doesn't rush in there and try to save me" when things went wrong. This permissive approach, however, was offset by the rigidity of the curriculum, which served as a limiting factor in Lila's decision-making.

Lila's university supervisor, Rhoda, a doctoral student in English education, observed her five times, was available via e-mail and the telephone for additional consultation, and kept a dialogue journal with her. In that Lila made very few attributions to her as an influence, we do not include her as a factor in our Findings.

Sites of teaching

The schools that Lila taught in during student teaching and at her first job were located in the same US state as the university she attended.

Student teaching

The county in which Lila taught included 60,687 residents at the time of the study. The population density was 184 people per square mile, suggesting a rural setting for the schools. Roughly 10% of the population lived below the poverty line, including 12% of those under the age of 18. The class in which we observed Lila teach was a ninth-grade vocational English class offered in the school's block schedule. Mentor teacher Willa said that her Coordinated Vocational Academic Education (CVAE) students were instructed in "workplace learning with English. . . . We take the literature and their writing and gear it all towards workplace communication . . . to help them make it in the world, to be a constructive citizen . . . to be a good worker" because they were "not planning on going to a four-year college." Instruction involved "basic life skills" oriented toward "getting them ready for jobs." Students enrolled in CVAE, she said, were "targeted" according to "low socioeconomic, low reading skills, writing skills, that sort of thing." Lila elaborated, saying, "Willa told me the sad fact is a lot of the ninth graders will drop out [and] are just not highly motivated" to succeed in school; "a lot of them have jobs, after school jobs, or girlfriends, or activities, [or babies, and] put homework on the low end" of their priorities.

Site of first full-time job

Lila took her first job at Danforth HS, the same suburban school at which her husband had taken a job the year before as an English teacher. Demographically, Garfield and Danforth were quite similar, particularly in terms of the enrolment of low-SES students. Danforth was distinct, however, in terms of the overall ethos of the administration and faculty in terms of how to engage potentially disaffected students with the curriculum, even as it responded to the same accountability mandates imposed by the state.

Lila felt relatively liberated in the setting of Danforth HS, saying that at Garfield County HS during student teaching, both the curriculum and Willa drew her toward practices that felt restrictive to her:

> I feel more like myself [at Danforth]. . . . Willa was kind of a formal person in a lot of ways, and I think that kind of made me feel like I needed to be that way when I'm really not that way at all. . . . Willa gave me a lot of freedom, but . . . there were certain things that needed to be done.

At Danforth HS Lila's primary structural influence was her instructional team, which shared a common planning period to coordinate such cross-disciplinary projects as "an

autobiography journey through life" for ninth graders that extended across all classes. She was not entirely free to teach as she chose, yet felt far more autonomy than she had experienced during student teaching.

Method

Data collection

In each of the two years, we studied Lila's teaching through three *observation cycles*. Each of the six observation cycles consisted of a pre-observation interview, two classroom observations documented via field notes (all sent to Lila for her confirmation), and a post-observation interview. We additionally conducted gateway interviews prior to each of the two years (student teaching, full-time teaching) to get a sense of relevant background on the settings of learning to teach and her prior experiences in schools. Additional interviews were conducted with the two university professors, university supervisor Rhoda, and mentor teacher Willa. The third author collected all data except for the gateway interview before the first year, which was conducted by the first author. The first two authors analysed the data, interpreted the findings, and prepared the manuscript.

Data analysis

We used three broad *a priori* categories for our coding of interviews and field notes, developed in previous research in this line of inquiry (e.g., Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999): *pedagogical tool* (i.e., the means through which Lila enacted her instruction); *attribution* (i.e., the source identified by Lila for her knowledge of how to use the tool); and *problem* (i.e., the goal toward which Lila worked in employing the tool). These categories are derived from our Vygotskian framework that emphasizes the goal-directed (*problem*), tool-mediated, socially situated (*attribution*) qualities of human conduct (Wertsch, 1985) and have served as general analytic categories in prior case studies in this research program.

We populated these three superordinate categories with subcategories specific to Lila's experiences and how they were recorded in field notes and articulated during interviews, a process of differentiation undertaken in each case study from the corpus in order to allow the analysis to be sensitive to situation-specific factors. We read each document from the Atlas.ti software databank slowly and carefully and applied codes that followed from our discussion of the document's contents. (See Smagorinsky, 2008, for a rationale for achieving reliability through collaborative coding rather than independent coding.) The process involved continual reconsideration of codes and how they fit within an overall organizational pattern. The specific codes are reported in Tables 1–3 (the two gateway interviews, with one table each for attribution, problem, and tool) and Tables 4–6 (the six observation cycles, with one table each for attribution, problem, and tool).

