

Learning to Teach Elementary Students in Democratic Field Placements

By

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This dissertation is dedicated to all of the teachers, students, and families with whom I have worked over the years, in particular those at PS166Q and Manhattan School for Children.

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A participant in this study reflected on her growth and quoted Desmond Tutu, “A person is a person through other persons.” This research, and my work toward it were made possible because of the incredible support, guidance, and care of other people.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

My first grade students were getting ready for lunch. At our public school on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, the elementary students in grades kindergarten through fourth grade ate lunch in their classrooms. The progressive mission of the school supported this practice of lunch as an instructional time; we believed our work involved teaching both academic and social curriculum. Lunch provided multiple spaces to learn about my students' lives and interests, as well as work on oral language and social skills important to discussion and problem solving. There were always problems at lunch. People were dropping too much food on the floor so the sweeper didn't have time for after lunch activities. Best friends became sworn enemies over seat choices. And, one day the correct number of milks didn't arrive in the blue bags.

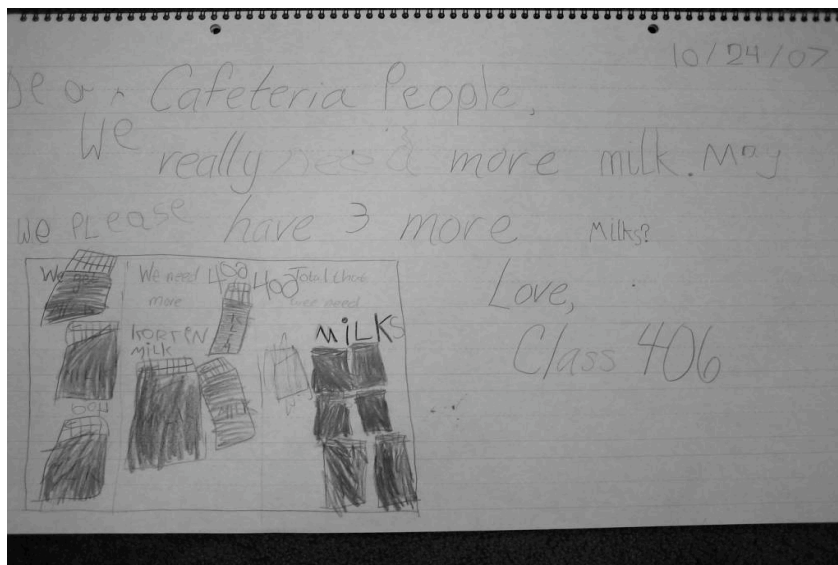
Since we ate our lunch in the classroom, the cafeteria sent up big blue bags with school lunches in them. Some students had hot lunch from the cafeteria every day. Some students just got milk from the cafeteria. Each bag had to be carefully counted for each classroom in the building. On one fateful day, our class did not receive the correct number of milk cartons. A student came up to me and complained, "Katie, we don't have enough milk." This was the golden moment for which I had been waiting.

We had been learning about letter writing, including attention to audience and voice. I wanted to transition into persuasive letter writing and this was the chance I had been looking for to engage my young writers in solving problems through writing. I told the student, "Well we have water, can't people just have water?" The student wrung his hands and firmly stated, "But Katie, people are *supposed* to get the milk." I replied, "Well what can we do about it?" Now more students were involved in the conversation as I was sitting at a table enjoying my own

lunch among six and seven-year-olds. One student suggested that I go to the cafeteria. I pointed out that it was not a problem for me and I also couldn't very well leave my entire class by themselves. Then another suggested that kids go to the cafeteria to complain. Not wanting to lose my chance at persuasive letter writing, I reminded students that the upper elementary and middle school students were in the middle of lunch so we would be interrupting a work time for the cafeteria workers. My young students had learned the value of uninterrupted work time – they were constantly whispering to each other “back to work” after we had a mini-lesson on what to do when we get distracted. Finally, I told them that sometimes I write a letter when I need to file a complaint or figure out a problem. They agreed that this seemed reasonable and we decided that after lunch we would write to the cafeteria. My young students composed the following (Figure 1):

Figure 1

Student Letter



That afternoon, two students delivered the letter to the cafeteria workers and the class awaited their reply. The following day at lunch our blue lunch bag had a written reply stating the

cafeteria workers' apology for the miscount and noting that they had rectified the mistake. This letter kicked off our exploration into how people use letters and other forms of writing to solve problems in their lives, in the lives of their community, and in the world. I wanted students to believe that their voices had power to make great changes, to learn the academic skills necessary to act on those beliefs, to understand the processes currently in place to make change, and to gain the dispositions necessary to see themselves as members of a community that cared for each other. Not every student in the class needed milk, but they all shared in the outrage of the missing milk and worked together on behalf of those who needed their milk.

I share this anecdote not to make light of social action, or to shame our very hard working cafeteria staff, but to explain the important role social action can play in elementary classrooms. I believed that young people could change the world, that everyday problems that faced our classroom community held possibilities for teaching the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to not only participate in, but also shape our democratic society. In turn, my young students constantly amazed me with their insights on fairness, knowledge of social issues, and ability to show sincere compassion for their classmates.

I delved into these areas of inquiry in my teaching during my time at the Manhattan School for Children (MSC), a relatively privileged public school. Yet, my conscience nagged at me. Prior to working at this elementary school, I had worked for three years at PS 166 in Long Island City (Queens), New York. While at PS 166 I had started to explore student voice through the introduction of writer's workshop and sharing the construction of classroom rules, procedures, and jobs with students, yet, I also felt the pressure to follow a mandated (and often scripted) curriculum that did not reflect the experiences of my students who were mostly recent

immigrants from South America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Why was one group of students afforded curricula that asked them to question the world and change it, while another group of students was asked to toe the line and complete the workbook? I wondered, how did the teachers at MSC learn to teach this way? Why didn't the teachers at PS166 teach in the same way? How could all teachers see students as young citizens in the making? These questions fueled my desire to learn more about democratic education and teacher education.

The Issue

What I now realize is that my students exemplified what Hess (2008) has termed the “democratic divide.” I believed that all students deserved access to democratic education that developed their critical knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to lead a democratic way of life (e.g. Apple & Beane, 2007); yet, for my students at PS166, this access was clearly not happening, or if it was it happened sporadically and at the will of individual teachers. Hess (2008) explains that the “democratic divide” happens in schools, where wealthier students have more opportunities to engage in “high quality democratic education,” than students who are poor, African-American, and Latino (see also, Kahne & Middaugh, 2008). Given this divide, it is crucial that teacher education better prepare teachers as democratic educators who can create classrooms and learning experiences for all students to see themselves as able and active members of our democratic society.

The democratic divide provides an impetus to argue for inclusion of high quality democratic/civic education for *all* youth and to ensure that teachers are able to frame, construct, and deliver this type of education. The second reason for a focus on democratic education is more systemic. The current policy state our public schools and universities face demands a

review of our purposes for the provision of free education. By current policy state, I allude to the constellation of practices aimed to privatize our public good of education. As an example of what this current state has done to public school systems, we need to look no further than the education news coming out of urban centers. Teachers, parents, students, and community members are protesting schools closures in major urban centers across the country. A young man of 9 years-old, Asean Johnson, told a crowd of protesters in Chicago that the policies of Mayor Rahm Emmanuel gave the message, “We don’t care bout these kids, but there are kids in there [the schools set to be closed].” He named the closing of schools as “racism.” He led the crowd chanting, “Education is a right, that is why we have to fight” (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oue9HIOM7xU>; see also, *Chicago Tribune*, May 25, 2013). Free education is foundational to the vision of democracy that is dependent on an informed, enlightened, and critical public.

Dewey’s idea of the school as a laboratory for democracy, as the place in which we imagine a better democracy than the one already in place, needs to remain at the core of our mission for public schools. This idea does not limit schools to the realm of civics, but rather focuses attention on schools as microcosms of society to be. Labaree (1997) contends that at the root of conflicts over education are three alternative goals for schools – democratic equality, social efficiency, and social mobility. Democratic equality focuses on preparing citizens and positions education as a public good. Similarly, social efficiency’s goal is preparing citizens as workers who will continue contribute to the public good. The goal of social mobility positions education as a private good that can be used as a commodity to elevate status. Neoliberal¹

¹ Harvey (2005) defines neoliberalism as “in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual

reforms, policies, and ideologies, which emphasize individual interests and liberties, have shifted our understanding of democracy to consumption practices with the ideal citizen as one who is making choices about what he prefers (Apple, 2006; West, 2004). Labaree (1997) writes,

... We can defend the public schools as a public good by drawing on the deeply rooted conceptions of education that arise from these traditions: the view that education should provide everyone with the capacities required for full political participation as informed citizens and the view that education should provide everyone with the capacities required for full economic participation as productive workers (p. 74).

Education in public schools, and consequently the teacher education programs preparing teachers for those schools, needs to imagine *thick* forms of democracy. Thick forms of democracy extend democracy to a way of living with other people, rather than thin forms, which focus only on the particular governmental processes, i.e., voting. These thick forms of democracy support Dewey's (1916) idea of democracy as "a mode of associated living, a conjoint communicated experience (p. 93). We need to center education as a public good working for the common good (e.g. Barton & Levstik, 2004), as a mode of living together, and thus work to counter the prevalent economizing views of democracy.

On the one hand, the democratic divide and neoliberal impacts on the purpose of education frames the purpose for examining how to better prepare teachers as democratic educators who can foreground the democratic purposes and practices of schooling; on the other hand, critiques of teacher education (e.g. Labaree, 2004; Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001; Tom,

entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within and institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices" (p. 2).

1997; Hess, 2009) and growing concern over problems facing our nation's schools, frame a need to examine how to restructure teacher education in more democratic ways. These two frames – democratic education and teacher education – come together in the design and analysis of the following study.

Moving practice from peripheral field experiences, to the center of novice teachers' studies (NCATE, 2010; Ball & Cohen, 1999) has been a key feature in current reforms in teacher education. This study posits that while this move is important in reshaping whose knowledge counts in teacher education, i.e., teacher education must look to schools and communities for knowledge in addition to its own research base at the university, nevertheless teacher education must maintain a critical stance over what practices we learn in and from. In particular, this study focuses on novice teachers learning in and from democratic practices in elementary classrooms, and how that learning experience shapes their professional teaching identity. If teacher education does not pay attention to what practices novice teachers learn in and from, teacher education could merely replicate practices that schools are forced to enact within an era of neoliberal education reforms. These reforms highlight accountability and testing as measures of success and narrow the purpose of schooling to competition and social mobility (see Ellis, 2010; Labaree, 1997; Cochran-Smith, 1991). A more robust conception of success focused on leading a full social and political life in a democracy, learned through democratic education in schools, needs to be part of how we transform teacher education and ensure that all students are learning to be engaged and critical members of our democracy.

Outline of this Study

This study examined novice (i.e. pre-service) teacher learning and identity development

in elementary classrooms that enact democratic practices in terms of how the classroom community and curricular content is organized around student participation, voice, and choice (see Parker, 2009). The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do field placements in democratic classrooms shape novice teachers' learning and identities?;
2. How do novice teachers' prior learning experiences and identities shape their learning opportunities in democratic classrooms?;
3. How do the environments in which democratic classrooms exist, including the school, community, and larger socio-political contexts, shape learning opportunities for novice teachers?

Through these questions, I explore how the field placement as a site of immersion in democratic practices afforded and constrained learning and identity development opportunities for the novice teachers in this study. The study followed six novice teachers during a one-semester field placement in a democratic classroom in a mid-size Midwestern city, Lake City. With the field placement as the focus, I also examined the practices and knowledge of the cooperating teachers in the study. As all of the cooperating teachers identified as democratic educators, I considered how their particular knowledge contributes to conceptions of mentoring novice teachers.

Throughout this study, I considered the multiple contexts that support, constrain, and complicate the issues of novice teacher learning and identity development. This web of contexts created both rich opportunities, as well as multiple spaces and times for missed learning opportunities.

I seek to further illuminate these questions and issues through the following chapters. In Chapter 2, I discuss the relevant literature that informed this study. In particular I consider the

concepts of democratic education and democratic teacher education, the role of experience in teacher education, and finally the development of a teacher identity. I also outline how sociocultural theories and learning and development structure my understanding of novice teacher learning and identity development. In Chapter 3, I present my choice of multiple case study methodology, detail the design of the study, and consider the ethics and implications of my role as the researcher. Chapter 4 provides the context for the study. In this study, context was influential in my analysis, so I provide a detailed description of the multiple contexts and people that were woven together. I begin with an overview of the six novice teachers so that their words and experiences can help shape the consequent understanding of the city, schools, university program, and socio-political contexts.

In Chapters 5, 6, and 7 I detail substantive findings of my research and analysis. Chapter 5 highlights two novice teachers and their conceptions and enactment of democratic education. I use these two teachers to highlight the primary ways that democratic education was experienced and enacted in elementary classrooms. Chapter 6 looks across the practices of the cooperating teachers in this study and highlights how their practices as teacher educators working with the novice teachers paralleled the democratic practices enacted with their elementary students. This chapter bolsters the argument I make that teacher education research needs to more carefully consider the knowledge of teacher education presented by cooperating teachers. Chapter 7 looks in depth at one novice teacher's identity development, and in particular the possibilities for developing a democratic teaching identity as a novice teacher.

Finally, Chapter 8 looks across the research holistically and assesses the findings and implications for this work. Ultimately I argue that the field placement as a space of immersion in democratic practices affords novice teachers multiple opportunities to experience, conceptualize,

and enact democratic education; however, teacher education, in particular, elements connected to university preparation and programs, must be more coherent and clear in their support and extension of these field experiences. Further attention must be paid – both in practice and in research – to the role of particular types of field experiences and stronger models of collaboration between schools and universities in support of novice teacher learning and democratic education.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Perspective

This study draws upon three bodies of literature. I consider the literature that specifically addresses democratic teacher education, which inevitably also considers democratic education writ large. I begin the discussion of this area of literature with an overview of my perspective on democratic education, the relationship between schooling and democracy, and finally I present an analysis of the literature on democratic teacher education. My theoretical perspective on learning and development draws from sociocultural theories of learning and development, including identity development. I begin with a brief overview of literature on teacher learning, in particular learning from experience, then the literature on teacher identity development, and finally an overview of sociocultural theories of learning and their framing of teacher learning and identity development.

Democratic Education

Democratic education encompasses the teaching and learning of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions a democracy holds as important to its sustainability over generations. How knowledge, skills, and dispositions are positioned and weighted varies according to how scholars and teachers conceptualize and practice democratic education in the school setting. I will begin this section with an overview of *how* these different emphases play out in conceptions of democratic education. Next, I will consider the theoretical underpinnings of democratic education, including why education and democracy should have a symbiotic relationship in the United States. Finally, I will make the case for why democratic education is particularly

important in elementary schools and why our teachers need to be prepared to enact democratic practices in their elementary classrooms.

While knowledge, skills, and dispositions are evident in each possible conception of democratic education, nevertheless different groups of scholars place varying degrees of importance on what they foreground in their instantiation of democratic education. I will outline six major camps within democratic education – knowledge, service / problem solving, issues, skills, participation, and values². These camps are loosely organized around which area of democratic education they foreground – knowledge, skills, or dispositions; however, it is important to remember throughout the discussion that while one area may be highlighted, the other two are inevitably present and informing practice.

Democratic education that foregrounds knowledge highlights the idea that most democracies are complex because they have mechanisms for change that are complex. People in democracies need to have a deep understanding of how democracy in a society is meant to work. For example, students in Mark Newton's Mountain Vista High School class deeply study First Amendment Supreme Court cases to understand the function of the First Amendment and how it shapes and is shaped by our democracy (personal communication, Hess 2008). Focusing on knowledge can provide an important understanding of how our democracy functions; however, questions around what content gets covered, the value of that content, and how that content is used must be asked (Apple, 2004).

Democratic education that foregrounds skills encompasses multiple camps of thought, including those focused on service and problem solving (e.g., Westheimer & Kahne, 2004),

² While these camps are widely recognized in the field of democratic education, this particular layout of them came from personal communication with Diana Hess on November 19, 2008.

issues (e.g., Parker, 2006; Hess, 2009), and specific skills such as critical thinking.

Focusing on service as a way to learn about democracy has the potential to teach students problem solving skills and strategies; however, there is also the potential that it can create class-based mentalities and therefore risk the problem of “helperism” and seeing service as “charity” to those “less fortunate” (e.g. Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; Boyle-Baise, 2005). The issues camp recognizes that in a democracy there will be controversial issues and these disagreements are fundamental to the health of a democracy. In order to engage in discussion and deliberation of these issues, students need to learn how to formulate opinions and arguments and engage in the process of discussion (e.g. Parker, 2006 Hess, 2009). The question lingering here is what, if anything, students actually do after discussing an issue. Is there any component of action on their opinion? This caveat also applies to the camp that primarily focuses on the teaching of specific skills; it is one thing to teach the skills necessary to function in a democracy (e.g. critical thinking) and use them within a classroom setting, but it is an additional and different challenge to apply those skills in our complex democracy outside the school walls. In contrast are those that center participation as the way to teach students about democracy. Students cannot just talk about democracy, or learn skills outside of knowing that they are important for participating in a democracy; students need to actually live and “do” democracy. Classrooms in this vein often emphasize student choice, decision-making, and problem solving. At the extreme are schools like Summerhill (<http://www.summerhillschool.co.uk/>) that represent total student choice in curriculum and governance of the school; however, there are less extreme examples such as the work that Deborah Meier did at Central Park East in New York City in the 1990’s (Apple & Beane, 2008).

Democratic education foregrounding values concentrates on the development of specific qualities of mind and character necessary for a democrat; this type of democratic education is particularly evident in the work done in elementary schools. The values camp concentrates on the need for students to understand core democratic values; thus, these values need to be identified and taught so that students not only understand them, but also buy into them. While critiques of this type of democratic education cite a tendency toward teaching the values of a “good citizen” as simply obedience (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004), nevertheless when looked at more broadly this focus can encompass the goals of social justice educators (e.g. Lyman, 2003; North, 2009).

For example, Vivian Paley’s (1992) discussion of her kindergarten students’ year of debate and development of a rule that stated “you can’t say, you can’t play” exemplifies the kinds of challenges, choices, and triumphs in this line of thinking. Throughout her account of the implementation of this rule, Paley discusses her discomfort imposing a rule – a move that could be characterized as undemocratic – but also her feeling that the rule represented the values of inclusion and empathy that she wanted students in her kindergarten class to learn. How students relate to one another, view themselves as part of a community, take responsibility for their actions toward others and the common good are central to developing a democratic orientation and primarily fall within the area of dispositions.

Each camp requires particular choices around the knowledge, skills and dispositions that a teacher will include when enacting democratic education in their classroom. Yet it is important to remember that knowledge, skills and dispositions are touched upon within each camp of thinking and are important to any iteration of democratic education. For example, while the knowledge camp focuses on the knowledge necessary to understand a complex democracy, it

also values scholarly inquiry and curiosity as dispositions necessary for an engaged citizenry. Further, the knowledge camp requires particular skills as well, including critical thinking and analysis. The discussion of controversial issues foregrounds the skills of discussion and deliberation, but also concurrently values talk as a means of engagement; and finally, it requires knowledge of the democracy in which the issue is seen as controversial.

While I have presented these “camps” as separate, they are overlapping in practice. As an example, a study conducted by CIRCLE at the East Bay Conservation Corps Charter School includes in its conceptual framework for civic engagement and education³ “civic knowledge (what students should know about citizenship), civic thinking skills (cognitive civic skills students should possess), civic participation skills (participatory civic skills students should possess) and civic dispositions (civic dispositions students should possess)” (Chi, Jastrzab, & Melchior, 2006, p. 4). Evident in this conception are the areas of knowledge, skills and dispositions, as well as multiple camps of addressing democratic education. The difference among camps is in what ways democratic education is enacted and taken up. The East Bay Conservation Corps Charter School is an example of how democratic education resulted from policy attention to the civic engagement of youth. In 1996, the school was established “with the explicit mission to prepare and engage students grades K through 12 as caring citizens who are capable and motivated to fully participate in our democracy” (Chi et al., 2006). The school focuses on three kinds of literacy – academic, artistic, and civic. They define civic literacy as, “The ability to ‘let your life speak’ by participating thoughtfully, responsibly, and passionately in

³ Similar to North (2009), I choose to use “democratic education” as a more inclusive and expansive concept than civic education, as the system of education that serves youth often serves students for whom our government does not give the status of “citizen”.

the life of the community with concern for the common good” Chi et al., 2006). This idea of “civic literacy” clearly addresses knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

I have presented an overview of these camps to maintain a broad conception of democratic education; however, I will use the framework of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be a democrat in the United States as my general parameters. Further, it is important to recognize that democratic education can look very different in elementary schools than in middle and high school settings (e.g. Levine, 2007). Given that there is a dearth of research on “civic education” in elementary grades, Chi et al. (2006) implore the field of democratic education to consider research in the relevant fields of social and emotional development, moral development, character development, and conflict resolution / peace education. Thus, when considering democratic education in this study, particularly in the selection of sites, I considered the workings of elementary classrooms beyond time allotted for “civics” or “social studies.” Democratic education has possibilities across the curriculum; for example, discussion and deliberation occurs during morning meeting, read-alouds of children’s literature, solving and giving reasoning for mathematical problems, problem-solving on the playground, and multiple other instances throughout the day. Elementary schools, which should focus on the social learning of students, can include learning the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of being a member of a democratic society in that social learning.

The difference among “camps” is in their focus – this focus stresses the theoretical underpinnings of how scholars see the relationship between education and democracy, as well as the very values represented by democracy itself. In the following section, I consider the major underpinnings of the relationship between education and democracy in the United States, why these ideas matter, and particularly why a social conception of democracy (thick democracy) is

more compelling for democratic education than a solely political conception of democracy (thin democracy). This underlying reasoning informed both the design of this study, as well as the argument for why democratic education in elementary schools really matters in this particular political climate, and why teacher education needs to take seriously the preparation of novices to engage in these practices in the classrooms.

Education and Democracy as a Symbiotic Relationship

The relationship between education, and in particular schools, and democracy in the United States is complicated and yet inextricably intertwined. In the ideal circumstances it is a symbiotic relationship of mutual benefit creating a virtuous circle of educated democrats participating in the public sphere and influencing the education of future democrats; however, too often the ideal is not met. This relationship between the health of a democracy and the need to educate the public is foundational in the United States. In 1820, Thomas Jefferson wrote to William Charles Jarvis:

I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them but to inform their discretion by education. This is the true corrective of abuses of constitutional power (Thomas Jefferson 1820[1899]), (as quoted in Helfenbein & Shudak, 2009).

While Jefferson's intent emphasizes a commitment to government by the people with distrust for concentrated power, nevertheless it also underscores the idea that education is the primary way to prepare people to share in this power. This goal of enlightened understanding so that a citizenry can thoughtfully and meaningfully participate in democracy persists today and is

outlined in different scholars' conceptions of what democracy requires (e.g. Dahl, 2000).

This goal more clearly aligns with conceptions of democracy described as "thick" democracy.

Carr (2008) explains the difference between thick and thin democracy:

The key concern for the thick perspective of democracy resides in power relations, identity and social change, whereas the thin paradigm is primarily concerned with electoral processes, political parties, and structures and processes related to formal democracy (p. 118). (See also Gandin & Apple, 2004)

Education ought to prepare students to participate in, engage in, and renew thick democracy.

Democratic education must teach the critical knowledge, skills, and dispositions to engage in a democratic way of life, while also teaching students how to navigate the processes and structures of formal democracy.

So why is it the place of schools to prepare students for a democratic way of life? Some scholars (e.g. Murphy, 2007) argue that schools should not engage in democratic education as it is value-laden and other parts of society, i.e., families, religious and community organizations, ought to oversee what values we advocate for children. Yet, this argument assumes that there is such a thing as a value-free curriculum or value-free knowledge; what schools choose to teach and how to teach it is rife with decisions that are based on beliefs of what is valuable. Dewey (1909), on the other hand, argues that schools have a significant moral responsibility to society, and that apart from enabling participation in social life, i.e., a democratic life, the school has no other end. Democracy then is a way of life and a way of living together with other people. Democracy is not just a political concept (*thin democracy*), but also a social concept (*thick democracy*) embodied in the ways in which we live and communicate with one another.

Learning to live in relation to others is essential for a democratic way of life.

Apple and Beane (2007), drawing on Dewey, enumerate the values and principles of “the democratic way of life” as “concern for the dignity and rights of individuals and minorities; concern for the welfare of others and ‘the common good’; and, faith in the individual and collective capacity of people to create possibilities for resolving problems” (p. 7). So as a way of living with other people, a democratic life requires attention to rights, welfare, and abilities to work together. Gutmann (1999) discusses the democratic way of life in terms of how the state can work to help children understand and evaluate competing conceptions of the good life and good society. She argues that two limits, *nonrepression*, i.e., no one can use education to restrict deliberation of competing conceptions of the good life, and *nondiscrimination*, i.e., “all educable children must be educated” (p. 45), ought to guide all decisions about education in a democracy. This way of life is something that needs to be cultivated – it does not just reproduce spontaneously or without tending – and public schools are ideal places to engage in this cultivation.

Goodlad (2008) believes in the power of the public to engage in a democratic way of life, and calls on the public as the caretakers of that democracy. To do so, Goodlad (2008) writes, “a robust, renewing democracy requires the presence of a *well-educated public*” (p. 9). While Goodlad firmly recognizes the difference between being “well-educated” and “much-schooled” and that education is not synonymous with schooling, he also pragmatically recognizes that the only current institution capable of providing education for all people is the public school.

Parker (2003) argues that public schools are in fact the ideal place to engage in cultivating a democratic ethos. He considers the need to live with others in the interwoven relationship between democratic education and multicultural education. He asserts that a

democratic education must concurrently engage citizenship education and multicultural education. Differences are both the realities of our democracy, and the strengths and possibilities of our democracy. Schools are the places where children first encounter other people; in fact, schools are the first *public* venue in which the individual must work alongside others outside of his private sphere of family and immediate community (Parker, 2003). This diversity of children from different private spheres makes schools productive places for democratic education and cultivation of public virtue. Schools, with their inherent diversity, are ideal places to consider how to foster kindness, tolerance, as well as both the ability and the disposition to talk across difference (Parker, 2003; O'Brien, 2006).

In Barton and Levstik's (2004) argument for history's contribution to citizenship education, they outline a view of a democracy that is participatory, pluralist, and deliberative. Like Dewey, Barton and Levstik (2004) argue for a social conception of democracy, in particular a democracy that focuses on the common good. They write,

Democracy becomes a means by which we jointly create a vision of the common good from our diverse starting points, rather than an arena in which competing perspectives battle it out until one reigns supreme. Both participation and pluralism, meanwhile, depend on deliberation—the open-ended (and open-minded) discussion and reflection necessary for understanding our fellow citizens and for taking action toward a mutually satisfying future” (Barton & Levstik, 2004, p. 34).

This focus on democratic education as a means to discuss, reflect, and shape an idea of the common good is particularly important in today's political climate, which is focused on the individual and education as a private good.

Rather than focusing on schools as places to prepare for a democratic way of life, today's political climate in education is dominated by a neoliberal ideology. Neoliberalism emphasizes private enterprise and gains, markets, and consumer choice as the ultimate equalizer among individuals (Apple, 2006; Clark & Newman, 1997). Under this ideology, schools act as places for academic achievement measured by tests, preparedness for the workforce (Goodlad, 2008; Apple, 2006; Hirsch, 1996), and social mobility (Labaree, 1997). Further, Apple (2006) argues that neoliberalism transforms our idea of democracy from a political one to an economic one; thus, neoliberalism not only affects the position and purpose of schools in our society, but also the broader goal of democracy. Reshaping our idea of democracy as an economic concept focuses on choice and individual attainment, and consequently devalues the goals of supporting a common good. Despite this ideological shift, the public still expects our schools to support young people's social and personal betterment – consider the recent call for schools to address the horrific incidences of bullying prompted by intolerance for difference. Goodlad (2008) notes that we are not just asking schools to train our youth, but to educate them, and “education is by definition and functioning a moral endeavor” (p. 14; see also, Dewey, 1909). The public, and therefore teacher education, need to support an agenda for schools to enact democratic education in order to support a continuous renewal of democracy (Goodlad 2008; 1994). This call to action is not a new one; however, it is one that has been muffled by the dominant forces of a neoliberal agenda that promotes education as a private good for private gains, rather than as a public good in service of the common good.

Learning to live a democratic life requires a fluid view of democracy. Rather than viewing democracy as an accomplished, static practice deserving of guardianship, democracy here is a way of life that is shaped and reshaped by those living it (Dewey, 1916; Parker, 2003). Schools become spaces where young citizens learn to live democracy – to talk across difference (e.g. Parker, 2003; Hess, 2009), to value the welfare of others and the common good (e.g. Apple & Beane, 2007; Barton & Levstik, 2004), and to evaluate these competing conceptions of the good life and a good society (e.g. Gutmann, 1999; Allen, 2004). And yet, many who teach in our schools have not learned in ways that center the goals of a democratic life (Gutmann, 1999). Carr and Hartnett (1996) argue, “In a society which takes democracy seriously, issues about the ways in which teachers are themselves educated will always be central to the public educational debate” (p. 195). Teacher education programs in the United States are at a critical and decisive moment. If a primary purpose of public schools, and consequently of teacher education programs, is in service of a more robust democracy, and that democracy is dependent on our abilities to interact and work with a wide variety of persons, particularly those who are unlike us, then teacher education must re-imagine how it collaborates with schools and communities in service of teacher learning and democratic education.

Democratic Teacher Education

While much has been written about the relationship between schools and democracy, the literature linking the education of teachers to that relationship is scattered across multiple areas of study. Teacher education *for* democracy has been seen through multiple lenses, from work that centers multicultural education for the purposes of renewing or reconstructing democracy (e.g. Sleeter, 2008a), to closer attention to culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy of education within a diverse democracy (Sleeter, 2008b; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Gay, 2000;

Ladson-Billings, 1995), to recent work that centers social justice as the primary purpose of education within a democracy (e.g. Cochran-Smith, 2004; Zeichner, 2009; North, 2009). All of these areas relate to a concept of “democratic teacher education”; however, the focus of this section will be on studies and conceptions that explicitly drew on or named the term “democratic teacher education.” Just as P-12 students need to learn the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be engaged and critical democrats, the teachers who teach these students need to be prepared to do this work by understanding the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to enact democratic education. This type of teacher education needs to pay attention to both the democratic character of the structures and processes that shape programs, courses, and experiences, and the curriculum of teacher education that gives novice teachers democratic experiences (see Apple & Beane, 2007).

Within the literature that specifically addresses democratic teacher education, I have identified four primary themes that I have teased out through a semantic analysis of the term itself. The four themes considered are: [democratic teacher] education, democratic [teacher education], [democratic teacher education], and finally a variation on the term with *democratizing* teacher education. There is necessarily overlap in each of these categories; they are not linear, nor are they exclusive, but they do offer different lenses. I will offer a brief description of each iteration of democratic teacher education and then situate this study where it may extend and add to our understanding of democratic teacher education.

[Democratic teacher] education. In [democratic teacher] education, democratic describes the type of teacher the program seeks to prepare; that is, the teacher education program focuses on cultivating teachers who approach teaching, both in the classroom and as a profession, in democratic ways. The goal of these teacher education programs is to create a

cadre of teachers who can work toward developing democratic schools. In other words, if teachers are going to educate students as democratic citizens, then their teacher education programs need to prepare them to be democratic educators (Robertson, 2008; Harber & Serf, 2006; O'Brien, 2006; Slekar, 2009; Kincheloe, 2004; Leistyna, Lavandez, & Nelson, 2004; Rainer & Guyton, 1999). Working against policies that deskill the work of teachers (Zeichner, 2003; Sleeter, 2008a), part of this preparation focuses on educating teachers as professionals (e.g. Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005), with particular skills, qualities, and dispositions that characterize democratic teachers.

To enact this kind of democratic teacher education, some scholars focus on developing and advocating for particular dispositions that democratic teachers ought to embody (O'Brien, 2006; Wong, Murai, Bérta-Avila, William-White, Baker, & Arellano, 2007; Black, 2005). Others argue that a critical and inquiry stance in teaching equates to being a democratic educator (Michelli & Keiser, 2005; Robertson, 2008; Bieler & Burns, 2009; Beyer, 1996; Zeichner & Liston, 1993; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009). Finally, another body of scholars focuses on critical pedagogy as the way that teachers can become democratic educators (Freire, 1998; Ayers, 1994; Apple & Beane, 2007; Bartolomé, 2004; Helfenbein & Shudak, 2009). While there are hints of engaging people outside of a teacher education program, such as in Bartolomé's (2004) call for teachers to become "border-crossers," the primary focus is how a teacher education program can create curriculum that would engage teachers in becoming democratic teachers. The emphasis is primarily on what Apple and Beane (2007) call the "democratic curriculum."

To illustrate what this democratic curriculum means for teacher education, Robertson (2008) outlines a clear conception of what teachers in a democratic society ought to be able to do. She writes,

Teachers in a democratic society should be able to: lead deliberative discussions where students learn to formulate their own arguments, engage others' points of view, and be open to changing their minds when given good reasons to do so; teach the skills and attitudes of negotiation that include the willingness to accommodate others' interests in ways that do not deny fundamental democratic principles, as well as the ability to generate creative solutions to conflicts; and encourage students to be alive to injustice in social practices as well as in themselves and others and to be willing to challenge injustice when they see it (p. 41).

Importantly she highlights that these practices have “ethical dimensions” and require “reflective appropriation” rather than mere training of skills.

Democratic [teacher education]. In democratic [teacher education], “democratic” describes the processes and structures enacted in a teacher education classroom. Pearl & Pryor (2005) write that when applying democratic principles to teacher education, teacher educators have to be willing to practice what they preach which includes increasing student voice in both the management of their teacher education program and their course offerings. Scholars that focus primarily on making teacher education within the university more democratic focus on issues of shared authority and decision-making (Brubaker, 2010, 2009; Morrison 2009, 2010; Bucci, 2005).

[Democratic teacher education]. While [democratic teacher] education focuses primarily on the novice teacher's learning and practice, and [democratic] teacher education focuses primarily on the teacher educator's practice and pedagogy, [democratic teacher education] seeks to influence novice teacher's dispositions, knowledge, and skills as democratic educators, through democratic means, and in many cases to concurrently influence the broader education arena beyond the university. Goodlad's (1994) idea of "simultaneous renewal" of both public schools and schools of education highlights major aspects of this conception of democratic teacher education. Simultaneous renewal includes teacher education programs and public schools; partnership among teacher education faculty, arts and sciences faculty, and public school personnel in the preparation of future teachers and renewal of current teachers; structures and policies that allow for deep collaboration and connections to communities; and organizing and joining of advocates for teaching for democracy and social justice at the federal, state, and local levels in support of public schools and providing excellent teachers (e.g. McEwan, 1994; Hillkirk, 1994; Kelly, 1994). Communities as sites for engaging difference and democracy (e.g., Boyle-Baise & McIntyre, 2008; McDonald, et al., 2011; Lucas, 2005; Sleeter, 2001) also falls under this type of democratic teacher education.

Democratizing teacher education. *Democratizing* teacher education specifically attends to whose knowledge counts in teacher education; this type of teacher education acknowledges, accesses, and mediates multiple knowledge sources. While [democratic teacher education] works within, and possibly across established institutions, i.e. schools, universities, and communities, it does not necessarily examine the nature of those relationships. Democratizing teacher education implores teacher education programs to examine the nature and ethics of their relationships with schools, communities, and families *and* create new means and

spaces for collaboration. Democratizing teacher education asks, in what ways are teacher education programs creating experiences through which novice teachers can access school, community and cultural knowledge in service of their students? (Norton-Meier & Drake, 2010) Who are they turning to as experts in this knowledge? Recognition of expertise in these areas outside the university is the first step in rethinking how to collaborate with schools and communities so that novice teachers benefit from the distributed expertise of university faculty, P-12 schools, and communities (Zeichner, 2010; Edwards, 2010). While [democratic teacher education] *might* draw on these sources, such as through community-based field experiences, democratizing teacher education considers *how* relationships are mutually negotiated and enacted, as well as *who* is involved in teacher education. Thus the object of democracy is not only the novice teacher, but also the relationship that teacher develops with knowledge; democratizing teacher education seeks to level knowledge of teaching so that novice teachers critically examine knowledge sources outside of the university prescription.

Democratic teacher education in this study. This study primarily situates itself within and seeks to contribute to the literature on [democratic teacher] education and democratizing teacher education. Since democratic education through partnership is not a wholly stated goal of the teacher education programs that participants were in⁴, this study more clearly falls into understanding how to prepare teachers as democratic educators. With a focus on the field experience, and in particular the school and teacher knowledge as a resource, this study also inquired into how teacher education can draw upon multiple sources of knowledge to inform teacher learning and identity. I asked questions both about learning in and from

⁴ Some aspects of MU's teacher education program, e.g., the Professional Development Schools, do work toward more democratic partnership between the university and the schools. MU established a Partner School Network; however, the work of the network is still unclear.

democratic practices, as well as how previous experiences and context shaped learning opportunities and identity.

