



Experiences of Learning to Teach Physical Education: Navigating Tensions

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This narrative inquiry explored two pre-service teachers' experiences of learning to teach Physical Education during a 16-week internship. A research puzzle was named: how learning to teach is experienced by pre-service teachers and how they dwell in spaces of tension while learning to teach Physical Education. Two pre-service teachers in secondary urban school settings were part of the study over a six month period before, during, and after the 16-week fall semester internship. Field texts included audio recorded and transcribed group and one-on-one conversations, field notes from school visits and teaching observations, journal writing and reflections, artifacts from the participants' internship, and text message conversations. Narrative accounts that inquired into their experiences were co-composed with each participant. Three threads of narrative connection reverberated, moving toward new wonderings related to the research puzzle: shifting stories to live by, teaching their way, and working alongside teachers. Questions arose about how we might be able to use this inquiry to reflect on our own experiences and practices and how narrative inquiry may be a valuable methodological approach for Physical Education teacher education.

Keywords: Teacher education, physical education, socialization, field experience, identity, teaching, narrative inquiry, curriculum

This paper discusses a narrative inquiry study that focused on how two pre-service teachers, Ali and Lauren, experienced learning to teach physical education during a 16-week internship in two urban secondary schools. The research puzzle named at the outset of the study was 'what tensions do pre-service teachers experience in various contexts, at different times throughout the 16 weeks, and while working alongside many people in a landscape of education?' Further questions and wonderings surrounding the research puzzle emerged throughout the study such as how pre-service teachers experienced relational shifts as the semester moved forward, and how pre-service teachers might dwell in spaces of tension while learning to teach. Each participant in the study experienced learning to teach physical education uniquely. However, they also shared some similar experiences which can be termed threads of

narrative connection (Clandinin et al., 2006). Three threads of narrative connection that emerged through the participants' experiences while looking across their stories were a) shifting stories to live by, b) teaching their way, and c) working alongside teachers. Issues and tensions surrounding physical education teacher socialization, identity development, and mentoring are discussed in relation to the findings of the study. Such a discussion is significant because literature on learning to teach physical education is limited, especially in relational ways that narrative inquiry brings forth.

Tensions in Learning to Teach Physical Education

In the field of education there exist many examples of tensions with regard to teaching and learning, and each is unique. Quite easily, however, tensions can be regarded as negative rather than spaces of potential growth. As teachers, we might ask ourselves how to get

rid of tension; we may wish to live a discourse of 'effective teaching' which is smooth and without disruptions. Cook (2009) used the term productive equilibrium to describe the inevitable state of imbalance experienced by a pre-service teacher entering a school as they navigate new relationships and contexts within the workplace. The following subsection is a brief overview of occupational socialization theory (Lortie, 1975) and literature surrounding potential tensionality (Aoki, 1986, 1991, 2004) that pre-service teachers may face as they enter the landscape of schools.

Occupational Socialization Theory (OST).

Occupational socialization is a process by which we learn roles, expectations, and values that are associated with a particular occupation (Stroot & Williamson, 1993). Early experiences in schools can greatly influence a pre-service teacher's beliefs by challenging or reinforcing their understandings of what it means to be a teacher (Pike & Fletcher, 2014). Using a framework developed by Lortie (1975), three kind of socialization that teachers face can be identified. Acculturation includes actions, beliefs, and value systems that are learned from birth that create and reinforce ideologies about professional conduct. Professional socialization is the process through which we learn and maintain values deemed ideal for teaching physical education. Organizational socialization is the process that serves to maintain traditional skills or routines that are valued by a school, organization, or institution and may work against change in order to maintain traditions. This framework is useful when considering how socialization influences pre-service teachers while learning to teach.

Mentoring and OST. In relation to OST, in particular professional and organizational socialization, the voices of teachers in the field are critical because of the influence that they may have with pre-service teachers during internships and the first years of teaching. McCaughtry, Cothran, Kulinna, Martin, and Faust (2005) explain that "... teachers who receive mentoring are more likely to stay in teaching, be satisfied, hold better teaching attitudes, and implement more effective instructional practices and long term planning" (p. 328). However, cooperating teachers are often chosen on the "...assumption that anyone who has taught can effectively teach teachers" (Butler & Cuenca, 2012, p. 297) which may not always be the case. Mentoring itself is a socially constructed process and, without clear communication between teacher education programs and the field regarding expectations and philosophies, can be viewed as a sink-or-swim approach by cooperating teachers. Mentoring by, including communication between, teacher educators, teachers in the field, and colleagues can be an essential part of the growth and development of pre-service teachers, especially in the beginning years of the profession (Griffin & Ayers, 2005; McCaughtry et al., 2005; Patton et al., 2005; Stroot & Williamson, 1993).

Identity development and OST. Another example of tensionality that may be experienced by pre-service teachers, and directly related to OST, is the shifting and always changing nature of a developing professional identity. Identity is not determined by a single factor; our lives are made up of many multiple and sometimes conflicting discourses (Richie & Wilson, 2000). This socialization process, referred to earlier as acculturation, is a process that constructs and reproduces what society believes 'a teacher' to be and, as a result, pre-service teachers already have begun to shape their stories to live by based on the discourses of public education. A narrative view of identity believes that through experience and the telling and reliving of experiences, we shape our identities, our stories to live by (Clandinin, 2013). Knowledge is intertwined with identity. A narrative way of thinking about identity takes into consideration the interconnected and interrelatedness of past and present, and personal practical knowledge, and the landscape(s) on which a person lives and works. When pre-service teachers enter schools in a new role as educators, they must navigate the landscape of education from a new perspective and may find themselves in spaces of tension in relation to their stories to live by.