Findings

Our research questions focused our attention on the developmental pattern that Lila's conception of teaching took across the two years of the study. We thus present our findings chronologically, moving through her apprenticeship of observation, then her university coursework, and finally each of the three observation cycles from her student teaching and her first year of full-time teaching.

Table 1. Lila: gateway interviews: attribution codes.

CODES	Gateway 1	Gateway 2
Apprenticeship of Observation		
Negative exemplars		
Fifth-grade teacher	1	
First-year college English professor	1	
Math teacher	2	
Ninth-grade teacher #2	2	
Exemplary teachers		
Ninth-grade English teacher	3	
Tenth-grade English teacher	4	1
Eleventh-grade English teacher	2	
Twelfth-grade AP English teacher	3	
Twelfth-grade Physics teacher	1	
Nineteenth-century college Literature professor	1	
College courses involving historicizing literature	1	
Other Work Experience		
College newspaper editor		1
Site of Teaching		
Colleague		3
Curriculum		4
Mentor teacher during student teaching	2	2
School administration		1
Self	5	6
Staff Development Units		1
Students		5
Teaching Experiences		
Montessori teaching experience	1	
University		
Education professors	11	

Apprenticeship of observation and university program

In the interview conducted prior to her semester of student teaching, Lila reflected on her years as a student from kindergarten through college. Our identification of her apprenticeship of observation in university coursework was limited to how her teachers taught, rather than what her education teachers advocated. In other words, it was their teaching itself, rather than their stated beliefs about pedagogy, that provided Lila with her apprenticeship of observation.

Lila referred to her classroom and school socialization for students in terms of their self-control, their academic accountability, and their learning of life skills. Teachers she found exemplary provided a supportive classroom environment that she hoped to replicate, one that accommodated diverse learners and treated all students fairly. Teachers could promote these qualities through teacher dispositions, e.g., being a reflective practitioner with the ability to adapt and be resilient in the event of lessons gone awry. Lila also admired teachers who had promoted exploratory, activity-based, independent, and integrated learning.

Pedagogically, Lila elaborated on the tools her teachers employed that she associated with good and bad practices. In general, negative tools involved the verbatim testing of established knowledge and assessment on that knowledge with no interpretive or constructive learning opportunities. Positive instruction, in contrast, was useful, active and

Table 2. Lila: gateway interviews: problem codes.

CODES	Gateway 1	Gateway 2
Classroom & School Socialization		
Controlling behaviour	1	1
Developing students' life skills	2	
Making students accountable for assignments	1	
Students' Social Needs		
Accommodating diverse learners		2
Articulating expectations	1	2
Improving student confidence	1	
Maintaining student interest	3	1
Making students feel recognized and worthwhile	1	
Promoting student enjoyment of class	2	
Treating students fairly	3	
Teacher Dispositions		
Being adaptive	1	
Being open-minded	1	
Being patient	1	
Organizing instruction	1	
Supporting students positively	2	
Teaching reflectively	8	
Being resilient	1	
Respecting students	2	
Rewarding effort	1	
Teaching energetically	1	
Teaching with humour	3	
Teaching and Learning		
Evaluating student work	1	
Exploring textual meaning	1	
Fostering independent learning	2	
Integrating knowledge	2	
Learning through activity	1	
Planning instruction		9
Preparing for AP test	3	
Promoting student learning	4	5

performative, open-ended, multimodal, discussion-oriented, integrated, interest-driven, and differentiated.

Prior to student teaching, then, Lila embraced what we would broadly call an idealized constructivist approach to teaching, derived from teachers whose classes she enjoyed. She hoped to avoid teaching a rote curriculum, seeking instead to establish an engaging curriculum that discouraged off-task behaviour that would require her to become a disciplinarian. Anticipating that not all teaching would proceed so smoothly, she aspired to become a reflective practitioner with the willingness to adapt her plans in thoughtful response to the performance of her students.

Student teaching

Mentor teacher

Willa stressed life and workplace readiness for her students and the need to make school a pleasant and useful place, emphasizing students' personal lives in a flexible, enjoyable, and person-centred environment that linked the curriculum to their experiences. She used

Table 3. Lila: gateway interviews: tool codes.