Regarding the reform call to center teacher learning in practice (e.g. NCATE, 2010), this study argues that as we situate teacher education and teacher learning in and from practice, we concurrently need to be thoughtful about what that practice includes and foregrounds as the purpose of public schools. The focus of learning in and from practice contains the possibility of turning teaching into a technical practice in service of narrow ideas of achievement and social mobility, where tests are the measure of success. This study argues that teacher education can situate learning in and from practice in line with progressive ideals in which our teachers and students work to renew, reinvigorate, and reshape our democracy in a better iteration than is already present. In the following section, I review the literature on teacher learning from a sociocultural perspective.

Teacher Learning and Identity Development

Much of the literature in teacher education considers what teachers need to know, care about, and do to effectively meet the needs of our nation's students (Feiman-Nemser, 2008; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Researchers concern themselves with teacher learning since we ultimately believe that this will impact student learning. Yet, learning to teach is complex. Feiman-Nemser (2008) conceptualizes four broad themes in learning to teach – learning to think like a teacher, learning to know like a teacher, learning to feel like a teacher, and learning to act like a teacher. Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, Bransford et al. (2005) suggest a framework for teacher learning that situates teacher learning in a community that affords novice teachers a particular vision of practice, gives them an understanding of critical content, helps them develop dispositions of inquiry and action, allows for the enactment of

practices that reflect these beliefs, and supports their learning with conceptual and practical tools. Each framework is complex, yet each also contributes to development of a professional identity of ‘teacher’ (Britzman, 2003; Beijjaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, and Fry, 2004; Kelly, 2006; Schepens, Aelterman, & Vlerick, 2009; Goodson & Cole, 1994; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Bullough, 2005; see also Bransford, Derry, Berliner, Hammerness, and Beckett, 2005). Yet, knowing what that means to different people and for different purposes directly impacts how we consider the design and study of learning experiences for novice teachers (e.g. Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Tom, 1997; Edwards, Gilroy & Hartley, 2002).

In this section, I explore conceptions of learning to teach and teacher identity development and then situate those within sociocultural theories of learning. While I agree that learning to teach is a career-long process, the focus here is primarily on novice, or pre-service, teacher learning and identity development. I begin with an overview of literature on learning to teach, in particular the role of experience, then conceptions of teacher identity, and finally, after an overview of sociocultural theories of learning and development, I situate teacher learning and identity development in a sociocultural perspective.

Teacher learning: The role of experience. Novice teachers centralize experience as the place they will learn, or have learned, the most about teaching; however, the question of how novices have opportunities to learn from experience, both about teaching and about being a teacher, is less clear (Rosaen & Florio-Ruane, 2008). For most, experience is equated to time in schools, particularly time as a student teacher in schools. Yet, isolating experience merely as time in school risks exacerbating the divide wherein the university is the place for thinking and the school is the place for practicing (Rosaen & Florio-Ruane, 2008). This separation between

the university and the school, as places of knowledge and spaces for learning is an issue that continues to plague teacher education design (Zeichner, 2010; Edwards, Gilroy, & Hartley, 2002) and teacher learning (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; Valencia, Martin, Place, & Grossman, 2009). For novice teachers, experiences are most often situated at the university and within K-12 classrooms.⁵ The challenge is that these experiences in the two different contexts need to find ways to simultaneously situate learning in university and field-based experiences (Putnam & Borko, 2000). We must consider experience and its space as part of the context. Context in this case draws on Cole's (1996) definition of context as the weaving together of two different threads within a single process; that is, the object and that which surrounds the object are interconnected and dialectical. In this study, the field placement is the context in which learning is both enacted and generated.

Learning *in practice*, and learning *from practice* have become central to teacher education that takes a stance of inquiry as its core belief (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). Ball and Cohen (1999) argue that this stance of learning to teach is less about situating teacher learning in schools in real time, as much as it is about strategic documentation and analysis of practice that allows novice teachers to develop inquiry skills in teaching. Learning in and from practice recognizes that the knowledge of teaching is situated in the everyday practices of teaching. Additionally, recognition of knowledge in practice (Bullough &

⁵ There are a number of efforts to bring these two areas together through teacher residency models (e.g. Berry, Montgomery, Curtis, Hernandez, Wurtzel, & Snyder, 2008). There are also other alternative pathways that eliminate the role of the traditional university altogether, e.g. Teach for America's Relay University and The New Teacher Project's Teaching Academy. This also does not account for organizations focused purely on certification and not education. For example, the American Board for the Certification of Teaching Excellence (ABCTE) certifies teachers based on two online examinations in content knowledge and professional knowledge. This study focused on a model where teachers had learning experiences at the university and in classroom practice.

Gitlin, 2001) underlies these conceptions of teachers learning in and from practice. Thus knowledge is not only at the university, but also in the workings of teachers, both novice and expert, who are teaching.

Learning in and learning from practice ideally seeks to overcome the pitfalls that Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985) outline in their seminal article on teacher learning. They describe three major pitfalls: (1) the familiarity pitfall; (2) the two-worlds pitfall; and (3) the cross-purposes pitfall. The familiarity pitfall explains how novice teachers enter classrooms with years of familiarity with schooling and therefore leave practices unquestioned (see also Lortie, 1975), thus prioritizing personal experience and histories. The two-worlds pitfall highlights that learning about teaching is taking place in two different contexts – the university and the school. This pitfall assumes that connecting knowledge learned at the university and knowledge learned at schools is straightforward and too often, making these connections is left to the inexperienced novice teacher (Valencia et al., 2009; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Grossman, Smagorinsky & Valencia, 1999). Further, doing well in one setting does not necessarily equal doing well in the other setting; that is, doing well as a student at the university brings rewards such as grades that may not equate with being a successful teacher. On the other hand, reifying the practices of schools negates considering new and different ways of doing practices that the university might envision or research. Finally, the cross-purposes pitfall highlights how classrooms in schools, the places where student teachers expect their most worthwhile learning experiences, are set up for students to learn, not for novice teachers to learn how to teach. Central to all three pitfalls are issues of experience, context, and whose knowledge is accessed and valued.

Britzman (2003) notes the importance of problematizing the knowledge and approaches that schools and universities already reify, stating, “To approach education and the language of

experience as problematic, then, is to study its discourses and discursive practices in such a way as to reveal its commissions and its omissions” (p. 38). Britzman (2003) extends the argument beyond the practical knowledge in schools to symbolic practices which could either have roots in the first pitfall of familiarity, or in larger cultural and social narratives around teaching, which also have the potential to affect the autobiographies of teaching that novice teachers bring with them in learning to teach.

Thus while this shift to learning in and from practice and attention to whose knowledge counts is important in addressing issues of teacher learning from experience, nevertheless teacher education must be careful about reifying practices. Importantly, Ellis (2010) critiques the shift to school-based teacher education in England for its lack of capacity to critically examine the meaning of experience. Experience in schools, he argues, may simply become a vehicle to acculturate teachers into existing practices and the reproduction of technocratic behaviors. He advocates that teacher education needs to find ways to help novice teachers mediate knowledge in and between settings while recognizing the teacher’s agency in this process.

Yet, what happens when the practices in schools are democratic and are ones that teacher education might want to reproduce? Cochran-Smith (1991) analyzes how a student teaching program’s underlying assumptions of knowledge, expertise, and language play out in the school-university relationship and thereby provide different learning opportunities for student teachers. Cochran-Smith lays out three possible school-university relationships – consonance, critical dissonance, and collaborative resonance – and how those affect novice teacher’s learning opportunities. Consonance occurs when the university-based and school-based portions of a program are affirming of one another; however, she critiques this approach for its emphasis on the university’s knowledge and language as the ideal measure for schools to meet. Critical

dissonance happens when the university-based portion of teacher education is structured to challenge and critique the school-based portion of student teaching. While goals like promoting reflective practice and a critical stance toward schooling can emerge from this approach, nevertheless the approach might also frame teachers in deficit ways and undermine their experiential knowledge. Collaborative resonance links learning from the university and field experiences through “mutually-constructed learning communities” (Cochran-Smith, 1991, p. 109). Cochran-Smith (1991) further explains collaborative resonance:

Programs based on collaborative resonance simultaneously aim to capitalize on the potency of teaching culture to alter students’ perspectives by creating or tapping into contexts that support student teachers’ ongoing learning in the company of experienced teachers who are actively engaged in efforts to reform, research, or transform teaching” (p. 109).

Thus, collaborative resonance recognizes the knowledge and expertise of teachers in schools, while also drawing upon the knowledge and expertise of the university to create learning opportunities for novice teachers.

How we define experience, how that experience is structured, supported, and interrogated by the novice teacher are all issues that teacher education must address. This study focused on the field experience as place of learning opportunities. In particular, I consider how teacher learning and identity development occurred within the particular learning opportunities afforded by the context of a democratic classroom experience. Ultimately, if our goal in teacher education is toward preparing democratic teachers and leveling expertise between the university and the school, then field placements in democratic classrooms hold the potential as spaces for collaborative resonance.

Teacher identity. In a review of the literature on developing a professional identity, Beijaard et al. (2004) argue that most studies of teacher professional identity do not clearly define what they mean by the terms identity and self. They also note that the role of context in professional identity formation, what counts as a professional identity, and research outside of cognitive perspectives are all lacking. What they did find in the literature could be divided into three major categories: (1) studies that focus on a teacher's professional identity formation, (2) studies that attempt to identify the characteristics of a teacher's professional identity, as perceived by either the teacher or the research, and (3) studies that look at how professional identity was (re)presented by teacher's stories.

Professional identity formation: The personal and the professional. In studies that focused on teacher's professional identity formation, identity was seen as an ongoing process of integration between the personal and professional sides of becoming and being a teacher (Schepens et al., 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004). This integration involved developing a sense of personal coherence and a socially legitimated identity. A teacher has to be recognized as a teacher not only by himself, but also by others. So the social aspects of identity become particularly important here. Ronfeldt and Grossman (2008) use Hazel Markus and colleague's concept of "possible selves" (Markus & Nurius, 1986; see also, Kao, 2000) as a possible means for teacher education to structure opportunities for novice teachers "to encounter, experiment with, and evaluate possible selves" (p. 44). These possible selves help the novice teachers craft their professional identities. This idea of possible selves echoes Britzman's (2003) contention that student teacher identity is a process of projection, identification, and disassociation and that learning to teach is always a process of "becoming". Thus a professional identity is both a personal process, as well as a social process. This idea connects to one of the major tensions in

learning to teach – while learning to teach may be experienced individually, it is necessarily a socially negotiated process (Britzman, 2003).

Rodgers and Scott (2008) define teacher identity in terms of self, as:

A self to subsume teacher identities and to be an evolving, yet, coherent being that consciously and unconsciously constructs and is constructed, reconstructs and is reconstructed in interaction with cultural contexts, institutions, and people with which the self lives, learns, and functions (p. 751).

They assume that identity is framed in multiple contexts that bring in social, political, cultural, and historical forces. They also assume that a teacher's identity is formed in relationship with others and inherently involves emotions. While there is a drive toward coherence in a teacher's identity, they also recognized that a teacher's identity is always shifting, multiple, and unstable depending on the context and relationships.

Overall studies on the formation of a teacher's identity lack attention to and emphasis on the context (Beijaard et al.'s 2004), and yet context plays an integral role in teacher learning. Novice teachers work and learn in multiple contexts – university, school, and community. These contexts are complex and layered – urban, rural; public, private; homogenous, diverse; same as, or different from the novice teacher's personal history. Context affords and constrains learning opportunities, thus must also inform studies of teacher identity formation. In Chapter 4, I lay out the multiple contexts and people in this study, as well as attend to some of the complexities presented by these multiple contexts.

Characteristics of professional identity. Studies that focused on characteristics of a teacher's professional identity noted the difficulty that these teachers have in drawing from multiple sources to inform a professional identity. These sources include knowledge of affect,

teaching, human relations, and subject matter. Each has the possibility to influence what a teacher sees as most salient to their professional identity. Olsen's (2008) conception of identity echoes this, "Teaching is not merely a cognitive or technical procedure but a complex, personal, social, often elusive set of embedded processes and practices that concern the whole person" (p. 5). Schepens et al.'s (2009) study of teacher identity development at different points in time argues that teacher education needs to pay close attention to the shifting identities of novice teachers, particularly in their first experiences with teaching practice as students of teaching.

Teacher's stories as identity. From a narrative perspective the practice of teaching is constructed when teachers tell and live out stories. Connelly & Clandinin (1999) define a professional identity as the "stories to live by," meaning that narrative is the means to bring together the personal practical knowledge and professional knowledge that informs a teacher's identity. The narrative perspective on identity highlights how teacher identity is both a methodological lens, as well as a subject of study (Olsen, 2008). Further, in teacher education, narrative as a way to understand teacher identity is used as a pedagogical tool to explore teachers' beliefs (Olsen, 2008). For example, Seidl and Conley (2009) describe how they use multicultural apprenticeships to challenge novice teachers' identities and in turn, re-see themselves as multicultural educators. As a primary pedagogic tool, novice teachers engage in "dialogue and recursive group analysis of stories" that lead to novice teachers authoring new stories. Seidl and Conley (2009) directly connect the stories we tell, and the identities we take on.

Primary to Rodgers & Scott's ideas of a teacher's identity are the construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time (e.g. Sfard & Prusak, 2005). Importantly, their attention on authoring centers the agency of the teacher. They want teachers both to

become aware of their identities and the political, historical, and social forces that shape them and to assume agency in authoring their own professional identities. Thus, Rodgers & Scott (2008) give the following recommendations for teacher education programs seeking to help novice teachers develop their identities as teachers:

1. Give teachers opportunities to know themselves and frames of reference, bias, and values;
2. Give teachers opportunities to take a critical look at themselves, their privileges, and inequities in their own and in students' lives;
3. Teachers should explore their own social perspective;
4. Teachers should reflect on their own educational experiences to see how those impact how they think about teaching;
5. Teachers should be exposed to different perspectives from their own.

In many ways these could be possible design principles for a teacher education program, particularly if developing a teacher identity is made central to the purposes of learning to teach. The struggle here is that learning to teach and learning to be a teacher are intertwined. Teacher education programs must consider if both learning to teach and learning to be a teacher are going to be made explicit and be interrogated, or if the program is going to leave those issues for the individual novice teacher to sort out (i.e. Valencia et al., 2009).

Beijaard et al. (2004) note that a professional identity needs to encompass both who someone is at the moment, as well as whom they want to become. This argument connects to Feiman-Nemser's (2001) outline of the trajectories of teacher learning and professional identity from pre-service (novice), to induction years, through early professional development. In her view, during pre-service years teachers can develop the tools and dispositions to study teaching,

which mirrors arguments that inquiry and problematizing teaching needs be a central aspect of teacher learning (Britzman, 2003; Ball & Cohen, 1999). Teachers then develop a professional identity in their induction years as they take on the full role of teacher of record. The difficulty in pre-service teacher education is aiming for pre-service teachers to *feel* and *act* as “teachers”, yet, at most, pre-service teacher education might only equip novice teachers with the beginning tools, repertoires, and knowledge necessary to meet some success in the first years of teaching.

Sociocultural Theories of Learning

Sociocultural theories of learning focus on whose knowledge is accessed and applied in novice teachers’ learning about teaching and how contexts play an integral part in this process. Novice teachers work and learn with multiple people who are part of multiple contexts: professors and supervisors at the university; cooperating teachers, students, and families at schools; and possibly community leaders and members at community based organizations. All of these places have particular ways of understanding and framing what it means to teach – what values, purposes, and means should be most salient in a teacher’s practice. Often these are in conflict with each other, and more importantly, they can be in conflict with the novice teacher’s emerging professional identity (e.g. Valencia et al., 2009; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Grossman et al., 1999).

Sociocultural lines of research draw on the idea that people learn through participation in social practices that are situated. In other words, people are learning by participating in particular practices that occur in particular contexts. Sociocultural theories have their roots in Vygotsky’s theories of learning and development. Three major ideas guide Vygotsky’s premise that learning and consequently development are mediated processes: (1) the genetic law of

cultural development, (2) the zone of proximal development, and (3) scientific and spontaneous concept formation.

First, the genetic law of cultural development states,

“Every function in the cultural development of a child appears on the stage twice: first, on the social level, and later on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to local memory, and to the formation of concepts.

All the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals”

(Vygotsky 1978, in Daniels, 2007, p. 309).

This process-oriented view of development establishes the social nature of learning, as well as how the individual internalizes the social. First a person learns through social interaction, and only then can the individual internalize the learning. The genetic law of cultural development establishes the formative effect of social, cultural, and historical influences on learning (Daniels, 2007).

Second, Vygotsky (1978) claims that the developmental process follows the learning process, which results in zones of proximal development (ZPD). Vygotsky (1978) defined the ZPD as “the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). The ZPD recognizes the importance of tools, from language to physical objects, in mediating individual learning and development. Social and environmental interaction is thus essential for learning. It is important

to note that not all instruction leads to development; some instruction may only lead to skill acquisition (Daniels, 2007).⁶

Finally, Vygotsky introduces the idea of concept formation within instructional settings and everyday settings. Teachers introduce scientific concepts in schools or in designed instructional settings. Conversely, a child acquires spontaneous concepts outside of designed instructional spaces (Daniels, 2007). There is an interdependent relationship between these concepts in the process of concept formation. Daniels (2007) writes that Vygotsky “argued that everyday thought is given structure and order in the context of systematic scientific thought” (p. 311). For novice teachers, instructional settings and everyday settings are somewhat intermingled. Within the traditional university teacher education model, coursework at the university would more clearly fall under designed instructional spaces and the learning that occurs in the field at schools constitutes the everyday setting for spontaneous learning. Democratic teacher education must ask, first, are the everyday classroom practices democratic? If so, are those everyday democratic classroom practices accessed by the novice teachers learning in those classrooms?

A sociocultural lens focuses on individual internalization of cultural practices and concepts (Smagorinsky, 2010; see also, Holland & Lachicotte, 2007). This focus on the individual connects sociocultural studies of learning with identity literature that most often takes the individual as its unit of analysis, even when placing that individual in their multiple contexts or discourses that may shape their identity (Mead, 1934; Gee, 2000-2001). While individual internalization becomes more central in these approaches, social practice and distributed

⁶ Mimetic traditions of student teacher learning by imitating the practices of a cooperating teacher are an example of this kind of skill acquisition that does not necessarily lead to further learning and development (e.g., Smagorinsky, et al., 2004).

knowledge, or what Kelly (2006) calls knowing-in-practice, are still central to the process of learning, development, and identity formation in teacher education. Goos (2005), drawing on Lerman (2000), argues that sociocultural perspectives allow an examination of teacher socialization as the “person-in-practice-in-person” (Lerman, 2000, p. 28, in Goos, 2005, p. 50). The social settings, goals, and actions of all persons in the social practice have the potential to inform a novice teacher’s learning and professional identity; however, the novice teacher’s identity also informs how she interprets and analyzes the problems of practice in these settings.

Contexts for learning and becoming increasingly legitimized participants, and the ZPD as a way of understanding what opportunities those contexts afford, become central to how an individual internalizes an understanding of what it means to teach (teacher learning) and what it means to be a teacher (teacher identity). Van Huizen, Van Oers, & Wubbels (2005) suggest that guided participation (Rogoff, 2003) and the close association between action and meaning propel novice teachers to orient themselves toward the meanings of teaching in the context in which they will become participants. Novice teachers have to figure out their alignment or disalignment with public ideas of teaching that are reflected in the cultural and political settings of schools. Van Huizen et al. (2005) underscore that this does not mean that novice teachers need to accept current ideologies and practices; however, they need to understand that their allegiance and commitment to teaching as a professional identity must contend with these factors. Teachers not only need to contend with possible contradictions with public ideas of teaching, but also with their own personal identities outside of teaching. This study examined how teacher learning and identity unfolded in the specific context of democratic classrooms, while also paying attention to the larger school, district, and socio-political contexts that might affect that classroom.

Communities of Practice. Wenger's (1998) "communities of practice"

framework situates his social theory of learning primarily in relation to the idea of participation. A community of practice is formed and maintained through individuals engaging in social practices together. Wenger's (1998) conception of practice considers how shared historical and social resources, frameworks, and perspectives can sustain mutual engagement in action. From a community of practice standpoint, where learning is fundamentally social, learning is connected to the concepts of engagement, imagination, and alignment. Wenger (1998) defines engagement as the active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning. This negotiation is crucial as it differentiates learning from doing. Wenger (1998) looks to imagination as a way of creating images of the world and seeing connections through time and space via our own experience. Imagination requires us to look at our engagement through the eyes of the outsider, and requires us to take risks and explore unlikely connections. Finally, alignment is how we coordinate our activities to fit within and contribute to broader structures. Alignment can be positive or negative and can result in either participation or non-participation.

In a communities of practice framework, an individual's identity occurs at the nexus of memberships in their multiple communities of practice. Identity comes through participation in communities; this participation requires that individuals engage in the practices of the community as well as imagine what could be for the community's larger shared purpose. Wenger (1998) writes, "Because learning transforms who we are and what we can do, it is an experience of identity. It is not just an accumulation of skills and information, but also a process of becoming – to become a certain person, or conversely, to avoid becoming a certain person" (p. 215). Again, there is the possibility of non-participation or rejection of a community as being an influence on the individual; that is, an individual can take on the identity of non-participant (e.g.

Hodges, 1998). In the case of novice teachers learning to teach, these concepts seem particularly important when considering whether the novice teacher feels that their limited participation is a way to future full participation, or if their lack of participation means that they are moving toward not taking on the identity as teacher. Thinking about the novice teacher in their school field placement, there is the possibility for a number of communities of practice. If the novice teacher is on the periphery of one of these communities, then there is the possibility for them to learn through engaging with the community; however, if they are marginalized then there is both a lack of learning from the field experience, which is often its intention, as well as the possibility of taking on a non-participant identity. Yet, this latter possibility is not necessarily negative. A novice teacher's non-participation might signal other commitments that are not present in the community of practice afforded to them in their field placement.

An additional identity framework. As noted in the critiques of identity literature, too often there is not a clear conception of identity. In this study, I draw on the theory of identity presented by Côté and Levine's (2002) that draws on both psychological and sociological ideas of identity development. In many ways this blending of the psychological and the sociological speaks to Vygotsky's conceptions of learning and development; he considered both the social factors and the role of the individual. Côté and Levine suggest that a "viable social identity" which brings together our sense of self over time (ego identity), how others see us (personal identity), and how we fit into our various social communities (social identity) could inform studies of teacher identity within a sociocultural framework. Thinking back to the teacher identity literature, the three identities give some insight into the development of a professional teaching identity; however, rather than work from the ego outward, teacher education might begin with the social and work inward toward helping the individual find coherence. Students

are working with cultural and political understandings of teaching as represented in the media. Teachers as unionists; teachers as martyrs; teachers as slackers – there are any number of social scripts about what it means to be a teacher at this moment in time. This kind of social identity is macro and the novice teacher may or may not be aware of its influence on what they take up or do not take up as they learn how to teach. Within these social identities of teaching might be a multitude of communities of different kinds of teachers. For example, do students identify as a multicultural teacher? A social justice teacher? A transmitter of knowledge? A master of content? They might identify with any number of these communities, which then must be made sense of through personal relations and through internal beliefs. The role of a pre-service teacher education program ought to be to give novice teachers tools to understand their contexts, their experiences with others, and to develop beginning understandings of their beliefs and values as a teacher.

In this study, I attend to the tools—pedagogic, linguistic, ideological, cultural, and political—that the multiple contexts for learning afforded to novice teachers. Tulviste (1999) argues that these multiple systems in which people are involved afford different tools and thus different ways of thinking. While the primary space I consider is the democratic classroom, nevertheless I also consider the teacher education program, the current events of Lake City, and the personal histories of each participant. This consideration is important in describing the multiple contexts and people in this study in Chapter 4. The affordance of tools and the alignment or disalignment with those tools/practices was powerful in examining how the novice teachers conceptualized and enacted democratic practices in their learning-to-teach process, which is the focus of Chapter 5. Wegner's (1998) concept of a community of practice was particularly useful when considering the possibility of a loosely defined community of practice

of democratic teacher educators in Chapter 6. Both Wegner's community of practice framework and the core idea of individual internalization supported the analysis of the development of a teaching identity in Chapter 7. At the heart of this perspective is the belief that people learn through participation in social practices; the core design aspect of this study examined novice teacher learning and identity development occurring during participation in a democratic classroom.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Sociocultural theories emphasize that meaning is situated within social practice – thus how we interpret and understand our world comes through interactions and participation in social practice with other people. Similarly, qualitative methods have roots in Chicago Interactionism (e.g. Blumer, 1969) and the philosophy of pragmatism via George Mead and John Dewey (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Of particular importance in aligning the questions this study asks, the theoretical framework it draws upon, and the methodology it will employ, Corbin and Strauss (2008) write that qualitative methods epistemology sees that “knowledge arises through (note the verbs) acting and interacting of self-reflective beings” (p. 2).

Specifically, within the range of qualitative methods, I framed the design and consequent analysis of this study using multiple case study (Stake, 2006). According to Yin (2009), case studies are best used to answer “how” and “why” questions about “contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context” (p. 13). Case study allows the researcher to examine contemporary events that the researcher is not purposefully manipulating. Case study’s strength lies in its ability to work with a variety of data sources, including artifacts, interviews, and observations that the research considers when triangulating data (Yin, 2009). This study sought to understand *how* teachers learn and *how* they construct professional teaching identities within a particular type of setting – a democratic classroom. Merriam (1998) notes that case study is particularly suitable to examine a process. I wanted to better understand the learning-to-teach process and constructing a professional identity process; in particular, I believed that immersion in the setting of a democratic classroom could provide unique learning opportunities to novice teachers. While the learning-to-teach processes continue throughout the life of a teacher and are therefore less

bounded, for this study I bound my cases within the context of learning-to-teach and constructing a professional identity within a single semester field experience in a democratic classroom.

As Stake (2006) notes, while the single case is always meaningful and seen in relation to other cases, in multicase study, “the single case is of interest because it belongs to a particular collection of cases” (p. 4). The cases are categorically bound in some way. Stake refers to this grouping as the “quintain” (p. 6). In this study, the cases were categorically bound by the phenomena of teacher learning in a democratic classroom; therefore, the quintain is the phenomena of teacher learning, with each individual case helping to further understand that phenomena. Importantly, Stake (2006) implores us to recognize the multiple contexts – historical, cultural, social, economic, political, ethical, aesthetic, physical – in which the phenomenon operates. He writes, “One purpose of multicase study is to illuminate some of these many contexts, especially the problematic ones” (Stake, 2006, p. 12). Thus, in this study, where teacher learning occurred across multiple contexts, I had to attend to spaces, people, and ideas outside of the individual democratic classrooms in order to attend to the phenomena of teacher learning.

Site and Participant Selection

The democratic classrooms and the cooperating teacher’s pedagogic work to create those classrooms served as the sites for this study. As outlined earlier, democratic practices in elementary classrooms include teacher attention to how students participate in classroom discussion and instruction, how students make decisions and solve problems (both individually and collectively), and how teachers and students work together to create a classroom community that is inclusive of all people. Importantly, teachers in these classrooms identified that they used

democratic practices. This self-identification was important not only in making sure that democratic practices were present, but also in creating a possible learning relationship where these ideals were important to the cooperating teacher's pedagogy.

To recruit cooperating teachers who self-identified as using democratic practices, I asked a variety of university-, school-, and community-based people about potential candidates so that I did not limit my conception of democratic practices. I focused on teachers in Lake City and at the start of recruitment I was open to classrooms that had novice teachers from any of the multiple universities in Lake City. In the end, the classrooms that chose to participate in this classroom and the timing of the study meant that all of the classrooms were working with Midwestern University (MU). Since I had worked in Lake City schools as a Project Assistant for MU's Professional Development Schools, and as a supervisor for MU, I had privileged access to many of these classrooms and teachers. In fact, my prior work in one classroom with a novice teacher was the impetus for this study as I watched this novice become more committed to democratic education after working with this teacher. This access and status provided multiple affordances in my research, as well as presented multiple challenges as I considered how my previous relationships, knowledge, and commitments affected my role as researcher; I revisit these dilemmas at the end of the chapter. I relied on these established relationships, as well as the networks that branched out from those relationships. I asked identified candidates for other possible candidates within their professional network. With each possible candidate, I met individually with the teacher to ensure that they self-identified as using democratic practices and were committed to the terms and length of the study.

I also visited each classroom to observe for at least three hours prior to formally recruiting teachers into the study. During these initial discussions and observations I looked for the following characteristics of a democratic classroom (see Parker, 2009):

- **Deliberation / Discussion** – There is an emphasis on students discussing shared problems and concerns. The teacher emphasizes learning how to discuss, that is, how to both actively listen and contribute to the discussion in ways that support other’s contributions. Importantly, there is also an emphasis on problem solving wherein the students are the primary solvers of both personal and community problems. This includes the teacher modeling and mediating problems with students.
- **Decision Making** – This is directly linked to deliberation and discussion. Voting is the most obvious way that this can occur in a classroom. Both practicing voting and studying / understanding its historical significance would fall under this category.
- **Democratic Values** – The most basic democratic values include liberty, attention to the common good, justice, equality of opportunity, responsibility, and tolerance of diversity. These values can be studied in the curriculum, i.e. studying history and/or the biographies of people whose lives reflect these values. These values are most often promoted in through the daily life of the classroom, i.e., consideration for others, individual responsibility and responsibility toward the community, equality, and dignity.
- **Democratic Dispositions and Virtues** – Parker (2009) describes this as the “habits or inclinations that summarize a person’s behavior and values.” Included here is character education and morals / values education which emphasize responsibility, courage, fairness, and respecting the rights of others.

- Democratic Knowledge – This includes the actual content of teaching about democracy. This could be direct teaching about government, but could also come through in teaching about the Civil Rights movement.
- Social Action – The students see taking action as a way to solve problems, better their community (from the classroom, to the school, to larger contexts), and contribute to the common good.

I wanted for each classroom to incorporate a critical mass of these different aspects of democratic education; however, I also recognized that the ways in which these practices were enacted looked and sounded differently across classrooms. In Chapter 4, I describe each classroom that participated in this study and the particular instantiations of democratic education in that classroom. To give an overview of the multiple instantiations of democratic education, I compiled a table noting the primary facets of democratic education present in the classrooms in this study. I marked facets that occurred frequently with “often”, sometimes with “some”, and less often with “less.”

Table 1

Democratic Practices in Classrooms

Democratic Practice	Deliberation / Discussion	Decision-Making	Democratic Values	Democratic Dispositions	Democratic Knowledge, Curriculum	Social Action
Maya, 2 nd / 3 rd Grade	Some	Some	Often	Often	Often	Some
Grace, 2 nd / 3 rd Grade	Some	Some	Often	Often	Often	Some
Tuan, 1 st Grade	Often	Often	Often	Often	Some	Some
Eva 3 rd Grade	Often	Often	Often	Often	Some	Some
Julia 3 rd Grade	Often	Often	Often	Often	Some	Some

As seen in the above table, I recruited five classrooms to participate in the study, with a total of six novice teachers participating in those classrooms. Importantly, I visited a few classrooms that did not fit the above criteria and helped solidify the difference between a democratic classroom and a child-centered classroom. The primary difference I noticed was in the intentionality and ideology of the cooperating teacher. For example, I visited a wonderful classroom where the teacher cared for students' well-being, used multiple participation strategies, and engaged students in a writing workshop model that valued whatever the students chose to write about. While the teacher showed great respect for the freedom of students to choose and valued multiple voices in the classroom, her intentions behind her work centered on students feeling valued. That valuation was not tied to any conception of a student's role in a democracy, her goal for them as a future member of society, or even as part of a classroom community acting like a mini-democracy. The self-identification criteria helped me clarify this difference when selecting classrooms.

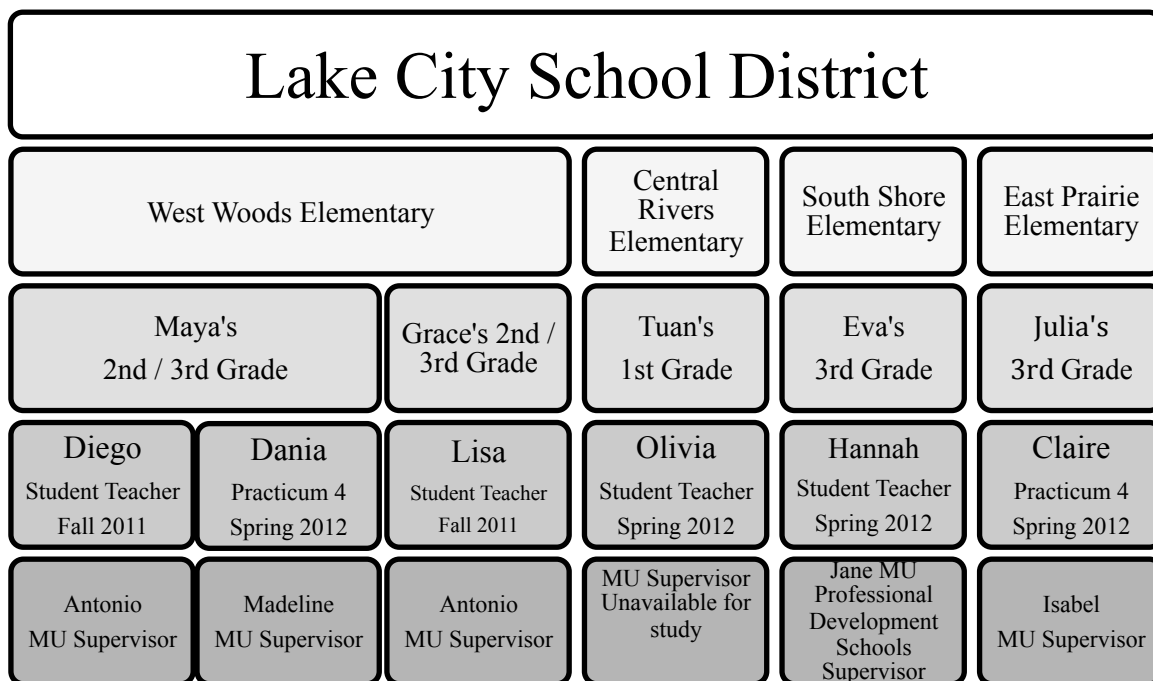
While the primary criteria for selection was the presence of democratic practices and the teacher's self-identification of using those practices, nevertheless I also wanted to represent the span of geography and demographics across Lake City. Stake (2006) writes, "An important reason for doing the multicase study is to examine how the program or phenomenon performs in different environments" (p. 23). For these cases, I wanted to look at novice teacher learning in democratic classrooms that existed in different types of school environments. In each case, the phenomena of novice teacher learning in democratic classrooms was prominent, but it occurred in varied contexts. The range of school contexts not only bolstered the design of this multicase study, but was also important in addressing my final research question, which asked how the

environments in which democratic classrooms existed, including the school, community, and larger socio-political contexts, shaped learning opportunities for novice teachers. In the following chapter, I consider the multiple contexts of this study, including a description of each school and classroom.

Selection of the novice teachers depended wholly on their participation in the democratic classrooms selected for the study. The novice teachers who participated in this study either chose to work with these cooperating teachers (in the case of student teachers), or were assigned to these classrooms by their teacher education program at MU (in the case of practicum teachers). The teacher education supervisors working with those novice teachers were also solicited to participate in the study. Figure 2 illustrates the participants in this study and their relationships to each other:

Figure 2

Overview of Study Participants



In total, five cooperating teachers (N=5) opened their classrooms to this study. In the Fall of 2011, two student teachers participated; in the Spring of 2012, two student teachers and two practicum students participated (N=6). Despite attempts to include all of the supervisors who worked with the novice teachers, I was unable to include one novice teacher's supervisor who had left the country before the end of the semester. In total, I interviewed four supervisors who all worked at Midwestern University (N=4).

Data Sources and Collection

Important to the design of case study was the collection and triangulation of multiple data sources. The primary sources of data in this study were field observations, semi-structured interviews, a video-analysis interview with the novice teacher, and teaching artifacts. While the primary participants and the unit of analysis were the novice teachers and their learning-to-teach process, understanding the multiple contexts affecting the novice teacher required that I also observe, interview, and collect artifacts related to the cooperating teacher's classroom and the teacher education program.

Observations. I began my work in each classroom with a full-day observation. In most cases this set a baseline for the practices of the cooperating teacher and how they organized their classroom community; however, in two cases (Diego and Lisa), the student teachers were already moving into their full-time "lead weeks" and therefore the cooperating teachers were less involved. This occurred due to the timing of the study, which started partway through the fall semester of 2011. The full-day observation not only gave me a general feel for the flow of the day, which in elementary classrooms sets a particular tone and cadence for students, but also allowed for students in the classrooms to acquaint themselves with me. My role in these classrooms was what Merriam (1998) calls "observer as participant," meaning that my observer

activities were known in the classroom and that participation in the classroom was secondary to gathering information. Yet, given that I was in the classrooms for many months, I recognized that this line could become easily blurred. As a former elementary teacher, I knew that students would inevitably talk to me, ask me questions, and look for assistance. More than once, I found myself in the middle of an indoor recess playing a game with a group of students because they considered me a part of their every day interactions in the classroom. I also saw this as part of my role as an educational researcher in giving back to the classrooms in which I worked; when a classroom needed an extra set of adult-hands, I helped.