Teaching of physical education and OST.

Another example of tensionality and socialization that pre-service teachers may face while learning to teach is the concept of curriculum. Curriculum can be formal or informal, written or unspoken, traditional or innovative. As pre-service teachers learn to plan and implement meaningful, relevant, and unique learning opportunities for students, spaces of tension may arise when they realize that not all students are alike and not all situations call for the same action. Their own voice and stories to live by must be somehow recognized in their planning and day to day interactions. As well, often in a role of being evaluated, pre-service teachers must be mindful of the landscape of the school and beliefs or orientation of cooperating teachers. This concept can be discussed in terms of *curriculum-as-plan* and *curriculum-as-lived* (Aoki, 1986, 1991, 2004) in relation to the tension(s) that pre-service teachers might experience while attempting to find a balance between both.

Teacher agency and OST. Teachers have unique life experiences, histories, autobiographies, and stories to live by. Students also enter into the classroom world with unique backgrounds, home lives, previous experiences, and voices. Curtner-Smith, Hastie, and Kinchin (2008) acknowledged that students can be a powerful socializing force on pre-service and beginning teachers. Together students and teachers create and live out exceptionally distinct and varying versions of what physical education looks like.

It is important to remember that pre-service teachers have agency and are not necessarily directed uncontrollably by socializing forces. Socialization is

dialectic, a two-way process where pre-service teachers may actively try to shape the schools, programs, and universities that are continually shaping them.

The Inquiry

This study was a narrative inquiry into experiences of two pre-service teachers, Ali and Lauren, during a 16-week internship semester in relation to Aoki's (1986, 1991, 2004) notion of tensionality and dwelling productively in spaces of tension.

Narrative Inquiry – A Brief Overview

Narrative inquiry is a way of living alongside participants and living with stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Sharing and learning from each others' experiences allows educators to hold up a mirror, see new angles, and think about perceptions and practices. Through conversation and living alongside each other, we may come to understand each other while also asking more questions.

This study followed Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) understanding of narrative inquiry. While living alongside participants and sharing experiences, the researcher focuses on the three dimensional space: (a) temporality; (b) personal and social, and; (c) place. In narrative inquiry work, the researcher positions themselves and their stories to live by in the midst of the inquiry, which means that they already had their own experiences about a topic which most likely led them to be interested in the topic to begin with.

Living in spaces of tension (Aoki, 1986, 1991, 2004) became a focal point for the study because I had experienced many tensions while learning to and continuing to teach physical education. Learning to find productivity in tension may be difficult for most teachers especially student teachers and beginning teachers. This study refers to various tensions that Ali and Lauren experienced and how they did/not live productively within these spaces of tension.

Terminology. Narrative inquiry makes use of unique conceptions that may not be familiar. For example, a narrative inquirer will name a research puzzle (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) or set of wonderings that frame the study. As well, stories to live by is a narrative conceptualization for professional identity that has been developed over time by Connelly and Clandinin (1999) as the link between knowledge, context, and identity. Stories to live by "...make evident the personal, social, and political contexts that shaped our understandings" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 55). A narrative way of thinking about identity takes into consideration the interconnected and interrelatedness of past and present, a person's practical knowledge, and the landscape(s) on which a person lives and works. These are a few common narrative inquiry conceptions or terms that are used throughout the paper.

Context and Participants

The participants in the study, Ali and Lauren, were two pre-service teachers who were well known to me through teaching at the university. The teacher education program involved a progressive immersion into schools over eight semesters; the seventh semester as a 16-week internship placement in a secondary school setting. Ali and Lauren, in my professional opinion, had challenged themselves throughout the teacher education program to dwell in space(s) of tension rather than turn their focus to teaching sport knowledge and content – planning and implementation skills that they had already learned and demonstrated. I felt that Ali and Lauren would successfully be able to navigate the complex landscape of their 16-week internship but would also attempt to continue questioning space(s) of tension in relation to their stories to live by.

I approached Lauren and Ali as pre-service teachers to work alongside because of our already-existing relationship and because of their questioning of curriculum in relation to their developing professional identity. As a narrative inquirer, I was aware that "...these relationships might be viewed as research contamination or criticized for the researcher studying people just like her ... yet from a relational standpoint, connections such as these offer richness and depth and allow insights that would otherwise not be possible" (Craig & Huber, 2007, p. 255). I believed that the already existing relationships allowed the inquiry to begin more personally than had we just met at the outset.

Ali. Ali was a physical education major and social studies minor in the secondary education program in the Faculty of Education. She had grown up and currently still resided in the city in which she interned. Living with her parents while completing her degree, Ali also had time to help coach both outside of school (ringette) and at the school (basketball). She prided herself on her involvement and ability to build relationships with students.

Ali worked alongside three different cooperating teachers because she wanted to gain experience teaching a variety of grade levels and also wanted to teach in her minor subject (social studies). She worked primarily alongside Kelsey in a grade nine female physical and health education class as well as a grade ten female physical education class. She also worked alongside Krista for one grade co-educational eleven physical education class. For a shorter length of time she worked alongside Kevin and his grade ten social studies class in order to teach in her minor subject area.