CODES	Gateway 1	Gateway 2
Life Skills		
Character education	1	
Discipline	1	
Utilitarian literacy skills	1	
Management		
Assignment notebook		1
Communicating poorly with students	1	
Discipline		1
Giving clear directions		2
Pedagogical Tools Considered Negative		
Asking textbook questions about literature	3	
Assigning busy work		1
Assigning homework overload without sufficient instruction	1	
Preparing only for tested knowledge	1	
Reading literature aloud	1	
Studying literary elements	1	
Pedagogical Tools Considered Positive		
Acting out literary scenes	1	
Assessing through portfolios	1	
Chunking texts	2	
Differentiating instruction		4
Discussing in large groups	3	
Discussing in small groups	1	
Drawing on multiple intelligences	1	
Individualizing instruction	1	
Integrating course content thematically	3	
Inventorying students' reading interests		1
Knowing students	1	
Learning grammar in context		5
Learning through activity	1	
Performing improvisation	1	
Writing autobiography	1	
Writing creatively	1	1
Writing essays		1
Writing five-paragraph theme	1	
Writing in journal	1	
Writing workshop	2	1
Writing/peer editing	1	

the vocational curriculum's character education modules to help them develop workplace dispositions and citizenship qualities. Willa granted Lila latitude in her teaching, even as those decisions needed to fit within the vocational curriculum's odd combination of workforce readiness and canonical literature study. She would let Lila try out her ideas, even if they led to failure, and then suggest how she might have taught differently.

Observation cycle #1

The first observation cycle of Lila's student teaching took place on consecutive days in the last week of February. The proximal influence of the school site appeared paramount in influencing her instructional decisions. Lila's teaching focused primarily on issues of teaching and learning, including assessment, and used theoretically inconsistent

Table 4. Lila: observation cycles: attribution codes.

CODE	Y1-OC1	Y1-OC2	Y1-OC3	Y2-OC1	Y2-OC2	Y2-OC3
Other Work Experience						
Montessori teaching experience		1				
Theatre experience	3					
Site of Teaching						
Block Schedule				2		
Colleague		9		8	3	2
Curriculum	3	1	9		2	1
Mentor teacher during student teaching	7	9	3	2		
School/district administration	1			1	5	
Self	6	8	1	22	13	23
Students	4	7	2	10	1	12
Testing environment	3					
University						
Cohort member		2		1		
Education professors	4	2		2	1	
University supervisor during student teaching		1				

Note: Y stands for Year, and OC stands for Observation Cycle. Y1-OC1 thus refers to Year 1, Observation Cycle 1, etc.

constructivist and objectivist pedagogical tools along with those that supported students' social and behavioural growth.

The field notes describe Lila telling the students to begin working on sociograms – graphic representations of a person's relationships – depicting characters from Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. She had students present their sociograms to the class the next day. Lila used sociograms as interpretive tools, saying that her focus was on a "people aren't always what they seem" motif. As Tables 4–6 suggest, her attention to matters of teaching, learning, and assessment were paramount in this observation cycle. Lila emphasized the use of sociograms for both literary interpretation and for study guides for a fact-oriented test over various *Canterbury Tales*, suggesting that she had developed what Vygotsky (1934/1987) calls a *complex* – a fragmented conception that has yet to cohere around stable principles – in using a potentially constructivist pedagogical tool to serve objectivist curricular ends. Her influences primarily came from the school site (24 of 31 *attribution* codes), with her university education professors credited four times as the source of pedagogical *tools*. Most decisions came from a combination of the curriculum, her mentor teacher, and herself as a source of ideas.

Observation cycle #2

During the second observation cycle Lila shifted her attention to issues of classroom management, with 24 of the 43 *problem* codes concerning *being taken seriously by students, building community*, and *control*. She said that she was requiring students to take notes on class presentations so that she could quiz them over the contents:

> They know that they take notes, I will take them up, I will check them off, we will have a quiz [so] that they will take me more seriously.... I'm trying to plan interesting things that will engage them and keep them busy [but] I've got classroom management kind of

Table 5. Lila: observation cycles: problem codes.

CODE	Y1-OC1	Y1-OC2	Y1-OC3	Y2-OC1	Y2-OC2	Y2-OC3
Classroom & School Socialization						
Being taken seriously by students		5				
Building community		6			1	3
Classroom environment					1	4
Controlling behaviour		13	4	4		3
Developing students' life skills		6	1			1
Learning life lessons	1		3	1		
Making students accountable for assignments			4	10	6	5
Preparing students for the workplace			5			
Socializing students to high school					1	1
Students' Social Needs						
Recognizing student fatigue with instruction				1		1
Maintaining student interest				1		1
Promoting student enjoyment of class	1			3	4	
Treating students fairly	2					2
Teacher Dispositions						
Being adaptive				1		
Being flexible		1				
Being patient		1				
Developing teaching identity	1					
Teaching reflectively	1	3		1		6
Teaching and Learning						
Assessing student work	11					
Creating makeup work record		2				
Diversifying curriculum and instruction				1		1
Integrating knowledge				1		
Learning through activity	1					
Managing time crunch			3	3	3	1
Meeting students' needs		3		1		
Planning instruction		1		6	2	3
Preparing for standardized tests		1			1	
Promoting cultural literacy						1
Promoting student learning	16	5	4	16	14	14
Relating personal knowledge to course content						3
Sharing work					1	

Note: Y stands for Year, and OC stands for Observation Cycle. Y1-OC1 thus refers to Year 1, Observation Cycle 1, etc.