After the full-day observation of the classroom, I observed instances when the novice teacher led either the whole group or a small group in instruction. I observed multiple subjects, times of day, and across the span of the semester during which the novice teacher worked in the democratic classroom. For each novice teacher, with one exception, I observed between four and six times over the course of the semester. The observations lasted from one hour (a single lesson) to 4 hours (a half-day). In one case, I could not observe the novice teacher immediately due to a conflict of interest given my role at MU. In that case I enrolled a graduate student at MU to videotape the novice teacher conducting a lesson; in addition, the novice teacher supplied another videotaped lesson used for a university class assignment.

During teaching observations, I focused on what the novice teacher and the students were saying and doing. While field notes for these observations resembled running records of classroom events, inevitably they also included my observer commentary (Merriam, 1998) that contributed both to preliminary analysis, as well as the consequent semi-structured interviews debriefing the lesson with the novice teacher. After each observation, I highlighted field notes to mark instances I wanted to discuss with the novice teacher. These included instances when I

noted democratic practices, when I needed clarification, or when I needed to check my own positionality as the researcher.

Interviews. I conducted semi-structured interviews with all participants (novice teachers, cooperating teachers, and teacher education supervisors) in the study. With both the novice teacher and the cooperating teacher I began with an in-depth focused life history interview (Seidman, 2006) in order to contextualize the participants place in the setting. I wanted to understand their journey to becoming a teacher and how their personal histories affected their current views on education. The interview with the novice teachers covered four major areas: 1) Past personal narrative that led to the decision to become a teacher, 2) Current personal narrative of their experience in their learning-to-teach process, 3) Conception of democratic education, particularly democratic practices in current classroom, and 4) Beliefs and ideals that shape the novice teacher's projected identity and practice. The interviews with the cooperating teachers covered personal narrative, democratic practices and goals, and the cooperating teacher's understanding of teacher learning and their role in that learning. Finally, I conducted one interview with each university supervisor, with the exception of one, who worked with the novice teachers. These interviews focused on the supervisor's background as a teacher educator, how they understood their part in the novice teacher's learning-to-teach process, and their overall impressions of the novice teacher. Each of these interviews occurred at the end of the semester after the supervisor had observed the novice teacher in the democratic classroom.

My subsequent semi-structured interviews with the novice teachers followed teaching observations; these interviews allowed the novice teacher to reflect on the teaching experience, their current learning around that experience, and how the experience was influencing their professional identity. Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes; in total, I conducted

twenty-eight interviews with the novice teachers. I also conducted one to two follow-up interviews with the cooperating teachers during the semester. The focus of those interviews moved from the cooperating teacher's practices to their interpretation of the novice teacher's learning and professional identity development. Each interview lasted between 30 and 90 minutes; in total, I conducted thirteen interviews with the cooperating teachers.

After working with two student teachers in the fall, I realized that there were common themes novice teachers drew on when talking about influences on their learning-to-teach-process. Drawing on Grossman's (1990) study of English teachers, I used a card sort / ranking activity with my four Spring 2012 participants. During our final interview, I asked participants to rank the following cards and talk through their ranking: personal background (including family, hometown), personal K-12 school experiences, School of Education program (including methods coursework), practicum and student teaching experiences, and a blank card. Only one participant chose to add a category with the blank card. This final card sort allowed the novice teacher to revisit their personal narrative in the learning-to-teach process that we had discussed in our initial interview, as well as provide their narrative for their learning and development as a teacher.

Video-Stimulated recall interviews. For one of the observations and interviews with the novice teacher, I videotaped the novice teacher teaching. I videotaped an entire lesson of approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Then, through use of the stimulated-recall interview (Bloom, 1954; Clark & Peterson, 1986; Shavelson, Webb & Bernstein, 1986; see also, Meijer, Beijaard, & Verloop, 2002; Marland & Osborne, 1990) I viewed the lesson with the novice teacher, who stopped the video at key points to explain their thinking. While the novice teacher was in primary control of stopping the video, when there were critical moments that I felt had not been

touched on, I followed up with those after the novice teacher had talked through the lesson. The goal here was to better understand the novice teacher's pedagogic choices, as well as what they saw as important to their teaching. The stimulated recall technique is often used in place of the think-aloud technique (Shavelson, Webb & Burstein, 1986) since it is unreasonable to stop a lesson in real time to ask why the teacher made a particular choice or ask what they are thinking while they react to students. While critical incidents were necessarily part of any debrief interview, having the videotaped lesson allowed for the novice teacher to relive the lesson and recall their thoughts (Bloom, 1954; see also, Meijer, Zantig & Verloop, 2002).

My goal in using video here was to more clearly allow the novice to articulate and reflect on why they made pedagogic choices, particularly as they related to democratic practices. The use of the video was particularly helpful to further investigate areas of struggle in the novice teacher's learning-to-teach process. For example, I had wondered about the number of times Diego, a novice teacher, used attention-getting strategies with his students. Attention-getting strategies, e.g., call-and-response, clapping, flickering lights, are common in elementary classrooms, yet I believe that a teacher has to consider how often and when they use them during instruction; when used too often, I often wonder about how instructional planning could have better supported students. In the case of Diego, I interpreted these strategies as interrupting the flow of his lesson; however, I wanted to better understand his choice. During our video-stimulated-recall interview, I asked him about his use of attention-getting strategies. While Diego noted that he had relied far more heavily on these attention-getting strategies than he realized, he also gave this insight into his practice:

If a kid wasn't putting his eyes on me right away, I wasn't like, I tried not to go right onto them. I tried not to be like, '[Student] look at me' instead of saying

‘all right all eyes on me,’ not putting the blame on one kid in those kind of instances because for the most part, I would say, 75-90% of the kids did have all their attention on me and that would have been something where I felt like I was out of place calling a kid out in that experience. So that was why I kinda would do the ‘listen-up’ ‘listen-up’ and then say ‘I need all eyes on me. I don’t need you to pick up a pencil, a pen, anything like that. I need you to look at me so I can explain what our activity is’ (Interview, March 22, 2012).

Diego saw his attention-getting strategy as a way to not single out a student for misbehavior, but still attempt to focus the student. Had we not had this common text to reflect on, I may have misinterpreted Diego’s move. While I followed up with similar questions during other debrief interviews, the power of having the common viewed text allowed for our conversation to find roots directly in the behaviors and thinking of the novice teacher.

Artifacts. Whenever possible, I also collected teaching artifacts, such as lesson plans, teaching philosophies, and student work related to the lessons the novice teacher conducted. Most of the artifacts came from the novice teachers; however, the cooperating teachers also provided artifacts including a teaching philosophy, class newsletter, and program to a class performance. Further, I asked permission to take photographs of charts in the classroom that supported democratic practices. For example, I captured an “anchor chart” that Lisa, a novice teacher, had made when students were exploring the concept of “ujima” (unity). Most artifacts were produced as a result of topics covered in our interviews, e.g., one novice talked about writing up her reflection on her lead week and then provided that reflection after the interview.

Focus group. Finally, I conducted a focus group with three of the novice teachers near the end of their semester in their democratic placements. Coordinating the schedules of five

college students proved difficult and in the end two were unable to make the time we had set. As this study focused on democratic education, and in particular on ways to enact democratic teacher education, I wanted to provide a time and space in which participants could interact, talk across their different experiences, and even deliberate on the merits of their experiences. I saw this as an important embodiment of democratic practice in research design. In the end, the focus group did help flesh out differences between two of the school and program contexts in this study; however, its value was limited due to the lack of participation from all novice teachers.

Data Analysis

Just as sociocultural theories of learning and development guided the questions of this study, they also guided the analysis of data collected. Using a lens of sociocultural theories of learning required particular attention to the construction of setting, the relationships afforded or denied to the novice teacher, and what tools, constructs, or persons helped mediate the novice teachers' learning and identity. Analysis also required close attention to the setting, whether the setting constituted a community of practice (Wenger, 1998) and how the novice teacher's alignment or disalignment with that community of practice, afforded learning opportunities and new identities.

I used the tools of qualitative research, including inductive and deductive coding, comparative analysis, and continuing memoing (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), to analyze the data. For the qualitative analysis, I began by transcribing all of my interviews and field notes. I also digitized relevant artifacts, such as pictures and student work. From here, I began my coding process using both inductive and deductive coding strategies. Deductively, I had used Parker's (2009) characteristics of citizenship education in the selection of these classrooms; therefore, I

knew that I would be looking for instances when these characteristics occurred during the novice teacher's observations and reflections. Importantly though, I did not want to limit myself to these six categories. An example of when I expanded this framework was when developing the code "critical curriculum." According to Parker (2009), "democratic knowledge" includes information about how democracies work, as well as political movements that demonstrate those processes. When looking at the work occurring in these classrooms, I saw that the curriculum not only looked at social movements and issues that demonstrated democratic processes, but also brought those processes and whose voices represented those processes into question. Thus, terming these instances as "critical curriculum," under the larger code of "democratic knowledge," created a more detailed account of the data through the coding structure.

I also relied on inductive coding strategies to allow for other themes to emerge from the data. For example, I had hypothesized that immersion in a democratic classroom might afford particular kinds of experiences; however, I had not imagined how the cooperating teacher's practices as a teacher educator would shape those experiences. The parent code of "mentoring" and subsequent child codes, such as "shared authority" and "parallel practice" shaped the themes that are discussed in Chapter 6. I coded all interviews, field notes, and selected artifacts.

Along with coding, I wrote ongoing analytic memos throughout the research process. After each observation of the novice teachers in the field, I recorded voice memos to capture my questions, current themes, and identify critical incidents to follow up on with the novice teacher. These voice memos turned into longer written memos that I recorded throughout my time in these classrooms. During the transcription process, I kept ongoing memos as I finished each transcription; listening to interviews and reflecting on my initial voice memos helped me identify emerging codes and themes. As I began to code all of my data, I had a list of codes from the

literature, i.e., “deliberation,” as well as codes about which I had written during the transcription process, i.e., “shared authority.” While coding I kept memos related to these emerging themes and each case. Having a specific memo devoted to each case helped me understand each case as its own entity, with its own particularities and stories. These memos as a set of cases contributed to my overall understanding of the phenomena of teacher learning. Throughout coding and memoing, I looked for both confirming and disconfirming instances of data and kept a specific memo that linked to anomalous pieces of data.

Given this large amount of data gathered, I used the mixed-methods software Dedoose. While Dedoose is designed for mixed-methods work, I only used its features that support qualitative data. I uploaded all transcripts and field notes into the software and used it to code, memo, and compare data. After my initial coding and memoing, I went through each major memo, i.e. “Democratic Practices,” “Mentoring,” and “Identity,” to compare coded excerpts and develop the various dimensions of each major theme. The software aided in my ability to organize this copious amount of data; however, I developed, applied, and analyzed all of the codes and themes.

Role of the Researcher

Stake (2006) writes, “It is an ethical responsibility for us as case researchers to identify affiliations and ideological commitments that might influence our interpretations” (p. 87). Given the access that these schools, classroom teachers, and novice teachers provided me to better understand their practice, I feel it necessary to give my readers access to understanding the personal and professional lenses that I bring to this work. While I could never identify every possible lens that has influenced my understanding of this work, nevertheless in the following

section I attempt to lay out my own interpretation of my affiliations and commitments that shape this work.

Personal and professional. I am a White, upper-middle-class female who had access to every educational opportunity afforded by my highly regarded public school system. I benefitted from the generosity of my parents, who were willing to send me to an Ivy League institution. My understanding of educational inequities arose from recognition of all that I was afforded because of my race, class, and geographic location. This recognition of inequities led me to my career as an urban elementary teacher, who was concerned about equity, justice, and opportunities for young people to voice their ideas to the larger world.

I worked in urban elementary classrooms for six years in New York City. One of the strongest lenses I bring to this work is my own experience working in lower elementary grades and my personal educational philosophy rooted in the works of John Dewey. For three years I worked at a progressive elementary school that used Ruth Charney's (2002) *Teaching Children to Care* as our guidebook to establishing caring classroom communities. Charney's writings, which are a foundation for the Responsive Schooling approach, focus on how classrooms can support both academic and social/emotional growth. Student voice, choice, and participation were central to our work. We began each day with a morning meeting, held class meetings when problems needed whole class attention, practiced interpersonal problem-solving beyond the words "I'm sorry," and considered our classroom space, both physical and social, as shared among students, teachers, and families. My initial interest in democratic education and its possibilities arose from the work that I did at this school.

I carry with me those experiences of seeing children take ownership over their classroom and learning, take action to right wrongs they saw in the community (classroom, school,

neighborhood, and city), and take care with each other's feelings. I firmly believe in young children's abilities to engage in these actions and that these actions contribute to their overall understanding of their role in society. These beliefs shape what I mark as "good teaching" when I have worked with novice teachers.

I also bring the professional lens of my preparation to become an elementary teacher. I entered teaching through the New York City Teaching Fellows, which is a program run by The New Teacher Project (TNTP). While I believe I worked incredibly hard to provide a thoughtful and rigorous academic experience to my young students, I also recognize that in those first two years of teaching, I was "learning on" my students. I spent the first three years of my teaching career working in Long Island City (Queens), New York. My students were mostly recent immigrants, or children of recent immigrants hailing from all over Central and South America, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. These were students who needed the very best teachers and instead they had me, a very bright-eyed and eager young teacher who was still taking courses on literacy and math while I taught those subjects every day.

From this standpoint, as a participant in a program that has become central to the new reform movement in teacher education, I also approach my research and work as a teacher educator. Beyond completing my program with TNTP, I also worked for them as a selector of new candidates for the program, and at their Summer Institute in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I critique the larger policy mission of the program, but I also recognize the development this program afforded me as a teacher educator. I spent many hours thinking about and evaluating others on what would make a successful teacher in a hard-to-staff school in an urban area. I supervised novice teachers in elementary, middle, and high school settings and worked with them to overcome the challenges of an urban school system. I also saw the organization

transform over the course of my six years working with them, from one focused on providing teachers to high-need schools, to one focused on transforming the policy landscape in teacher education toward their vision of “good teaching.” This vision did not match mine. I carry this personal point of view, from which I recognize both the “good sense” and the “bad sense,”⁷ when I critique neoliberal movements in teacher education.

Professional and institutional. I also bring the lens of a teacher educator to my work. I have supervised students in field placements and taught them social studies methods coursework. While some of my work as a teacher educator occurred with TNTP, the bulk of my work and the source of my ideological commitments in teacher education come from my work in a university program. That work in the university program gave me knowledge and access for this study. I take seriously the confidentiality of my participants, including the institutions that participated in this work. And yet, I also know that my role as a researcher was heavily influenced by this knowledge and access.

Having worked at Midwestern University I knew intimately the workings of its Elementary Education program. I had worked as a supervisor and methods instructor, was a graduate student alongside many of its other methods instructors, and had countless conversations about the program with the novice teachers who participated in the program. This insider knowledge was both an affordance and a hindrance when examining the role of the teacher education institution in the learning-to-teach process of my novice teachers. I understood their critiques on a very personal level, as they were critiques I had often leveraged myself. I also understood the institutional limitations set on many of the methods instructors and

⁷ I credit use of these terms to Michael Apple who always urged us to be critical, but to be thorough and thoughtful in our critiques.

supervisors in the program. Limitations of time, money, and labor are very real at a public university.

Perhaps most important to this study is the role that I had with many of the novice teachers. As I taught the Social Studies Methods course in the Elementary Education sequence, I had worked previously with five of the six novice teachers in this study as their instructor. In four of the five cases, I worked with them the semester prior to their participation. In the fifth case, I waited until semester grades were submitted before I knew if the novice teacher had consented to participate and only then spoke with her about her experiences in her democratic field placement. Since the novice teachers knew me, in many cases this added to their ease in talking with me about their experiences. They knew my critiques of teaching and teacher education from our course; they also knew my views on social studies curriculum as a means for democratic education and social justice education. I will never fully know how their knowledge of these factors influenced what they said to me during the course of our interviews; however, I also felt that we began the study with a level of trust that would not have been possible in other circumstances.

At the end of this study, one of the novice teachers gave me the following note:

Dear Katie,

It has been so great getting to know you over the past year! I have learned so much from you, both from our social studies methods classes and from this semester in mine and [CT's] classroom. You have really helped me look at my teaching in a different way, a way that students deserve to learn. You not only helped me to reflect on my own teaching, but helped me to look at my cooperating teachers' classrooms in a different and reflective way. I can't wait to

bring together all of the elements that we have talked about and to try to use them in my own classroom (Artifact, May 22, 2012).

To me, this note reflected the possible ways that I influenced the novice teachers in this study. By emphasizing democratic education in our interviews, I necessarily foregrounded that concept for the novice teachers. Yet, I also believe that our time spent in interviews also provided another space for the novice teachers to figure out their learning-to-teach process and emerging teacher identity.

I have thought deeply about how my knowledge of my participants as students in my methods class impacted my work with them. Knowing them as students in a university classroom and learning about them as teachers in a school setting emphasized how these young people were negotiating various identities. Some of my knowledge provided more affinity with the participants as I had witnessed dynamics of their cohorts and knew their stresses during the fourth semester of the program. Yet, I constantly had to check what I understood about participants as students and what I observed of them as teachers. This highlighted Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann's (1985) less drawn upon notion of the two-worlds pitfall; that is, a student can meet success in one setting, the university classroom or the elementary school classroom, while struggling in the other setting.

This tension of having a previously established relationship and rapport was particularly strong when I wrote up the cases of Diego, Olivia, and Hannah. I have intense respect for each of these young teachers. I know how difficult it is learning to teach and learning to teach in a way that balances your desire to control a classroom and your belief that students need to assume ownership over their learning process. I also needed to ensure that I accurately represented the phenomena I had observed. Stake (2006) notes, "Most favoritism in research is to be found in

what is *not* said – underplaying a negative side of the picture” (p. 85). In my analysis and writing, I attempted to balance my respect and affinity for my participants with the relative truths laid out in the data.

In order to ensure that I accurately represented these people’s stories, I sent out portions of the following chapters to participants. Given the time constraints on practicing teachers, I only sent chapters to participants that drew on their data or that discussed them. I asked for feedback and response to how I characterized them, analyzed their teaching and identity, and what they thought of the overall arguments. Of the participants who responded, each expressed thankfulness for the opportunity to read the chapters and acknowledged the work as fair.

My sincere hope is that all of my participants felt similar sentiments to the one who gave me the note from above. I believe that our work together not only surfaced important findings about the phenomena of novice teacher learning and identity development in democratic classrooms, but also supported the personal and professional learning of the teachers who participated in this study.

Chapter 4: The Contexts

Michael Cole (1996) illustrates the necessity to consider context as a different type of relationship than “that which surrounds”. When context is pictured as “that which surrounds,” it is often seen as nested in a series of concentric circles in which the subject is at the center with ever broader contexts surrounding, i.e. novice teacher, surrounded by classroom, then school, then school district, etc. Cole reinterprets context by examining its Latin root, *contexere*, which translates as to weave, entwine, join, or bind. Cole (1996) writes, “[Context] is, rather a qualitative relation between a minimum of two analytical entities (threads), which are two moments in a single process” (p. 135) Given the multiple contexts that influence teacher learning and identity development – including the multiple systems, goals, tools, and people – an overview of these set the stage for further analysis in this study.

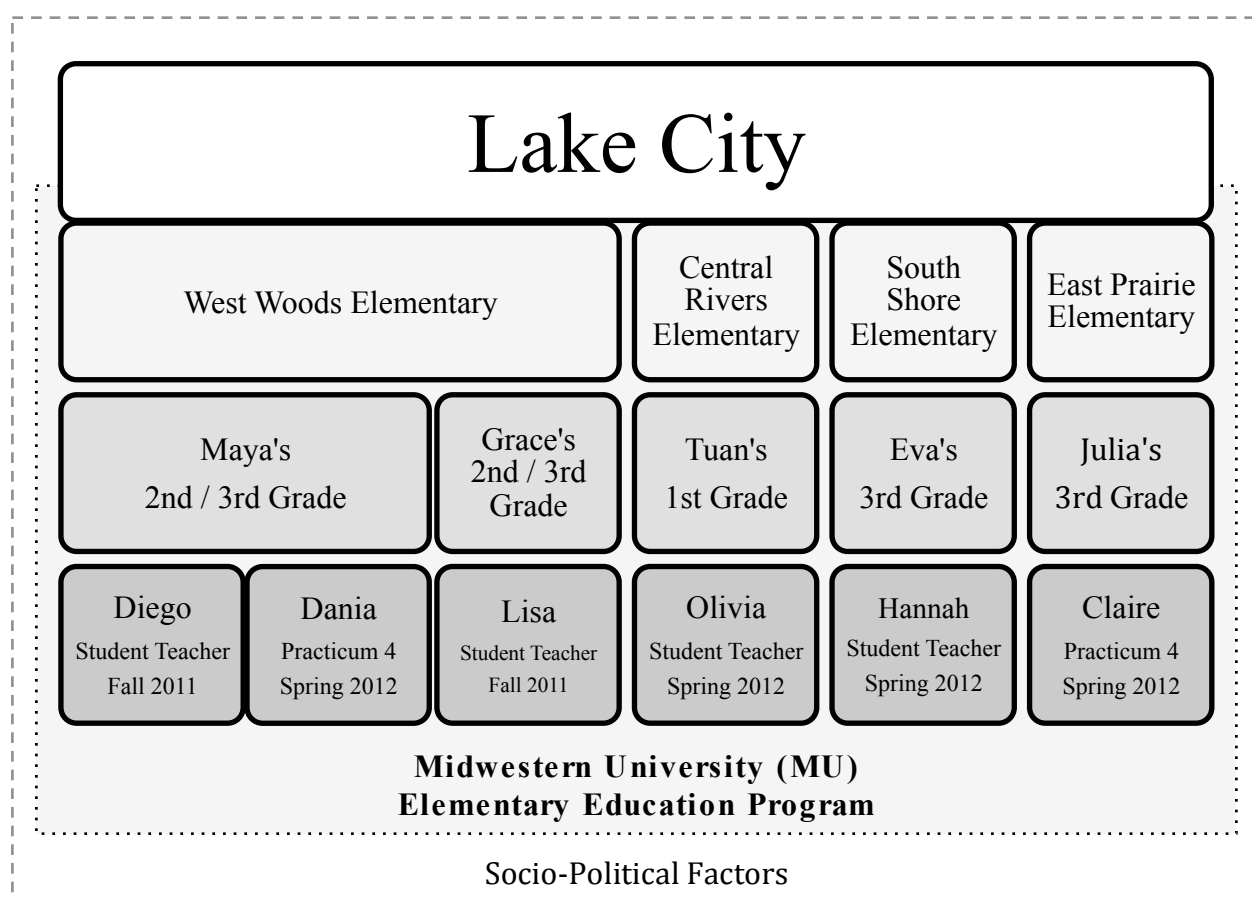
In the following chapter, I describe the contexts, including the individual sites and participants, in which this study occurred and which afforded and constrained the opportunities for the novice teacher’s learning to teach process and development of their identity as a teacher. While I agree with Cole’s interpretation of context as “to weave together,” nevertheless for the sake of readability, I will layout the multiple contexts of this study in a more linear fashion. I begin with brief sketches of the novice teachers who participated in this study; as their learning and development was the primary area of inquiry, I introduce their individual stories so that their voices can then shape the understanding of the city, university, and schools. Their voices and stories shape the contexts, as much as the contexts shaped their learning opportunities and identities. Inserting their understanding of institutions, programs, and spaces illustrates the interplay between the individual and the social that are at the heart of learning and identity

development in this study. Further, each of these contexts shapes and is shaped not only by individual persons, but also by larger institutional and socio-political contexts. Having a clear picture of the multiple spaces and people involved in novice teacher learning highlights the constellation of possible learning and development spaces, as well as the many junctures where tensions or gaps can inhibit growth.

As a visual guide, Figure 3 outlines the multiple people and spaces in this study.

Figure 3

Overarching Study Context



The Novice Teachers

The six novice teachers in this study all participated in the same broad university-school-city context; however, each individual carried with them separate histories and cultures that shaped how they encountered the different contexts in the learning to teach process. In the following section, I will give a sketch of each novice teacher and the characteristics of their background that they highlighted in talking about their learning to teach and teacher identity development process. When describing the schools and cooperating teachers in the latter part of this chapter, I will revisit each novice teacher to weave in their stories with their immersion in those classrooms.

Diego. Diego was a 23-year old male student teacher, who self-identified as a “passer.” When I asked him what he meant by this, he explained,

Yes, I don't look African-American. Or, I don't, physically I do not fit into one racial identity. I mean if you look at me, unless I explicitly told you I was African-American, most people don't think it. It's not the first thought, I get a very, I get a lot of Hispanic, that would probably be the number one, especially when my hair gets long (Interview, December 11, 2011).

Diego's father was African-American and his mother was White; for Diego, he grew up bi-cultural and bilingual. He described how he heard both African American Language (AAL) and Standard English in his home. He said,

Even just listening to my dad on the phone, I would get this really, really expressive African American English, just listening to it. So I think of when I say things like that, I think, 'Damn, that's my dad on the phone' (Interview, March 22, 2012).

Further, he noted that he would code-switch between the two sides of his family, “And then when I’m hanging out with my cousins, it’s a completely different language than when I’m with cousins on my mom’s side” (Interview, March 22, 2012). Diego noted that this code-switching not only resulted from his family being biracial, but also because of where he grew up. Diego grew up in the largest city in the state – a city that has a history of segregation and failed attempts to integrate schools to narrow the “achievement gap” between White students and students of color. He described where he grew up: “I lived three blocks away from the hood area where it’s low-income housing, but yet I’m still two blocks away from [suburb].” Diego’s family and his home surroundings were multicultural in ways that supported his code-switching early on.

For Diego, code-switching his language between AAL and Standard English was unconscious; however, he clearly saw the divide when it came to school. He commented, “When I was on the bus in 7th grade, that’s how we talked on the bus. So that’s how I talk, at times, whereas if I’m in school, if I’m in a classroom, I don’t talk like that because I know that I’m in that classroom setting in which my language is a direct, my language is something I can control, and it is a direct, gives an immediate impression of who I am (Interview, March 22, 2012).

Diego’s ability to code-switch and his ease with AAL was key to his development of relationships at his student teaching placement, where the majority of his students were African American and spoke AAL as their home language. Yet, Diego also recognized how it marked him in his cohort of students at Midwestern University (MU).

Diego often spoke of how his background separated him from his cohort; he described this situation: “the male teacher of color, talk about the double-minority” (Interview, March 22,

2012). He noted that he did not talk about his racial identification until the fourth semester of the program. He reflected,

I didn't want to be targeted and sometimes I felt like after I expressed that in the class when we were talking about the African-American museum, sometimes I felt like they, sometimes I'd see eyes going to me, like 'when's Diego going to say something?' And that's not what I wanted. And that's not a comment on [the] class, but that's just the reality (Interview, December 2, 2011).

Despite his discomfort identifying as African-American among his mostly White cohort at MU, Diego overtly affiliated and identified as African-American and freely code-switched into AAL in his student teaching placement.

Diego's goal was to work in a Kindergarten setting with primarily African-American students; he often described his affinity with young students as, "I am a 23-year-old Kindergartener in a 5'10" body" (Interview, December 14, 2011). After coming to MU with the goal of becoming an anesthesiologist, he realized that he was not invested in his courses to pursue medical school. After conversations with his family and then volunteer work with the local JumpStart program, Diego decided to pursue teaching. His desire to work with young students is both rooted in his affinity with the age, but also in a belief that Kindergarten teachers set the foundation for future school success.

Diego decided to forego a teaching position offered to him in Lake City in order to move back to the larger urban area where he grew up. He took a position teaching first grade at a charter school.

Lisa. Growing up in a town of around 30,000 people in the northern part of the state, Lisa, a 23-year-old White female student teacher, described that town as "very white, very

conservative” (Interview, December 8, 2011). Lisa always knew she wanted to be a teacher; during her senior-year of high school, she participated in an education externship and worked in a local Kindergarten classroom for four hours each afternoon. In particular she worked with a young student who “had a lot of issues” (Interview, December 8, 2011), with whom she really connected. Lisa describes her successful work with this student as the moment when “that was where my heart came into it” (Interview, December 8, 2011) and she realized she could make an impact on a student’s life.

While Lisa applied to MU, she decided to go to another smaller public university because she was not sure that she was “ready” for the size of Lake City. She applied to the education program and started her coursework; however, she soon felt dissatisfied with the program. She reflected,

The caliber of the people in the program was not up to where I want it to be...I didn’t feel pushed to being a better teacher...I wasn’t getting a culturally diverse experience, everyone was a girl, White, from a small conservative town...we never had deep conversations about anything, it was very surface level (Interview, December 8, 2011).

After her parents moved to Lake City, Lisa decided to transfer to MU and to its Elementary Education program “that was more of a fit” for her. While Lisa critiqued the program, particularly its admission criteria and lack of access to professors, nevertheless she also supported its mission of teaching for social justice. Important for Lisa was her exposure to greater diversity over time and how that challenged her beliefs. She remarked,

And a lot of these, a lot of things that I grew up with thinking were the truth were just like broken when I got here. I didn’t grow up with many African American

people around me so when I came here [Lake City], and when I came to [other public university] even...there was all of the crap in my head about what I learned when I was growing up, but then I had formed relationships with people in [other public university] and then when I came here it was even more, like I dated a guy [African American] who was from [major city], and I think this is what really solidified my tie to wanting to work with African-American students was him and then I worked with the [State] Youth Company, there was mostly African-American students there. That was just where I fit, it just fit for me (Interview, December 8, 2011).

For Lisa, developing relationships with people whose backgrounds and life experiences were different from her own made her question the “truth” from her hometown and background. Importantly, these experiences and relationships set her course of wanting to work in diverse school settings, particularly with students who struggle in the current school system. Lisa’s goal was to find a teaching position in either in Lake City or a larger urban area. At the conclusion of her student teaching, Lisa had been hired on as a long-term substitute teacher at West Woods Elementary, where she had completed her student teaching. *Lisa is now a Kindergarten teacher in Lake City and will be moving into a fifth grade classroom for her second year of teaching.*

Dania. Dania was a 22-year-old White female practicum student, who grew up outside a major city in a neighboring Midwestern state; she did not come to college with the intention of becoming a teacher. After taking courses in Arabic, she set out to major in International Studies with the hope of going into the Foreign Service or the Peace Corps. During this time, Dania also began to volunteer with the Jump Start program, a preschool program that served the lower-

income areas on the south side of Lake City. During her sophomore year, she began working with a three-year-old student who became the catalyst for her desire to become a teacher.

Dania commented that the Elementary Education program at MU had a “really strong focus on multicultural education” (Interview, April 12, 2012); however, like Lisa, she also noted the lack of diversity in her cohort. She said, “You look at me and my cohort and it’s all primarily White upper middle class girls, there’s virtually no diversity in the cohorts” (Interview, April 12, 2012). Like Diego and Lisa, Dania was committed to working with diverse populations of students and felt that the program struggled to create necessary spaces for novice teachers to engage with difference. She reflected,

I think that class [Introduction to Elementary Education / Multicultural Education] is necessary, but people are afraid to talk about it and to address it at that point when it’s the first semester. You can’t really get to the nitty gritty. And I don’t know where you’d put it in the program, and you have to expose people to those realities and make sure that they get, what you grew up with is not what you’re going to teach with, maybe depends on where they want to go (Interview, April 12, 2012).

Dania’s desire to work with “the realities” illustrated her commitment to working toward social justice goals of diminishing inequities in society via schools. Dania planned to do her student teaching the following semester at a public school in the larger city in the state; she desired specifically to work in an urban environment. *After completing her student teaching in the larger city, Dania found a teaching position within that district.*

Olivia. Olivia, a 22-year-old biracial (African American father, White mother) female student teacher, grew up in a neighboring Midwestern state and then moved to the northern part of MU's state for high school. She described her town as very "non-diverse," and that because of that her parents worked hard to give her background on her race. Growing up in a predominantly White school, Olivia discussed how her parents were conscious of talking about what it means to be a minority in school and worked to maintain open communication so that Olivia felt comfortable coming to her parents if anything ever occurred. Olivia explained further,

And also really educating us about the world around us too because our town was really Caucasian heavy and I mean we were a minority in my school, public school probably had a little more. And so having that knowledge too and all my dad's family lived in much larger towns, like Cleveland and things like that, so we would travel there. He didn't want it to be a culture shock of when we finally left like this is not what the world looks like. So in that sense just making us really aware of what we were, where we came from, and my family and things like that (Interview, February 29, 2012).

Whereas Diego more strongly identified with his African American identity, Olivia identified equally as African American and White. Similar to Diego, her race was ambiguous to other people. She said,

People do that to me too [question my race], they're like you're something, but they can't. It's a strong value. If I'm filling out a form and they say check race, check one, I check both of them. I don't identify with one or the other more than. I just check both, or if there's a biracial one I do that (Interview, May 24, 2012).

For Olivia, she did not discuss race as heavily as Diego, but it did come up in our more informal conversations about her family. In one conversation about her hometown, she recalled an instance, in which she talked about race with her father,

One comment I can remember was them [students on the bus] telling me I only had to go halfway to the back of the bus if I wanted to go sit back. So stuff like that. But otherwise, it was never too damaging, since I would go home and tell my dad and we would talk about it and it would be fine” (Interview, May 24, 2012).

Olivia saw her racial identity as part of who she was, as an important aspect that her father ensured she recognized, but she did not overtly name it as a guiding force in her teaching.

Olivia’s decision to become a teacher came as a confluence of factors during her years in high school. She had been volunteering in buddy-programs to mentor middle school students and was very active in her high school choir. At the time, she thought that she wanted to combine her love of music with her desire to work with students and become a choir director. Deciding that she wanted to keep music as the “fun” part of her life and not delve into music-theory courses, Olivia decided to change direction. She reflected,

I really wanted to work toward a career I was passionate about. I knew I was passionate about music but I wasn’t totally sold on making it my career. And so I kind of talked to the Ed program here and started volunteering in an after school program, a head start program, and then a baby community center, and then that’s when I knew it’s what I wanted to do. So it was really developed and I really, I knew I wanted education but I didn’t know how, whether it would be music or younger, and I really considered doing the older option as well (Interview, February 29, 2012).

Olivia's decision illustrated her drive to be purposeful in her actions. Her parents required that she pay for college, so Olivia worked throughout her time at MU and took her classes very seriously; however, she also saw many of her assignments as lines of a checklist and during her time in student teaching reflected that she wished she had fully understood the importance of reflective practice earlier on.

While Olivia considered working with the middle grades cohort, she eventually decided to work with the early grades. Like Diego, Olivia saw the early grades as full of potential to create a foundation. She commented,

I want to do something where I could, not, I hate say make a difference, because that's such a full blown statement, but I feel like with that age and the passion I want to put into my own teaching I could really work toward doing that. And helping them be ready for those older years when they have a lot more choice and there's a lot more developing into who they are and things like that. And to be in that place that you give them that foundation I think is really important. You can still color and paint and glue and all that stuff that I like too (Interview, February 29, 2012).

Olivia saw the balance between "making a difference" and being creative with students as an ideal mix in the lower grades. Further, Olivia's background in music and theater supported her work in the first grade classroom in which she did her student teaching. She often led morning meeting, which was full of singing and never shied away from speaking in front of students or parents.

Looking toward the future, Olivia wanted to teach in a "diverse area." She explained,

I wouldn't enjoy teaching in an area where I grew up. It wouldn't be fun. I love an inter-racial class, like where are all these kids coming from and all their different everything. It's just so cool. So I like being surrounded by that. And that's probably based on my own family having a biracial family and just having two very different cultures and different families. My parents grew up so differently. My mom they were pretty affluent and my dad had like nothing. So I like that balance and I just want to work in a room that's reflective of our country. So I guess it more impacted my values, which indirectly transfer into my teaching (Interview, May 24, 2012).

For Olivia her family background in conjunction with her experiences in classrooms became incredibly salient resources to draw upon as she shaped her teaching experience and identity. *At the end of this study, Olivia had decided to take the following year off from teaching in order to save money to pay back college loans; she worked as a nanny for a family in Lake City. As I write this, Olivia has been in touch to let me know that she is looking for a teaching position in or around Lake City.*

Hannah. Hannah, a student teacher, was a 22-year-old White female who grew up in a small-city in the northern part of the state. She often described herself as “goofy,” “silly,” and “weird.” Hannah went to a private Catholic school through middle school and then transferred to the local public school. Hannah was a twin and had always lived in the same city as her brother, who also went to MU. Hannah described where she grew up as a place that did not recognize difference, and she was shy to discuss issues like race and class until she became a part of the Elementary Education program.