Ali enjoyed and worked productively alongside Kelsey as a cooperating teacher but felt intimidated by and did not find ways to communicate her feelings toward Krista. On many occasions she expressed that she was frustrated by her relationship with Krista but did not want to share these feelings with Kelsey and run the risk of

behaving unprofessionally. A shy person by nature, Ali sometimes lacked the confidence to stand up for herself and, on a few occasions, agreed to things that she wished she had not. Ali struggled with classroom management while in the classroom setting but felt that she had good management in the gymnasium. She was very organized and tidy, and contributed to the overall smooth function of the department by maintaining the equipment room and knowing which space she was assigned to on which day. She enjoyed building relationships with students and generally looked forward to teaching every day.

Lauren. Lauren had moved away from where she grew up to attend the university and play hockey on the varsity team. Taking less than a full course load to accommodate her hockey commitments, Lauren was in her fifth year of university when she interned. Living on her own and playing hockey outside of her internship commitments, Lauren found she was very busy but managed her time well; she was very independent and functioned well living on her own.

Lauren was a physical education major and special education minor in the secondary education program in the Faculty of Education. During internship she worked alongside Janay as her primary cooperating teacher, teaching grade nine physical education. However, because Janay also held administrative responsibilities in the school, Lauren was forced to spread out and work alongside two other cooperating teachers in order to gain experience with other grades and subjects. She also worked alongside Krista, a teacher of four years, in a grade ten female physical education class and alongside Brad, a first year teacher who was new to the school in a grade nine female physical education class. Lauren also spent time in the special education classrooms around the school.

Lauren enjoyed working with Janay and found, much to her initial surprise, that they related to each other on a few levels regardless of their age and interest differences. They shared an office space which became a productive space to ask questions and engage in dialogue. She expressed that working alongside Brad often felt like she was his mentor rather than the other way around, largely due to him being a new teacher as well. Sarah and Lauren eventually built a very positive relationship but started out with a lot of tension around beliefs about teaching physical education.

Lauren was a very organized person and liked to plan ahead in case she found herself busy with hockey on occasion. She quickly built relationships with students and appeared very at ease around the school and other teachers. Lauren expressed that she felt competent at school and this made up for her lack of confidence during the hockey season, which she was struggling to get through.

Living the Inquiry

Ali and Lauren agreed to meet at least once per month as a group and audio record (to later transcribe) the conversations. I met with them together four times informally for one to two hours at a restaurant or at homes in the evenings. Both Lauren and Ali agreed that they enjoyed the group conversations and found it interesting to hear stories of experience of the other. In addition to meeting once per month as a group, I also met each of them one-on-one in their schools periodically so they could share their space(s), share some lessons and planning, and so I could observe their teaching experiences if they wished.

I collected field texts in the form of field notes, such as voice memos following school visits, observational notes, thoughts, questions, or reflections. Ali and Lauren shared artifacts such as lesson plans and internship evaluation documents. In addition, they shared critical incidents from their teaching experiences.

One field text that was not anticipated was in the form of text messages. We began to realize before internship even began that text messaging could be a convenient way to communicate schedules in order to plan ahead. However, text messaging emerged into a valuable field text; it became a way to keep in daily contact regarding events, experiences, emotions, and asking each other questions. Lauren and Ali said that when something happened at school, often their first reaction was to text message me or the group (in a group text message, all participants can contribute to the conversation). I recorded all text messages in a calendar format so that it could be recalled what had happened on which day. I also added my reflections, thoughts, and/or questions beside each conversation. Ali and Lauren were aware that our text messages were recorded as part of the research in order to avoid any ethical concerns.

Creating research texts. When the internships concluded, I began writing interim research texts using a combination of transcriptions, text messages, field notes, and artifacts. I talked to Ali and Lauren frequently but we needed to find a way to move farther apart; the group had become very close and spent a lot of time together during internship, but we necessarily had to spend less time together and I needed to think about the data as I read and re-read the conversations. However, discussing in more detail the co-composition of the text, the group was still able to engage in relational ways and feel part of the research.

From the interim research texts, the group identified where actions/events occurred, story lines interwove, and gaps or silences were found. By "...considering all of the possible stories... or what we had lived as part of the inquiry process, [we] then chose specific stories of practice that seemed to [us] to be particularly relevant to the wonders about the experience... (Burwash, 2013, p. 64). Together we went

back and forth identifying and highlighting spaces of tension for the final, co-composed narrative accounts. This back and forth "... allowed us to respond to each other's tentative interpretations and representations in the narrative accounts..." (Clandinin et al., 2010, p. 70). I wanted to be sure that before moving ahead Lauren and Ali agreed their respective narrative accounts were representational of their experiences. Once the narrative accounts had been co-composed for each Ali and Lauren, thinking about experiences that were identified as having relevance to the research puzzle (Burwash, 2013), I looked across the narrative accounts for threads of narrative connection.

Threads of Narrative Connection

As I looked across the narrative accounts, there was no attempt to generalize the experiences of all pre-service teachers but, rather, wonder about how Lauren and Ali's stories of experience "...lie alongside each other or how they may bump up against each other" (Burwash, 2013, p. 233). I recognized interrelationships between these resonant threads and with the research puzzle regarding Aoki's (1978, 2004) space(s) of tension. Some threads of narrative connection that emerged through Ali and Lauren's experiences while looking across the narrative accounts were shifting stories to live by, teaching their way, and working alongside teachers.