> underneath everything that I'm trying to do. I'm trying to get them interested in the [British] Restoration [literary era], but I'm still also trying to keep them busy and keep them engaged so that I don't have to give anybody detention.

The influences on Lila's teaching were widely distributed across proximal codes, with colleagues at the school site, her mentor teacher, her students, and herself accounting for 33 of the 40 attribution codes. A colleague, for instance, recommended that she use a timer to keep lessons on pace and students busy: "I want to keep them so busy that they don't have time to talk to each

Table 6. Lila: observation cycles: tool codes.

CODE	Y1-OC1	Y1-OC2	Y1-OC3	Y2-OC1	Y2-OC2	Y2-OC3
TOOL						
Constructivist Tools						
Activity-based learning						
Performing literary interpretation	4			1	2	
Cooperative learning	5	5	2	7	3	1
Drawing literary interpretation	3					
Graphic organizer	15					1
Project				5	2	1
Students leading class	2	7		2	2	2
Accommodating learners						
Differentiating instruction	1	1		1	2	
Prior knowledge – personal						1
Relating lives to curriculum		2	2			
Students choice in learning				1	2	
Assessment						
Multiple means of assessment				1		
Portfolio				1		1
Quiz/test preparation – activities				1		
Rewarding effort	1					
Students evaluating students				2		
Study questions – discussion		3				
Integrated curriculum planning						
Interdisciplinary teaching				3	2	5
Prior knowledge – historical		2				5
Thematically integrated course content				8	2	2
Literature						
Literary analysis (open-ended)			3		5	
Literary character descriptions				2		
Oral literary experience						5
Prediction of literary action	1			1		
Writing						
Writing from sources	3			5	3	1
Writing collaboratively				1	1	
Writing creatively	2	3		5	4	
Writing from personal experience				4		7
Writing/Peer editing				1	1	
Objectivist Tools						
Assessment						
Quiz/test	9	9	2	6	4	5
Quiz/Test preparation		4	1	4	2	
Standardized test	3				2	
Correctness						
Literary elements					4	
Orthodox literary analysis		11		1		1
Vocabulary definitions						3
Workbook – CE module			6			
Writing–Taking notes						3
Social and Behavioural Tools						
Negative reinforcement						
Assigned seats		4				1
Behavioural contract		3				
Busy work		5				

(*Continued*)

Table 6. (*Continued*).

CODE	Y1-OC1	Y1-OC2	Y1-OC3	Y2-OC1	Y2-OC2	Y2-OC3
Discipline		4	1	3	1	
Draconian grading		2				
Homework		1				
Positive reinforcement						
Rewards for good behaviour		4	1			1
Social education						
Career-focused education	1					
Character education	8		10	3		1
Civil discourse		2				2
Time management		4	4	12	2	1

Note: Y stands for Year, and OC stands for Observation Cycle. Y1-OC1 thus refers to Year 1, Observation Cycle 1, etc.

other and don't have time to play practical jokes, like turn the heat up to 90 or erase things off the board that I've written." The problems that Lila addressed were thus largely social rather than academic. Although she in many ways worked toward greater control, she also employed constructivist pedagogical tools for her instruction, whose open-ended qualities allowed her students freedoms that they exploited with disruptive behaviour.

She assigned, for instance, a small group project through which students would research and make presentations on the British Restoration. She intended for students to collaborate on an open-ended task, but when the students came to class unprepared and were inattentive, she moved to objectivist means to enforce more acceptable behaviours, such as requiring students to take notes and testing them on their notes. She also employed a series of what we termed *social and behavioural tools*, primarily to control, punish, and reward student behaviour, such as assigning seats, exacting discipline, and giving busy work. She gave positive reinforcement by making phone calls to the parents of cooperative students and giving extra credit to students who helped her with class record-keeping.

The proximal problem of students' lack of engagement thus overrode the university program's student-centred emphasis, which urged the teacher candidates to found their curriculum and instruction on students' interests. Rather, Lila considered her students' need for external means of regulation to supersede their need to guide their own learning, given that a disciplined disposition was required for students to work productively in an open-ended environment. She found that she could only engage students in schoolwork by acting in ways that she believed would ultimately disengage students from authentic learning opportunities.

This shift could be considered an instance of reflective practice, albeit not of the sort found in professional literature that suggests that reflective practice leads to constructivist instruction (Kroll & Laboskey, 1996). In contrast, Lila's reflections led her to impose more objectivist instruction, suggesting that in this context, while reflective practice was available, eupraxis was not: Her students' negative orientation to the curriculum did not provide her with great freedom of choice to teach according to her stated ideals and instead led to her reactive decision to clamp down on student misconduct.