Originally intending to go to medical school, Hannah decided at the last minute to apply to the School of Education. She commented,

About a few weeks before the application was due my sophomore year, I just decided to apply. I had worked with some kids in a park in [home city], where I grew up, and I really liked it and I was like, maybe I'd like teaching (Interview, February 21, 2012).

Hannah continued to take courses in English so that she would have a double-major in case she decided not to continue with teaching. She noted that while her family supported her, it was difficult for them when she decided to become a teacher. She explained,

Me and my brothers and my sister are first generation college students...they don't have anything against me being a teacher, but I think it was hard for them to know I'm going into a profession where I'm not going to be making as much money...in the beginning, it was very hard for them to hear that and they were always like, 'are you sure you want to do this?' (Interview, February 21, 2012).

Yet, when Hannah gave her final teaching and learning presentation to her peers in her Professional Development Schools (PDS) cohort, her parents and her brother were both present and each made comments of support during the question and answer period.

As part of the PDS cohort, Hannah made more overt connections between her coursework, practicum seminar, and practicum experiences than the other novice teachers in this study. She noted the important role that her supervisor, Jane, played in her development. In her final teaching and learning presentation, she thanked Jane and said that she had "seen me in my worst more than my best...she supported me in being weird" (Field Notes, May 14, 2012).

Hannah finished her student teaching in Lake City after eighteen weeks and then went to complete the remainder of her student teaching abroad in Africa⁸. That was the first time she had lived in a separate place from her brother, but she noted that she felt it would be important for her to experience a different culture and reflect on a different education system. Thinking beyond her student teaching, Hannah desired to work in a large Midwestern city. She said,

I would like to be somewhere inner-city, working with really diverse groups of students...it's definitely not the idea of not wanting to work with students like how I was when I grew up, but also the idea of becoming a teacher where I work with students that would need me as a teacher to help them, as opposed to thinking about those who could succeed no matter what teacher they have (Interview, February 21, 2012).

Hannah felt that her ability to care for students and be dedicated to them, to learn whatever she needed to support her students' success, made her the kind of teacher who could "help" future students. *Hannah is currently looking for a teaching position for the upcoming school year. She explained that because of the timing of her work in Africa and completion of her final project, she met a delay in obtaining her teaching license. For the past year she worked as a nanny in a large Midwestern city.*

Claire. Claire was a White female in her early twenties; she was in her fourth semester of the program while she participated in this study. She said that she came "from a long line of

⁸ I have specifically chosen to name only the continent and not the specific country where Hannah completed her student teaching. Given the small number of international student teaching placements, I considered the country as an identifying characteristic of the university's program.

educators” (Interview, March 5, 2012). She began working with youth from a young age, beginning with babysitting and eventually leading to coaching while she was in high school. Upon entering university, Claire waivered between wanting to teach and wanting to pursue a law degree, possibly in education law. Eventually, she decided on teaching and noted, “in order to be effective at that [educational law], being a teacher would be important, having that background would be important” (Interview, March 5, 2012).

Claire felt that once she began in the School of Education that she had made the best decision for her future career. She explained why teaching appealed to her,

I guess in teaching you can experience the direct impact that you’re having on students. And I guess what I’m looking for in a career is something that I feel like I’m truly making a difference and I’m helping, I’m doing something positive for the world. And I think teaching offers me that and it also allows me to utilize my talents for something really positive. And although I know that you have that opportunity to do that in other professions, I don’t know if it’s quite as tangible. I think you can see the difference a lot more with education (Interview, March 5, 2012).

As the only participant in this study who participated in the middle grades cohort of the Elementary Education program, Claire noted that she felt that cohort gave her the widest range of grades (grade 2/3 – grade 8) from which to choose.

Having grown up in the suburbs of a small city (c. 60,000), which was surrounded by rural areas, in the central part of the state, Claire knew she did not want to work in a rural area. Describing her hometown, Claire said, “Well, where I was from it was almost all White, middle class. Like every, especially at the two schools I went to there was no diversity whatsoever, and

like income, there's no diversity in terms of income, race, nothing" (Interview, May 7, 2012). Ideally she hoped to get a job in Lake City when she finished the program. Claire contrasted her hometown, which she described as "conservative," with Lake City. She commented,

I guess Lake City is just so liberal that it's almost like everyone seems more on the same page, whereas in [hometown] there was more of, I guess maybe more tension, especially in the school district. My dad worked for the school district. So they had a lot of issues all the time (Interview, March 5, 2012).

Claire was already familiar with Lake City before attending MU; she noted that both of her parents held degrees from MU and all of her siblings had attended MU. She only applied to one or two other schools when she made her choice to attend university. *I have not heard from Claire about her whereabouts after graduating from MU in the Fall 2012.*

Lake City

Lake City is a mid-sized Midwestern city with idyllic summers and long cold winters. Considered by many to be a desirable place to live, Lake City offers its residents a variety of cultural, athletic, and intellectual activities sponsored by both the city and the university. Bike paths crisscross the city and serve as both recreation and transportation for many of the city's residents. The summers in Lake City are marked by music festivals and farmers' markets every day of the week across the various neighborhoods, each of which has its own distinct character. Winters see lakes dotted with ice-fisherman, trails in regional parks filled with cross-country skiers, and pubs filled with folks gathering for Friday Fish Fry. At the center of the city lies Midwestern University (MU), which is consistently a top public university in the United States.

Lake City is one of the political and social liberal strongholds in its state and its citizens are active participants at the local, regional, and state government levels. Importantly, during the months preceding this research, Lake City was among the places in the Midwest that engaged in protests and a widespread grassroots political movement in response to state legislative actions. Many of Lake City School District's teachers and employees, along with employees and students at MU, were active in this movement; however, this movement also created spaces of tension for the novice teachers in this study that are important contextual factors that I will consider in the latter part of this chapter. These civic actions signify Lake City's progressive legacy, clear ideas of a participatory democracy, and current political leanings.

Midwestern University (MU)

A large, research-focused state university, MU plays an integral role in Lake City as well as in the state. Whether they are an alumni, or just a fan, people in the state cheer on MU's sports teams; in fact, in one novice teacher's classroom, to get the students excited for the start of math, she would have the students graph the number of push-ups they could complete during one of MU's school songs. The majority of the undergraduate population (c. 30,000 students) hails from the state; however, around 20% of the undergraduate population comes from out of state, with many coming from states in the Northeast. MU's mission is to be a center of intellectual engagement that gives back to the state; this emphasis fosters many community and state-wide collaborations.

For many of the students attending MU, Lake City is the largest and most diverse place that they have lived up until this point in their lives. Lisa reflected,

Lake City just opens your eyes if you're from a small town, from a very conservative town, it just opens your eyes I guess...I mean, I'm just from a really conservative town, so I had never, and my parents are very conservative, so I've always had this fire inside of me where I try to stand up for myself and I don't agree with a lot of things my parents say, but I had grown up my whole life like, 'no that's right, that's right, you don't question authority, you don't question adults.' So that's what I grew up with and then I got here and I feel like in Lake City and especially at MU they cultivate that question-asking in you (Interview, December 8, 2011).

This was a common theme across most of the participants in this study. Hannah also spoke to how her experiences in the elementary education PDS program were the first in which people openly spoke about issues such as race and poverty. Diego and Dania were the exceptions to this sentiment. Diego grew up in the state's largest city "three blocks away from a hood area where it's low-income housing, but yet...still two blocks away from [suburb]" (Interview, December 2, 2011). Dania came from outside a large city in a neighboring state and spoke about her disconnect with students in her cohort of the Elementary Education program. She noted that she grew up with having the power turned off from time to time and that this was something that most of her all-female cohort, who spoke about having second houses on lakes, could not understand. Thus, while for many students MU and Lake City provided a more diverse environment, for others like Diego and Dania, experiences in Lake City were potentially more homogenous, particularly in the School of Education and the Elementary Education Program.

The Elementary Education Program

The School of Education at MU has a national reputation with many high ranking graduate programs and faculty who are innovative in their fields of study. The Elementary Education program has a reputation for being selective. Hannah, who decided at the last minute to apply to the program, noted that at first she felt that she “didn’t deserve” to be in the program because she had not engaged in the multiple volunteer school experiences many of her peers had done to prepare for admission. She said,

I know a lot of my peers have wanted this forever and they’ve worked with family members or friends in classrooms, or they had taken other classes that I hadn’t taken yet...so my friends talk and they get really emotional about how they didn’t think they were going to get accepted, or they were put on the wait list...”

(Interview, February 21, 2012).

Olivia, who was in Hannah’s cohort, echoed these sentiments about the anxiety-producing application process. She reflected,

I felt the application portion struck me, I was really nervous about that because the way that it structured, you kind of have two, you have an autobiographical statement and one really broad question to answer. And I think my year it was what do you see as the biggest challenge public educators face today. Where it was like I could list a million things and you had a word limit or a character limit or whatever. I remember thinking that question is going to determine whether I get to do this or not...I remember thinking through that application process, wow, all this is a really loaded question because that’s really all, you had rec letters but that’s really all you had (Interview, February 29, 2012).

Olivia noted both the selectivity of the program, as well as the seemingly limited application process. Olivia's reflection also points out the program's clear focus on student's ability to think critically about education and its commitment to public education.

During the period of this study, each semester the Elementary Education program generally admitted around 50 students, split between two cohorts – one focused primarily on PreK and lower elementary grades and one focused on upper elementary and middle grades. In this study, five participants (Diego, Lisa, Dania, Olivia, and Hannah) were in early grades cohorts and one participant (Claire) was in a middle grades cohort. Each cohort had a distinct focus, i.e. many in the early grades cohort desired to work in Kindergarten or first grade classrooms, while many in the middle grades cohort hope to work in middle schools; however, there was significant overlap in the structure of each program. The major difference for the two cohorts was in the requirements for grade level coverage in practicum experiences; the early grades cohort had to teach in three out of four grade ranges -- PreK, K, 1-2, and 3-5, and the middle grades cohort had to teach in the following two grade ranges -- 3-5 and 6-8.

The Elementary Education program during the time of this study⁹ was a five-semester program, with the fifth semester consisting of full-time student teaching. The courses were organized sequentially so that a student had to follow the program in its exact order. The following table outlines the sequence of courses and practicum experiences for the program:

⁹ Since the completion of this study, MU has revamped their Elementary Education programs. The programs now are completed in four semesters and students choose from four different strands for dual-certification: Early Grades (PreK-2)+ ELL, Middle Grades + ELL, Middle Grades + Content Specialization, Middle Grades + Special Education.

Table 2

Elementary Education Sequence at Midwestern University

Semester	University Coursework (credit hours in parentheses)	School Practicum
1	Introduction to Elementary Education (3)	“Community-based” experience, 9 weeks *Usually consisted of tutoring in after school programs
2	Teaching Reading (3) Teaching Language Arts (3) Teaching Children’s Literature (3) Strategies for Inclusive Schooling (3)	Three half-days / week, 9 weeks Focused on literacy
3	Teaching Mathematics (3) Art and Design in Teaching (3)	Three half-days / week Focused on mathematics
4	Teaching Social Studies (3) Teaching Science (3) Teaching Music (3) Physical Education (3)	Three half-days / week, 9 weeks Focused on social studies and science, music and movement when possible
5	Student Teaching Seminar (2)	Student Teaching (10), 15 weeks

The coursework in MU’s program revolved around particular content foci each semester. The students in the program often referred to which semester they were in by the content focus, rather than the order, e.g. literacy semester or math semester. The novice teachers in the study had a variety of opinions about the coursework. Olivia summarized many of the sentiments in the following reflection on the program:

I feel like in terms of my progression through it [the program] I feel like there were two really light semesters, where we were kind of wanting more, and then there were two really heavy semesters, where we couldn’t get our heads above the water. So it is hard to take a lot away from each one because there would be the lighter ones where we would kind of take that time for granted and then feel like we had more free time than we did. And then there would be these heavy ones which would really be content rich, like literacy has so much to take away and

I'm seeing it now in student teaching, I'm wishing we would have more time from literacy and also the previous one I was in which was social studies and science and gym, I wish I would have taken more away. But we didn't, you got in the mindset halfway through that you were getting stuff done to get it done and it when it was kind of when it was done you could breathe out and move on

(Interview, February 29, 2012).

The novice teachers in this study all commented on the literacy semester as one that was very heavy in its workload; some students, like Olivia, eventually found connections between the content learned in that semester and their practice, whereas others, like Diego felt that too much time was spent on justifying teaching choices. He commented, "When I'm a teacher, do you think I'm going to sit down and say, oh I chose this book, write it out, sit there at my computer and type out 36 pages of why I picked the books I picked to do in a certain order? No"

(Interview, December 2, 2011). This tension between seeing the assets of the program's courses and the constraints of viewing assignments as tasks disassociated from the work of teachers played out in novice teacher's learning to teach process. Despite his critique of the coursework, Diego also noted,

I got what I needed out of it [the program]. I got the knowledge, and those big top, in the clouds ideas, and then through the experiences in the school, I got what I needed in terms of how I learn, like kinesthetic learning, learn by doing

(Interview, December 2, 2011).

The theoretical aspects and the experiential component were the main assets of the program for him.

All of the participants in this study cited their practicum experiences, including their student teaching, as the greatest influence on their development as teachers. Claire commented,

So overall I think the program has been super powerful in that I guess the in class the practicum experiences have been probably the most significant experiences so far. Just getting to see professionals teach and I've seen a really wide variety (Interview, March 23, 2013).

MU's program had significant experiential components in the local schools with its practicum requirement each semester. After the initial semester, students generally filled out a "preference sheet" to indicate their grade level preference and if they had any special circumstances, i.e. transportation issues. This became particularly important when considering how each novice teacher experienced the program. Diego explained, "I made the program fit what I wanted" (Interview, December 2, 2011); Diego advocated for placements that fit his needs, i.e. he worked with a male kindergarten teacher, in a middle school despite being part of the early grades cohort, and with a teacher of color during his student teaching. Dania had a similar experience when she advocated her desire to work in an African-Centric Instruction classroom during her fourth semester. For students who knew the local schools and had a particular vision for the kind of teaching they wanted to enact, advocating for their needs was a central part to creating an experience that supported their learning. Lisa, however, lamented not knowing more about the schools to better shape her experience and attributed her determination to secure the student teaching placement she wanted to her final realization that she needed to shape her experience.

For most practicum students, faculty or teaching assistants who supervised practicum students made the placements. In addition to visiting the students twice during the semester, the

supervisors then worked with the students during a weekly seminar used to debrief practicum experiences. Cooperating teachers who worked with practicum students had approval from their principal to participate in the program and usually had three or more years of teaching experience; however, for the practicum semesters there was no other requirement or preparation as a teacher educator to work with novice teachers. Cooperating teachers who worked with student teachers in MU's program had to complete a university supervised / taught course focused on supervision. During the student teaching semester, supervisors visited students at their student teaching site four times throughout the semester. Importantly, student teachers at MU went through a "matching" process to select their student teaching placement. During the semester prior to student teaching, students met with a coordinator at MU who suggested two to three possible cooperating teachers after a brief interview to assess the student's desires for a placement. The students then visited the cooperating teacher's classrooms where they met with and were interviewed by the cooperating teacher. Near the end of the semester, the students ranked their choices for student teaching and the cooperating teachers indicated which student with whom they would like to work. In this way, the novice teachers who were student teachers in this study had a direct voice in choosing their student teaching placement.

In most cases the most salient link between the university coursework and the practicum experience was the novice teacher. Antonio, one of the university supervisors working with student teachers, commented that "the idea is to make collaborative work, but that doesn't really, really work" (Interview, December 16, 2011). He reflected on the intense nature of the work cooperating teachers are doing, along with the intensity of student teaching, and saw his role as one of support to the student teacher. Thus, while the university supervisor was crossing the

physical boundaries of the university and the school, they remained more entrenched in the ideological space of the university.

This disconnect among the multiple contexts became particularly clear during a critical incident that occurred between Dania, Madeline, her university supervisor, and Maya, Dania's cooperating teacher. Working in an African-Centric Instruction classroom, Dania worked to develop her cultural competence and switch between home and school language. When Madeline visited the classroom she expressed concern over Dania's language since Dania is White. Madeline said,

Dania is committed to working with students of color, so we also talked a bit about her thinking through as a teacher, who is going to be perceived as White by her students, what language choices, tone, and vernacular she is using and how those, and to just be thoughtful about that...so she'll sometimes in working with students, her speech patterns will imitate her student's speech patterns, which I think could be appropriate or could not be appropriate, I didn't really feel like it was my place to say it was or it wasn't, but rather for her to be thoughtful about what that means for her students and about whether that was intentional or not intentional, and whether that was a good fit and what those messages might be, and so that was really the questioning bit...those were the types of questions I was asking her about...[Maya's] teaching style is very unique to her, so we also talked about what does that mean for you being a different person than Maya, and what are you going to take away and what are you going to leave. What are things you really admired and what are things that really wouldn't be a good fit for you? (Interview, June 6, 2012).

Madeline's recounting aligned with her supervision philosophy of helping students "identify core practices" and figure out how those aligned with their personal teaching values. For Madeline, she framed the incident as an inquiring conversation she had with Dania around her language, her values, and how to become her own person while working with Maya. When Dania recounted the incident she said,

She [Madeline] made it really clear she was not comfortable with Maya, told me to be aware of how I act because of how Maya acts, I emailed back with her a couple of times to be like, Am I being inappropriate with the kids from your point of view, and she was like, no, no you're fine.

Katie: Do you know what her issue with Maya was?

Dania: Because Maya is in their [students'] face...I think that being loud and calling them out for their stuff and not letting them get away with it, she was like you need to be careful as a White female. And I was like what? I'm not saying I'm going to be like Maya. You know and then she was like, are the parents ok? And I'm like, yes they are. It was weird. It made me very uncomfortable (Interview, May 21, 2011).

For Dania, the incident revealed Madeline's discomfort with Maya's teaching practice. Dania also wondered if her actions in the classroom were inappropriate, and while Madeline assured her that they were not, she also reiterated her stance that Dania should examine her role as a White woman when working with students of color. Finally, when I asked Maya about the incident, she interpreted the situation in the following way:

Someone said that she should think about how what she's saying is affecting the kids coming from a White person. And this is what I have to say about that.

Dania is very culturally competent, she switched very well between home and school language. I think the kids responded to her so well, the relationships developed so well, because she was relating to them in a way that they totally understood. So her supervisor in my opinion was projecting because Dania is very competent in that way. She is very current. She knows what the kids are watching, she knows what the kids are listening to, and her language seemed to me to be extremely appropriate for the kids (Interview, June 13, 2012).

In this critical incident, Madeline's lack of contextual knowledge of Maya's classroom and Dania's learning within that space – she was only required to observe Dania two times and in this case both of those occurred near the end of the semester – inhibited her ability to mediate Dania's learning to teach process. While Madeline thought she was supporting Dania's reflection, nevertheless, both Dania and Maya felt that the comments were inappropriate. Again, this critical incident is not to diminish Madeline's work as a supervisor, rather it is to highlight the lack of mediation between contexts beyond the work the novice teachers did for themselves.

Claire demonstrated how some novice teachers worked to mediate their own experiences between university coursework and practicum experiences. She commented,

Well I guess in general, I've really with each semester, I usually try to look at the syllabus for all of my classes and see how can I find ways to connect like our assignments with those classes with what I'm doing in the classroom, because usually I find it more meaningful. Especially with this semester with social studies we've talked about creating democratic classrooms. We at least at the beginning of the semester we had a lesson on democracy in the classroom, which I think it was only touched on briefly (April 20, 2012).

There were clear connections between the work occurring in her methods coursework and her practicum experience; however, Claire made those connections. The multiple contexts for novice teacher learning and identity development created multiple spaces for learning; however, mediation among those spaces too often fell upon the novice. Importantly, one participant, Hannah, participated in MU's PDS cohort, which held promise as a means of more intentional mediation among learning contexts.

The PDS strand within the Elementary Education program at MU admitted a few (around 3-5) students each semester. The PDS strand had an early grades cohort, which Hannah participated in, as well as a middle grades cohort, which had a slightly different structure. For the purposes of examining context, I will only detail the structures of the PDS early grades cohort.

Jane, the PDS supervisor for the early grades cohort, explained that there had been various iterations of the program for the past 20 years. She clarified that the model of fieldwork in the PDS strand was a "clinical program," during which students spent all four semesters (after the first introductory semester) between two elementary schools: South Shore and the lower-grade partner school to South Shore. She remarked, "We supervise them so we get to see their growth over time, which is different than the regular model, where they have a different supervisor every semester and a different school" (Interview, May 31, 2012). While Diego and Dania advocated for their needs to shape their experience, Hannah, the novice teacher who was in the PDS cohort, talked about Jane's role in shaping her experiences in classrooms. She reflected, "I was lucky enough to have Jane who could see that I needed these teachers, at these times, and placed me with each of them" (Interview, May 22, 2012). Further, the PDS program was a multi-semester program; in other words, the students in the PDS model met as a seminar

group that included students from semesters 2, 3, 4, and student teaching (5). This intergenerational component and consistency of the same supervisor and schools across semesters gave PDS a different quality. Jane remarked,

They [novice teachers] have a chance to become really immersed in the school community and the neighborhood communities. And the idea is that that could leverage something important in terms of becoming a more connected, knowledgeable teacher for diverse schools (Interview, May 31, 2012).

There was a clear dimension of time that supported relationships in the PDS program – relationships between the supervisor and novice teachers, between the novice teachers and the schools and their communities, and among the multi-age cohort of novice teachers. While not the focus of this study, the role of PDS and its particular attributes were an important context for learning and development afforded to one of the participants.

Overall, the novice teachers who participated in this study had varied views of MU's program and which aspects were most influential to their learning to teach process. All participants noted that the practicum experiences in schools were the most influential; however, when looking at specific components of the program the critiques varied. The critiques included disappointment that most of the courses were taught by graduate student teaching assistants.

Lisa remarked,

I felt kind of gypped because there are a lot of amazing professors at MU and they're really well known in the education field and we don't get them. And I really, really have loved most of my TA's and I've enjoyed all of my classes, but we're supposed to be the #2 education program in the nation and not, that is crazy to me, because we don't even get [leading scholar], or [other leading scholar]

talked to us on the third week into semester of student teaching about culturally relevant teaching in our student teaching semester; that should have been done on the first day of the program...there are so many people that get into the program that are not, not looking to teach relevant to their, anything relevant to their students; they're looking to teach the traditional way (Interview, December 8, 2011).

Lisa's remark also pointed to a tension in the program between its mission – “To provide an intellectually challenging professional program that promotes social justice through multicultural education and critical reflection” – and student's experience of that mission. For Lisa, she noted that while this mission came across at various points in the semesters, it was not as clearly and coherently embodied throughout the program as she would have liked. Importantly, Lisa transferred to MU during the second semester of the program and did not take the Introduction to Elementary Education course. Diego spoke to a similar tension; however, for him, the introduction of socio-cultural issues in education during the introductory semester proved difficult. He noted,

The program does not cater itself to minorities. It doesn't cater itself to the men, and it doesn't cater itself to the African-Americans. I mean there are Asian-Americans in the program, but there's me, and I got the double-whammy of being the only male and the only African-American and so like I told you, your semester [Social Studies Methods] was the first time I ever spoke up and was really adamant, like when we read the piece about the African-American museum. I never talked about that kind of stuff first semester, and it's supposed to be our cultural class. I don't know these people, I'm thinking, ok, I'm going to tell some

of these people that I'm African-American and they're just going to be like [pause], kind of look down on me. And so, it's very, but that's a personal thing. That's a personal identity issue that I have. So it's been, the program has taught me a lot about how to be a teacher and it has a really great, a really great ideal, but I don't think it meets its ideals (Interview, December 1, 2011).

This sentiment of the program setting forth an idealized form of education was echoed across participants who often struggled to make connections between coursework, which they often viewed as theoretical, and their experiences in classrooms. Lisa articulated this disconnect,

I think there needs to be more of connect between practicum and our classes. So specifically talking about things in our classes that we can then implement into our practicum site. Because I didn't really understand that connection until now that I'm student teaching (Interview, December 8, 2011).

As noted earlier, this disconnect between the university coursework and the work of schools spoke to the perennial issue in teacher education of the two-worlds pitfall (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985); however, it also illustrated the inattention of MU to these issues. As the only participant who worked in the PDS cohort, Hannah was the sole voice in seeing connections between the university and her work in schools. In that case, Hannah had Jane as a mediator of those experiences; Jane had deep historical and cultural knowledge of both the school space and the university space.

Even with these critiques of the disconnect between the university and schools, Dania considered the "theoretical" nature of MU's program as an asset. She said,

[It's a] very theory based program...[that's] incredibly important because they're giving us justification for everything that we do and it gives us the ability to say

ok, this is what I'm doing, this is why it's important to me, and really a justification for whatever we do. And I know people struggle with that and with the ed philosophy, people kind of complain about it, but really it's you sitting down and flushing out why you think the way you do and why you do what you do. And you have to justify yourself, you're going to have to defend yourself if you're going to be a teacher (Interview, April 12, 2012)

Dania's emphasis on justification of practice illustrated her attention to the larger socio-political contexts that shape views of teachers and teaching. Local politics and politics within her practicum placement at West Woods bolstered Dania's understanding of how her work at the university supported her work in schools.

Other critiques of the program that the novice teachers noted included the timing of the courses, i.e. Olivia's explanation of two light semesters and two heavy semesters, the lack of diversity in the cohorts preparing to be teachers, the program not "walking the talk" of being responsive to learners, and the program's lack of attention to the everyday logistics of teaching, i.e. classroom management and managing student data. Despite these critiques, most of the participants felt that the combination of experiences in classrooms and coursework prepared them as much as possible for their first years teaching. Olivia commented,

Overall I feel really prepared. I feel like I'll leave [Lake City / MU], based on its location and based on the opportunities we've been given in terms of our practicum and different courses, I will feel prepared to teach in the type of schools I want to teach in, which would be diverse and with a lot of different learners with different levels and different backgrounds and I'll be ready to do that (Interview, February 29, 2012).

Field Placements: Schools, Cooperating Teachers & Novice Teachers

Revisited

The foci of this study were the field placements, which were conceptualized as possible spaces for immersion in democratic practices. In the following section I give a brief overview of the schools, the cooperating teachers, and I revisit the novice teachers who worked with each cooperating teacher. I highlight the democratic practices that each cooperating teacher enacted; however, I leave richer description of classrooms for later chapters that delve into specific cases. Each description gives a general idea of the school demographics. As a comparison, Lake City's overall elementary school population is around one-fifth African American, one-fifth Hispanic, a little less than half White, around one-tenth Asian, and a little less than one-tenth multiracial. In terms of socioeconomic status, a little over half of Lake City's students are classified as low-income. Around one-quarter of Lake City's elementary students are English Language Learners (ELL) and one-tenth receives Special Education services¹⁰.

West Woods. Tucked in a neighborhood of older homes, West Woods was an elementary school serving around 350 students in grades PreK - 5. As you walk past the main office, you pass a school bulletin board that changes its focus every few weeks, but was usually focused on a person of color who had achieved success or an example of building self-esteem. For example, one week the board held a display about Michael Jackson with a pocket full of lyrics to "Wanna Be Startin' Something" (Artifact, December 11, 2011).

¹⁰ I have chosen to use "rough estimates," rather than exact percentages for the demographic data for the school district and the individual schools in order to protect the anonymity of the participants and locations. The demographic data is publicly available via the school district's website and was accessed for the 2011-2012 school year.

West Woods had one of the highest percentages (a little over 40%) of African American students in Lake City's school district. The remainder of the school population was around one-quarter White, one-sixth Hispanic, one-tenth who identify as multiracial, and a little less than one-tenth Asian. Nearly 70% of the students were classified as low-income and around 15% of the students received Special Education services. The two partnered-classrooms, which participated in this study, were a "special education cluster" and had an additional educational aid that worked with the students throughout the day.

Maya and Grace were the cooperating teachers at West Woods who opened their classrooms for this study. They worked in a teamed second-third grade classroom. Each teacher had a "homeroom," of mixed age students, but the students moved fluidly between the two rooms and worked with all teachers who supported the classrooms. Diego, who worked directly with Maya, and Lisa, who worked directly with Grace, had their student teaching experience in these classrooms in the fall of 2011 and Dania had her practicum experience (assigned to Maya) in the spring of 2012.

Maya. Maya, a middle-aged African-American woman, who had been teaching for sixteen years, came to education later in her career. She originally studied Political Science with the intent of going to law school. After starting law school, she realized that "it was not going to help me meet my goal of saving the world" (Interview, December 1, 2011). In her studies of Political Science Maya cited ideas from Machiavelli's *Le Prince* as part of what propelled her to consider education. She said,

One of his theories, which is a commonly accepted precept is that, if you want to occupy a country, you have to occupy the minds of the children. So what I really discovered was that if I really want to change, if I really want to change the

system, or the way that we do things then I have to start with the children. And so

I decided to go into education (Interview, December 1, 2011).

For Maya, education was about a means to justice and equity. She joked that her mother used to ask her, “Who do you think you are? Martin Luther King Jr.?” to which Maya succinctly replied, “Yes” (Interview, December 1, 2011).

Before she returned to school for education, Maya earned a degree in Political Anthropology. Maya wanted to pursue a degree in Special Education, but there were limited slots at MU at that time, and so she was directed toward The Community Teacher program at MU, which was an experimental clinical program¹¹. Through this program Maya earned her teacher certification and a Master’s degree in Multicultural Education. After completing her student teaching at South Shore Elementary (also in this study), Maya went on to work at South Shore for over ten years. While there she worked at the district’s Saturday morning African American Academy. During this time, she began working with others, including Grace, to develop a more cohesive pedagogy and curriculum around African-Centered Instruction (ACI)¹². When she heard that the principal of West Woods was invested in the ACI model, she and Grace changed schools and began working at West Woods.

Diego. Diego’s decision to work with Maya seemed very straightforward. He told MU that he wanted to work with a teacher of color for his student teaching placement; this in itself limited the number of possibilities in Lake City. He said that when he walked into Maya’s room, he just felt at home and knew that is where he wanted to student teach.

¹¹ The Community Teacher program was the predecessor of the current instantiation of the PDS model at MU.

¹² A more detailed description of ACI and Maya and Grace’s classroom is included in Chapter 5 that considers Diego’s conception and enactment of democratic education.

Dania. Since Dania was a practicum student, she usually would have had less of a voice in deciding on her placement. She noted on her preference sheet that she wanted to work in an ACI classroom and originally was placed with another teacher at West Woods. She and Diego were dating during the time of the study and she already knew a great deal about the ACI model by listening to him reflect on his student teaching. When the placement with the other teacher fell through and Maya volunteered to take a practicum student, Dania agreed to work with Maya.

Grace. Grace, a middle-aged White female, came to education through a less traditional pathway. She grew up in Lake City and said that she was “not a very plugged in student.” Without a clear plan of what she wanted to do after high school, Grace decided to attend the local technical school. She knew that she wanted to have a career where she was involved with the community and originally centered her work in police science; however, after realizing that she would be a minority as a female, and that her temperament of being easily “infuriated” would complicate her position, she decided to change directions. After taking a course in juvenile justice, Grace considered switching her focus to working with youth, yet she still saw that work within the realm of law enforcement, perhaps working as a parole officer for juveniles. During this time, Grace worked as a custodian in another local school district to pay her way through school. As she worked in the school she began to envision what her own classroom would look like; she then changed her pathway to take college-transfer courses, and transferred to MU.

One of her practicum experiences was at the lower-school for South Shore Elementary. At that time, South Shore was predominantly African-American. After doing her student teaching in the district where she had worked as a custodian, Grace began to question working in

a mostly White school district. She explained her enthusiasm working at South Shore's partner school, "The things that were happening in my classroom the relationships, the realness behind what we were doing was just like, I just became really passionate about the realness, the purpose, the family involvement, the kids, the impact" (Interview, December 6, 2011). Grace then worked for a neighborhood intervention program in Lake City, volunteered as a basketball coach, and began substitute teaching in Lake City. Her work as a basketball coach helped her develop strong relationships with students; however, it also highlighted to her how many issues her students were facing in school. After a year, Grace realized she was not "playing the game" right for the way that Lake City hired its teachers and decided to take a year away from the school district; she worked with a nonprofit agency that provided adolescent programming. The following school year she began working at South Shore Elementary School.

During her tenure at South Shore, Grace took a year's leave and went to work in a large Midwestern city. She described the experience,

So it was really interesting for me, I had a lot of experience in Lake City working with a lot of African-American kids and families and had worked at the African-American Academy. But, still, to be coming from a really White base, you know, to be in Lake City and really, you know, and then for me to move and be completely immersed, and I lived on the south side and I taught on the south side, and it was just like, extremely challenging and I grew a lot and I learned a lot.

But it was really emotional and it was really hard (Interview, December 6, 2011).

After her year away, Grace came back to Lake City and South Shore Elementary, where she continued to work with Maya on developing the ACI model. She and Maya transferred to West Woods together.

Lisa. Lisa's decision to work with Grace was an all-or-nothing one. The only classroom she listed as a match was Grace's. Lisa reflected on how she came to work with Grace:

Well, the only, and I didn't really hear about it [ACI] that much before I came here, but...a couple of those students were in my after-school, so I would talk to them about what they did here and it was always different than what I would expect to hear. And they would tell me about the principles and I'd be like, "Oh!" and they're like, "Oh they're Swahili words, they're from Africa" and I was like, what's going on? And then [student] would always talk about Grace, that she would always try to find books that he could see himself in because [student's] mom and dad are Black but for some reason he has blonde hair and light skin and so that to me was like [snap] a trigger right there, like I want to know that teacher. Because if that's a teacher that cares about that student and wants to be able to have them be reflected in things that he's reading and doing in the classroom, that's a teacher I would want to work with and know...came here and came for Harambee time for the first time and I was like, ok, I like this a lot, and then I saw how [student] and [student] acted here compared to the center, which the center was tough and I was like they are doing something right here, and then you just listen to the principles and the things that they talk about and how empowering it is for the kids and that just got me. Then I came back for a second visit because I wanted to see more of the academic work that they do and I just knew it was a fit, you just know (Interview, December 8, 2011).

The ease with which Lisa worked with Grace and developed both a professional and a personal relationship reinforced how this placement was a “fit” for her.

Democratic practices in Maya & Grace’s 2nd / 3rd grade classroom.

Democratic values and dispositions dominated the work in these classrooms. While not necessarily obvious, the principles of the Nguzo Saba, which guided the ethos of these classrooms closely aligned with democratic values. Briefly, the seven principles of the Nguzo Saba, as detailed in a West Woods newsletter, are as follows:

1. Umoja (Unity) - To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation and race.
2. Kujichagulia (Self-Determination) - To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves and speak for ourselves.
3. Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility) – To build and maintain our community together and make our brother’s and sister’s problems our problems and to solve them together.
4. Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics) – To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses and to profit from them together.
5. Nia (Purpose) – To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.
6. Kuumba (Creativity) – To do always as much as we can, in the way we can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than we inherited it.
7. Imani (Faith) – To believe with all our heart in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders and the righteousness and victory of our struggle. (Artifact, December 1, 2011)

The curriculum and language of the classroom drew heavily on these principles. The classroom also centered itself around the ideals of justice, equality, and respect; all four teachers worked with students to flesh out what these ideals meant to their classroom in the first weeks of school. These classrooms also had a strong focus on supporting students to problem-solve and learn to become more independent in solving their problems. Finally, the curriculum was focused on issues of equity. Lisa described her students' engagement with their beginning-of-the-year study of people who fought for justice and freedom:

And then freedom, they love, they know a lot about Rosa Parks, they know a lot about Martin Luther King, I mean we looked at Rosa Parks quite a bit in the first month and a half and to see how it resonated with the kids, it was really interesting. You could tell we watched the Rosa Parks movie and I felt like that was really powerful like when we were watching, the kids were, 'no that is not ok', they were really into it. So then they started asking questions, 'why did that happen? Does that still, does that kind of stuff still go on?' (Interview, December 8, 2011)

These issues of curriculum as a primary force for enacting democratic education will be further explored in the next chapter that looks closely at Diego's learning to teach process.

Central Rivers. Located in the middle of Lake City, on a tree lined street just off of one of Lake City's many lakes, Central Rivers is typically known as the elementary school that serves the students of many of MU's professors and staff. Nearly 70% of the students at Central Rivers were White; the remaining population was a little less than one-tenth each for Asian, Hispanic, and multiracial, and the African-American population was less than one-tenth of the school population. Central Rivers had roughly 20% of students who are considered low-income.

The Special Education population was less than 10% and the ELL population was a little more than 10%. The classroom that participated in this study was an ELL cluster room, so it disproportionately represented both the ELL population and the Hispanic population of the school.

Tuan. Tuan's first grade classroom was a welcoming space where all visitors were immediately introduced and greeted. Tuan, a Vietnamese male teacher, who has been teaching for around ten years, grew up in the state. As one of eleven siblings, values related to family and not putting one person's needs ahead of another's were important for him. Tuan attended MU for his undergraduate degree and started out wanting to become a dentist. While in school, Tuan spent his summers working alongside his brother who ran a youth program in a northern city in the state. This program served a number of Southeast Asian students, who, Tuan explained, "had run-ins with the law and they could potentially do the community service with him or go to jail essentially" (Interview, February 28, 2012). Tuan began to question how the school system was serving these young people. He commented, "So that was a huge thrust into why I wanted to teach because I just felt that there's not a lot of Southeast Asian males. There's not a lot of teachers with my background teaching" (Interview, February 28, 2012).