Shifting Stories to Live by

Both Ali and Lauren entered the school setting with particular beliefs about teaching but may not have worked with teachers who held similar beliefs. This potential difference created tension, especially at the start of the internship when this experience was surprising and new.

Lauren. During an early conversation with Lauren, she talked about an experience from the first day of school when she had to share a space with another teacher who seemed unorganized. Lauren storied herself as an organized person and said she cringed at the thought of another physical education teacher 'just playing soccer' on the first day of school because the teacher did not know what space was assigned to her for that day. Lauren recalled that "... she was like, 'well I don't know, I don't even know where I am,' so then she says, 'I guess I will just take the girls out for soccer,' and comes back with two balls. I'm thinking, 'oh my god.' So we walk the other way into the gym and I decide to try to get started with my stuff..." (Transcribed from group conversation, September 10, 2012). Lauren commented that perhaps the confusion had been a result of multiple teachers sharing the same space but in a later conversation said that this had happened many times with that teacher since then. Her philosophy about being a 'good teacher,' which meant being organized, was challenged as she worked alongside this particular teacher.

As Lauren worked alongside Physical Education teachers and learned about the school's physical

education program, she began to feel more comfortable because she said she learned what to expect from each of them. In a field note I commented that it seemed she was not going to let others' disorganization get in the way of her own teaching professionalism and philosophy of being prepared. She attempted to live out the vision of how she wanted to teach and be perceived as an educator (September 12, 2012).

As well as her outward perception, Lauren was also feeling tension regarding curriculum as she became familiar with some of the resources available to her. The subject area (all the health and physical education teachers) used a common text book but Lauren said, "...I don't like using the tests and stuff from the textbook website because they're not good enough. I would rather make my own quizzes or whatever that align more closely with what I have taught or what we have talked about in class" (Written from school visit notes, September 21, 2012).

I remember feeling proud of Lauren for explaining to me her understanding of curriculum in relation to assessment. This was something we spent a lot of time on in the undergraduate course I taught and I was happy to see that Lauren seemed to be able to transfer her experiences in class to her teaching in internship. I also noted that her confidence seemed to be growing since the start of the semester.

In relation to her confidence and her ability to remain thoughtful about her teaching, philosophy, and identity, Lauren later explained that, "...I seem to come across as more confident when I am more nervous. So I guess the students thought I was confident and strict. It worked out. When I'm nervous I am more loud and clear. More specific" (Transcribed from group conversation, October 2, 2012). Lauren said that she had been nervous at the start of the semester but came across as confident in front of the students. I wondered if Lauren had also been living a cover story (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999) at the start of the semester, outwardly portraying confidence but inwardly feeling lost and nervous. I wondered if she had become more comfortable as she spent more time teaching and was able to find a productive space of tension between feeling nervous and being prepared, no longer needing a cover story.

Regardless of other teachers' orientations to teaching physical education, Lauren resisted and continued to demonstrate innovative responses to varying degrees of professional socialization.

Ali. Ali also felt tension in relation to her story to live by of how teaching was 'supposed to be.' She said that she wanted to "... figure it out as I go... not always do things how they want me to ... or just doing what the teacher wants and not learning what works best for me" (Text message, October 14, 2012). Ali struggled with speaking up for how she believed a lesson should go and admitted that she was intimidated as a pre-service teacher

who would be evaluated at the end of the semester (Written from field notes, October 15, 2012). She also mentioned being “...yelled at by Krista from the side line” (Text message, October 13, 2012) because the lesson was not going as well as she had planned, she thought. Ali mentioned that immediately following this experience, she “...began teaching more like Krista even though (she) wanted to do different things” (Written from field notes, October 15, 2012). She seemed to experience pressure to do things in certain ways, perhaps in order to uphold tradition or routines (Lawson, 1983a), also called organizational socialization.

At the end of the semester Ali looked back on why she thought she had felt insecure about doing her lessons how she wanted to and said, “...because at the beginning I was just always fluttering back to where Kelsey was sitting to talk to her about how the lesson was going and I shouldn’t have done that... If a student asked me something, my first reaction was to turn to Kelsey and ask her” (Transcribed from group conversation, December 6, 2012). Ali seemed to identify a shift in her confidence over the course of the internship semester and an increased desire for independence. However, she felt the style of supervision by a few of her cooperating teachers did not align with her growing confidence and desire to be ‘in control’ of the class and figure things out for herself (Text message, November 19, 2012). This space(s) of tension between Ali’s philosophy, identity and her developing stories to live by seemed to be challenging for her.

Although socializing forces could be identified throughout the semester in various forms, both participants predominantly demonstrated innovative responses rather than accepting the socialization without question or critique. It was interesting to see both exercising their sense of agency and finding positive spaces of learning in the spaces of tension they experienced.

Teaching Their Own Way

Both Ali and Lauren strove to teach their own way and honour their stories to live by rather than unquestionably following their cooperating teachers’ lead. There was a wide variety in the beliefs of the cooperating teachers both in the ways they taught and the ways they mentored pre-service teachers. Both Ali and Lauren recognized these differences and challenged themselves to teach their own way.