Observation cycle #3

During the third observation cycle Lila adhered to the vocational curriculum, whose bifurcated design of emphasizing workplace readiness while attending to canonical

British literature provided a difficult mix for Lila. Willa's assistance was limited to making occasional suggestions, such as teaching the Reginald Rose play *Twelve Angry Men* to illustrate the character trait of leadership. This curriculum proved difficult for students, who in turn made it difficult for Lila. British Restoration literature did not engage the students, leading Lila to resort to objectivist pedagogical tools that provided students fewer opportunities to get off task. Lila said that "they can't just appreciate [Restoration literature] for what it is.... They have a hard time going beyond just what's on the page" and relating it to their lives, in spite of her efforts to make it relevant.

In service of the vocational emphasis, Lila taught character education modules that accompanied the curriculum. These modules were designed to prepare students for life beyond school. Conflict management and leadership were the focal modules for this cycle, leading Lila to stress life readiness skills that she also hoped would contribute to better academic dispositions. Throughout the cycle she continued to face behavioural problems, often following from the students' rejection of the curriculum content. Even though the character curriculum assumed that students could be taught dispositions that would make them more responsive to school instruction, the students demonstrated little application of the modules' lessons to their engagement with British literature. Lila's hope of building a greater sense of *community* in a class thus became complicated by the curriculum's assumption that a work ethic can be taught and established as a foundation for school and workplace learning.

On the whole, the settings at Garfield HS that mediated her developmental pathway produced a fragmented conception of learning to teach: While holding on to her ideal of a relevant, relationship-driven inquiry into meaningful ideas, she resorted to a highly authoritarian teaching approach designed to socialize students to school and workplace behavioural expectations that limited the freedoms she had aspired to cultivate in them.

First job

Gateway

Lila 's gateway interview at the beginning of her first year at Danforth HS was designed to elicit information about Lila's teaching assignments and the school and community in general, and to inquire into the instruction that had taken place to that point in the school year. Lila's attributions at this point were widely distributed. As Figure 1 indicates, the two most frequent attributions were to herself as the originator of ideas and to her students as influences on her thinking. Various factors from the school also influenced her decisions, particularly her colleagues and the English curriculum. She made little reference to her teacher education program and her prior experiences, suggesting the paramount importance of proximal factors in her conscious instructional decisions in her first year of full-time teaching.

Lila's teaching addressed a different range of problems than she had faced during student teaching. Of the 20 problem codes, only one concerned matters of control. In contrast, she referred extensively to planning, suggesting that her focus was more on instruction than on discipline. Her planning relied on pedagogical tools primarily from the constructivist tool kit. Even in her instruction in grammar, Lila sought to contextualize language use in relation to the students' writing (including writing essays, writing

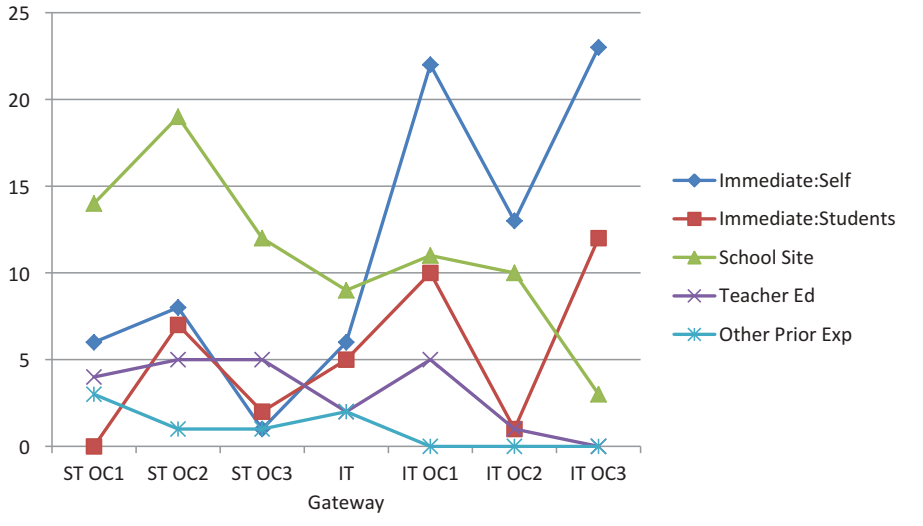

Figure 1. Aggregate attribution codes.
Note: ST stands for Student Teaching, IT stands for Inservice Teaching, and OC stands for Observation Cycle. ST-OC1 thus refers to Student Teaching, Observation Cycle 1, etc.

creatively, and writing in a workshop setting) and public speaking. She also hoped to differentiate her instruction so that diverse learners could have equal access to success.