Tuan's first semester in the Elementary Education program at MU was difficult. He reflected,

But my first year into the program was really difficult because I was trying to figure out, you're twenty-something, you're trying to figure out your own identity and just trying to prove yourself. Because I just feel like as a Vietnamese American I always feel I have to prove myself, like how did you get into the school? How did you get into this program? Is it because of your merit or is it

because of other things, and it didn't help because during that time there was an article by a student who claimed that in the education program there was reverse racism (Interview, February 28, 2012).

Tuan noted that a prominent MU professor wrote a rebuttal to the article. Soon after the incident, Tuan managed to switch tracks and join the PDS program, which Jane was already leading at the time. Tuan credits his growth as a teacher to that switch and feeling more supported; he said,

I felt the mission was clear, it was to help teachers prepare for a more diverse population. And it just reached my core. My values. And I think once my values were aligned it also helped me to be more invested in it. Like I said, I had a difficult experience my first semester because I didn't feel everything was aligned. It might be the structure but it also might be just me trying to figure out and trust people in the program (Interview, February 28, 2012).

As I will explore in the following chapter, Tuan's values were a key driving force to his teaching.

Immediately following his graduation from MU, Tuan began to work in the Lake City school district. During his first five years of teaching, he was moved to different schools in Lake City. He took a leave from Lake City and went to teach English in Ecuador, followed by a year in New York City for graduate studies toward a school administration degree. He then returned to Lake City, where he began teaching at Central Rivers. During his summers he continued to work abroad and taught in China and Thailand.

Olivia . In the following excerpt, Olivia described her first visit to Tuan's classroom and her decision to work with him for her student teaching placement:

And I went there thinking was going to stay an hour, I stayed until lunch because I was so infatuated with this classroom in terms of how it was laid out and I felt that my ideal vision in terms of teacher-student relationship, and that language I talked about before was in there. I felt there was a diverse group of learners. I felt like I would be challenged because Tuan at first really intimidated me in terms of me seeing him and thinking how great of a teacher he was in the brief time I saw him, and I wanted that uncomfortable feeling and I didn't want to, I didn't want to become best friends with my teacher and I didn't want to, I do, I shouldn't say I didn't want to, I didn't want to go in not having that uncomfortable feeling like I don't know what to do because I feel like that's when you learn the most, when you're really questioning yourself (Interview, February 29, 2012).

Olivia's description of Tuan accurately foreshadowed their relationship and her learning to teach process. *Hannah also worked with Tuan during her fourth semester practicum. This experience occurred before Tuan had joined the study; however, Hannah references her work with Tuan throughout her interviews, and Tuan was present at her final presentation of her teaching and learning.*

Democratic practices in Tuan's 1st grade classroom. Tuan's classroom buzzed with talk, which exemplified his focus on discussion, deliberation, and decision-making. Tuan taught his students that "our schema" is our understanding of the world and his students frequently referenced having to "change their schema" when they had new information. Students also engaged in asking for and providing evidence during their discussions. Students regularly shared during their morning meeting and fielded questions and comments from other

students. Students were also engaged in problem-solving for both the community, i.e. calling out a class issue, and for themselves, i.e. resolving issues with friends.

Democratic values and dispositions were present throughout the classroom's actions and language. Students referenced "caring for one another" as a reason to either initiate or end an action. Tuan also shared his Vietnamese culture with his students – from teaching them how to count in Vietnamese, to sharing his immigration story, to making Pho one afternoon – and encouraged his students to share their cultures as well.

Toward the end of the school year, Tuan wanted to engage his students in more social action. As Tuan knew my background working at a Teachers College Reading and Writing Project School, he asked for me to help Olivia and him develop a persuasive letter-writing unit. We based our work around Sarah Picard Taylor's (2008) book, *A Quick Guide to Teaching Persuasive Writing, K-2*; I had participated in Sarah Picard Taylor's study group, whose work contributed to the writing of this book.

South Shore. Situated in a neighborhood of older homes and apartment buildings, South Shore was a short walk to a major thoroughfare in Lake City and some of its best Mexican grocery stores. The neighborhood of South Shore has shifted in the past few decades from a mixture of African-American, Asian, White, and Hispanic families, to one that has a larger Mexican and Hmong presence. The school's population was over one-third Hispanic, a little less than one-third White, with the remaining third almost evenly split between African American and Asian students. Less than 5% of the students were classified as multiracial. Nearly 70% of the students at South Shore were low-income. Around 10% receive Special Education services and a little over 40% of the students were ELL. South Shore primarily served students in grades 3 to 5 and had a partner school that housed the K to 2 classrooms. South Shore's partner school

was one of the first schools in Lake City to adopt the dual-language (Spanish-English) model of instruction, which at the time of this study had been in place for two years.

South Shore had a long history of partnership with MU and with its partner school was the site of MU's PDS program. The students who participated in the early grades cohort of the PDS model had nearly all of their teaching practicums at either South Shore or the partner school, and the PDS cohort held their weekly seminars on site at the schools. Holding the seminar on site allowed for the novice teachers to organize sessions that invited parents, teachers, and school staff to share their expertise; e.g., Hannah described seminars where parents of students came to talk to the novice teachers. The novice teachers who worked at South Shore had a community engagement component as part of the PDS model; many of the students worked with the Saturday soccer program or with various groups organized by parents of South Shore students. South Shore worked to increase "minority" parent involvement at the school through Parent Empowerment Groups that brought together parents of particular populations, i.e. African American and Hmong, which historically had been less active in the traditional Parent Teacher Association.

Eva. Having grown up in a rural part of the state with a mother who was a teacher, Eva knew from a young age that she wanted to follow her mother's pathway. She described using her mother's Vis-à-Vis dry erase markers to pretend she was teaching while doing her math homework on the windows. Throughout middle school and high school Eva volunteered with students and spent her summers working at camps. Eva attended MU and was accepted into the School of Education; she decided that with going to such a large university she "wanted to feel like I really fit in somewhere" and applied to be a part of the PDS cohort. She described her thought process for joining PDS:

Ok, I'm going to have a supervisor...continuously for two years and have this steady sense of community for seminars and things, and that was really what I went into the program hoping for. But then when I came out, because of the focus of PDS, my priorities as a teacher have shifted. And not that I wasn't interested in culturally relevant pedagogy or working in communities of poverty, not that I wasn't interested in that before, but, it just became really important at that point for me. I just felt like the work was really necessary (Interview, February 20, 2012).

In particular Eva took the community engagement aspect of the PDS model to heart and volunteered at multiple community organizations; for Eva, she soon saw engagement with the community as a natural part of being a teacher.

After graduating from MU, Eva spent a year working with an AmeriCorps program in public housing communities in a large Midwestern city. She worked to set up leadership programs and homework programs in the community and considered her time spent working with students outside of schools “extremely valuable” (Interview, February 20, 2012). She then spent a year teaching sixth grade in a neighboring state after which she moved back to Lake City, where she began working at South Shore. Eva moved grades a few times and this was her first year teaching third grade. She was working toward her certification in ELL and was also taking a supervision course with Jane during the time of the study.

Hannah. When Hannah described her decision to work with Eva, she stated, I really liked how goofy it was in there. She wasn't afraid to be silly with the kids...and she told me right away, oh I love 3rd grade because 4th grade they get a little more serious and they're not as goofy...but 3rd graders are the perfect age

where they're not embarrassed when you say something funny, or they'll joke around with you" (Interview, February 20, 2012).

Hannah also mentioned Eva's ability to integrate curriculum as a reason she was attracted to working in that classroom.

Democratic practices in Eva's 3rd grade classroom. Eva described multiple parts of her day as having a "buzz," which was certainly the case. Students came into the classroom with a purpose and easily shifted their purpose with each change in the day. That purpose translated to a sense of student ownership over the physical and social space; however, it was always clear that Eva was part of that community and part owner in everything that occurred in the classroom. Jane, who split her time between South Shore and its partner school, commented that students in Eva's class had access to every material in the room; there were not "teacher supplies" and "student supplies."

The ethos of community and responsibility for the common good was prevalent throughout every aspect of Eva's classroom. One of the students' weekly rotating jobs was "Community Council," which consisted of listening to anyone's issues during the week and then bringing those issues or concerns to a community council meeting on Friday. Four students were assigned the job of Community Council each week and they ate lunch with Eva and Hannah on Friday to discuss issues, problem-solve solutions, and decide on that week's free choices for the afternoon. Students considered the free choices seriously and debated how well certain centers had gone in previous weeks. For example, after a needle was left out at sewing one week the students announced that sewing would be closed that week so that the community could work on being safe with materials.

Talk, discussion, and curriculum that drew on student's knowledge, as well as questions, were a significant part of the classroom. Students held morning meeting each day and used sign language to let the community know how they were feeling. At the end of morning meeting students sang a new song each week; the songs usually had a theme of caring, equity, and justice. For example, during my time in Eva's classroom I heard students sing, "Where is the Love?" by the Black Eyed Peas and K'naan's "Wavin' Flag." Every Tuesday the students would "travel" to a new part of the world via a math problem that gave them their mileage for travel. Students then learned facts about that area of the world throughout the remainder of the week; these facts were not limited to travel tidbits, but also engaged in considering serious issues like oil spills. This attention to social issues was part of how Eva attended to ideas of equity and engagement with the world in her classroom.

East Prairie. Nestled among tree-lined streets, East Prairie was in the section of Lake City that many affectionately call the "hippie" neighborhood. A natural foods co-op and restaurants that touted sourcing from local farms dotted the neighborhood surrounding East Prairie. The smallest of the four schools, East Prairie served around 250 students in grades 3 to 5. Julia, a cooperating teacher, described East Prairie:

So when I started here East Prairie was actually a tougher school in the district, and it was starting to come off of that a little bit, but it was definitely a tough school for kids to be in, tough for Lake City I guess I should say. But because of the location of the school, the neighborhood really gentrified, so a lot of the very stable, lower income families had been forced to move out because either their apartments were being sold out or houses were being bought by people who wanted to live close to downtown and there are some great old homes here that

needed a lot of work. So the school climate really changed, but the passion that community has for inclusivity has not changed, so it's been an interesting thing to watch but yet there's still, because we have the transitional housing program here, we still get, it's not all neighborhood kids. We do get the transitional housing students, so that's been an interesting challenge to make sure they feel a part of the community and do not feel ostracized because they might look different than other kids in the school. And they come with their own set of challenges given that they're homeless (Interview, March 1, 2012).

Nearly 70% of the student population at East Prairie was White. Around one-tenth of the student body was African American, a little more than one-tenth were Hispanic, fewer than one-twentieth are Asian, and the around one-twentieth were multiracial. Only one-third of the students were classified as low-income. Interestingly, East Prairie had a much higher ratio of Special Education students, with around one-fifth of the students receiving Special Education services; Julia's class was a special education cluster in the school, i.e. she had a concentration of special education students in her class. Less than one-tenth of the students at East Prairie are considered ELL.

Julia. Julia came to teaching as a second-career after working in finance. She had a desire to enter the teaching profession after high-school, but her father pointed out the climate teachers were working in during the mid 1980's and encouraged her to pursue business. After the sudden loss of her mother, Julia had an "aha moment" and decided life was too short and it was time for her to switch careers. She entered the first cohort of MU's Community Teacher program. At first she felt uneasy about working with elementary age students, but soon realized it was a perfect fit. She reflected,

What I found was with elementary kids it was much more relational and much less academic curriculum, you're not the expert in a curriculum area. You're a generalist and it's more about the relationships and building community and that's really how I would run any kind of work that I did with youth. So it seemed like it was a better fit for me ultimately, but I didn't realize it at the time when I was first looking at teaching (Interview, March 1, 2012).

Julia noted that MU's Community Teacher program had a strong emphasis on multicultural education and wanted to find "people who were passionate about public schools" (Interview, March 1, 2012). Julia did her student teaching at East Prairie and when a position opened there the following year she was hired. At the time of this study, she had been teaching at East Prairie for 15 years.

Claire. As a practicum student, Claire was assigned to work with Julia for her fourth semester practicum experience. In our first interview, Claire described her initial experiences in Julia's classroom:

I've only been there for a week and a half, but she's [Julia's] told me that, well so far the kids seem really polite, I don't know why but that's stuck out to me the most. It's such an organized classroom and the kids are all really respectful of one another, and I think in terms of when I entered her classroom she said, "I have a democratic classroom." I was like oh that's interesting. I was like I wonder how, like what she means by that, since it can mean a lot of things. So far it's been really interesting to see how much ownership the students take for their own education and just defining the rules and regulations for how class should be run and holding one another accountable for their learning and I've already seen that,

which is really cool, especially because...there's a wide range of learners and they all seem to be really supportive of one another which is really positive so far (Interview, March 5, 2012).

Thus, while Claire did not choose specifically to work with Julia, she was quickly attuned to the culture that Julia had developed within the classroom.

Democratic practices in Julia's 3rd grade classroom. Julia described her classroom as, "I think I have a structured room, but it's not rigid. I think the students have the expectations, and we really come to those expectations together" (Interview, March 1, 2012). Julia's students worked with her to develop a classroom community focused on the common good with clear attention to democratic values and dispositions. The language in the classroom supported students' encouragement, care, and respect for each other; for example, on Fridays students participated in a meeting devoted to compliments and appreciations. The goal of this meeting was to foster good will amongst the students in the classroom and to recognize people's contributions to the community. Further, Claire commented on an incident when the class was learning a new game:

[Julia] was introducing this game, 'Who Wants to Be a Geologist?' game, and she gave the instructions and one girl raised her hand she was like, "I would just like to say that we should all be supportive of one another and if somebody makes a mistake you should tell them good job." It was funny because I was like, wow that's a great thing to say and then another kid raised his hand and he was like, "Yeah, and try not to brag too much because it might make other people feel bad" (Interview, March 5, 2012).

Students took each other's feelings and ideas of fairness seriously in Julia's class and were very open to discussing and raising these issues.

One of the most salient instantiations of democratic education in Julia's classroom was their weekly class meeting. Julia provided a binder for the students to submit issues or problems for the class to consider. Students chose whether the problem was an issue that they just wanted to discuss or a problem that they felt needed a solution. Julia set up a clear format to the class meeting wherein the student who filed the issue presented the problem, then students passed a talking piece around the circle and each person could weigh in on the issue. Finally, if the issue was a problem that needed a solution, students brainstormed possible solutions and then voted on one to try the following week with the promise to check back in at next week's meeting to see how the solution was working. Julia commented,

One of the hot issues right now is there are no class pencils and I think some of it is I sharpen lots of pencils and they're gone, and someone said oh there's no pencils, and I'm like I sharpened a bunch of them, and someone put that in the binder and they really talked about it as it's a responsibility that you, that kids have to make sure that they borrow a pencil that they give it back and that they're not destroying it. I see them using that language; if it's consistently used throughout the day it does infiltrate into their vocabulary as well (Interview, March 1, 2012).

Students learned to raise issues and solve problems that were of immediate importance to their lives in the classroom community.

Julia ascribed to Jim Fay's "Love and Logic" approach and cited her work in professional development with this philosophy as instrumental to her current work in the classroom. She

described the approach as one that focused on giving students choices, e.g. who they sit by on the rug, but then if that choice affects the community then they need to correct the behavior or have the teacher step in to guide the correction. She elaborated,

So I think it helps kids take responsibility. It's ultimately what I want them to learn, that ultimately you have to, you can be responsible for your actions. There are choices that you make and every day we have to make choices and some days we make good choices and some days we make bad choices. The day we make bad choices, ok we move on and the next day is a new day. I think that's really important for kids to now...Every day is a new day (Interview, March 1, 2012).

Julia emphasized both individual responsibility, but also more importantly, responsibility to the classroom community. Central to her philosophy was that developing relationships with students and families provided the foundation and trust to encourage this type of community in her classroom.

Socio-Political Context

This study occurred in the year following public protests against legislative actions in this state. Led by the state's governor, the legislature introduced a series of bills that limited the rights of particular public unions, most notably the teachers' union, in the state. Teachers were at the heart of the protests and both endured public ridicule and garnered public support. The novice teachers in this study were all in attendance MU, which was also embroiled in the protests and debates over how to support or ignore the actions of teachers in schools. In addition, the teaching assistants at MU, as part of a public union, were also affected by these protests. During the height of the protests MU university TA's held "teach-ins" or made attendance at seminar optional to stand in solidarity with the local teachers and give MU students the opportunity to

participate in protests without being penalized for missing class. These protests occurred at the start of a semester, meaning many practicum students were uncertain about what they should do when schools were closed due to the mass number of teachers who called in sick.

These protests were spaces that afforded opportunities for political engagement as well as spaces that drove deep divides among novice teachers entering the profession. While some novice teachers walked alongside MU School of Education faculty, teaching assistants, and staff during an organized march from the School of Education building to the capitol, nevertheless other novice teachers felt that the teachers should not have called in sick and worried about how these actions were affecting students in their practicum and student teaching placements. These issues shaped public ideas of teachers and teaching as state media continued daily coverage of the protests and teachers position in them. While not a focus of this study, these larger socio-political contexts shape public ideas of teaching and teachers that consequently shape what visions of teaching were afforded to the novice teachers in this study.

Since this was not an explicit focus of this study, I did not speak with the cooperating teachers about the protests; however, given my position at MU and relationship to Lake City Schools, I know personally that each of the teachers in this study participated in the protests. Maya was the union liaison for West Woods. Tuan frequently spoke about continued ramifications of the protests and engaged in these conversations with Olivia. Given the highly political nature of the community surrounding East Prairie, Julia noted that she did not explicitly talk about the protests with her students; however, if they brought it up as an experience or issue she allowed them to discuss it fairly, i.e., without using abusive language toward the side with whom they disagreed. While I did not speak with the cooperating teachers about the protests, I

did speak with many of the novice teachers about the protests and how they affected their learning-to-teach process and identity as a new teacher.

Many of the novice teachers in this study noted that one of the ramifications of the protests was a more intense questioning around why they wanted to enter the profession of teaching. When I asked Claire if and how the protests affected her decision to become a teacher, she commented,

I get asked this question a lot surprisingly. Mainly by adults, not by peers. It was an interesting way, I don't know, you remember, but we started practicum, my first day in the classroom was the first day of the protest, so it was kind of like wow, this is a lot of drama for the first day of teaching, but I would say in general like everyone just has assumed, oh wow, how can you still want to be teacher despite everything that is going on. And I think what, when I think about what draws me to teaching it's not necessarily, I mean you want to be valued by your, like your government, you know, but that's not why I went into teaching, for any respect from others. It was I want to inform students so that issues like this maybe don't have...maybe they wouldn't happen again. I always think of like ok it's definitely not an ideal climate to teach in and I think with all the budget cuts and everything else I think it's kind of daunting like going in to education, but at the same time I think there's a really big responsibility now for teachers that are out there to you know be effective in the classroom despite maybe having less resources and whatnot. And so in some ways it's maybe motivated me more... I guess I shouldn't say as a teacher I wouldn't say I would prevent people from making decisions like that, because obviously I want to spread democracy in my

classroom and everyone has a voice, but I was thinking about that as a second, that could come across slightly wrong. But at the same time I want people to know their rights and also develop those skills to hey, voting is important. You have a say. (Interview, May 7, 2012).

Olivia echoed Claire's sentiments that she did not "go into it [teaching] for the money" (Interview, April 24, 2012). Like Claire, who recognized the importance of voting and voicing one's opinion, Olivia noted that the protests emphasized the importance of public debate and freedom of speech for her. She commented,

So I'm not glad it all happened, but glad I participated the way I did because I have a whole new outlook on politics in general and I value, I mean I identify with a certain political side but it's, I guess I haven't really valued the idea that we are fortunate to live in a place where you can have differing values and you can take on a belief and really run on it, because that's not the case everywhere. So it's not only disagreeing with people, but recognizing that this is a really fortunate place to live in terms of being able to have those types of conversations safely most of the time. That's something I haven't thought about as much as I have now, ever, because I wasn't surrounded with it, and so trying to get my parents to think that way too. They're just so, whatever, we'll vote. They're just very non, and that's how they grew up, but I told my mom, I'm like I'm going to turn you, I'm going to get you revved up about this stuff. But I don't get crazy, but just recognizing that we can have differing opinions is pretty amazing if you really think about it. And that's a value you can instill in your room too, that you don't always agree and that's ok. You can have really rich conversations about it.

And feeling that anger, but frustration with someone, that's good, because that means you believe in what you do that much more (Interview, April 24, 2012).

For Olivia, the protests both emphasized her right to voice her opinion as a citizen, and reinforced the idea that voicing one's opinion could be an important value to instill in the elementary classroom.

Claire emphasized that having debates with people during this period strengthened her resolve to become a teacher:

It's one thing, one benefit that I've taken away from I guess that such dividedness of this issues is that I've had a lot of interesting discussions about education with people who are on different ends of the... So in a way it strengthened my values about education in talking to other people and just hearing other people's viewpoints and just practicing that debate. Which so I think for me that's been the most positive thing, is just debating with others (Interview, May 7, 2012).

Dania noted that the protests solidified her decision to become a teacher as well and also reflected on how experiencing the protests further politicized her views of teaching:

And I think being part of the protests probably solidified the fact that this is what I want to do, even though I'm probably going to battling for the entirety of my career with whoever and this type of stuff is going to consistently happen. But I think for us younger teachers, I think that it really showed how everyone can really join together and really take a stance and speak our minds, even though it didn't end up in a way that we wanted it to end up, it shows that it can happen, that you can have 100,000 people [protesting], you know protesting one man's decision. And I think that's exciting, especially when you have a school like

West Woods where these teachers are so polarized, but you know in that moment that these teachers were together and fighting for these rights that were being taken away. And I think that's exciting to see that people that think very differently, even in the same profession can come together. But I think it was exciting to see that and I think that I don't know, I guess I'm ready to battle (Interview, June 14, 2012).

Dania's comment illustrated how this larger socio-political context afforded opportunities for the novice teachers to engage as citizens in ways that may not have been as salient in a less contentious environment. Her comment that the teachers at West Woods "are so polarized" pointed to an ideological divide at the school; this divide played out in the vision of a teacher as political during the protests, as well as in the support of the ACI curriculum at West Woods. As noted Maya, who worked with Dania, was a teachers' union liaison and was active in the protests.

While the current events in the state illuminated public perceptions of teachers and made the novice teachers find resolve in their decisions to enter the profession, the current policy context in teacher education further shaped two novice teachers' student teaching experience through a pilot of a teacher performance assessment. Olivia and Hannah both participated in the voluntary pilot program of a new national teacher performance assessment (TPA). Olivia reflected on the introduction of the pilot to her group of student teachers,

It was introduced as something that was totally something we would already be doing, it wasn't extra at all, it wouldn't take time, everything that was required by the TPA we would already be doing with student teaching with or without this TPA requirement. Not to freak out. It's a pilot. It doesn't count toward our grade.

We just need to participate. Free of charge. The selling of it was very optimistic
(Interview, May 24, 2012).

For both Olivia and Hannah, this assessment took up a large part of their time during student teaching and their cooperating teachers noted how it took away from their larger teaching goals during the time they were completing the assessment. As Tuan talked about Olivia's growth, he commented,

I think for me I notice a shift in she had three weeks of student teaching, like lead weeks, and she was really focused and I felt like I was handing over the class and she took, I mean she did a great job, but then towards the end I think she was very focused on the [teacher performance assessment] and the portfolio and so it's like she kind of moved back a little bit to kind of get the other school work done. So that to me, I mean I sensed that and I also want to be supportive of her because I know how it is to get your portfolio done and your school work, especially when you already graduated, but you still have to be there. I think that was kind of hard for her, but I definitely noticed that (Interview, June 12, 2012).

While MU assured student teachers that the performance assessment would not be any more work than they were already completing, both the novice teachers and the cooperating teachers noted that it did interfere with growth during student teaching. This may be due to the assessment being in a pilot phase and not fully understood or supported by MU; however, it was also a reflection of larger policy contexts that affected the novice teachers in this study.

The contexts of this study, including the social, political, ideological, and physical, created multiple spaces for learning and identity development. In the following chapters, I will

analyze how these contexts supported and constrained opportunities to learn about democratic education, experience democratic education, and develop a democratic teaching identity. As Cole (1996) noted, these contexts are interwoven and difficult to tease apart; however, each aspect must be considered when seeking to understand the learning-to-teach process.

Chapter 5: Democratic Education: Critical Curriculum and Skills for Participation

In its simplest definition, democratic education consists of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be a member of a democracy; which aspects an educator emphasizes lead to different instantiations of democratic education. In the five elementary classrooms in this study there were a variety of emphases, from instilling an ethic of care to promoting problem solving for the common good through class meetings; however, critical examination of society through curriculum and inculcation of particular discussion and deliberation skills necessary to be an engaged democrat were the most salient and clearly enacted instantiations. In this chapter, I will use the cases of Diego, with supporting evidence from Dania and Lisa, who were the two other novice teachers working in the partnered classrooms at West Woods, and Olivia to examine these two stances and tease out how these novice teachers experienced, conceptualized, and enacted democratic education in elementary classrooms. For each case, I will first contextualize their learning within the particular classroom and will then examine how each novice teacher conceptualized and operationalized their definitions of democratic education through their teaching practices.

Diego: Critical and Responsive Curriculum

The students file into the gymnasium, each class lined up behind a flag decorated with adinkra symbols; a student who is given the “honor” to lead their class into Harambee time that week carries the flag. K’naan’s *Wavin’ Flag* begins to play and every student belts out the lyrics, “...When I get older, I will be stronger, they’ll call me freedom, just like a wavin’ flag.” First, second, third, fourth, and fifth graders sing each and every line of the song, motioning with a raised fist when they sing out, “they’ll call me freedom,” dancing in their place during the

chorus of “oh’s”, and clapping in unity with their teachers who are interspersed among them. Four students, who are being recognized for their contributions to their classes that week, move to the center of the circle and lead all of the classes in a call-and-response:

I am somebody	<i>I am somebody</i>
I am somebody	<i>I am somebody</i>
I am somebody	<i>I am somebody</i>
I am teachable	<i>I am teachable</i>
Therefore I can learn	<i>Therefore I can learn</i>
I can do anything when I try	<i>I can do anything when I try</i>
I’ll be the best that I can be	<i>I’ll be the best that I can be</i>
Each day	<i>Each day</i>
Each day	<i>Each day</i>
Each day	<i>Each day</i>
I will not waste time	<i>I will not waste time</i>
Because it is too valuable	<i>Because it is too valuable</i>
And I	<i>And I</i>
Am too precious and bright	<i>Am too precious and bright</i>
I am somebody	<i>I am somebody</i>
I am somebody	<i>I am somebody</i>
I am somebody!	<i>I am somebody!</i>

As the students finish the poem, another student teacher moves to the center of the circle to lead another call-and-response around the principles of Kwanzaa. It is December and all of the classes are exploring the principles; these principles also shape the work done in these classrooms each day. They work with “nia” or “purpose”, they talk about “kujichagulia,” self-determination, as they choose how they will act and react. Diego moves to the center to announce what his group, which is composed of students from the third, fourth, and fifth grades, will be focusing on that day. Each multi-age group is focusing on a monument, sacred site, or artifact from ancient Africa; Diego’s group is building the Pyramid of Djoser. For the remainder of Harambee time, Diego works with his group to plan how they will construct the pyramid and what materials they need to gather to do it (Field Notes, December 2, 2011).

Harambee time is just one aspect of the African-Centered Instruction (ACI) model at West Woods Elementary. Currently the model is in a first grade class, the second-third grade teamed class that Diego and Lisa work with, and a fourth-fifth grade teamed class. Maya and Grace have been working on developing the model for many years, first beginning the work at South Shore Elementary School, and then moving to West Woods when the principal expressed distinct interest in the model and the possibility of making it central to the school's curriculum. The model is based around the seven principles of Ma'at (truth, harmony, righteousness, justice, propriety, balance, and order), the seven principles of Kwanzaa (unity, faith, purpose, cooperative economics, collective work and responsibility, creativity, self-determination), and nine cultural precepts found amongst Africans worldwide: musicality & rhythm, spirituality, communalism, realness, humanism, personal style and uniqueness, verbal expression and orality, resilience, and emotional vitality (Artifact, December 1, 2011).

Maya described ACI as a "student-centered methodology" that focuses on making "meaningful connections to the kids" (Interview, December 1, 2011). The primary goal of the ACI model is for students to develop a clear sense of identity and agency. Maya explained,

What the research shows us is that African Americans, especially, but most kids of color have a disconnection with their cultural identity; it's been removed, especially with African Americans it was stripped from us as we came over in the middle passage as slaves (Interview, December 1, 2011).

The curriculum focuses on the contributions, history, and culture of African and African-American people. For example, earlier in the year the class studied plants in science; as part of that inquiry, they looked at the cassava plant, which is particularly important to many African cultures. Beyond identifying with African and African-American culture, Maya remarked that

she wants students to develop “a sense of self-agency, that they have power in the world to change their surroundings, even when things are not fair, which they often are in our country” (Interview, January 25, 2012). Thus, at its heart, this curriculum focuses on critical thinking about society, students’ place and ability to function within that society, and students’ agency to reshape society in more just and equitable ways.

The student teachers, Diego and Lisa, and the practicum student, Dania, who worked in these classrooms all created curricula that was responsive to their students’ cultures, and they were also critical either directly through a critique of society, or indirectly by presenting counternarratives that often are left out of the curriculum. Lisa worked with her students at the start of the year on a unit on African American tap dancers, including Bojangles – the first African American tap dancer – and current dancer, Savion Glover. She also carefully planned her lessons around Kwanzaa, which occurred during her lead weeks of teaching. Diego worked with Maya on a jazz unit earlier in the year, and as I will discuss in the next section, he also wrote and presented a portion of a unit on American Indians in [State]. During her practicum experience, Dania wrote and presented portions of a unit on hip-hop and music as a means for change; she wanted both to draw on student’s interest in hip-hop, as well as to challenge their view of hip-hop by presenting more politically conscious hip-hop, e.g., Jasiri X. Dania also exposed students to the origins of hip-hop through a lesson on what is often cited as the start of modern hip-hop / rap, Grand Master Flash and the Furious Five’s “The Message.” The curricula that these novice teachers developed supported literacy and social studies work in these second and third grade classrooms; however, more importantly these classrooms afforded opportunities for these novice teachers to develop curricula that would be responsive to student’s backgrounds

and interests, as well as that presented perspectives and histories that are not always represented in elementary classrooms.

The critical curriculum in these classrooms was supported by the virtues and principles that shape the classroom community. At the start of the year, both Maya and Grace's classes brainstormed concept webs around the ideas of justice, equality, and freedom. These posters hung in the classroom throughout the year and were referenced by the teachers during discussions, particularly when it came to solving problems among students. Additionally, the principles of Kwanzaa, or the Nguzo Saaba, hung at the front of the room and were referenced by the teachers. For example they might say that we were working with *nia*, i.e. with purpose, or they would reference *kujichagulia* (self-determination) when talking to a student about working hard to get to the next reading level. Still, this was a model in progress; most of the talk around these values and dispositions came from the adults in the classroom. Students were able to think through the values and dispositions during specific lessons on the values. During my time with Maya, Grace, Diego, and Lisa I observed lessons focused on Kwanzaa in which students explored *kujichagulia* (self-determination) through rap-artist Nas's song "I Can" and the principle of *ujamaa* (cooperative economics) by making posters to promote the school's new "Ujaama" (cooperative-economics) food pantry.

While these values and dispositions aligned with many of the values expressed in democratic education, nevertheless the novice teachers drew on these less distinctly as tools in the classroom. In part, while these values and dispositions are foundational to ACI and to the ways that Maya and Grace speak and act in the classroom, they are also more philosophically driven and contextually specific. Diego, Lisa, and Dania all expressed a desire to work in a classroom like Maya's or Grace's, Lisa and Dania even specifically wanted to work in Lake City

in an ACI classroom; however, they also saw limitations to transferring this particular language and philosophy to a context unfamiliar with ACI. Dania discussed her upcoming student teaching placement in a larger urban district and noted her uncertainty about whether her cooperating teacher would allow her to “do things I want to do, that I was allowed to do in Maya’s room” and that she “may have to play into what her [new cooperating teacher’s] ideas are” (Interview, June 14, 2012). These novice teachers more readily drew on the underlying ideological aspects of the ACI curriculum as a means to connect with and be responsive to their students’ lives.

Realness, relationships, and responsive teaching. For Diego, the ideological and relational tools afforded by the ACI context were particularly important in his conceptualization and instantiation of democratic education. Ideologically, the cultural precept of “realness” paralleled Diego’s experiences with and commitments to how race, in particular being African-American, shape opportunities afforded in American society. Further, Maya draws heavily on Ladson-Billing’s (1995) idea of culturally relevant pedagogy, particularly recognizing the need to build cultural competence and develop a sociopolitical / critical consciousness. Diego’s focus on development of relationships and his assertions around responsive teaching highlight how this particular context afforded him learning and growth opportunities. These ideals played out mostly through his interpersonal relationships and curriculum development; however, when faced with instructional challenges, more logistical issues of coordinating the learning opportunities created tension for Diego to fully draw on these areas of strength.

Realness. One of the nine cultural precepts shaping the ACI classroom is “realness”, defined as “the need to face life the way it is without pretense” (Artifact, December 1, 2011).

This precept shaped curricular aspects of the class, such as incorporating code-switching into literacy work, as well as through the general ideology that shaped conversations and interactions with students related to seeing society as it stands. Maya developed specific literacy centers in which students worked on code-switching from home language to school language; the class engaged in these activities more intensely during Dania's spring semester, however, this was also a focus earlier in the year, during Diego's fall semester, but prior to the start of this research. Maya validated student's home language in the classroom; however, the reality that American Standard English is more commonly used and is the language of power required that Maya work with her students to help them code-switch. She specifically referenced her desire for her students to be "bilingual," to be able to switch between their home language of African American Language and the school language of American Standard English.

This idea of code-switching resonated with Diego, not only in practice, but also in his explanation of his background and what attracted him to this class. Diego grew up in the largest urban area of the state in a biracial family; his mother is White and his father is Black. His comfort in speaking African-American Language (AAL) was apparent in the classroom and served as a resource to connect with his students. When we talked about how conscious he was of when he switched into AAL, he noted that he usually does it when he is in a comfortable situation. He referenced that he rarely spoke this way in his Elementary Education program at MU because that was a place for "school talk" and he only referenced being African-American three or four times because he did not want his peers to label him to speak for all African-Americans and all males. He called this as his "double-whammy"—being the only male, and the only student of color in his cohort. When he was looking for his student teaching placement, he specifically requested to work with a teacher of color; this request aligned with his earlier

maneuvers to make the program “fit” what he needed. For example, he worked with a male kindergarten teacher his second semester and then in a middle school placement in his fourth semester, both experiences he felt that he needed to round out his ideas of who he wanted to be as a teacher. Diego said that he felt “at home” in Maya’s class from the minute he walked in; in fact, when describing it he follows this statement with an audible sigh of relief.

During our first interview in December of 2011, I asked him to describe his class and he talked about how they were “energetic” and could be a “bunch of knuckleheads”. He then described how one student almost fought three other students that day. I asked him if it is one of two boys whose names I heard a number of times that day and it turned out to be the second one. Diego explained that he and Maya were really trying to figure out how to connect with the student, who felt like “everything you could possibly do is in some way against him” (Interview, December 1, 2011). Diego continued on and in this next excerpt gets at the heart of what drives his work in this classroom:

It’s been hard for me because I’m hard on all the kids, especially if they are a young African-American boy, young African-American male, I am very, very hard on them because I think that...as Maya says, if you can’t control yourself society will control you, and it usually looks like a 9 by 12 cell. And it’s, as horrible as it is, that’s the reality. Once you get out, and I had a conversation with all the 3rd grade boys, once you leave school, there aren’t consequences that are kind of ‘uh it’s not a big deal’. You get suspended, that’s not a big deal, in the grand scheme of things. If you get expelled from a school, it’s not a horrible thing...If you can’t control yourself in the real world and you do something, you could go to jail. That’s a big deal...I’ve really tried to connect to this idea that

they need to work on their self-control because they are given the shortest end of the stick humanly possible in our society. And for me, it's more about the realities less than thinking I have to make them better. I want them to see that this is the reality of their life for probably, for their life and probably their children's lifetime. And I want them to understand that, and know that it's up to them to make it better. They are the people who can make the difference (Interview, December 1, 2011).