Lauren. One of Lauren’s cooperating teachers was a teacher of four years who was new to physical education. She mentioned that Sarah was “...confrontational and sometimes intimidating” (Text message, October 29, 2012). She told a story of experience while teaching tchoukball (a net game) in Sarah’s class on the third day of the sequence of lessons when Sarah asked how she thought it was going. Lauren had replied that she thought it was going well; the

students were participating and learning the game strategy. Sarah then challenged her and asked about a few particular students who she thought weren’t participating enough and was pressing Lauren to get them involved. Lauren explained that “...her suggestion was putting competitive against non-competitive ... I’m a competitive person ... but I don’t think it is right with this group... But she didn’t agree so I was like, ‘uh, okay’” (Transcribed from group conversation, November 14, 2012). She said that Sarah had a different perspective on how to organize the class to encourage more involvement. I sensed that although Lauren did not agree with Sarah’s perspective, she did not want to appear disrespectful. Lauren told me that she anticipated the students would not respond well to Sarah’s method of handling the situation. I wondered if Lauren felt she would lose a certain degree of control if she taught the class the way Sarah suggested.

Lauren continued to describe her tchoukball teaching experience and said that she implemented a few extra game rules that would encourage inclusion rather than what Sarah had suggested. She said, “... they were all so positive to each other and it worked so well!” (Transcribed from group conversation, November 14, 2012). Lauren explained that she listened to Sarah’s suggestions the day before but decided to try something else. She grouped the students in a way that she thought would be effective and used a teaching strategy she had not tried yet. Lauren said in this story of experience that the students seemed to connect with her way of teaching. Sarah ended up agreeing and complimenting Lauren for trying something new, so she was “...glad that I stuck to my gut and did what I felt was right” (Text message, October 3, 2012).

In another story of experience, Lauren explained how she created her own calendar for sharing the teaching facilities even though the department had one created already. She said, “The teachers here have to share the gyms and stuff so at the start of the year we all get this massive chart of who is where and when. I don’t really like the format that they use so I retyped my own” (Written from school visit notes, September 21, 2012). She also explained how she created her own quizzes that aligned more closely with her teaching philosophy “... instead of borrowing tests from other teachers” (Written from school visit notes, September 21, 2012).

As mentioned earlier, Lauren seemed to story herself as an organized and prepared person, and said she did not mind creating her own materials. She said she felt more comfortable using materials that she had prepared and that more closely aligned with her way of teaching.

I thought about Lauren’s stories of experience and how she seemed to be trying to find a space to dwell between teaching in a way that reflected her own developing professional identity as well as respecting the school’s and teachers’ ways of doing things. Lauren seemed to be exercising her sense of agency in response

to professional socialization that she was facing in the school.

Ali. Ali felt she could not be perceived as the 'real' teacher unless she was alone with the students and without supervision. Ali described how she felt about this space of tension in a group conversation, describing how Krista "...won't give up her class to me fully either. It's that she is a ... powerful woman, so it's hard for me to take over if she won't let me take over. Maybe she feels like she has to be like that, if she doesn't trust me yet?" (Transcribed from group conversation, October 2, 2012). Although Ali expressed frustration with their relationship and her desire to have more control over the class, Krista often gave her positive feedback as well. Most often, this positive feedback was communicated after a lesson was complete and in an informal setting. Ali seemed to sense a disconnect between the positive feedback she received from Krista outside of class time and how she perceived Krista's actions during class time.

In addition to feeling like she needed to be in control of the class, Ali struggled with a knee injury that left her feeling disconnected with the students. The knee injury was from the summer and she said that after her knee healed and she began participating in the physical education classes she taught. While describing the new connection and positive relationships she felt were being build, she said, "I had this huge moment the other day when we were playing basketball ... I went over there and said, 'ok, let's do four on four and then there is no sub,' and I played with them. When I got involved their attitude and everything was totally different and they were like, 'oh, Ms. Schultz, let's one on one,' so it was this huge relationship building piece for me. For them to see me involved with them" (Transcribed from group conversation, November 14, 2012). With this new confidence in her teaching and the relationships she was building, she seemed to feel more comfortable teaching.

When we talked about her knee injury after internship had concluded and were talking about how her confidence might have been affected, Ali said, "The injury without me realizing it until after my internship, completely affected my confidence... I took pride in being an athlete that could participate in any activity with high intensity, and for the first two and a half months, not being able to run and get involved, was a major shot to my confidence" (Email, February 22, 2013). Ali believed that teaching her own way included her own "...involvement as a role model so the students can see it's healthy to be active" (Text message, November 2, 2012).

As well, she said once she started coaching basketball after school, she felt the students in her classes who were also on the team were more open to her. She said, "I am loving coaching. Really loving it. Now those girls are more open to me in class and stuff. And their personalities have changed toward me. I think that the

management in class got a lot easier that way" (Text message, December 6, 2012). Ali said she felt her classroom management improved in grade nine Physical Education once she began to build relationships with students. I wondered about potential connections between Ali's confidence in herself as a teacher, her relationship alongside Krista, and her desire to teach her own way.

Working alongside Teachers

Working alongside teachers was both challenging and rewarding for the participants in the study. Although they were able to have productive professional dialogue with and received constructive criticism from most, challenges arose when the pre-service teachers did not align with the teaching orientation of the cooperating teacher or their stories to live by bumped into one another.