The setting of Danforth HS, we emphasize, did not include students of greater affluence or school affiliation. Rather, it was characterized by an ethos that enabled Lila to return to the constructivist orientation toward which she had aspired prior to student teaching. She trended back toward the positive models from her own education, although without referring to them as influences on her thinking. It is thus difficult to ascertain the role that her apprenticeship of observation played in her development as a teacher, given that she gravitated toward models of contradictory orientations at different times and under different circumstances. It is also difficult to determine the role of the teacher education program, another influence of which she made little mention. During student teaching she had abandoned its principles; yet at Danforth HS she was able to teach concordantly with them, if not with explicit linkage during the interviews.

Observation cycle #1

During the first observation cycle, Lila taught a mystery unit in the context of a cross-disciplinary "Me Project" that required her to coordinate her teaching with that of teachers from other subject areas. Lila said during the preobservation interview that "This is my first real attempt at putting together a unit," an opportunity available through the open-ended expectations for teaching and learning available at Danforth.

Lila said that her students were no more academically ready at Danforth than at Garfield, with some students having "a hard time because they don't have very good reading skills, they don't have very good writing skills, and they really aren't independent enough to really do this." Her struggling students at Danforth, she believed, lacked "study skills, organizational skills" and the capacity "to be very tolerant of each other and very

patient." As had been the case at Garfield, administrators and colleagues viewed part of their task as socializing ninth graders to high school behavioural expectations.

Their socialization, she felt, could be assisted by providing them with an engaging curriculum, a view shared by her colleagues and thus engrained in the school's approach. Although she was obligated to integrate her instruction with the Me Project, how she went about this synthesis was entirely up to her. Her design of the mystery unit illustrates her freedom to plan instruction based on her own judgment of her students' needs. She hoped to help her students "to see English and reading and writing as something that's actually fun rather than this, oh, this big chore." Based on a survey she had conducted in which students had named the mystery story as a genre they would like to read in class, she designed a mystery unit around the 1944 Frank Capra version of the play *Arsenic and Old Lace*.

Students worked in self-selected peer groups on handouts where they listed "characters including the detective and the suspects. Clues, the solution, [and] a basic plot outline." The unit included a lot of personal response writing, such as reflections on the craziest and most sane characters in *Arsenic and Old Lace*. They also experimented in their journals on topics such as "create a detective." These constructivist opportunities were accompanied by objectivist assessments so that "different kids who test different ways will be able to at least do well on parts of it."

Lila's instruction, as Figure 1 indicates, drew primarily on site-specific influences such as colleagues and her principal in both the socialization of students and the interdisciplinary integration required for the Me Project. Primarily she taught from a constructivist tool kit, as the tasks from the mystery unit we have reviewed imply; objectivist tools primarily served the purpose of assessment in the form of a unit test. Most of the relatively few social and behavioural tools we identified were dedicated to socializing students to school expectations, and the tools that served to foster teacher dispositions kept her instruction organized and helped her reflect on the effects of her teaching.

In a setting that provided opportunities for Lila to design her own instruction with attention to, but not obeisance to, the structure of the curriculum, Lila taught academic socialization through constructivist means. She used instruments designed to elicit student interest to design a unit that both she and her students would enjoy and learn from. She did not follow her original design strictly, but instead reflected on how the instruction was working and made appropriate adjustments, as indicated by codes identifying her and her students as the primary influences on her teaching. Danforth's setting thus enabled her to teach reflectively in light of her students' interests and needs, rather than using reflection to shift from a student-centred approach to one oriented to classroom management.

Observation cycle #2

Lila's instruction during this cycle from the second week of November centred on both writing and reading poetry. Students began with a journal assignment to write either a poem or a short story, after which students read what they had written. She then began a discussion of Ernest Thayer's poem "Casey at the Bat," first focusing on formal elements such as stanza divisions and rhyme scheme, and then conducting what she called a "reader's response" session in which students gave personal opinions about the poem, following which groups of students shared stories and accompanying artefacts that they had worked on outside class.

On the second day of the observation cycle, Lila began with a quiz over "Casey at the Bat" and poetry terms, allowing students to use notes to assist them. Lila then randomly

assigned students to groups to work as if they were the junior editors for a publishing company, tasked with deciding which five from a group of eight untitled poems to recommend to the chief editor (Lila) for inclusion in a volume of poetry, along with their argument for their selection. The students worked on this project for the remainder of the class. For the most part, she attributed these decisions to herself.

In the following excerpt from her preobservation interview, Lila said that she felt her students needed a break from reading the fiction emphasized in the mystery unit, which, along with a curricular requirement to teach poetry terms, led to her decision to focus next on poetry. Lila fit personal choices in with broader requirements set by her district and followed by her colleagues, which enabled her to plan a curriculum based on her reflection on her students' needs in the context of a broader standard for coverage.