At the core of Diego's philosophy of education is an ideological commitment to the reality of the situations that he and his students will face as African-Americans in the United States; this is a commitment to the precept of realness. Given how he discussed his background, growing up bicultural, learning how to code-switch between school language and home language, between using one language with cousins from his father's side and then switching languages when speaking to cousins from his mother's side of the family, it was clear that he had a direct connection to the situation his students faced. He was not advocating that these students needed to be obedient, which could be construed as a racialized conception of citizenship; rather, he recognized the injustice of a racialized society in which the number of black males, ages 18 to 19, in prison is more than nine times higher than that of white male prisoners (<http://bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=4559>). Importantly, this comment was framed within a discussion of how his father was hard on him despite him being a "passer," i.e. people often cannot determine Diego's race and he could "pass" for being White, or at the very least his physical appearance is ambiguous enough that people do not think he is Black. He talked about how he grew up with his father setting high expectations and creating clear consequences if those were not met; he remarked, "I was held to the highest standard, because even though I'm a

passer my dad knew the reality” (Interview, December 1, 2011). Diego’s background influenced how he related to students, as well as how important developing those relationships was to his teaching.

Relationships. Relationships—their development, reflection on their state, and use of them to shape curriculum and pedagogy—were central to Diego’s teaching philosophy. In our first interview, he noted,

I look at my teaching as I build the relationship and then I teach. Because you need the relationship to teach, you can’t teach and then build the relationship. If I can’t connect with [student], I cannot teach him, because I can’t help him learn because he’s not going to want anything to do with me. If I can build that relationship and connect with him, then there’s that potential that me and him can make some progress, he can really do awesome work that I know he can
(Interview, December 1, 2011).

Developing relationships with his students was central to his conception of being a responsive teacher. Importantly, Diego saw this as something that made him different from some peers in his program at MU. He remarked that he didn’t want to just “teach to teach”; in other words, while he saw the importance of the craft in teaching, the actual act of teaching was never going to be his focus. Instead, his focus was constantly on his students and how he could connect with them.

To develop relationships with students, Diego brought together his commitment to realness and his affiliation with and knowledge of the African American community. He reflected,

I think in many ways it [speaking AAL] helped a lot with the kids to connect with me because I can be both, I can talk both like the teacher and talk like a friend, but they know that I'm that teacher first, then I'm that friend. That's one of the things, when the kids said they hated me, I'm like, ok cool you can hate me all you want because tomorrow I'm still going to be here, and I'm still going to be your teacher and if you ever need anything...that's just me being fluid. I don't think a lot when I teach, I just let it all happen, I have it all up here – that sounds really bad like I'm just not thinking – I don't want it to sound like that, that I'm just like duh-duh-duh, but it's like, I don't have a script in my head, I have a plan....I'm very much a moment teacher (Interview, March 22, 2012).

In this excerpt Diego recognizes that AAL is a tool that helps him connect with his students, but he also points to the tension between affiliation and authority. Further, he alludes to his ultimate tension between a desire to be “fluid” and a “moment teacher” and a lack of planning to enact the critical curriculum that he creates. His belief that being “fluid” equates to a lack of planning leads to lost learning opportunities for Diego and his students that I will explore in the following section on critical curriculum.

For Diego this connection and development of relationships went beyond his classroom and extended to the larger school community. When walking down the hallway with Diego, he would frequently say hello to students from other classrooms. Talking about how he has met and spoken with many students in the PreK classrooms, he said,

My connection, like when we were walking down the hall, those kids know who I am because I go out of my way to connect with them and it's easy for me. It's just me being me, I can connect with the kids in the building. I don't know if that

has to do with their race, if it had anything to do with that, if it's just me, but this school has a really great community within the children and I have made sure that my place in that community is there (Interview, December 1, 2011).

One of the ways that Diego bolstered his place in the community was by walking students home. This is a practice that he acquired from Maya and Grace and that he used to deepen his connections to his students and their families. By walking students home he had the opportunity to meet families and make personal connections with them; he also felt that seeing him in the community impacted how his students related to him. He reflected, "The kids really know that I care about them because I'm willing to do that" (Interview, December 1, 2011). This was also a strategy that he called upon as a consequence when talking to students about their behavior in class; for example, he might tell a student, 'Do I need to call your mom? Because she knows me and she knows that I am telling the truth.' Thus, while Diego drew on relationships as a tool to develop connections that supported his ability to teach, he also used those relationships as a tool to manage behavior. This tension of how to use relational tools to support his teaching played out further in his difficulties in managing the learning environment; while relationships remained a strong asset for Diego, nevertheless, how and when to draw on those relationships was an area for development.

Another space in which Diego worked to develop relationships was in the Wednesday afternoon boys' lunch group. Maya and Grace started the lunch group as they learned more about the importance of strong male role models for young African-American boys. A local male African-American pastor and an African-American male from the district office came into the classroom every Wednesday to have lunch with the first, second, and third grade boys. All boys were invited to the group, whether they were African-American or not. Most boys in the

class attended, including one of the two White boys. Diego actively participated in the group, conversing with the boys and talking about future plans for the group to take trips to Chicago. Diego discussed how he will make this an integral part of his classroom practice,

...Maybe I'm going to change my mind when I become an actual teacher, but there's no reason for me to sit in my classroom and eat lunch alone...or with my team...If I'm going to be in an urban school with 30 kids in my class, why not break them up into groups of 6 and have lunch with a group every day. That gives you weekly time with 6 to 1 ratio where you can connect with your kids.

That's the kind of stuff that I see that works (Interview, December 1, 2011).

Diego viewed these personal connections as spaces to better understand his students, their lives, and how he could relate to them. Diego's MU supervisor, Antonio, summarized this sentiment,

That maybe he's not only, that he makes his content more relevant, but he wants to be more relevant. Not only that he wants to make his lesson more significant, he wants to be significant, that he wants to be a significant adult for these little kids (Interview, December 16, 2011).

Diego's desire to be relevant, to be able to connect with students, drove his teaching by foregrounding relationship-building over other curricular aspects of the day. Further, this impetus was supported by Maya who centered Diego's ability to relate to students as a key part of his practice and development of cultural competence. Maya noted, "he has excellent relationships with them and because of that he can tailor his lessons to be extremely relevant to their lives and that's going to be an excellent skill for him" (Interview, January 25, 2012).

Diego's ability to develop relationships directly impacted his ability to both establish rapport and consequently create relevant and responsive curriculum for his students.

Responsive teaching. Developing cultural competence and recognition of schools as cultural spaces was a key aspect of Maya's teaching and her goals for her student teachers. Maya and Grace worked with Dr. Sharokky Hollie (see Hollie, 2011) and his consultants around "culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and learning" in their teaching and as central to their ACI model. For Diego, this emphasis on culture became a given in how he conceptualized culturally responsive teaching. He reflected,

So for me, a lot of our class is about culture...what does culture mean to you in terms of culturally responsive pedagogy?...As I think about it, the culture is put first, but is not what is important; it's being responsive because every student has a different culture. [Student] and [student] are both African-Americans, but they have a completely different culture. So being responsive to your students takes into account the culture, you don't need to have culture if you have responsiveness, because responsiveness inherently has to have culture for it to be responsive. You know, I could have picked Eminem for gangster, but would that have been culturally, would that have a cultural connectivity that Lil' Wayne has? (Interview, December 1, 2011)

Diego's desire to connect with his students fueled his conception and enactment of responsive teaching.

Music was a clear tool for Diego to be responsive to his students; drawing on another cultural precept, Diego used 'musicality' to connect lessons with students. As seen in the quote above his was acutely aware of what specific music his students listened to and connected to. Further, in his lessons during Kwanzaa he used music as a means to spark conversations around the principles. When studying Kujichagulia the students listened to "I Can" by Nas. Similar to

how Antonio remarked that Diego wanted to be seen as “relevant” to his students, he also used his culture to be responsive. He joked with students when they questioned his knowledge of hip hop, “I’m from [larger city]...I can say I was listening to Tupac when I was 6 years old. I know what hip-hop is” (Interview, December 1, 2011). For Diego, being responsive is closely tied with developing relationships through his affiliation with students as an African-American male.

Realness and responsiveness are the means by which Diego situated himself as relevant to his students and their lives; he engaged those ideologies to foster relationships with his students and the larger community. Further, these ideologies become core to his philosophy and shaped his pedagogic moves in the classroom. He noted, “That is a really large part of my philosophy, I keep it real and I keep it real with my third graders. And it’s who I am” (Interview, December 2, 2011). This concern with keeping it real with his students influenced how Diego conceptualizes democratic education. When asked what democratic education meant to him, he said:

They [the students] need to be ready to enter society. And one of the really important things for me in terms of meeting that is by telling the truth, by teaching the truth...who is Abraham Lincoln?...Oh he was the emancipator, he was a president, he emancipated the slaves, he freed the slaves, and then say he also killed Santee Sioux in 1863 - the largest ever. How does that change how you look at him?...Just questioning what we know and what we think about (Interview, December 15, 2011).

Diego equated democratic education with “telling the truth,” “keeping it real,” and applying a critical lens to the curriculum. This was most clearly exemplified in the social studies unit on

American Indians that he wrote in a previous semester and then adapted to meet the needs and standards for his second and third grade students in his final weeks in the classroom.

Critical curriculum. Diego first developed this unit, titled “American Indians in [State]”, during his fourth semester in MU’s program. Working with MU’s American Indian Curriculum Services Coordinator, Diego developed a 25 lesson unit, originally written for fourth grade and submitted for his social studies methods course, that he modified to a set of 11 lessons for his second and third grade students. In his unit rationale, Diego laid out five main purposes for the unit:

- 1) Investigate the role of American Indians in the contemporary;
- 2) Introduce the concepts of prejudices and stereotypes;
- 3) Introduce the students to the forced movement of American Indians in [state];
- 4) Allow the students to see and feel the impacts of being moved through simulations and map-work;
- 5) Lay the conceptual framework for future learning about American Indians.

(Artifact, Collected March 30, 2012)

In his reflection on the unit (Artifact, collected March 30, 2012), he recognized that for him concepts became more important than content, and that an overarching goal was to lay a critical foundation for the learning students would do in upper grades that focus on the state history. By focusing on concepts, Diego ably constructed a social studies unit that addressed social issues such as stereotypes and that challenged student’s perceptions of American Indians in their state. The content, driven by notions of truth and realness, then served as a primary means for Diego’s enactment of democratic education.

Diego addressed affective notions of justice and equity and engaged students in experiential learning throughout the unit. During one lesson, he created a simulation of land ownership and American Indian removal. He assigned students to different groups (designated by a color), either American Indian or European settlers, who then lost or gained land during the simulation. As a follow-up, Diego had students complete a reflection on the lesson. Student's responses included the following: "I was red. I felt sad because they took my home" and "I was a yellow. I felt mean because I kicked them out of their homes (lands) and being selfish to other colors (red, green, blue) and they felt sad" (Artifact, Collected March 30, 2012). These responses indicated that Diego's lesson clearly met the affective objective of understanding how early settlers and American Indians' notions of land ownership created inequitable circumstances. When Maya talked about Diego's teaching, she noted that he "dedicated himself to social justice" and was able to "show kids in an experiential way some of the very complicated issues" (Interview, January 25, 2012).

Tensions in teaching. While Diego clearly could create critical curriculum that addressed social justice issues and critiqued society in ways that aligned with his commitment to realness, nevertheless there was a tension between introducing this content and organizing the learning environment so that students had a clear understanding of the content. Planning and time management during lessons were a struggle for Diego; or rather, for Diego planning and time management did not align with his conception of being a "moment" teacher. When asked about planning, he commented, "I've kind of been going a lot by the seat of my pants because I know it all, I have all this information up here [taps his head]" (Interview, December 1, 2011). Diego's university supervisor corroborated these conclusions, noting

He is much more disorganized [than Lisa], I think he still, it's almost a personality thing, how you make things flow in the classroom...he tries to be close among the classroom and he also tries to lay out classroom behavior expectations, but he still has to push himself much harder in order to keep that balance between control and participation...But he's working on it, that's what I want to say. The last time I observed him, he was putting a little more structure into what he was doing, which I think is definitely helping him to make improvement in terms of his teaching. He's got this thing where he wants to be spontaneous and he talks about that, but I think he's moving a bit more beyond that, he's becoming more mature about it (Interview, December 16, 2011).

Maya also noted in her final interview reflecting on Diego's areas of struggle that "he needs to work on timing, as we all work on timing, and it's something that you have to learn as you're doing, it's not something that I can teach" (Interview, January 25, 2012). Diego's timing affected his ability to communicate his critical curriculum; additionally, his approach to planning, which usually involved thinking through his lessons on his bus ride to school, did not allow him the space to engage in the participatory structures that he had seen modeled by Maya and Grace.

During lesson five of his unit, Diego tackled the concept of a stereotype. The lesson was titled, "Who is a gangsta?" and he started it by hanging pictures of LeBron James, Lil' Wayne, Barak Obama, Sitting Bull, and a contemporary American Indian around the classroom. As the students walked into the classroom, many remarked on the pictures, demonstrating a piqued interest in what might happen in social studies that day. Diego based the lesson around word

association and then deconstructing student's thinking around the choices they made.

The following is an excerpt from the start of the lesson:

Diego: The first word is "gangster", stand up after you're done writing [the word]

Student: I don't have a pencil

Diego: What do you do?...When I move you move.

Students: Just like that

Diego: You have 30 seconds to move. Peace [Ss: Quiet] Peace [Ss: Quiet] Peace

[Quiet] Raise your hand if you're by Lil's Wayne. Listen [Ss: Up] Listen [Ss:

Up] Listen [Ss: Up]

Lisa: Who remembers how to mall walk?

Diego: I want to get you up and moving. Why is almost everyone by Lil' Wayne?

...[Student] share one more.

Student: He grew up in the hood.

Students start talking aloud.

Grace: You don't say anything, you just sparkle them if you agree

Diego: Until the age of 15, Lil Wayne had a 4.0, he was an all-star student...new word, "leader". Take 30 seconds, write it down. Mall walk. 5-4-3-2-1-0, stop talking.

Diego: We have three by Lil' Wayne

Grace: How many? Holla [Ss: Back]

(student sent back to seat if having a hard time in the group)

Diego: Ok, mall walk back to your seats...

Diego: Raise your hand if you were by #4? Raise a righteous hand if you were by Barack Obama. *Diego moves pictures to the front of the room since students are now sitting at their tables.*

Diego: We're going to do a bottoms up now. *Students start to move.*

Lisa: What are we talking about?

Diego: Why did you pick who you picked?

(Field Notes, December 2, 2011)

In this excerpt, Diego illustrates a number of his strengths—his cultural competence and knowledge about Lil' Wayne, his ability to construct a lesson that contains relevant persons for his students—but, he also illustrates his struggles with planning for and coordinating the learning opportunities in the classroom. During this excerpt of the lesson, Diego attempted to use strategies to get student's attention and to focus their talk; however, he missed the opportunity to fully explain his expectations and the procedures for the lesson. In so doing, students talked more when they gathered at pictures, which then prompted Diego to rely on more attention getting strategies, and not focus on the objective of the lesson which was to construct the meaning of a stereotype. When Diego could not regulate the talk that occurred with students grouping near a picture, he sent them back to their seats and moved the pictures to the front of the room. Near the end of the excerpt, Diego called for the students to do a "bottoms up," which is a strategy from the culturally and linguistically responsive training that Maya and Grace had done. In this strategy, students put their bottoms in the air and their heads together at the table to discuss the question. While Diego made the move to have students discuss and share ideas, a move that could clearly constitute a democratic practice, nonetheless he did not give directions on what students should talk about until prompted by his fellow student teacher, Lisa. This

tension between making attempts towards enactment of democratic practices and not planning explicitly to do so played out throughout this lesson.

Near the end of the lesson, Diego said the word “American Indian” and most students moved to the picture of Sitting Bull. When asked why, one student replied “He’s got feathers” (Field Notes, December 2, 2011). He then told the students, “Do you know who else is an American Indian?” and pointed to the picture of the contemporary American Indian. One student challenged Diego asking how he knew that. Diego responded that he went on a website talking about contemporary American Indians to find the picture, and then remarked, “I know American Indians. They don’t dress like that [pointing to picture of Sitting Bull].” Another student responded, “They don’t look like that, they only dress up for dancing.” As Diego wrote the word stereotype on the board he paraphrased the student’s comment. Then in the final two minutes of the lesson, Diego went through a rushed definition of a stereotype stating, “A stereotype is a characteristic or thing that describes someone, but that does not mean that it’s true. You don’t have to have feathers to be an American Indian. If someone has tattoos and raps that doesn’t mean he’s a gangster.” As he finished this final sentence the bell rang and students were up out of their seats, ready to leave for the day.

In Diego’s reflection on the lesson, he wrote,

What this lesson allowed for me to do was to give the students the words that could be considered stereotypes and then allow them to use these words. After this, I was then able to introduce the word stereotype but more importantly, introduce and modify the view of our students in terms of who is an American Indian (Artifact, Collected March 30, 2012).

Importantly though, he did not arrive at this key moment of deconstructing stereotypes until the final two minutes of the lesson, immediately before the final bell rang. While Diego wanted to introduce the concept of a stereotype and modify views of who students considered to be an American Indian, which he did partially do, nevertheless, he was not able to have a more in depth inquiry into the concept because of the timing and lack of coordinating the learning opportunities throughout the lesson.

As noted in this selection, issues of planning and time management played out through the sheer number of attention-getting strategies Diego employed. Importantly, during our video recall interview he commented on how he had noticed that he used many attention getting strategies and asked that we tally the number of times he used them in the lesson. We ended our count around twelve. When I asked him why he used so many, he commented,

One of the things that I struggled with a lot, was being super – so if a kid wasn't putting his eyes on me right away, I wasn't like, I tried not to go right onto them. I tried not to be like, '[Student] look at me' instead of saying 'all right all eyes on me,' not putting the blame on one kid in those kind of instances because for the most part, I would say, 75-90% of the kids did have all their attention on me and that would have been something where I felt like I was out of place calling a kid out in that experience. So that was why I kinda would do the 'listen-up' 'listen-up' and then say 'I need all eyes on me. I don't need you to pick up a pencil, a pen, anything like that. I need you to look at me so I can explain what our activity is (Interview, March 22, 2012).

Here Diego presents another reason behind his use of the attention-strategies. Rather than redirect a single student, which had the potential to be perceived as a "call out" or targeted jab,

he generalized and asked for the attention of all the students. While this points to his knowledge of the student's culture and what they might consider a slight, it also points to a lack of pedagogic resources to tackle this issue from an instructional stance.

Reflecting on his video-taped lesson, which looked at American Indian land removal over time through use of maps, Diego also commented on his timing:

You know some teachers might look at this and say, 'there's so much wasted instruction time' you know because we don't get to the maps for 18 minutes. But, how I look at it is, given the group of kids that we're with, and given what my goal was, was for them to see the change in the map from 1825 to present, to see that, and also for them to be able to understand it because as we get closer to the end, we have some kids answer saying, 'wow,' and I think that what my goal was and what the way I went about—[gets distracted by video] So that was a pretty good one, I feel like the count down works a little bit better—but when I look at it I don't feel like I wasted as much time as some people might say because I got to my goal and I was able to for them, they were able to do what I wanted to do in the time. I think that I could have been a little better about getting to the maps sooner, but I also think that if I had done that they wouldn't have been able to see all of the artifacts that Ms. Maya had (Interview, March 22, 2012).

In this excerpt Diego again focused on analyzing his timing and use of the attention-strategies. He also talked through whether or not he "wasted instruction time." For him, if he was able to get to his final point with students he felt that the time was not wasted; however, similar to the previous excerpted stereotype lesson, Diego did not arrive at his big "aha" moment of changes in land ownership until after the ending bell had rung. Further, his evaluation of meeting his

objective was from a handful of student comments. He noted, “So if you hear the kids are like, ‘What?! That’s not fair’, that was what I was trying to get to” (Interview, March 22, 2012). After the simulation lesson he had all students complete a reflection sheet to gauge their affective understanding of land removal, but in this case he judged his objective as met by a few students recognizing the change in land ownership between 1825 and today. Thus, while his curriculum is critical and addressed important issues of both historical understanding and social history, nevertheless he did not structure the timing of the lessons to reach this understanding in a way that allowed for students to reflect on and engage with the critical information for more than a few seconds before they were running out the door.

The interplay of these tensions around timing and coordinating learning opportunities to fully realize his critical curriculum are not out of the ordinary for a novice teacher. Maya commented,

Diego...is a very typical student teacher in that the areas that he struggles in are areas that a novice teacher would struggle in, like classroom management, how to get the kids’ attention, how to keep the kids’ attention, learning how long you can do something before the kids start to struggle... (Interview, January 25, 2012)

Yet, these issues affected his enactment of democratic practices and the full implementation of his critically focused curriculum. As in Valencia et al.’s (2009) work on lost learning opportunities, Diego was left to mediate the learning he had experienced around lesson planning at the university and his experiences working in Maya’s classroom. Further, Diego’s affiliation with being a “moment” teacher clearly aligned with Maya’s own description of her teaching. She noted,

I'm challenged with this as well, I'm a very intuitional teacher and I have a tendency to intuit what the students need in the moment as opposed to planning specific activities. And my challenge this year has been that I'm, number one, I'm working with a collaborative group that we were working very closely together, still are working very closely together, so in order for me to be a productive member in that group, I have to do some things ahead of time, and to think and plan in a different way. And so, my, yeah, I would recommend that he writes things down more (Interview, January 25, 2012).

While Maya has been teaching for over 15 years and has developed an intuitional sense that allowed for her to work in "the moment," she also recognized her own need to be more planful and recommended that Diego do the same. Thus while Diego drew on this tool afforded by the context of working with Maya, he did so without a full conception of the other foundational work Maya had done that allowed for her to have the mental capacity to intuit while continuously keeping the flow of instruction moving. In this case, Diego's alignment with Maya, rather than affording him particular tools for growth, led to disengagement with practical aspects of teaching, i.e. planning instruction, that amounted to lost learning opportunities for him and for his students.

Looking at Maya's reflection on her need to be more planful, she clearly recognized this as an issue in Diego's preparation, yet there was a lack of support for Diego to develop these skills. Maya was caught in the bind of having her focus be pulled between working as a teacher educator with Diego and her primary responsibilities to her second and third grade students. The question that arose was, what role should the university play to support Diego's growth as a teacher and sort through these tensions?

Diego's supervisor Antonio thoughtfully reflected on his role as a supervisor in his novice teacher's learning experiences:

I would think that the overall thing about supervision is to be the connection between the university and the actual classroom sites, actual practicing places...of trying to make the connection between theory and practice. Now in order for that to happen you really need to be on the same board, so that these two sites are talking back and forth...and I think that for a lot of reasons we are not all on board most of the time. Student teachers, they want to just be at the school, they just want to be field teachers, so it's difficult for them to relate back to the university. And then the cooperating teachers, they have their own set of biases and stuff and so a lot of the times, they kind of, they want to protect their student teachers, on the other hand they want to, they feel that they are mentors so that want to really push hard for whatever principles they have...I just want to make that point that you know, when you have that, you have to accommodate so sometimes that connection between theory and practice really washes down and a lot of the time it's just a game trying to be responsive to whatever the student teacher needs and wants in terms of that, sometimes they just want really concrete suggestions and advice, which is to me, something that the cooperating teacher should be doing, but they're asking you so ok I'll do that and sometimes it's a very specific thing about classroom management about how to structure the lesson, not necessarily anything theoretical or whatever, like let's think about principles of multiculturalism, let's talk about culture, let's talk about power relationships in the classroom. To me, those would be the kind of conversations

that should be going on with a supervisor but they don't really happen (Interview, December 16, 2011).

In this excerpt, Antonio highlighted the tensions he felt as a supervisor as well as his ideal conception of supervision as a space to have more theoretical conversations around teaching. Interestingly, Diego did not struggle with the theoretical and had space to talk with his cooperating teacher about critical societal issues, the cultural spaces of schools, and principles of multiculturalism. Instead, Diego needed the outside push around the logistical and practical aspects of his practice; Antonio became another person with whom Diego could align with on critical issues, rather than someone to challenge his growth in areas of planning that he saw as less important.

Antonio highlighted the disconnect between the university and the field component of student teaching, the competing demands and principles of each, and the issue of student teachers affiliation with the field over the university. The issue remains here though: what happens when the theoretical is reinforced in both spaces, but the practical is not highlighted? To further explore this issue, I turn to the case of Olivia, who in important ways is polarly opposed to Diego.

Olivia: Skills for Participation

Tuan's first-grade students come into the classroom and get right to work. They have morning activities that are established and part of a carefully constructed routine that allows for Tuan and his student teacher, Olivia, to circulate among the students to give morning greetings and check-in with students. Olivia described a particularly poignant moment during this morning time close to the end of her semester working with Tuan:

Olivia: [Student] walked up to Mr. Tuan and was like, “Give me a hug. I’m so mad about [Governor].” She’s like, “Give me a hug.” And people were talking about it and [other Student] goes up and is like, “I don’t understand why people are still talking about this. The vote happened. The results came, that means it’s over. People should stop talking about it.” And I was like, what are you going to say to him? I don’t know what to say. And Mr. Tuan was like, “No, that is not how it works.” He’s like, “[Other student] you’re wrong. If you’re passionate that never goes away.” We [Olivia and Tuan] were having an intense conversation about it before he got there. And [Other student] goes, ‘It’s kind of annoying.’ Which I don’t know if that’s what his parents said. I don’t know.

Katie: He [Tuan] kind of insinuated that that’s been a tension, that [Other student’s] family is definitely more a [Governor] supporter. Because I said, “oh are there any letters to [Governor]? [talk about their letter writing unit]...”

Olivia: He’s even, even when we started the letter thing, Mr. Tuan started with his idea of what he thinks is not fair. And his was like respect the teachers. And he went into who would I write to? And someone said, “The Governor.” And then they started going into what [Governor] is doing and [Other student] would whip around and be like, “How do you know that? What’s your evidence? I would like to hear your evidence on that.” He’s all fired up. So they must be.

Katie: Although that’s interesting. I think about it with those kids that his response is how do you know? What’s your evidence? I’d rather that response from a lot of adults than what you get (Interview, June 6, 2012).

This excerpt describing Tuan's classroom highlights many of the salient features and democratic practices in the room. Tuan had a clear vision for his classroom as a democratic space where ideas are discussed and debated; further, people's passions and values drive their ideas and need to be nurtured as well. Tuan described his teaching and his classroom as being driven by values. He noted,

Your value drives a lot of your actions...I think I value family...We really do take care of each other and knowing that no one's more important than the other...I value new ideas...I value students' thinking and other adults' thinking...I believe everyone has something that they can share (Interview, February 28, 2012).

Tuan focused on student's critical thinking, their ability to discuss and deliberate using evidence, and that new evidence can change our "schema" and help us come to believe in or form new ideas. This language of "schema" and "evidence" was apparent throughout the semester in Tuan's classroom. The student in the above excerpt asking for "evidence" to back up a claim is not an anomaly. This was a coherent facet of Tuan's teaching. Further, the first student saw her classroom as a space where she could look to her teacher and classmates for comfort.

Additionally, the second student recognized the classroom as a space where he could openly disagree. Tuan balanced carefully between the two students' expressed needs – for comfort and for silence. In a later interview with Tuan, we discussed the incident further and he noted,

I know their family is talking about now it should be over, as far as politically, the one side has one won, the other side has lost. It's like winning and losing, but I just switched it around and said it's whatever you're passionate about, right [Student]? We talk about people's passion and you just can't drop your passion. Something that you feel is not fair or equitable, I hope you stand up for whatever

you feel is right, so kind of switching and saying, you would do the same thing too, with him (Interview, June 12, 2012).

Tuan clearly has a vision of his classroom as a democratic space both in his actions, as well as in his own rhetoric with students. As their teacher, he not only looked to nurture their ability to develop opinions and draw on evidence, but also to develop their democratic sensibilities around justice and social action.

Importantly, these are first grade students who are discussing a recent election in their state. Their knowledge of, and at times involvement in the contentious election, points to the particular context of this school, Central Rivers, in Lake City School District. The school is more affluent, with only a little over 20% classified as low-income, and majority White (over 65%). Serving a large portion of Midwestern University's families, the school has many children of professors who were heavily involved in the state election. Interestingly, Tuan requested to work with the English Language Learner (ELL) cluster of students and his classroom was more diverse in terms of race/ethnicity as well as socio-economic status than the rest of the school. Like Diego, the context of her learning shaped what opportunities were afforded to Olivia, and consequently her values and experiences shaped how she selected and enacted democratic practices.

Participation Skills: Choice, Problem-Solving, Discussion and

Deliberation. Olivia chose to work with Tuan because she thought that he would challenge her. In an early interview, she described her decision work with Tuan:

And I went there thinking I was going to stay an hour, I stayed until lunch because I was so infatuated with this classroom in terms of how it was laid out and I felt that my ideal vision in terms of teacher-student relationship, and that

language I talked about before was in there. I felt there was a diverse group of learners. I felt like I would be challenged because Tuan at first really intimidated me in terms of like me seeing him and thinking like how great of a teacher he was in the brief time I saw him and I wanted that uncomfortable feeling...like I don't know what to do because I feel like that's when you learn the most, when you're really questioning yourself (Interview, February 29, 2012).

She remarked that she knew she could go somewhere comfortable and feel good about where she was, or she could work with Tuan and feel uncomfortable and challenged. Throughout her semester working with Tuan, these moments of discomfort, brought on by his push for her to reflect on her choices and take risks with her teaching, created multiple opportunities for growth. Rich talk—both as a reflective space for Olivia and Tuan, and as a vehicle for student social development and learning—shaped the context for learning in this classroom.

When I asked Olivia what she thought about democratic education, she responded: I feel like a point of like not only public education, all of it is to prepare you to be a citizen in this world and to know that your potential role of making a difference and to do that you have to have a voice and you have to recognize those moments where you can have an opinion and where you can participate in decisions being made. I know based on my non-political family and the classrooms I had, I really didn't notice the importance of that. And so now, it's really frustrating, all this education stuff and [Governor] stuff has really empowered me in terms of noticing that because I mean I would vote, but it was never that big deal to me, I'm looking back and I'm like why? This is huge. Just that empowerment as a citizen and doing things not only for like outside reasons but for yourself, it's so

empowering, and so reflecting that back in the room I think it is really important
(Interview, April 24, 2012).

This statement encapsulates how Olivia experienced, conceptualized, and enacted democratic education in the context of Tuan's classroom and in the very specific context of Lake City, which, as already noted, was engaged in an intense and divisive election. Olivia saw a clear connection between the work of public schools and preparation to be a citizen in a democracy. From this she extracted her key principles for being a citizen in a democracy: citizens participate via voicing opinions; citizens "make a difference" in their communities, i.e. they help solve problems by finding viable solutions; citizens' opinions shape decision-making possibilities; and finally, civic efficacy matters and can affect you on a personal level. This final realization that her vote really counted and affected issues that impacted her life was a watershed moment for Olivia. The context of the election in Lake City served as a vehicle for Olivia to see how public policies and officials could affect her life on a personal level; consequently, she related this back to a desire to reflect her new understanding of civic efficacy in the classroom. For her, there was a level of frustration at not having had opportunities in school to fully understand and experience this until her final semester in college and due to a contentious election rather than the everyday life of the classroom.

Voice & Choice. Giving student's voices and choices space to flourish in a classroom were key to Olivia's conception of democratic education. She noted, "I think just overall I like the idea of student ownership in a classroom. I don't ever want to be like the dictator, like what I say goes. I make the rules, this is what you do. Do it or repercussions happen" (Interview, April 25, 2012). Focusing on sharing authority in the classroom with students aligned with her conception of building a classroom community with students. She saw establishing rules and

consequences with students as a way to feel less authoritative, as well as to disperse responsibility for correcting behaviors in the classroom. Olivia said,

I just think it's, if they know the expectations then...the discipline factor is not coming from you. It's more so, we can go back and we created these rules, and not even just disciplinary, even just mid-conversation giving students choice and a voice and not being the only decision maker because I don't think that's representative of the world they're going into (Interview, April 24, 2012).

Importantly, Olivia equated this with giving students “the value of democracy in general” (Interview, April 24, 2012). This value of democracy was something that Olivia saw as a means to affect change in the world and as the reality of what her students would face – for Olivia recognized that her students would face innumerable choices and instances where they would need to form an opinion and voice it. Unlike Diego, who critiqued the obstacles that American society constructed because his students were African-American and sought ways to help them counteract those issues, Olivia saw her students, many of whom were White and affluent, as being in positions of power and needing tools to make informed decisions.

Olivia brought this particular dimension of learning the tools to make informed decisions and share authority back to her personal experiences. She stated, “I think starting that early is phenomenal. I didn't get that at all. It was very authoritative, this is what we're doing it, do it or you're staying in for recess” (Interview, April 24, 2012). Like her reflection on the power of her vote, for Olivia, engaging in democratic education in Tuan's classroom, in conjunction with her own political watershed moment, epitomized experiential learning. As she saw the effects of Tuan's democratic practices on his classroom community, she reflected on the importance of including these aspects of education early in a child's experience. Since she worked with Tuan

in the second semester of the school year, Olivia did not have the opportunity to enact her ideas around setting up rules and consequences; however, she incorporated these ideas of shared authority, choice, and voice in her enactment of problem-solving.

Problem-Solving. In Tuan's classroom, Olivia engaged with students around solving interpersonal problems among students and problems that affected the entire community. While Tuan modeled this for Olivia, perhaps more powerful was the way that his students modeled how they had learned to engage in problem solving. During an observation of a morning meeting that Olivia led, the students engaged Olivia in their problem solving.

Olivia: I would like to do a two-way fish greeting

Students greet around each side of the circle, students start racing to see which side can finish first.

Olivia: When we do our greeting going two ways, is it a race?

Students shake their heads.

Olivia: When we treat it as a race and, we're not doing what we do when we greet someone, look them in the eye and look in their face. I'm going to have to rethink that the next time.

Student: Well...

Olivia: Do you have something [Student]?

Student: Can we start over?

Olivia: I like that, let's see if we can fix it right away. Good idea [Student].

Students fix their greeting, taking time to look at each other.

Olivia: Give a thumbs up if that felt better. Thank you for that idea [Student] and for doing it again.

(Field Notes, March 20, 2012)

In this excerpt, the student engaged Olivia in solving a problem of behavioral standards that the community had set. Later that day when we debriefed, Olivia reflected on the incident:

We talked about it before...we talked about how it's not a race and how it's important to say hello to someone and good morning and how that makes you feel and how you need to show that same kindness to another person, because it makes you feel good...So then when it happened I was like sigh. And I saw it come around I'm like oh you guys...and in my head I was like if we do it again that's time consuming and...in my head I was like we should do it again, we should do it again. But I had already felt like I closed it. But when he was like 'can we do that again?' I was like yes, yes we can. And I was kind of glad that didn't come from me, it came from him in terms of their peers, the community. So I was kind of glad, happy that that was question was brought up by him, because I feel like it was way more meaningful for them. I'm glad too that he helped me take a step back and be like no you have time, just address and do it again and address the difference and then it's done (Interview, March 20, 2012).

This incident illustrated Olivia's engagement with student problem-solving, as well as the shared authority in the classroom. Olivia was open to hearing the student's suggestion and to reflecting on her practice. Instead of adhering to her decision as the teacher to move on, she remained open to the student's suggestion to "try it again", and allowed students to attempt the greeting a

second time. Further, she reflected on the importance of students taking responsibility for one another, illustrating a concern for the common good and how to cultivate that in her teaching.

This concern for the common good and how to allow for students to participate as community members rather than constantly regulate the community from her position of authority was an ongoing productive tension for Olivia. Reflecting on that same morning meeting, Olivia considered her positionality as the teacher, and how to self-regulate her own tendency to want to control each move:

I feel like I'm ok with not doing that [micromanaging] but when it comes to overall focus, I'll be like come on, come on, come on. When you do it too much they're going to be like whatever. I would. So I felt today I felt like I was doing that a lot and I was like I just need to stop. It's ok if said something and now she's looking at me. I don't need to remind her if she's stopped on her own. And so giving it, and I think for me that comes with noticing it but then waiting even a couple seconds to say something because if they resolve it on their own, because the one time I did when I forced myself too, and then [Student] leaned over and was like "Stop talking." And that's so much more powerful coming from your peer than your teacher. Like if your friend leans over and is like "You're distracting me," like if my friend leaned over I'd be like oh my gosh. I'm sorry (Interview, March 20, 2012).

This ability to step back and allow for students to regulate each other's behaviors, particularly those that affected the community, was a source of growth for Olivia over the course of the

semester. As time progressed, she became more adept at stepping back and allowing for students to make decisions to solve problems. For example, one student had a difficult time completing her work while sitting at the same table with two of her friends. The student moved to another table one day and Olivia made it clear to the student that she noticed how she had solved her own problem. Allowing students the space to recognize a problem or situation, determine a solution, and act on that solution became a strength in how Olivia enacted her conceptualization of democratic education.

Discussion and deliberation. Olivia's conception and enactment of democratic practices played out most clearly in her facilitation of discussion and deliberation in the classroom. Discussion and deliberation were part of the routines in Tuan's classroom. For example, as part of morning meeting students had particular days on which they could share with the class. The students then had the opportunity to field questions about whatever they had shared. Share time is a common practice in many lower-elementary classrooms; however, in Tuan's class, they used their share time as a space to practice asking questions and giving answers, skills that became important in more organic discussions that took place during lessons.