Ali. Ali shared that she did not feel she could fully take over the class she was teaching for Krista. She also explained the tension(s) she felt— which she called adopting two philosophies and making her own – and Aoki (1978, 2004) called tensionality between curriculum-as-plan (Krista's plan) and curriculum-as-lived (Ali's hope to be 'the teacher'). She explained this further and said, "I honestly think the hardest thing for me is adopting two philosophies and trying to make my own, because I'm with two different teachers right now. Kelsey and I are super comfortable and can talk about absolutely everything, but Krista I just feel is super judgmental and so strict that I got all worked up" (Transcribed from group conversation, October 2, 2012). Ali had began teaching Krista's class in late September as part of her teaching load in addition to the class she was already teaching for Kelsey.

Ali described another experience and space(s) of tension when she felt that her teaching was interrupted by Krista. She explained that "Normally, she would yell, 'Ali!' and then I'd have to stop what I am doing and go over to her, or she would stomp over to me, and then she will say in front of all the kids, 'don't do that,' or whatever" (Transcribed from group conversation, December 6, 2012). She said she felt humiliated and that no matter what she did, Krista was always stepping in. Ali added, "Then Krista left and the student turned to me, 'why does she always get mad at you?' She doesn't even hold back, even in front of the kids..." (Transcribed from group conversation, December 6, 2012). Ali shared that she was frustrated that Krista interrupted her. On the other hand, Ali said she was not sure if she preferred a cooperating teacher who was rarely present, such as Kevin (her social studies cooperating teacher). She told me that Kevin's style of supervision was the opposite of Krista's, and often he did not ask about what she was teaching that day (Text message, December 2, 2012). This seemed to bother her and she said she perceived his behaviour as a lack of interest.

Kelsey, on the other hand, was a cooperating teacher whom Ali got along with well and said that their teaching philosophies aligned. She admitted that when it came to talking about the other cooperating teachers she often held back because, “I don’t want to tell [Kelsey] everything and then she thinks I’m bashing. Because I’m not.” (Transcribed from group conversation, December 6, 2012).

Each of Ali’s cooperating teachers seemed to live out a different version of supervision and mentoring, which created a space of tension for her. Ali’s stories of experience and her internship semester while learning to teach, tensions surrounding wanting to figure out what is best for her seemed to bump into discourses about mentoring and supervision styles of cooperating teachers.

Lauren. Lauren shared a story of an experience from one of the first days of the 16-week internship semester. Although she was working primarily alongside Janay as her cooperating teacher and had attended the internship seminar (a three-day ‘retreat’ with the teacher education program and the cooperating teacher/pre-service teacher pair) with her, Janay’s teaching schedule had been shuffled on the first day of school. As a result of the shuffled schedule, Lauren and Janay asked two other teachers if Lauren could teach their courses in order for her teaching load to be full. Lauren seemed nervous about the shuffle of Janay’s schedule because she was working with more than one teacher. In my experience as a cooperating teacher and faculty advisor, pre-service teachers often work with two cooperating teachers in order to gain experience in both their major and minor areas of study. Lauren expressed her feelings in a text message and said, “There was this shuffle of teachers at school start up and now Janay is not in charge of my period 5 class. Instead Brad is the teacher for that class. And now I will have three different evaluators” (Text message, September 10, 2012). Lauren seemed concerned that working alongside three cooperating teachers would be a challenge. However, in my experiences it is the cooperating teachers who set aside time to discuss the pre-service teacher’s evaluation at appropriate times and the process does not require extra time on the part of the pre-service teacher; the primary cooperating teacher usually coordinates the organization of the group. I shared my experiences with Lauren and she seemed more at ease about working alongside three cooperating teachers.

When describing her relationships with each of her cooperating teachers, Lauren said that Janay “... has very similar outlooks on physical education as me” (Text message, October 31, 2012). About Brad Lauren said, “I thought we’d totally be on the same page how we kind of teach” (Transcribed from school visit conversation, December 11, 2012) but felt like they did not agree on many things. Lauren looked back on her relationship with Sarah and said, “Sarah doesn’t really see things the same. But things have been so much better. Honestly, I don’t

know what it was at the start, maybe she was trying to be a little bit tougher and test me a bit, but then she completely was like, ‘have at ‘er,’ and left me all the time” (Transcribed from school visit conversation, December 11, 2012). Lauren described how she perceived their progressing relationship over the semester and that she was able to teach how and what she wanted by the end of the semester.

Both Ali and Lauren worked alongside multiple cooperating teachers who supported them in various ways and at differing levels. Although these multiple relationships created spaces of tension for them as they navigated unique orientations to teaching and different approaches to mentoring, both participants were able to learn and grow from what could have been potentially negative situations.

Discussion and further Wonderings

Presented in the section above are only a few of the stories of experience that Ali and Lauren shared throughout their internship semester while learning to teach. With a turn back to the literature in relation to the stories shared above, we may be able to see connections and begin to ask more questions about how learning to teach is experienced by pre-service teachers and how we may be able to support them. The sections below present some connections between Occupational Socialization Theory (OST), the threads of narrative connection that emerged from the study, and some of the wonderings that I have moving forward.

OST: Acculturation

Ali and Lauren’s stories of experience of learning to teach physical education can be related to acculturation; their values and beliefs that have been developed and created since birth, through schooling, and through teacher education shape their experiences, identity, and stories to live by as pre-service teachers. It is generally agreed that identity is dynamic and ongoing, not stable, involves multiple identities, and is developed among the presence of others within various contexts (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Lofstrom, Poom-Valickis, Hannula, & Mathews, 2010; Mooney, 2007; Schepens, Aelterman, & Vlerick, 2009). Lauren and Ali’s stories to live by seemed to shift over the course of the 16-week internship as they were challenged by multiple cooperating teachers, curriculum ideals and values, and personal philosophies about teaching and learning.