The bulk of Lila's attention was focused on promoting learning and encouraging student engagement, primarily through constructivist pedagogical tools. She adapted an assignment from her English Education professors, who had recommended having students classify poems according to themes, an idea that Lila expanded to an anthology. We see this adaptation as an instance of reflective practice in that she considered what sort of experience her students were ready for, made literature selections from beyond what the textbook made available, and took an idea from her teacher education program and developed it into what she felt was a more compelling task, with the additional element of making judgments about poetic quality.

The frequencies for her students as an overt influence on her teaching are low for this observation cycle, with only one coded instance. The total is deceiving, however, because she frequently discussed her students in relation to the assignment, just not as a motivating factor in her initial decision to have them prepare anthologies. She said, for instance, that one student "understands rhyme scheme because he picked up on it very quickly. But then on the test he was like, 'Rhyme scheme? What?' And it was just like the terminology confused him." Her students were often in her thoughts as she reflected on the instruction and made modifications, even if she did not explicitly attribute them in explaining how she formulated the anthology task.

Observation cycle #3

During the third observation cycle, Lila introduced a unit on Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Lila's interviews revealed her concern for discussing racial issues in a class in which there was only one African-American student, toward whom one girl had shown insensitivity in racially provocative ways. This emphasis was part of Lila's broader goal of helping her students become "more tolerant of other people." Lila reviewed their assignment to research a human rights activist from history, then provided a list of 10 vocabulary words taken from the novel. After noting their disruptive behaviour and lack of respect for one another, she let the students vote on whether or not to spend the remainder of class in the school library researching their human rights activists, which they elected to do.

The next day, the students had 20 minutes to write journal entries in response to a prompt that paralleled a theme from *To Kill a Mockingbird*: "Tell about a haunted house or an odd person who lived in your neighborhood when you were a kid." After collecting their writing, Lila put the students in groups in which they generated a list of social rules that discourage offensive behaviours, which they discussed as a class. They then began reading *To Kill a Mockingbird* aloud for the remainder of the period.

In Lila's preobservation interview she stated that she had just completed a unit on *Romeo and Juliet* that had left students "all tired of it. We'd written journals and taken quizzes and done study questions and drawn character maps." She therefore decided to depart from the rest of her instructional team by not ending *Romeo and Juliet* with a "big bang presentation thing." Rather, she shifted the research requirement to the next unit, focusing it on a human rights activist in conjunction with reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This decision suggests the sort of autonomy she was provided at Danforth, which enabled her to decide, "I don't want our discussions and our writing to be so plot-driven. I really am aiming … for a much more introspective, thoughtful type of response from them in the writing.… The quizzes are basically just to make sure they're reading."

Lila's attribution codes were restricted almost exclusively to her classroom, with herself (23) and her students (12) accounting for all but three codes. Danforth HS, she said, "is so free and open that I'm sure I could do anything." Lila drew on her students for decisions as mundane as taking a vote on whether or not to work in the library and as critical as acknowledging racial tensions through pre-reading activities designed to inform them of historical injustices. She further noted that she would "never make the test before we do the material, because sometimes they take me somewhere that I didn't even know we were going." Indeed, many of her curricular decisions followed from her inquiries into her students' interests. In the survey at the beginning of the year, she said, her students "told me that they would be interested in finding out about civil rights activists who weren't well known," rather than reading again about "Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King and Malcolm X."

By the end of her first year at Danforth HS, Lila was arriving at most of her instructional decisions through reflective practice and moving toward eupraxia, the "good practice" that is available when thinkers have freedom within available structures. Her reflections included attention to seemingly routine aspects of instruction, such as her construction of assignments, e.g., "Some things that I did differently that I'm hoping will yield better results and thus I think better assessments," an outcome that followed from her reflective attention to her students' response to her original assignment. She also relied on her systematic consideration of the effects of her teaching in bigger decisions, such as the synthesis of ideas in large culminating projects: "Rather than having a big huge test at the end, [I'll let] them put together a portfolio of, you know, reflections over what we've talked about and what we've done."

The problem codes included attention to the socialization of students to school and society, and to matters of instructional planning and management that engaged students and promoted learning. Her classroom socialization efforts were designed to promote a fair environment that contributed to a sense of community among her students, with school socialization referring more to broader efforts to acculturate students to school norms. The remaining codes indicate that Lila was focused on how to engage students with the curriculum such that they related it to their own needs and interests. These codes suggest a disposition toward reflective practice, with Lila's attention to her students providing the primary motivator for her teaching, in terms of both her students' authentic learning opportunities and the behavioural context in which such learning would best be available.