As in the first excerpt describing Tuan's classroom, students learned to ask for evidence to support claims that they made during a discussion. Olivia acquired this very specific language from Tuan's modeling. In the following excerpt, Olivia facilitated a discussion as part of a science lesson. The students were concluding their unit looking at grass and working together to order pictures that showed the grass growing with both rye and alfalfa, after mowing the grass, and then the grass growing back with all rye. Olivia had students come up to order the pictures and explain their thinking; this excerpt is about the final two pictures:

Olivia: Then what happened? [Student 1], come on up.

Student 1: It grew back.

Olivia: Tell me more, what did you see? Tell me more.

Student 1: I saw leaves, tall grass.

Olivia: We're down to two pictures. We have picture B and A.

Student 1: – A

Olivia: Why A?

Student 1: Because it's longer.

Olivia: Who agrees with [Student 1]? Hmmm, not a lot of hands. [Student 2], what do you think?

Student 2: This one it's only up to the [shows with hand], B is only a little bit higher.

Olivia: You think it's B [Student 2]. Let me paraphrase, you're saying B is just a little bit above the cup. Did I capture all that? [S2 nods]

Student 1: A

Olivia: You still think it's A. Ok, we have to talk some more. So give me your evidence for A.

Student 1: The grass was taller.

Olivia: So you noticed it. B or A, [Student 3], what do you think?

Student 3: There's a little bit of grass and then it started growing a little bit.

Olivia: So you think it's B because you noticed a little bit of growth...

(Field Notes, June 5, 2012)

In this excerpt Olivia drew on the specific language of asking for evidence; additionally, she worked to incorporate multiple voices in the discussion. In this instance, the correct answer was

not “A”, but rather was “B”. This example both illustrates Olivia’s facility with organizing deliberation, as well as her tension around when to cut off the deliberation or possibly introduce other tools (in this case, perhaps literally the tool of a ruler) to bring students to consensus. Olivia reflected on the lesson, “But when that stuff happens I don’t ever know what teachable moment to take advantage of. Whether I should stop it like I did and let them continue thinking about it and bring it back, or to get a definitive answer then” (Interview, June 6, 2012). This tension illustrates that while she experienced and attempted the moves, nevertheless, she remained reticent about the practice.

When I asked Olivia if she would incorporate these types of discussions and deliberations into her teaching, she remarked,

It makes me so uncomfortable, Katie. Like I totally picked it up from him to try, and he’s encouraged me to try it....But he’s [Tuan’s] like, but look at how meaningful that process is. They facilitated that whole thing. He’s like it wasn’t you speaking to them. They were talking to each other, as a group they decided on one thing...You have to let go of control and it’s hard. Not control, I don’t think I control a class, but your role as a teacher sitting...and when I do that I feel like I’m not going to get them back” (Interview, June 6, 2012).

The tension of when to let go of control and when to take back the conversation is clear in Olivia’s discussion of deliberation. This illuminates a tension in enacting democratic education as a novice teacher; sharing the discursive space with students can be uncomfortable and unpredictable, two factors which require craft and skill to handle. On the one hand, Diego spoke of his desire to be a “moment” teacher, for him those moments did not result in a robust conception of sharing the classroom discursive space. On the other hand, Olivia discussed her

discomfort with letting go of control and allowing the moment to guide her teaching practice. Yet, Olivia also reflected on the importance of developing these skills:

It's a behavior you want to develop because it's part of having a voice and speaking to one another and providing evidence and listening to someone else and coming up with something different and agreeing and disagreeing...I want to get way better at it. Because it's really powerful, but not when I do it (Interview, June 6, 2012).

Her commitment to the ideal was apparent, but teaching as a process meant that she needed to continue this development in her future classroom. While she noted that it was not "powerful" when she did it, the mere attempt at doing it multiple times gave her the experiential learning to draw upon in her future practice.

Olivia's conception and enactment of democratic education fell firmly within preparing students with the skills they will need to participate in a democracy. The focus on talk in the classroom emphasized the importance of language, critical thinking, and developing an opinion. Further, she stressed dispositional qualities of sharing authority, an individual's responsibility toward the common good, and establishing an ethic of care for the common good. Interestingly, Olivia bucked against the typical notion of "everyone should be friends" that is often touted in elementary classrooms. She reflected,

I don't think everybody has to be friends, I think we misconstrue that definition, because as adults you don't have to be everybody's friend, but you still need to be respectful, care about their space, care about their feelings, stuff like that...we have two kids who have playground issues all the time and I try not to be like 'you guys are friends,' because they may just not like each other, and I guess

personally I think that's ok, but you still need to be respectful, not hurt them, care about them because they're in your classroom community...who am I to say be friends with that person? (Interview, May 30, 2012)

Her conception of a classroom community parallels the ideals of a democracy, particularly a democracy in a pluralist society. This is a less common sentiment in early childhood classrooms and one that served as a touchstone for Olivia's conception of creating a community where students could learn the skills of participation, the dispositions of care, all the while hinting at the larger concept of the common good and the idea that we can coexist, even when we're not friends.

Tensions in teaching. Some of Olivia's tensions in teaching have been noted throughout this section: finding a balance between being teacher as authority and teacher as community member; making pedagogic decisions in the moment; and, creating a community in which everyone respects each other, yet does not have to be friends with each other. These tensions were productive for Olivia. From them, she reflected on her practice, how she might resolve these tensions in the near future, and found learning opportunities embedded within the tensions. For Olivia though, her unresolved or unexplored tensions came from spaces where she either did not have experiences or could not connect to experiences to help her understand how to reconcile those in her practice. Three primary tensions remained for Olivia's conception and enactment of democratic practices at the end of her semester with Tuan: incorporating critical issues into the curriculum, responsive teaching inclusive of culture, and transferring her learning to a new context (a tension she anticipated).

The first two tensions of incorporating critical issues and responsive teaching inclusive of culture are interrelated for Olivia, as well as for Tuan who struggled to address these with Olivia.

In most aspects of their relationship, Tuan willfully pushed Olivia's thinking, always asking for her opinion first and for her reasoning behind pedagogic decisions. Yet, when it came to addressing issues of critical curriculum, Tuan hesitated. After Olivia gave a lesson from the reading comprehension toolkit that Lake City district used for literacy, Tuan reflected on Olivia's lesson:

And the one concern that I have right now is how can I approach the ideas of race and equity with her on an authentic level...I'm talking about the issue of talking about Helen Keller and it's more than just Helen Keller did this, she's blind, she couldn't hear. Kind of celebrating it...it was out of the comprehension toolkits, so she's doing what she thought I wanted her to do, but I wanted her to address that. What does that mean to be blind? What does that mean to be deaf? Because the kids were interested in it. So I think the content and her willingness to learn is definitely there. I just want to kind of push more or turn up the heat or accelerate her thinking as far as there's a different system for people of color it seems like for me. There's a different system for a woman. Not everyone is on the same type of system (Interview, April 27, 2012).

Tuan wanted to have more open discussions with Olivia about bringing a critical lens to the curriculum, but struggled with how to open that discussion. For Olivia, her growth in curriculum development came around finding pedagogic clarity centered on an academic purpose; however, she limited that purpose to learning devoid of culture. Talking about how she felt using a lesson from a "boxed curriculum" she said, "I think that with any written curriculum I think I would teach it differently every year based on the group of kids that I have and what needs they have whether it's ELL or other learning preferences or whatever" (Interview, April 24, 2012). For

Olivia, being “critical” of the curriculum meant adapting to student’s learning needs, but she did not include cultural or critical dimensions that affect student’s learning opportunities.

While Tuan worked to model these discussions and ideals for Olivia, he struggled to find a way to explicitly address how to incorporate attention to critical issues of equity. In his final interview, I asked if they had had the opportunity to address political advocacy, race, and Olivia’s background, all issues he had brought up as possible conversations he wanted to have. He commented,

Not as much as I wanted to be. I want it to be a, more of a bigger, or central topic than she would. I think for me I’m comfortable talking about where I come from and how I got to where I am now. But at the end of the day I think what was important for me that I show her by action, so I talk with kids about what’s fair, what’s not fair. Race with some of my kids talking about, one of my kids came in and talked about this is ghetto, and I’m like what does that mean? Just talking about it. Because I’d rather have them talking about it with me than having some misconceptions outside. But she sees that. And she’s mentioned to me before that she likes the fact and appreciates the fact that I can have those conversations with my kids, knowing that they’re in first grade...Slowly I’m figuring that out. Start to show it in your action. Because I think the university does a really nice job of talking about race and equity and kind of push their thinking, but it’s hard for them to show the action because they’re not in a class, what would that look like in a classroom. So for me that’s my shift in just thinking I just got to live my values and just do it. And hopefully she sees that, and then maybe this conversation will come out two or three years from now. I don’t expect it to come

out in just one semester. It's a lifetime of learning about who you are especially something as complex as having a mom who's White and having a dad who's Black and trying to figure out who you are and like how you were treated differently than your brother who's darker than you are. Some of her comments have been really interesting as far as she sees that her brother is kind of the one who's messing up and she said that he's using like race as an excuse or something like that. So I push her back, like is he using it as an excuse for all situations? Or is it like truly a systematic? So things like that still kind of worry me a little bit, but I think that at the end of the day I just have to model and just show her more than just tell her. It's a bit condescending to tell her because I don't know what that is to be black and white (Interview, June 12, 2012).

Having gone through a similar program at MU, but via the PDS track, Tuan assumed that Olivia had the same experiences talking about race and equity; however, when talking about the program Olivia did not mention its social justice focus. This is not to say that she didn't experience this, but rather that it was not a salient focus of the program for Olivia when she reflected on it. Unfortunately for Olivia, the details of assignments and at times overwhelming amount of work dominated her reflection on MU's program.

Tuan's comment that he did not "expect it to come out in just one semester" points to the need for ongoing work around critical issues in education. Olivia's focus this semester was on finding the purpose in a lesson; for her purpose was purely academic and related to skills for participation, rather than on a critique of society or addressing issues of equity. She reflected,

I know purpose is really important in there as far as why you're doing a lesson, so what's the purpose. So focusing on that, trying to limit the conversation in terms

of the tangents and going off, like what's the purpose Olivia, stay on task

(Interview, April 24, 2012).

Thus, her focus on "purpose" trumped the tangential moments of student interest in issues of equity that may have forced her to engage with this tension. Yet, her level of pedagogic clarity and ability to engage students in rich discussion and deliberation illustrate her proficiency in other areas of practice that are no less important.

Finally, Olivia anticipated tension around transferring the knowledge and skills developed in Tuan's classroom to a new context. Having started her work with Tuan in the second semester she did not have the benefit of experiencing how he had established his classroom community and its norms. She reflected on her ability to set up a similar classroom where the ethos focused on caring for each other,

I think I've been comparing it to other rooms that I've been in where I don't know if that [talking to students about caring for each other] would have worked. But again the other rooms I've been in were set up probably very differently than this one. I think this is an idea that he started from day one, and obviously I came in mid-year, so I think if I did it I would have to think about how to work it into from the start as far as how I set up my room and the community I tried to build and how I did that and it would have to be language I used from the very beginning...He encourages them to talk to one another too like if there's a conflict like go talk to her, tell her how you feel, whatever. So yeah, but I do like it. At first I was kind of like I don't know if that's going to hit home, but a lot of them you say that and it's instant like realization like oh yeah, you're totally right, I do care about this person, why am I flicking things across the room or whatever.

So with this group that he's, I haven't seen it, but how he's structured the room from the beginning and how they use the language too I think it's really strong because they've really practiced it a lot. I don't think it's something that would just happen. It's a big thought to have when you're really thinking about caring for somebody and how what you're doing isn't showing that... And I think you have to do it in a way where it's not a shame-based thing either. So it's a multi-layered thing. But I think if I was going to do it I would really be critical about how I implement it because I would want it to be authentic for them too. And how I would make them feel that way and modeling of course and all that. So I would have to really plan that out because I wouldn't want it to be that type of thing I wouldn't want it to be fake for them either (Interview, April 24, 2012).

While Olivia anticipates the tension in transferring her skills to a new context, in this excerpt, she clearly thinks through how she might do that and unpacks pieces of Tuan's practice. In this tension, Olivia draws on her tools of reflection that she developed through daily reflective dialogue with Tuan. Clearly skeptical at moments, she also finds spaces where she believes that she can enact this kind of practice in the future.

Interestingly, this skill of reflective practice became most salient for Olivia during her work with Tuan. She lamented not taking seriously MU's emphasis on reflective practice during her earlier practicum experiences because it had become a powerful tool for her learning during student teaching.

During the time working with Olivia, her supervisor was unable to participate in an interview, which is a clear limitation in analyzing MU's position in Olivia's learning to teach process. The supervisor had to leave the country prior to the end of the semester;

in fact, Olivia asked to use the video I did for her final observation since the supervisor was unable to come in again. While the limitation is clear, this also brings up two important points for Olivia. First, Olivia never mentioned her MU supervisors, either from her student teaching semester or in any other semester, as influential on her practice; however, she did recognize the role of reflective practice that had been emphasized throughout her semesters at MU. Secondly, the difficulty for the supervisor to be able to meet to be interviewed illustrates the constraints on graduate students who are balancing their work of supervision with their own studies and in this case, the additional logistics of studying in another country. In Olivia's case the primary responsibility for teacher education fell on Tuan.

Discussion

Diego and Olivia each conceptualized and enacted different aspects of democratic education. Whereas Diego's conception of democratic education as a space for critique fueled development of critical curriculum, Olivia's focus on the skills necessary to participate in a democracy promoted development of discussion and deliberation practices. For each novice teacher, the democratic education that they experienced in their field placement shaped the type of democratic education that they enacted. Maya's ideological focus on schools as cultured spaces, curriculum as a means to change the conversation for African American students, and a clear need to prepare students both for the realities of a racist society, and as change agents to better their life outcomes, created a learning environment that engaged Diego's commitments to social justice. Tuan's focus on critical thinking, establishing a community who attended to the common good, and the use of tools of talk and reflection as means to engage, created a learning space where Olivia's desire to be a more purposeful teacher could flourish.

In each case the experience was not limited to the tools that the novice teachers chose. For example, Tuan clearly wanted Olivia to engage in more critical issues of equity in her teaching; however, he saw this as something that would come with time and was part of an ongoing process of learning. Similarly, Maya recognized Diego's need to work on timing and classroom management, but saw those as issues of being a novice and as areas that he would continue to develop over time. In each case, however, the novice teachers lost learning opportunities for their growth as democratic educators, and consequently students in their classrooms lost learning opportunities.

While Maya and Tuan each enacted a more full conception of democratic education, i.e. weaving together a critical focus on issues of equity and encouraging participation skills and social action, nevertheless both Diego and Olivia were more selective in their choice of tools afforded by the context. For each of them, this selective choice was fueled by their mentor teacher's primary emphasis (curriculum for Maya, and participatory skills for Tuan), as well as each novice teacher's background and prior commitments. Diego's commitment to the realities of African-American students tied directly to his affiliation as an African-American male. Further, his critical eye on history may come from being a double major in Elementary Education and History, or from his relationship with the American Indian Curriculum Coordinator who helped Diego frame his original unit. Olivia's development and commitment to reflective practice bolstered her focus on finding purpose in every move she made in the classroom. While this was to the detriment of seeing issues of equity at times, it also created an environment focused on student learning aligned with standards and with development of participation skills. Interestingly, Olivia is also biracial with a Black father and White mother; however, for Olivia she specifically says that she does not identify with one side of her family

over the other. This may have been part of the tension that Tuan felt in addressing issues of race with Olivia; while he assumed that she might feel solidarity with him as a person of color, he also recognized that she might not, and that he did not know what it was like to grow up in a biracial family. Olivia's background, while it shaped how she understood her own racial place in the classroom, did not necessarily influence her commitments to particular populations of students or overtly play out in a critique of the curriculum.

In the analysis of each case, what became clear was how democratic education, and becoming a democratic educator, needs to be seen as a process rather than a product of particular experiences. Each novice teacher's field placement afforded them a particular constellation of tools that are foundational to democratic education; however, to assume that only the field placement and only this space of 15 weeks of time is enough is a disservice to the continued growth each of these novice teachers will experience throughout their careers as teachers. The key here is to understand how to better mediate the process of learning in a democratic field placement, by clearly seeing which tools the particular context affords and how an emphasis on one facet – knowledge or skills – creates particular conceptions and enactments of democratic education. For Diego, developing ways to coordinate the learning environment, might allow him space to focus on participatory skills. For Olivia, reflection on curriculum via a social issues lens might move her toward a more equity driven practice. For each novice teacher, the presence of the teacher education program as a possible means to do this could have been instrumental in expanding their learning opportunities beyond the tools emphasized in their particular democratic classroom.

Both the novice teachers are losing learning opportunities, and thus their students are losing learning opportunities when teacher education programs don't coherently support or

effectively mediate a robust instantiation of democratic education. Does MU's program itself reflect on the instantiations of democratic education? In its student teaching handbook, MU states that its mission has the goal, "To provide an intellectually challenging professional program that promotes social justice through multicultural education and critical reflection," (Artifact, collected March 10, 2013), yet the program's instantiation of this mission, at least through the experiences of these novice teachers, is scattered. Diego recognized the focus on social justice, but critiques how the program lives its values particularly in working with students of color. He noted that he never referenced his race until his fourth semester of the program, and at that point then felt his peers looked to him as a sole representative of people of color. Further, Diego's critical reflection did not bolster his ability to enact his critical curriculum. Olivia understood the necessity to provide space for multiple perspectives and did so through her focus on discussion and deliberation; however, the focus on social justice was not as clear for her, or rather, was not as salient to her teaching practice.

There was a clear issue of coherence between MU's mission statement and its enactment of those ideals in their coursework, programmatic structures, and support of instructors and supervisors who worked directly with students. Interestingly, in the case of Hannah, who participated in MU's PDS program, she felt a clear connection between the mission, her work with her supervisor Jane, her classroom practicum experiences, and to an extent her coursework. Hannah's case will be the focus of Chapter 7 and will explore how these contextual connections supported her development of a democratic teaching identity; however, it is important to note here that Jane's role as a boundary-crosser between the university, school, and community created more robust and contextualized learning opportunities for Hannah. Yet, the PDS program at MU is small and at present time is being phased out as the university moves to a

different partnership model, which may or may not draw on the practices of Jane and the PDS community at South Shore.

Just as Diego and Olivia enacted the type of education that they experienced in their student teaching field placements, university programs need to reflect on the type of education students are experiencing in classrooms. Programs can promote democratic education through their missions and commitments to social justice and multicultural education, while not reflecting on those ideals or enacting them in their own classrooms and therefore not providing the experiences novices need to fully enact democratic education. The cases of Diego and Olivia point to fissures in MU's program that hold possibilities to reimagine robust conceptions of democratic education via a more coherently understood and applied mission in all facets of its program – from the ways that methods courses are structured and enacted, to providing support for and development for supervisors to better connect university coursework with fieldwork, to finding ways that the university can bolster mentor teacher's knowledge of novice teacher learning issues that need resolution and remediation.

Chapter 6: The Role of Cooperating Teachers in Democratizing Teacher Education

In her seminal work on democratic education, Gutmann (1999) argues, “Democratic education begins not only with children who are to be taught but also with citizens who are to be their teachers.” (p. 49). Seeing teachers as citizens, who may or may not have experienced democratic education in their own school, community, or family experiences, requires that teacher education toward democratic education must include means of developing this capacity. In the previous chapter, I explored novice teachers’ conceptions of democratic education that they developed through their experiences being immersed in and working with the democratic practices of elementary classrooms. I have thus far argued that novice teachers enact the types of democratic education that are afforded to them within the particular contexts of their learning; in this chapter, I extend that experiential learning to the democratic qualities of their learning experience and relationship with cooperating teachers.

The five cooperating teachers who enacted democratic practices and pedagogies in their elementary classrooms engaged in a parallel practice in their mentorship of novice teachers. This democratic ethos extended beyond a mimetic tradition of do-as-I-do in learning to teach, in other words asking novice teachers to enact the same democratic practices; instead, these cooperating teachers took a democratic stance toward mentorship that shaped the learning opportunities and experiences for novice teachers by creating democratic spaces for inquiry and question-posing, critical examination of curriculum, building mutually respectful and beneficial relationships, and equal participation and decision-making. Thus, these novice teachers had opportunities to experience democratic education through the teacher education provided by their cooperating teachers. Further, these cooperating teachers worked to democratize teacher

education by recognizing the distributed expertise involved in teaching elementary students; in other words, these cooperating teachers sought out knowledge about students and pedagogy from other teachers, staff, professional developers, community members, and even the novice teachers. While the cooperating teachers necessarily had many more years of experience teaching, nonetheless these cooperating teachers worked to establish spaces wherein novice teachers could challenge ideas, introduce new practices, and co-create the classroom community. Yet, these relationships also introduced tensions for the cooperating teachers: supporting versus challenging, modeling versus freedom to become one's own model, and teaching as a product versus teaching as an ongoing process all presented dilemmas for the cooperating teacher's practice as a teacher educator.

In this chapter, I will explore democratizing teacher education through two primary areas of analysis: (1) how these cooperating teachers enacted parallel democratic practices in their teaching of elementary students and their mentoring of novice teachers, and (2) tensions in practice between allowing space for individual freedom and establishing a collective practice of democratic teaching. The chapter draws on data from all five cooperating-teachers and represents themes seen across the cases. Some cases more heavily represented one area of democratizing teacher education; for example, while Tuan and Eva more readily expressed open concern about the tension between apprenticeship models of mentoring and models that allow for the novice teacher to develop their own practices and identity, nevertheless this tension was also present, albeit to a lesser extent, in Maya, Grace, and Julia's classrooms. When looked at holistically these cases illuminated how teacher education could become more democratic in the experiences it provides, in the character of its relationships to schools and knowledge, and finally in addressing the tensions which could create expansive learning spaces for novice teachers and

teacher educators.

Enacting Parallel Democratic Practices

In these five elementary democratic classrooms, the cooperating teachers enacted parallel democratic practices as teacher educators. I draw on the concept of a “parallel practice” advocated by Lowenstein (2009). In her conception she argues that teacher educators need to look at and work with novice teachers through the same assets-based lens that they advocate using in K-12 classroom practice. In that same vein, I argue that democratic teacher educators draw on their ideological and pedagogical tools when working with novice teachers; their means of mentorship reflect the ways in which they engage in democratic education with young citizens, and thus highlight the knowledge and dispositions of school-based teacher educators that impact the learning possibilities for novice teachers. In the following interview excerpt, Julia explicitly named this connection between the work she does with her students and with novice teachers:

So that’s usually an exercise I go through with practicum students or student teachers. Like alright, so you’re really aware of all the things where you are falling short, let’s think about your strengths and how we can use those to help you gain on that...It’s kind of like what we do with the compliments and appreciations with the kids because it’s much easier for kids to say the negative things but they love hearing the good things. And I obviously will give them feedback too, but I want...the pre-service teachers to start identifying – these are my strengths – because as teachers we all have the things we don’t do so well and things we do much better and how do we build these up to help us with these.

(Interview, March 1, 2012).

In Julia's classroom, Friday class meetings were devoted to giving compliments and appreciations. Students would recognize each other's strengths and contributions to the kind of safe, respectful, and caring classroom community that the class had decided on setting up at the start of the school year. In turn, Julia took this practice and related it to novice teacher learning and how she could facilitate establishing a positive teaching identity.

These teacher educators took multiple opportunities to relate their values, ideologies, and pedagogies from their elementary classroom to their mentoring pedagogy and practice. Importantly, as seen in Julia's reflection, these cooperating teachers did not enact a direct translation of elementary practices to adult education practices; rather, they considered the affordances of those elementary practices and reshaped them into ways and means of working with adults. Four areas stand out as making the greatest impact on novice teachers' conceptions of democratic education and their own identification as democratic educators: inquiry and discussion as problem-solving tools, knowledge of social issues that impact education, establishing mutually respectful relationships to build communities focused on learning and the common good, and knowledge for teaching as distributed among multiple sources and persons.

Inquiry and question-posing to promote discussion and deliberation. These cooperating teachers approached teaching as inquiry (e.g. Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009); in other words, they approached their work as a set of problems, dilemmas, and issues that required reflection, question-posing, discussion, and then action. When reflecting on the novice teacher's learning and decision-making around instructional choices in the classroom, these cooperating teachers presented issues as questions and engaged in problem-solving strategies to deliberate the possible solutions to issues around learning and classroom management. Further, when these teachers engaged in reflection with the novice teachers, they emphasized their own belief that

truly responsive and democratic teaching brought into question their ideas, beliefs, and practices. These spaces of inquiry created robust opportunities for novice teachers to engage in learning to teach, particularly since the cooperating teachers approached these inquiry spaces with open minds and without a commitment to a predetermined solution. The novice teachers engaged in these acts of inquiry alongside their cooperating teachers, and found within these spaces the value of reflective practice and deliberative decision-making.

Asking questions and engaging in inquiry required willingness from the cooperating teachers to examine their own practice alongside the novice teacher. Starting from this point created an atmosphere where inquiry became the norm. Maya explained,

Ok, so we're working on integrating these curriculums into our practice and so I've been doing a lot of new activities based on Sharokky Hollie's new book, *Culturally [and] Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning*. And so one of the first things I do is say, "Ok what did you think of this activity? Was it effective? Do you think that the kids were engaged in the activity? Do you think I should change it somehow?" So sometimes I will start the questioning and that prompts more questions (Interview, January 1, 2012).

For Maya, asking Diego and Dania to examine her practice was a means to engage them in discussion about practice, to learn together with her novice teachers, and at the same time model how reflective practice is central to intentional teaching. Interestingly, Maya credits her Master's program at MU¹³ as the source of her approach to teaching as a process of inquiry and intellectual challenge. She reflected,

¹³ The Community Teacher Program had limited funding and ended after three years. The program was a Master's of Teaching program aimed at teachers who wanted to work in racially, ethnically, and socio-economically diverse settings.

I think for me it comes from the program that I was taught. So the Community Teacher Program was an action-research based program so that's very ingrained in me that reflective practice is the only way that we can be effective teachers.

That's my understanding of how this works (Interview, January 1, 2012).

Maya's emphasis on reflective practice created an environment in which she asked Diego and Dania openly to critique and challenge her practices; by having her novice teachers first question her practice, she set the tone to engage in later discussions about their practice.

Maya discussed further how inquiry related to her continued learning in practice; however, here she went further to make the connection to how her stance also promoted novice teacher learning and a vision of civic participation:

When they come to me at the very beginning, I say that I expect you to challenge me, I expect you to ask questions of me. And because that's literally how we grow our brain. Our brain grows; the synaptic connections actually are developed through the act of trying to understand. And so, I am dedicated to the proposition that we are here to grow our brains and it doesn't matter if you're a seven year old or a twenty-three year old, we're here to grow our brains because I really don't want to be one of those sixty year olds going through dementia and you know, this is how we keep our brain active. This is how we become lifelong learners. This is how we become active participants in our society (Interview, January 1, 2012).

Maya connected her expectation for novice teachers to challenge her thinking with her values for lifelong learning and ultimately for active civic participation. Asking questions, thinking

critically, and continuous learning were dimensions of “active civic participation” for teachers, which paralleled Maya’s commitment to her elementary students’ ability to do the same.

Similar to Maya, Tuan saw asking questions, discussion, developing the ability to give evidence to support your thinking, as well as remaining open to how new evidence might alter your thinking as critical to learning for all persons in his classroom. This stance of inquiry and question-posing shaped Olivia’s learning opportunities while working with Tuan. In the following excerpt, Olivia reflected on Tuan’s response when she asked for his thoughts on a teaching practice / decision:

And any time, and I know what the answer’s going to be, but I’ll ask him anyway and it’s always, “Well, what do you think?” “Well, what do you think? You know what I’m going to say, what do you think?” And it was so frustrating at first because it was like I don’t know! But he’s like, “You do! You do know and you need to be confident in your thoughts.” Or it will be like “I have an opinion, but I want to hear you first.” And it drives me nuts and he’s like “I know it’s going to drive you nuts” but he’s really going to challenge you to not only ask questions but then attempt to answer them. He’s like because “You don’t have to adopt anything that I do. I’m not perfect and I don’t have the one size fits all teaching.” I mean it’s like “It’s your job to observe and test things out.” He’s always been like “Do whatever you need to do and obviously if it’s something crazy, I’ll tell you. If you want to try something new...” I don’t even know what to call it, way to get attention or whatever, he’s like “try it because this is your space to do it and I’m not going to give you the answer.” It drives me nuts because it’s good. That’s real life because you have to think on your own and you have to be reflective and

use those reflections to make decisions on your teaching, which is scary to me
(Interview, March 20, 2012).

In this example, Olivia clearly felt frustration with Tuan's question-posing; however, she also recognized the importance of both the question-posing itself and the frustration as means to her learning and growth as a teacher. Her comment, "that's real life," illustrated her understanding that decision-making in the classroom shaped her work as a teacher. Further, Tuan gave her the space to try out her own practices and advocated that she not merely adopt his practices. For Olivia and Tuan this structure of question-posing, wherein he would wait to give his opinion was central to their relationship and her growth in learning to teach.

Discussion, resulting from question-posing, became a key tool in Olivia's learning to teach process. Tuan valued discussion with his students, other expert teachers, and Olivia as a means to process and learn. Similar to Maya's emphasis on continuing her learning to teach process, for Tuan the parallel practice of discussion held reciprocal value to his growth as a teacher. He commented,

If I am communicating and she doesn't get it, she'll tell me and then I have to figure out another way, not just to repeat it but to say it in a different way. That doesn't happen if I didn't have them [novice teachers]. In my mind it makes sense. I never have to share my thinking because it's in my mind. It makes sense in my mind (Interview, June, 12, 2012).

Tuan saw his relationship with Olivia as mutually beneficial to his learning. For him, the process of reflective practice through discussion and deliberation created an opportunity to clarify his schema. This reflected his practice of talking to his first grade students about their schema and

how new information can change your schema, but just awareness of having a schema proved central to his teaching young students. He reflected,

It really allows me to process with them, where I would never have this much time with a colleague. With a student teacher I feel it's important for me to process with them, but when I'm doing that I'm thinking about what I'm thinking. 'Does that even make sense how I explained it?' And if it didn't, it better make sense (Interview, June 12, 2012).

Tuan's attention to his thinking and consequent highlighting of this thinking were central to the daily reflection he engaged in with Olivia.

Julia also noted her use of small-session discussion, which she compared to Carl Anderson's (2000) model of conferencing with young writers, as a means to promote novice teacher learning. Like Carl Anderson, Julia created a structure to these short discussions to get at the heart of issues and learning. She explained the structure of the approach:

What do you think you did well, what are you struggling with and how can I help you? And the how can I help you is not so much, well if I were you I would do this, but the idea of letting them talk through that and then saying first of all, asking them if they have any ideas for what they would do differently and then offering them three or four different ideas of things that either I've tried or other people have tried and if any of those sound good to them it's something they could try. Again it's always how you work with kids, but I don't want to tell them what to do, but I want to guide them and let them pick. I always tell them, what works for me isn't necessarily going to work for you. So what I do for class

management isn't necessarily going to work for you. This is a perfect time to experiment and let them know that (Interview, March 1, 2012).

Openness to new ideas, allowing space for novice teachers to reflect and problem-solve, and taking risks dominated the discussion and deliberation enacted by these cooperating teachers. Enacting practices similar to those that guided their teaching of elementary students allowed for novice teachers to experience democratic education in their learning-to-teach process.

The parallel practice of using the same inquiry, question-posing, and discussion as a tool for learning with elementary students and with novice teachers extended to how the novice teachers also enacted practice in their classrooms. As seen in the previous chapter, Olivia took up the tools of discussion and deliberation as central to her conception and enactment of democratic education. Like Olivia, Hannah also drew on tools of inquiry and question-posing as central to her conception of democratic education. Hannah, projecting what democratic education would look like in her classroom, said,

A lot of it for me – and I've seen it in both their [Eva and Tuan's] classrooms – is the idea of talking and having the students be able to say what they want to say, how they're feeling, what's going on. If there's something going on in the classroom, how are they going to work it out? It's not me, I can't fix something for them, it's decisions they have to make. And choosing what they're learning, in both those classrooms they always had so many options...of what they want to learn...both those teachers, if one of the kids would ask a question about one thing, both go into that subject instead of trying to push one thing...questions that they ask, you can go off, you don't have to stick to a lesson plan if something that

comes up that's more important, you can talk about that and you can discuss these things (Interview, May 22, 2012).

Thus, while engaging in these practices of inquiry and question-posing with novice teachers mirrored their own practices as teachers and therefore could be construed as mimetic forms of teacher education, the openness with which these teachers engaged in inquiry with novice teachers and students revealed a legitimate curiosity and exploration of practice and knowledge.

Of note, every cooperating teacher in this study was engaged in some form of continued inquiry into their own practice as teachers. Tuan was working on a continuing administration degree at MU and had recently conducted classroom action research as part of a Lake City School District group. Julia also participated in the same action-research group with Tuan; the group's focus had been supporting novice teachers in learning. Eva was working on her ESL certification through MU and was also taking a course on supervision with Jane. Finally, Maya and Grace had both conducted action research in the past and were constantly working to develop the ACI model. During the semester, Grace worked directly with Sharroky Hollie¹⁴ and his consultants to improve her practice and in particular to be more culturally relevant in her speech and actions in the classroom. These teachers saw themselves as lifelong learners, constructed classroom spaces for their students to value learning, and engaged their novice teachers as partners in learning (Memo, May 11, 2012). Being able to gather and critically evaluate information, discuss and deliberate were all central to inquiry; similarly, these particular

¹⁴ Sharroky Hollie wrote the book, *Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy: Classroom Practices for Student Success* (2011). He is an Assistant Professor at California State University, Dominguez Hills, who is also the Director of the Center for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning. Through this organization, he conducts professional development for teachers to become culturally responsive. Both Grace and Maya attended a conference where he was present and he then came to Lake City to do further professional development.

skills, and the disposition toward critical thinking, are key to the democratic skills and dispositions needed to be an active and participatory citizen.

Connecting social action, knowledge of social issues, and teaching. Each of these cooperating teachers made clear their critical approach to knowledge in the classroom. This was the most direct instruction and prompting in the novice-mentor relationship. These cooperating teachers openly discussed current events, social inequalities, school and district policies, and issues in implementing curriculum that reflected the diverse populations these classrooms served. Cochran-Smith (1991) argues that “learning to teach against the grain” is part of the larger struggle of teachers seeing themselves embedded in the multiple social and political contexts that affect schools, curriculum, and the learning opportunities afforded in and by those contexts. Further, she argues that teaching against the grain is not a “generic skill” that can be taught at the university and applied in schools; rather, it is specific to learning how to resist and reform within a particular context alongside experienced teachers who are doing the same. While the novice teachers came to these issues with their own knowledge base, engaging with a critical educator questioning who questioned and critiqued social and political issues, reaffirmed the novice teacher’s commitment to creating equitable, safe, and socially engaged classroom communities. Further, these cooperating teachers engaged the novice teachers in discussion that promoted understanding teaching as practice beyond the classroom that included being informed about school, district, state, and national policies.

Discussion of critical issues related to power structures and inequities was one form of teaching against the grain enacted in these mentoring relationships. Maya and Diego engaged in dialogue about the achievement-gap that continued to plague Lake City School District. For Maya, the African Centered Instructional model was one way to work against that achievement

gap and introducing it to novice teachers like Diego and Dania was a means to emphasize the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy and practices. When asked what she hoped Diego would take from her class, she said, “I would hope that he has generated a set of tools that he can use to make his practice more culturally relevant” (Interview, January 25, 2012).

Maya’s impact on Diego’s critiques of society was clear when he said, “As Maya says, if you can’t control yourself, society will control you and it usually looks like a 9 by 12 cell” (Interview, December 1, 2012). Diego had clear connections and knowledge of social justice issues prior to working with Maya; however, he also noted that in her classroom he not only grew as a teacher but also as a person. He reflected,

I don’t think I could have had a better experience in a better classroom in terms of my personal growth, just not only as a teacher, but as a person I’ve grown a lot in terms of what I think is important, how I look at things, you know, what is my purpose in life (Interview, December 1, 2011).

Connecting the political aspects of critique necessary as an educator activist to personal growth was integral to Diego’s identity as an African-American male teacher who aimed to work with African-American students.

Diego’s personal growth in terms of his identity further complicated his position in the school and illustrated a growing sense of how school level politics, which in this case were often personal and relational politics, can impact an educator’s ability to affect change in the school. He noted,

I’ve been working on my own personal identity, who I am as a teacher, as a male teacher, as a multiracial male teacher, as a passer, that’s a really big, that’s a really large part of who I am because I can, in some cases, I can say things where

if someone who was African-American and looked African-American, that instant negativity would have been put out there (Interview, December 1, 2011).

His reference to “that instant negativity” referred to his observations of Maya’s struggles in her school context. Diego described the school as having a “fighting culture” and that other staff had negative reactions to Maya’s activism in the school. So while Maya served as a positive example of an educator activist for Diego, she also represented a challenge. Diego’s identity as a “passer” made him realize that he could say some things without being labeled as “a loud African-American” (Interview, December 1, 201) because of his racial ambiguity. For Diego, this example illustrated the politics of schools and the complexities of advocacy within particular contexts.