Ali struggled to find agency as she worked alongside Krista, yet also seemed hesitant to share her feelings entirely with Kelsey whom she trusted and identified with. She had an intense desire to be the real teacher, as she had most likely imagined what teaching was about as she grew up in school and developed a professional identity. Her ideal teaching image was to participate alongside the students, which was prevented because of an injury which further disrupted her stories to

live by about professional conduct and being a ‘good’ teacher.

Lauren’s tensions regarding her stories to live by about teaching and curriculum were challenged by each of her cooperating teachers in unique ways but she seemed to be able dwell productively in these spaces of tension; her confidence grew as the semester progressed. In addition, the landscape of school and her confidence as a teacher helped her get through challenges in her personal landscape of varsity hockey and the struggles she experienced on the ice.

We are reminded that stories to live by are a continual process over time and that identity is never determined by one single factor, person, or idea (Richie & Wilson, 2000). Multiple discourses and where they intersect can be space(s) of tension. I sensed that both Lauren and Ali experienced multiple discourses as they worked alongside many people in the context of school, as evident in all three of the threads of narrative connection. I was also reminded that stories to live by involve agency and that each person will differ in how they deal with the landscape of school, teaching, and learning.

OST: Professional Socialization

As we look across Ali and Lauren’s stories of experience, we see examples of professional socialization. The process of learning and maintaining values deemed ideal for teaching (Lortie, 1975) can be impressed upon pre-service teachers by the teachers whom they work closely with during internship; cooperating teachers may purposefully or inadvertently impose their beliefs and values on pre-service teachers. We are drawn to, in particular, the thread of narrative connection named working alongside teachers and consider the term mentor in relation to professional socialization.

Although the first few years of learning to teach are critical in a teachers’ career and that “...teacher mentoring may reduce the early attrition of beginning teachers” (Odell & Ferraro, 1992, p. 200), we can consider if there are differences between mentors and cooperating teachers. Mentoring involves a “... shared intellectual, ideological, political, personal, and emotional journey” (Chawla & Rawlins, 2004, p. 964) and is a term used in many contexts among many professions. Posden and Denmark (2007) said that mentoring is usually a sustained relationship between a ‘novice’ and an ‘expert’ in the profession that is established in order to provide help, support, and guidance while learning and developing skills. Yet, as Butler and Cuenca (2012) point out, cooperating teachers are chosen often under the assumption that they are also good at teaching teachers, which may not always be the case.

I felt uncomfortable with Posden and Denmark’s (2007) description of the ‘novice’ and the ‘expert’ in a mentoring relationship. Assumptions are made when pre-service teachers work alongside cooperating teachers;

cooperating teachers perceived as experts (Butler & Cuenca, 2012). Yet, cooperating teachers “...receive very little guidance on effective mentoring practices or ways to mentor student teachers toward the aims of particular teacher education programs” (Butler & Cuenca, 2012, p. 297). There exists a disconnect, potentially, between what pre-service teachers have learned in teacher education and what they live and experience in the field during internship.

As we think about the cooperating teachers in Ali’s and Lauren’s stories of experience during internship we notice that Brad, Kelsey, and Sarah all had been teaching for fewer than five years. Yet, they were labeled a cooperating teacher and, therefore, an expert teacher who works with a pre-service or novice teacher, according to Posden and Denmark’s (2007) description of mentors. I wondered if a discourse exists in teacher education and schools that cooperating teachers must be experts, and if this discourse influences how cooperating teachers work alongside pre-service teachers. What does it mean to have ‘good’ supervision and to be an expert and how can this discourse be renegotiated and restored to value a teacher’s and a pre-service teacher’s background, experiences, and knowledge?

Each cooperating teacher might interpret a process of supervising pre-service teachers differently. Looking backward to Ali’s text message about her perception of Krista having trouble ‘backing off,’ it seemed that Ali’s story to live by of figuring out what works for her was bumping up against Krista’s style of supervision. Bullough and Draper’s (2004) explanation of mentoring as a power negotiation of control over situations brings to our attention that perhaps Ali did not feel that she had control of her own teaching. In contrast, Ali had wished that Kevin provided more feedback about her teaching.

We might wonder if Ali felt that she was inadequately prepared, as Anspal, Eisenschmidt, and Lofstrom (2012) identify as a common concern for pre-service teachers. Curtner-Smith (2001) agrees that pre-service teachers often feel inadequately prepared for the landscape of teaching and learning. This can be further described as a feeling of disconnect between content of teacher education programs and what really happens in schools (Butler & Cuenca, 2012; Lawson, 1983b). Lauren’s stories of experience reflect feelings of confidence regarding preparedness, on the other hand. She believed that being prepared and organized was an indication of professionalism, and we might consider if this belief about the teaching profession was a belief also held by her cooperating teacher, Janay. Lauren may have knowingly or unknowingly aligning her stories to live by about being a ‘good teacher’ alongside the mentor (Janay) with whom she identified most.