To achieve these ends, Lila employed a wider range of constructivist pedagogical *tools* than were evident in any prior observations or interviews and on using students' prior knowledge to help shape instruction. She continued to intersperse objectivist tools such as quizzes to ensure that students would complete their reading assignments and maximize

their learning opportunities. Behavioural tools such as promoting civility further served to create a climate conducive to respectful discussion and engaged learning. These decisions were coupled with what we coded as reflective practice, a teacher disposition that, we infer, was far more available to her in the setting of Danforth HS than had been available at Garfield County HS. This orientation came in spite of the presence of end-of-course tests for ninth graders at Danforth that her Garfield HS seniors had not been subjected to, and that conceivably could have constrained her teaching to an even greater degree.

Discussion

As the attributions in Figure 1 suggest, site factors served as the greatest influence on Lila's teaching during student teaching. The teacher education program began as a minor influence and faded by the end of the second year of the study; moreover, her prior experiences barely figured in her conscious decision-making, even as she took on traits of both the good and bad teachers from her past at different points in her development. During student teaching her own decisions and the influence of her students spiked during the second observation cycle and then dropped in the third cycle as the curriculum took on prominence in her thinking. By the end of her first year of full-time teaching, her decision-making was predicated almost exclusively on proximal factors within her classroom, although it is possible that influences from her apprenticeship of observation and teacher education program were at least conceptually present in her thinking, given the constructivist orientation of her positive experiences as a student and the emphasis of the university program.

During student teaching Willa gave little frontloaded support or advice and then advised Lila on what hadn't worked, directing her attention primarily toward helping Lila merge the seemingly incongruous workplace and literary curricula. She paradoxically allowed Lila freedom to teach the curriculum, yet ultimately worked in service of the curricular goals by providing repairs that were consistent with its design and reliance on workbook-driven character education modules. Lila's struggles thus led her toward an authoritarian role when students did not engage with her instruction and moved her toward more control-oriented methods. This decision, based on her students' response to instruction, could be considered reflective yet not eupraxic.

Student teaching thus produced in Lila a sense of frustration that she was not developing into the teacher she had hoped to become, and instead led her to take on the negative models from her experience. Her student teaching therefore involved dramatic shifts in orientation as she began idealistically and with instructional freedom, rapidly devolving to a disciplinary emphasis in the hope that greater self-regulation would produce more engaged and respectful learners, an outcome that we did not observe occurring.

At Danforth HS the administrative and curriculum settings were much less constraining, and she was no longer teaching vocational courses with a behavioural component. Within limits, she was expected to use her good judgment to make instructional decisions based on her own appraisal and her reflective attention to the needs and interests of her students. This value permeated her teacher education program, yet received little attention when Lila was prompted during interviews to attribute her thinking to particular sources. The more that external factors influenced her teaching – a heavy-handed curriculum, a set of mandates – the less likely that reflective practice became available to her as a means of teaching in ways consistent with her ideals. With fewer extraneous factors influencing her teaching, Lila found Danforth to enable her version of eupraxia, one in which she focused

on her students as the primary motivation for her decisions about what and how to teach. In so doing, Danforth also enabled Lila to develop a more coherent conception of teaching English, one more aligned to her ideals than had been available at Garfield.

If Lila's case is representative of at least a subset of beginning teachers, we infer that in order for reflection to serve eupraxically, the school setting needs to provide teachers with the intellectual confidence and latitude to use reflection to inform practice such that it builds on students' interests rather than reacting to their detachment. In such a setting the curriculum needs flexibility, and the collaborators need to share the disposition that reflection can produce productive change. At Danforth HS the administration supported eupraxia and trusted and expected faculty to undertake it. Structurally, they achieved this goal by allowing teachers the flexibility and authority to interpret the curriculum in light of what they felt were their own strengths and priorities and the students' needs in relation to it. With voice in the conduct of class, the ninth graders – who shared the same academic needs as the seniors at Garfield County HS – were less resistant and were able to develop a stake in what they were learning, thereby opening the possibility for eupraxia to became available.

The current policy context in the US assumes that teachers are not capable of designing their own curricula or assessing students validly, and thus teachers need the Common Core State Curriculum and the Race to the Top mechanisms imposed from without in order to teach effectively and accountably. If Lila represents thoughtful, student-oriented teachers, then her experience suggests that the teaching profession would benefit from greater confidence in teachers' judgment. The emphasis on the freedom to think and reflect at Danforth HS contributed to Lila's potential for enacting a eupraxic pedagogy of the sort that is no doubt the envy of many teachers labouring under the current restrictive regime and experiencing declining morale (MetLife, 2013). We assert that her experiences suggest that schools, teachers, and students would be better served by fewer limitations and more opportunities for teachers, new and old, to actively construct the settings for their instruction.

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