Professional socialization is not necessarily a negative process when learning to teach but we should

remember that "...mentoring is largely a socially constructed practice" (Butler & Cuenca, 2012, p. 297) in itself. Cooperating teachers may also need training and clarity regarding their roles and "... the ways in which these roles are socially constructed, produced, and reproduced..." (Butler & Cuenca, 2012, p. 298). Support from teacher education programs, including shared visions about what learning to teach might look like, may help us support pre-service teachers as they navigate new relationships alongside cooperating teachers as professional and productive mentors.

OST: Organizational Socialization

Lawson (1983a) talked about organizational socialization and how new and experienced teachers acquire and maintain ideologies valued and rewarded by the organization. As I heard Lauren and Ali's stories of experience I was reminded of an explanation of how pre-service teachers can be caught between tradition and change. Britzman (2003) said pre-service teachers "... are confronted not only with the traditions associated with those of past teachers and those of past and present classroom lives, but with the personal desire to carve out one's own territory, develop one's own style, and make a difference in the education of students" (p. 41). In relation to organizational socialization and resistance to change on a larger scale, we might consider if pre-service teachers might feel limited by tradition and socialization, therefore affecting their perceived competency. Aoki (1984) described competency as a perception often oriented toward efficient control. This means to an end view of competence reduces teachers and students "... from beings-as-humans to beings-as-things," (Aoki, 1984, p. 129) and is an unfair way to judge pre-service teachers.

Ali shared stories of her classroom management; she felt the need to turn to Kelsey early in the internship semester during her lessons but later wished she could have the class to herself. She seemed to equate competency as a teacher and being the 'real' teacher with being alone in the classroom/gymnasium with the students and not have the cooperating teacher(s) present to intervene. In comparison, it was interesting to see how Krista did not leave Ali alone with the students and interjected during her lessons. One might wonder if Krista had learned and was living what she believed a mentor or cooperating teacher should do in order to support a pre-service teacher. Yet, Ali seemed to feel intimidated and pressured by such behaviour.

Lauren did not conform to ways that the physical education subject area suggested she teach; she did not use the pre-made tests and quizzes nor use the format for scheduling that was given to her. She demonstrated what she believed to be as professional judgment; her choices aligned with her teaching philosophy and identity.

Additionally, both Lauren and Ali commented on how they felt pressured at numerous points and to varying degrees to change or conform their teaching

based on what the subject area or cooperating teachers suggested. As beginning teachers themselves in the past, one might wonder how much organizational socialization influenced the cooperating teachers' stories to live by as professionals and mentors; what was valued by the schools where they experienced their initial years of teaching? Butler and Cuenca (2012) identify three different conceptions that cooperating teachers identify their roles as: mentor as instructional coach, mentor as emotional support system, and mentor as socializing agent. Deep rooted beliefs of an organization, such as a school/system, may have played a large role in influencing cooperating teachers. Alternatively, should we not instead hope that teacher education programs be the most influential in supporting and training cooperating teachers, the "...first educators to help make sense of the formal and informal requirements and resources involved in teaching" (Butler & Cuenca, 2012, p. 302)?

Open dialogue and continual reflection about how or why teachers act and think certain ways and what is regarded as competence should be of utmost importance. Teacher education programs alongside cooperating teachers and pre-service teachers may benefit from, together, examining and questioning traditional ways of teaching.

Summary of Wonderings

Through this narrative inquiry about experience of pre-service teachers while learning to teach physical education during a 16-week internship, more questions emerged for me personally and professionally. Narrative inquiry work does not create conclusions but rather generates more wonderings for our work as educators. Some of these wonderings and challenges are presented in the section above and may cause us, together as educators, to realize the influence of socialization on both new and experienced teachers. In addition, the shared experiences of Ali and Lauren together with consideration of literature surrounding mentoring and identity development may help us begin to reconceptualise how clear communication between teacher education programs, teachers in the field, and pre-service teachers could take place.

The internship semester may be one of the most influential periods of a pre-service teachers' education program. It can be an opportunity to develop personal practical knowledge about the teaching profession; through reflection, support of teachers, and practicing teaching while honouring their own beliefs and values about education, pre-service teachers may flourish. Spaces of tension regarding curriculum, physical education as a subject area, and their developing identities may be productive with supportive mentoring. Alternatively, pre-service teachers may experience tensions too great for their perceived confidence or present abilities, leaving them feeling isolated and alone,

succumbing to socialization without questioning their beliefs and values.

Cooperating teachers play perhaps the largest role in the development of pre-service teachers, often feeling as the "...gatekeepers to the work and norms of teaching" (Butler & Cuenca, 2012, p, 297) but lacking support. Cooperating teachers need to be chosen carefully and paired with pre-service teachers thoughtfully. In addition, they require support and training from teacher education programs if they are being asked to align with the goals and beliefs of the program. Quite often the schools' views are that teacher education programs and coursework are "...incompatible with the realities of the classroom" (Butler & Cuenca, 2012, p. 302) and the gap between university and field experiences is perceived as large. Communication, or lack of, may be the cause of this perceived (or real) discrepancy.

In order for the learning of pre-service teachers to be transformative, we might ask ourselves if we are clear enough in our communication of aims, goals, and expectations from both the perspective of teacher education programs and teachers in the field who take on the role of cooperating teachers. A shared vision is not the only answer, and may be already in place. However, open dialogue along with more communication between the field and teacher education programs may be a starting point for better supporting pre-service teachers during such an influential part of their careers.

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