Dania also commented on the complexities of advocating for students in the context of West Woods and Lake City. She noted:

To see these teachers go to battle every day and just know that they’re doing right by their kids. That’s awesome and just gives me more hope and determination to be ok with the fact that people are not going to like me, they’re not going to like what I’m doing and that’s ok because I know that I’m doing right by those students and that’s all that matters. And I gotta figure out how to finagle that political system (Interview, June 14, 2012).

Dania saw the work that Maya and Grace were doing with the ACI model as standing up for the students in their classrooms. She also noted that there was tension at West Woods around the ACI model and its place in the school; interestingly, the model was heavily supported by the principal, but met resistance from a portion of the teachers who had been teaching at West Woods for many years. Dania learned that fighting for what you believe your students deserve

and learning how to “finagle that political system” would be part of her work as a teacher. Importantly, she learned in this particular context that individual teachers ought to voice their beliefs in what is best for their students, even if that meant having to subvert the system of schooling to ensure that students receive culturally relevant and responsive curriculum.

Maya and Grace, who worked closely with their colleagues on the first grade ACI team, created multiple spaces for Diego, Dania, and Lisa to discuss issues related to curriculum and the politics of how curriculum is developed, distributed, and enacted. During one planning meeting the ACI team teachers, along with the novice teachers, reviewed Lake City’s textbook for teaching about the local area history. As the teachers examined the book they asked who was left out of the book, whose culture was not represented. Maya commented, “There are a few gaps in the reality” (Field Notes, December 15, 2011). She went on to talk about the composition of the committee that created the book and when a team member asked why she wasn’t on the curriculum development committee, she responded, “I was not allowed to be because [name] was on it.” As they continued looking through the book, another teacher remarked, “Where are our kids?” This critical examination of the text illustrated the team’s commitment to culturally relevant pedagogy and ensuring that their students saw themselves in the curriculum.

When the group arrived at a section about “Entertainment Then & Now,” there was outrage. To illustrate entertainment from years past, the book included a photo of a landmark theater; on the marquee for the theater was a picture of Amos and Andy in black face. The teachers engaged in a long discussion of what they were going to do to protest the inclusion of this picture without any context or discussion surrounding it; one teacher advocated writing to the district and rallying parents at the school to participate in protesting use of the book. When

Diego reflected on the meeting he emphasized a need to be critical of the curriculum, but also noted, “every tool is a teaching tool, but it has to be used in an appropriate way” (Interview, December 15, 2011).

Interestingly, Diego expressed frustration that the whole of the meeting focused on this issue rather than on other issues that students in the classes were facing. While Diego recognized this conversation as important, he also felt that the team spent too much time on the issue. His frustration and desire to focus on personal and academic issues facing the students may be rooted in a number of possible sources. First, relationships were core to Diego’s teaching. Second, Diego’s approach to curriculum was to be critical; therefore, for him, he noted that he would use the text but he would raise the issue of the inclusion of black face. Yet, Diego did not recognize the full political importance of the conversation; his contextual understanding was limited to his classroom, the students in that classroom, and how he, as an individual teacher, would work through this curricular issue. In this instance, more direct talk around the importance of challenging curricular decisions at a district, state, and national level may have aided in Diego fully recognizing that the issue extended beyond his ability to counter and subvert curriculum.

While Maya and Grace talked with ease about issues of race, equity, and power with their novice teachers, as noted in the last chapter, finding ways to talk about social issues and incorporate those into teaching was a source of tension in Olivia’s learning and Tuan’s mentoring. Importantly though, Tuan continued to reflect on how to bring up these issues with Olivia particularly as they developed their relationship and Tuan learned more about Olivia’s family. The tension remained, but a clear parallel practice emerged between how he wanted his

young students to engage in issues of equity, and how wanted his novice teacher to reflect on these issues as they affected teaching. He said,

It's interesting because Olivia, she's Caucasian and she's also African-American and I want to include that, her identity, because it's really interesting to me, how can she share her experiences with the rest of her kids. Because if you look at her she looks white, but she has these other experiences and not to say one experience is more important than the other, but clearly the white experience has been the dominating experience in every classroom. If we want to or not, having white teachers in elementary school, it's white female teachers and then the value as far as just pay for elementary school teachers as opposed to high school. There's a lot of really structural stuff. I like talking to Olivia about that stuff because I think that it's for new teachers, it's kind of like they're in survival mode (Interview, February 28, 2012).

Here Tuan reflected on how he empathized with Olivia's situation as a new teacher who feels that they are in "survival mode." Precisely because of this, Tuan saw the important role of a mentor to engage in discussion and promote reflection on these larger structural and systemic issues.

This recognition of "survival mode" speaks to a primary reason that engaging in conversation and reflection on how larger structural issues affect teachers at the classroom level was difficult when working with novice teachers. Just as Diego saw an immediate personal solution to the inclusion of black face in a text, in the same way Tuan recognized that Olivia's primary goal was to make it through a day of teaching. The role of the mentor teacher was key to providing spaces for these novice teachers to observe and engage in conversations about larger

curricular and policy issues that affect teaching. Yet, the comfort and eagerness of the novice to tackle these larger and more overtly political topics influenced the ability of the cooperating teacher to engage in critical dialogue. Further, the novice's position of being in "survival mode" could limit them to what they saw as most immediate and important, which was often student learning and engagement, rather than attending to issues that felt removed from the immediate environment.

Relationships, Building Trust, Establishing Community. Democracy as a way of living with people, a "conjoint communicated experience" as Dewey (1916, p. 68) imagined, requires particular attention to how we can create those experiences of living together in mutually respectful and beneficial ways. Because schools are diverse and public spaces, Parker (2006) argues, schools then are ideal environments to consider how to foster kindness, tolerance, and the ability to talk across difference. Establishing communities rooted in democratic dispositions was common across all five classrooms in this study. In particular, these classrooms drew heavily on democratic dispositions of fairness / equity, collaboration, and attention to the common good, along with an ethic of authentic caring (Gibson & Grant, 2012; Noddings, 2001), as a means to engage in social action in the smaller classroom community. The cooperating teachers paralleled this focus on developing relationships, trust, and community when working with their novice teachers. For these cooperating teachers, establishing caring and trusting relationships was essential to the learning process.

Just as these cooperating teachers worked to learn and utilize their student's assets and interests in their curriculum, they also took time to learn about the novice teachers. Tuan said,

I also try to take an inventory of what she likes and what she's passionate about. I always pose questions like if you had one thing you could do what would it be? I

want her to bring those passions into the class. I got her to say music and singing and the arts. I'm like I love it, let's do it, let's bring it into the class (Interview, February 28, 2012).

Knowing that Olivia was passionate about the arts allowed for Tuan to draw on her assets and create spaces for her to build confidence in teaching. One of the first responsibilities he turned over to Olivia was their morning meeting, which was full of singing. Finding your passion and using that to connect with the world was a key aspect to Tuan's teaching and mentoring; he used the idea of passion to create a community that celebrated the individual while also emphasizing that since everyone has a passion, no one person is better than another.

Grace also discussed learning about Lisa's interests and incorporating those into the curriculum.

So we talked about what she really loves and how to bring that into the classroom, and then she ended up creating a unit to kind of insert herself and also make a bridge to the kids. So she created a unit on tap dance because that's what she really loves. And then she found things that they could relate to that they didn't know and also things that they couldn't relate to that they found a way to, a new way, so they were finding, you know, initially we were looking for ways for her to teach them about herself and teach curriculum, you know, at the same time (Interview, December 13, 2011).

Like Tuan, Grace drew on her practice of using student interest and passion to drive curriculum. Grace related how developing curriculum around Lisa's interest created "a bridge to the kids." Bridging the interests of the teachers to the students emphasized the importance of knowing each person as a means to build trust in the community. Lisa designed and taught her tap unit at the

start of the year; the unit served as a means for the students to know her and develop relationships with her, as well as a way for her to explore how she related to the African Centered Instructional model. For Lisa, tap dance became a continued connection between her and her students. The girls in her class complained that the boys had the boys' lunch group with the local pastor and Diego and they did not have anything. Lisa developed and ran an afterschool club for the girls where they did academic work for the first 20 minutes and then she taught them tap for 30 minutes. Establishing connections between the personal and the professional was key to Lisa's ability to develop relationships with her students; Grace's establishment of this as a norm at the start of their collaboration allowed for Lisa's ease in taking up the practice.

Establishing trust and a sense of safety were also key to how these cooperating teachers created spaces for learning in their classrooms. Eva said,

I expect to create a relationship with her [Hannah] such that she feels totally safe with me, just like I do my students. Like, I want her to feel like she can try things and fall down and that's OK and we'll process it together. When I was a student teacher, I didn't really have that kind of relationship with my cooperating teacher; I was like kind of on edge all the time. And I was really emotional, um, so I would cry all the time I reflected on my lessons, and she didn't understand that. Cause we just hadn't built that sense of trust so I think certainly I have expectations of her that I can talk about. But first, my expectations of me--I need to create a sense of safety with her (Interview, February 20, 2012).

Eva's explanation highlights her role in creating a safe space where Hannah could take risks and even fail, and consequently where Eva could openly reflect on these as learning episodes with

Hannah. Tuan also connected building trust with creating a space for learning with Olivia. He reflected,

I don't know if I want to overwhelm her. I want her to share with me what she's doing and then kind of give her a different perspective to things. So right now I'm trying to build that trust so I can do that, so that if I do challenge her it's the idea and not her (Interview, February 28, 2012).

Establishing a trusting relationship not only allowed the novice teacher a safe space to take risks, but also provided the foundation for the cooperating teacher to challenge ideas in practice without the novice taking the challenge at a personal level. These trusting relationships were the basis for allowing inquiry and critical discussion to occur.

These relationships drew on democratic dispositions and values. For Tuan, the ability to present multiple perspectives and engage in a crucial dialogue prompted his focus on relationship building. Likewise, Julia focused on the value of honesty in her creation of space for dialogue and reflection on practice. Claire reflected on Julia's role in her learning to teach process:

She's just honest. Especially with feedback it's been really helpful because I've had CTs who just like to give you all positive comments or just kind of give you a few hints of what you could do better but not really a thorough here's the good but here's also things we can work on and then actually discuss ways you could have better met objectives. So it's been helpful that we have a set aside time every week (Interview, March 5, 2012).

Claire's recognition of Julia's honesty as a support in her learning through reflective discussion illustrated how these parallel practices are not isolated pieces; instead, there is a democratic ethos that shaped these interactions between the collaborating teachers and their novice teachers.

Valuing all knowledge: Equality in participation and decision-making.

The cooperating teachers emphasized a relationship with their novice teachers based on equality of knowledge; this paralleled how the cooperating teachers interacted with student knowledge in the classroom – allowing for it to shape discussions, lines of inquiry, and whole curricular units. The cooperating teachers shared the space – both physical and mental – of the classroom and created a sense of shared authority and equality of participation in the classroom community with the novice teacher. The cooperating teachers extended this feeling of ownership and voice in the classroom community by engaging the novice teachers in making decisions. Further, these cooperating teachers not only recognized the expertise embedded in the classroom community, but also sought out expertise in the school and local community. For example, Maya and Grace invited a local pastor and district representative to help support and primarily run their boys’ lunch group. By observing these cooperating teachers draw on local community knowledge and expertise, the novice teachers came away with a model for democratizing knowledge necessary to teach and know children from multiple perspectives.

“So students know there’s two teachers.” One of the difficulties novice teachers face is “feeling” like a teacher (Feiman-Nemser, 2008); in other words, the novice teachers may complete the actions of teaching without feeling that they are taking on the complete role of “teacher” in the classroom. Finding ways for novice teachers not only to feel like a teacher, but also to engage as a partner in teaching were central to how these cooperating teachers shared authority in the classroom. Tuan remarked,

I like to talk in dialogue with her about why I’m doing what I’m doing because I think the purpose is really big. I think sometimes I’ve seen teachers just be like alright let’s go at it and here’s everything you need to do today. And that might

work for some. But looking back at what I needed, I needed that structure and I needed that input from my student teacher. I need that input from the other adult. When I start treating them as adult learners, I think that's a lot better than treating them as a student. I see Olivia as another teacher in here, so everything that I do, even with the morning meeting, it's Ms. Olivia and Mr. Tuan, so just the way you put your name on the message and just so students know there's two teachers (Interview, February 28, 2012).

In this excerpt Tuan touched on vital dimensions to creating a shared classroom space. First, he recognized his role and benefit in working with another adult. Rather than only seeing himself as an expert whose task was to impart knowledge to Olivia, Tuan saw Olivia's presence as an opportunity to dialogue and process his own thinking with another adult. Second, he approached Olivia as an adult learner rather than as a student. This was particularly powerful for Olivia who struggled to shift out of her student-mode of seeing everything as a task to be checked off when completed. Finally, Tuan made specific moves in the classroom to position Olivia as another teacher in the classroom. Oftentimes he would place her name in front of his on the morning message; while a small gesture, it exemplified an important stance of humility necessary to share the teaching and learning space of the classroom.

Seeing oneself as a learner connected to sharing the classroom space. By approaching their work from an inquiry stance, these cooperating teachers opened up more spaces for dialogue and for sharing authority in the classroom. As noted, Maya saw her role as a life-long learner as central to her teaching and mentoring; this stance then encouraged her novice teachers to question her practice and create a more equal space for learning and teaching. She reflected,

I expect that I'm going to be challenged and I expect that they're going to be looking for something to challenge. I think that's really important because student teachers often feel like they're just supposed to absorb and just like our students in general, I believe that when you come to me, whether you are seven or twenty-three, that you have experiences from the past and you have knowledge that you are bringing to my classroom and my job as a teacher is to bring out that knowledge and to validate that understanding and to add on to that. I'm not a tabula rasa teacher, I'm not filling people's empty cages, I'm helping to facilitate life-long learners. (Interview, January 25, 2012).

Maya valued the knowledge that both students and novice teachers brought into her classroom. She drew on that valuation as a means to create space for her novice teachers to challenge her practice and co-construct learning and practice rather than "just absorb." For example, at the start of the year, Diego and Lisa felt that the students were not engaged in morning meeting and that the time used for morning meeting might better serve students via an extended literacy block. Grace recounted,

The students came back and said, you know I think we really need to look at extending our mini-lesson into a full blown-out 45 minute lesson...this was based on things that they heard us, our priorities changing and what we were doing and learning about in teaching. And they responded they came with a plan, and then we did it, we changed it. So we always try to approach the situation as having a general idea about what's important, priorities, and then being flexible and team, just like a mutual respect situation" (Interview, December 13, 2011).

This exemplified how Maya and Grace approached Diego and Lisa as partners in the classroom. They changed their practice after the novice teachers challenged the existing structure. Importantly, the novice teachers had to formulate a plan and give evidence as to why the change was needed. This example spans the areas of sharing authority and making decisions in the classroom. In this case, participating in the decision-making about classroom practice resulted from Maya and Grace establishing a shared space of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Sharing authority in the classroom not only gave the novice teacher space to feel like a teacher, but also benefitted the classroom community as a whole. Julia emphasized the benefit to her students when she worked with novice teachers. She said,

And because of the whole relationship thing I think it's awesome that kids have two adults they can go to, so it doesn't just have to be me, that there's another trusted adult in here if they are having issues and that person can make relationships with those kids. To me that's invaluable. It really is because I feel like the more caring adults there are in kids' lives the better off they will be (Interview, April 23, 2012).

Sharing the classroom with the novice teacher immediately supported the novice teacher's learning and reflection, as well as supported the students in the classroom. Positioning the novice teacher as another "trusted" and "caring" adult placed Claire in a better space to feel that she was taking on the role of the teacher. Importantly, Claire worked with Julia during her practicum so was only in the classroom for nine hours a week. Thus, taking extra care to position Claire in this way created more opportunities for Claire to take on the role of the teacher and establish relationships with students.

Claire also recognized the moves Julia made to share the classroom responsibilities with her and support her to feel like a teacher. Claire reflected on her relationship with Julia:

Even before the last lesson she always asks, “What do you want me to do? How can I help you?” It’s kind of nice she doesn’t feel like someone observing my every move and just kind of leaving me out there to dry...as I’m talking she’ll ask, ‘do you want me to write what the kids come up with at the board so you can focus on that’. It’s little things like that but she’s always willing to help out in small ways. Which is kind of nice. I think with the kids, I was thinking about it, and it makes it seem less awkward maybe, because I feel like as a kid I remember with student teachers they would go up and start teaching and the teacher, my teacher, would be at their desk writing down notes, and as a student you could pick up on that; even the power dynamic there is different. And so I think, I was thinking about that how even just her helping out makes us look more like we’re working together, which I really appreciate. Even though I’m sure there’s still a power dynamic, but at least it’s not so pronounced or awkward (Interview, March 5, 2012).

Claire pointed out the benefit to the students of having two teachers to work together during teaching. More importantly, she commented that by having Julia work alongside her while she was teaching aiding in shifting the power dynamic. Part of “feeling” like a teacher is being recognized as a teacher by the community, in this case the group of students in Julia’s 3rd grade classroom; Julia’s small actions to equalize status between her and Claire made a difference in Claire’s perception of herself as a teacher versus just a student.

Creating spaces of shared authority and establishing an equal presence in the classroom allowed for the novice teachers to move toward feeling like teachers. Interestingly, not all of the teachers engaged their elementary students as readily in shared authority in the classroom. Julia and Eva used class meetings as times to have students work together to solve community problems and have a distinct voice in shaping the outcomes. Eva also created spaces for student expression throughout the week by having “open mic” times in the afternoon and through the “Community Council” job, which allowed students a voice in making classroom decisions and solving problems. Tuan’s students openly asked questions and knew that he or Olivia would follow up on the question if they could not answer in the moment. The teachers would ask the students to “put it on a post-it” and they would then follow up the question. Maya and Grace’s rooms had fewer opportunities for students to have ownership in the decisions made in the classroom. While they focused on kujichagulia, self-determination, and ujima, unity, the teachers in these classrooms held the majority of the control over decisions.

“Do you want me to throw out my idea?” Shared decision-making remained a constant in the ways that these cooperating teachers enacted democratic teacher education. Thus, while less of a parallel practice in work with students in some classrooms, decision-making with the novice teachers was a primary way that the cooperating teachers involved the novices in the classroom community. These decisions ranged from pedagogic decisions about curriculum, i.e. the change from morning meeting to extended literacy, to decisions affecting students’ social world and community in the classroom.

Making pedagogic and curricular decisions together permeated the mentoring relationships in these classrooms. Even in the cases where practicum students were in

classrooms for limited amounts of time, both Maya and Julia ensured that their novice teachers collaborated on making decisions about what topics and practices to cover. Claire remarked,

So she [Julia] basically said like here is the text that we usually go off of...And then she was like why don't you think of some ideas and we'll talk about them. So I brainstormed a list of ideas...But so we collaborated in a variety of ways I guess throughout. I always turned my lesson plan into her and she always gave me feedback before I taught so that any questions, and she usually gives pretty good advice...She was really great about participating the whole time in all of my lessons. She was always working with kids. I feel, I guess I've always been with teachers who for the most part have been pretty engaged, but my peers for the most part it sounds like teachers just let them go up there and do their lesson and they're sitting at their desk. And I just really appreciate that she participates.

Makes it better (Interview, April 20, 2012).

To an extent Julia engaged in direct guidance with Claire; however, she also gave Claire space to brainstorm her ideas first and then support her in the implementation of lessons. Julia had Claire develop a short unit during her practicum as a way for her to prepare for the more intense time commitment of student teaching. As part of this, she collaborated with Claire to develop the unit, yet she firmly allowed Claire to take the lead in shaping the unit. Maya engaged in the same practice with Diana. During her practicum Dania developed a series of lessons on music as a means for change; Maya gave suggestions to Dania, i.e. introducing her to the jazz version of *This Land Is Your Land*, but allowed her space to develop and implement the unit. This model of decision-making supported the novice teachers in developing their own stake in the classroom curriculum, while also modeling the collaborative work of curriculum development.

Grace and Lisa illustrated how shared authority, discussion, and decision-making were interrelated in their relationship. Further, they made key decisions about not only curriculum, but also social and classroom community issues. On a Friday afternoon in Grace's classroom we could hear students in Maya and Diego's class during lunch. When Grace peeked in to see what was going on, she found out that the students in Maya and Diego's homeroom were having a pizza party. Given that the students mostly moved fluidly between Maya and Grace's rooms, the decision to have a pizza party without consulting the other homeroom chafed at the team mentality established between the two classrooms. In the following excerpt, Grace engaged with Lisa about how to talk to the students about this issue:

Grace: So how are going to make this make sense for the kids? How are we going to patch it up? I have an initial thought, but I just want to see if you have any ideas.

Lisa: I don't know, uhm [pause]

Grace: Do you want me to throw out my idea?

Lisa: Yeah please.

Grace: My idea is to make a joke out of it, such and such got pizza, they did? And then have them, yeah, and then let them say their say. Well how do you think you can get pizza? Let them generate their ideas on how they could get pizza. Ok, well when do you think you could get that by. And let them set a goal for when they think they could get it by and then they get the goal, I'll buy them pizza.

Lisa: And then the next time, we communicate...that would be what I would do, what's fair to me is now, they have a chance to do the same thing because they

probably contributed to that party so they should have the chance to be able to have one too (Field Notes, December 6, 2011).

In this instance Grace presented the problem to Lisa and gave her the space to come up with a solution. Although Lisa did not offer a solution, Grace continued to share the decision-making space by asking if Lisa wanted to hear Grace's idea. Lisa then evaluated and reiterated Grace's solution. Grace and Lisa continued to discuss the issue beyond the initial decision of how to handle the situation when talking with their class. Importantly, they considered how they would address the issue with Diego, who had originally granted the pizza party to his homeroom. Grace and Lisa considered Diego's intentions for the party and how that affected the team mentality they were trying to build between the classes. The dialogue between Grace and Lisa continued in the same fashion as seen above – each offered questions, possible solutions, and evaluation of those solutions.

For Eva and Hannah, Eva approached making decisions as a partnership; however, a tension emerged when Hannah did not reciprocate the dialogue. Eva said,

You know, I mean certainly after school we would process things together, but there was so much planning, I mean there's so many layers in every moment of every day, and often I felt like I would ask her questions about how certain things went, and she would just like look at me and like, “ yeah, I know, I wonder that, too.” I'm like, no [laughter], no I mean, like I want an answer. I want you to think about it and talk about it with me. But that just wasn't, she didn't want to do it then. And so I needed to push so that it didn't get lost right there. You know, like, OK, so like I asked you this question and maybe your mind is just rolling,

you know, a million miles a minute, whatever, but I don't want you to forget that question, or not think about it (Interview, June 7, 2012).

Engaging in making decisions was part of Eva's practice as a mentor, yet Hannah was not yet in a space to meet her as an equal. Thus, while these cooperating teachers enacted parallel democratic practices, those practices were not always recognized, or acted upon by the novice teacher. In Hannah's case, becoming more decisive and "finding her teaching voice" was a continual struggle, as well as a source of growth. While in this excerpt the tension around engaging in mutual decision-making was clear, nevertheless Eva also spoke to Hannah's influence in the classroom: "She's shared so much with me, and things have changed in this room because of her, and what she's brought to this place. And that's really powerful and awesome to me" (Interview, June 7, 2012). This sense of learning from one another and shared expertise represented the final aspect of equality of knowledge.

"None of us can do it alone." Throughout these dimensions of parallel practice, a disposition toward knowledge as distributed, diverse, and valuable represented a continuous thread of attention to equality. These cooperating teachers valued distributed knowledge precisely because it emerged from multiple people, spaces, and sources. Maya commented about learning from her student teachers,

I believe that when you come to me, whether you are seven or twenty-three, that you have experiences from the past and you have knowledge that you are bringing to my classroom and my job as a teacher is to bring out that knowledge and to validate that understanding and to add on to that (Interview, January 25, 2012).

As seen previously, this both created a space of shared authority as well as demonstrated a particular stance toward knowledge; for Maya, she recognized that knowledge would come from

her students and her novice teachers—her work resided in understanding, incorporating, and extending that knowledge.

Julia recognized that the infusion of new knowledge from the novice teachers also strengthened and extended her practice. She said,

It keeps me fresh because I learn a lot from ideas student teachers bring in. I like that...But just that freshness and I'm not a solitary person, so I like to be able to laugh with the person and 'oh my gosh can you believe this happened?', someone to bounce ideas off of. Whether it's about curriculum, kids, you name it, staff interactions. So I don't feel like I'm so much in a shell. And just I think it's good for our teaming as well that we have they're able to see other styles, because [Special Education Teacher] has a very different style, [Other 3rd Grade Teacher] has a very different style, but that we all work together as a team and collaborate (Interview, April 23, 2012).

This recognition of exposing the novice teacher to not only the practices afforded by her classroom, but also to other members of the grade team and school illustrated her stance toward a more distributed vision of knowledge. Rather than adhering to a model of learning directly and solely from the cooperating teacher, these cooperating teachers worked to expose their novice teachers to a stance of working alongside multiple colleagues.

Tuan connected his inquiry stance to valuing knowledge from multiple sources. For him, and similar to Maya, he saw connecting to other practitioners and sources of knowledge as a means to position himself as a constant learner. He talked explicitly about wanting Olivia to experience and identify with his disposition toward learning from multiple people:

I think for me it's really important for her that I model for that I'm learning. Jane [supervisor] said this and so we want to give credit to where credit is due, but I think she heard it from Bill Ayers or something but the idea that teaching is learning, and that's what I want to capture for myself and for her because that's why I'm bringing in [Math Professional Developer], that's why I'm bringing in [ELL support]. That's why I'm Bringing in an IRT [Instructional Resource Teacher] because she has to learn that teaching, you can't do it alone and I don't want her to be the first or second teacher who feels like they have to do everything alone. I didn't do it alone. Rarely, none of us can do it alone. So that's another big idea that I want her to understand that if we do not collaborate and work with each other our profession will definitely be defined for us. And we can't have that happen (Interview, February 28, 2012).

Tuan connected his inquiry stance to his view of knowledge residing in multiple sources, as well as to a more political stance toward teaching. Tuan's emphasis that teachers need to collaborate and work with each other otherwise the profession will be defined for teachers, pointed to his concern that the district, state, and national policies were determining curriculum and the parameters of teacher practice. Tuan's view of knowledge as distributed is democratic both in his attention to multiple perspectives, and in his attention to the politics of teachers maintaining a voice in their profession.

Tuan touched on connecting with teachers from outside the school community, i.e. the Math Professional Developer. Beyond teachers and school professionals, these teachers also emphasized the importance of drawing on expertise situated in the communities and families of students. For example, in Julia's classroom, she and Claire brought in a parent to talk with

students during Claire's mini-unit on immigration. Claire said, "We actually had a parent come in and tell their immigration story. And she had all these pictures from Ellis Island and their boat tickets. It was really cool. The kids really liked that" (Interview, April 20, 2012). Connecting Claire with the parent took Julia's knowledge of and cultivation of relationships with her students and their families; further, this connection illustrated the multiple knowledge sources, particularly local and relevant sources available to teachers when constructing curriculum. Tuan and Olivia also brought in parents to work with students; in their class a parent came in with a real cow brain so that students could better understand anatomy. Maya and Grace's work with a local African-American pastor and district African-American employee to set up the boy's lunch group was another example of how these teachers sought out knowledge from the community to support student's social learning as well as their academic learning. Further, Lisa emphasized how her relationships with families and the community were a source of knowledge. She noted,

It just helps to know people, it helps to have connections because it will be powerful for the kids to see that I have a relationship with [high school student volunteer] and her family and I know that it helps to know things that are going on in the community. That's how I find out a lot (Interview, December 8, 2011).

Lisa connected her relational capacity to her sourcing knowledge from the community that supported her teaching. This practice of connecting with the community directly related to working with Grace; while this was also an individual strength of Lisa's prior to her student teaching, seeing how Grace interacted with families and communities influenced and deepened Lisa's approach.

The cooperating teachers recognized that they could learn from multiple sources, including the novice teacher. Co-constructing knowledge and practices in the classroom

depended on a strong relational capacity. The cooperating teachers drew on the trusting relationships they had established as a means to engage in dialogue and make decisions with the novice teachers. In these instances, it became clear that building the relationship was not only important for the novice teachers to feel safe taking risks in learning to teach, but also critical for the cooperating teachers to feel safe sharing key decisions about the students in their classrooms. That relationships are at the center of these parallel practices was not surprising; democracy as a concept necessarily depends on relationships among people in order to govern. The give and take aspect of the relationship between the cooperating teachers and the novice teachers illustrated how the learning to teach process included the novice teacher both being shaped by the practices and teaching context, as well as having a role in shaping and reshaping the practices and context.

Tensions – Freedom to Become: Apprenticeship in Teaching

A distinct tension in the mentoring practices of these democratic teachers emerged over the course of this study; the teachers questioned – should their work focus on allowing the novice teacher freedom to pursue their own lines of inquiry, values, and knowledge or should their work apprentice the novice teachers into particular practices of teaching and taking on the role of a teacher? This represents the tension between a conception of [democratic teacher] education that focuses on producing a particular kind of teacher who will enact particular democratic practices, and a conception of democratic [teacher education] that emphasizes making the structures and experiences of teacher education democratic ones for the teachers. This tension between production versus process played out in how these cooperating teachers envisioned their practices as teacher educators.

Biesta (2006) explores a similar tension in how we conceptualize and enact democratic education in schools. He argues, “we should not approach education from the point of view of an educator trying to produce or release something. Instead I argue that we should focus on the ways in which the new beginning of each and every individual can come ‘into presence’” (p. 9). Drawing on Hannah Arendt’s conception of the democratic person, Biesta argues that “education should not be seen as a space of preparation, but should be conceived as a space where individuals can act, where they can bring their beginnings into the world, and hence be a subject” (p. 137). While Biesta’s argument contrasts Dewey’s focus on producing democratic individuals through participation in democracy, e.g. democratic schools, nonetheless the tension he introduces between education toward specific produced outcomes and education open to the actions (or beginnings) of students is an important one to consider. In these cases, the tensions occurred between the cooperating teacher’s particular commitments to and visions of education and its purpose, and with their desire to allow for space for the novice to discover, grow, and come to their own vision of teaching. In other words, their democratic ideology of mentoring at times clashed with a sense of needing to prepare teachers who valued democratic education for elementary students.

Eva talked about her role in working with Hannah as one that would allow her to “create a space for her [Hannah] to try things” (Interview, April 27, 2012). Eva explained the tension she felt in allowing Hannah space to try out practices and assume control of the classroom when those practices did not align with her own. As I will explore in the next chapter, Hannah struggled to find “her voice” in teaching. When I asked Eva about this, she commented that voice meant more than being verbal; it included non-verbal communication in the classroom. Eva also noted that supporting Hannah in finding her voice was a goal for both her and Hannah’s

supervisor, Jane. Yet, she went on to communicate the tension in allowing Hannah this space and her need to maintain the community she had established with her students. Eva said,

It's [establishing your voice] harder to do when I'm in the classroom too; and so, when I'm aware of the fact that, you know, the community vibe isn't where I want it to be, then, you know, I'll give Hannah a look like OK, you know you're leading this mini-lesson, but it's, you know, it's tricky when her, maybe not her values but what she allows is different than what I would allow. And I don't know if that's just because it's her style, or if it's because she just hasn't built that strength in her. I don't know, it's a combination of those two things but it's hard to like step back and be like, whoa, you know, people are talking over each other and it just seems really disrespectful. And so then I step in because it's gone to a point where I can't take it anymore and it's, it interferes with the community that I've tried to build over the school year. And then what does that do for her ability to learn that skill on her own? (Interview, April 27, 2012)

This excerpt illustrated the tension in allowing Hannah freedom to develop her own teaching voice and style, even when it was not in line with Eva's teaching voice and values.

Eva discussed her work with Hannah and some of the tensions felt and said, "I feel an immense responsibility to Hannah's future students" (Interview, June 7, 2012). Eva's philosophy as a democratic educator, which drove her practice, also shaped what practices she envisioned for Hannah. To an extent she wanted to allow for freedom to explore teaching voice, but the underlying pressure to prepare Hannah for "future students," coupled with Eva's vision of what a caring democratic classroom looked and sounded like created a difficult space for Eva and Hannah to work in. Yet, it was precisely this uncomfortable space that could have been

productive in the mentoring relationship. Had Eva pushed back on Hannah's decisions to allow particular behaviors, i.e. talking over each other, then a dialogue rooted in purpose of action in the classroom may have emerged. This discordant space between freedom and a vision of democratic teaching was ripe for dialogue, critical analysis, and growth.

Eva's unease with how to mentor in a way that valued both freedom to develop new practices and development of particular democratic practices played out across many of the classrooms in this study. Another dimension of this tension came in how to both support the novice teacher's learning to teach process and how to challenge their visions of teaching. In many ways, this was the productive tension that Eva and Hannah could have explored; however, in that case, Eva's concern for Hannah's development of voice trumped a concern to push her on practices. Talking about her goals for Hannah, Eva said,

So in terms of expectations that I have for her: I expect her to continue to grow and push herself, and I will help do that at a pace that feels good for her. But, I don't want her just to like shy away from those moments of growth that really happen when you try things that you don't feel comfortable doing (Interview, February 20, 2012).

Eva noted that uncomfortable moments produced learning, yet she also wanted to allow for Hannah to grow at a pace "that feels good for her." This concern for Hannah to come into her own valued Hannah's space to learn and grow; however, it also limited opportunities for her to engage in productive learning as a result of feeling uncomfortable.

Tuan echoed this concern of when to support versus when to push in his work with Olivia. He reflected,

It's not the apprenticeship model, it's truly talking to her, trying to figure out what she needs and wants, but that's where I'm running into trouble because I feel like she still needs this piece that she might not want, but I think...so I'm still trying to figure that out, because to follow that model you have to, maybe work more than one semester with someone I don't know. Because thinking about the apprentice model they have to know how to do the reading and writing or start to think about it in really authentic ways, whereas with kids if you're writing something, you're reading something, you pull that in. so all these things that she still needs to do and she needs to see me do it first...But that's what I'm trying to work on. What do you do with someone who you feel needs more of something? I don't know.

Or you think they need more but that might not be (Interview, April 27, 2012).

Tuan experienced the tension between feeling that Olivia needed something else, in this case a more critical lens on curriculum and teaching, but he recognized that his desire to push her in that direction may not mesh with what Olivia needed or wanted. Interestingly, Tuan also questioned whether she really needed what he had deemed important. In this case, Tuan moved closer to allowing space for Olivia to bring her new beginnings, rather than decide a priori what she needed. This excerpt illustrated the tension between the kind of democratic education that emphasized freedom to become, and democratic education toward particular goals.

Interestingly, both Tuan and Eva were working with their first student teaching placement during this semester. Each had worked with practicum students in the past; however, Olivia and Hannah were the first full-time student teachers placed in their classrooms. Tuan's relative ease with the tensions around mentoring could be due to a number of factors. He had more years of teaching experience, he had earned his principal's license so had mentored

teachers in other capacities, and he had conducted action research around mentoring the previous year. Eva's discomfort seemed to stem from her new role and uncertainty if she was doing justice to both Hannah's learning to teach process and to maintaining her classroom community. The differences here also connected to the different strengths of the novice teachers. Olivia's background in performance and clear decision to teach afforded her relative ease in establishing her "voice" in the classroom, whereas Hannah's struggle was in finding comfort being the decision-maker and assuming a leadership role in the classroom. While the practices of the cooperating teachers were key to providing learning opportunities, nevertheless the assets of the novice and their predilection to take up those learning opportunities also factored in to the mentoring relationship.

Interestingly, every cooperating teacher in this study had some affiliation with MU's PDS program or with the Community Teacher Program. Maya and Julia both entered teaching through the Community Teacher Program, which was noted earlier as having roots in action research and the premise that relationships and deeply knowing students and communities are core to teaching. Tuan and Eva both went through MU's PDS strand of the Elementary Education program. Similar to the Community Teacher Program, the PDS program at MU emphasized students working in the communities of the schools in which they were placed and seeing the cultural and relational aspects of teaching and learning. Grace, Maya, and Eva all worked at South Shore Elementary at one point in time. Grace and Maya began the ACI model while working at South Shore Elementary and as part of that community worked with MU's PDS program. While this study does not focus on the life histories of these cooperating teachers, nevertheless their connection to particular contexts of teaching and learning that emphasize

culture, relationships, equity, and inquiry may have shaped their understanding of teaching and thus the learning to teach process.

Discussion

As in the case of Diego and Olivia's enactment of democratic education, experiencing democratic education afforded opportunities to enact democratic education. In this analysis of the mentoring capacities and practices of these cooperating teachers, the novice teachers were afforded opportunities to experience democratic education in their own learning. The novice teachers not only learned from observing and enacting practice, but also by engaging as co-producers of knowledge, pedagogy, and practice. Given that most novice teachers have not experienced democratic education in their own education (Gutmann, 1999), experiencing democratic education in the teacher education proffered by these cooperating teachers created robust experiential learning opportunities.

The mentoring work that these cooperating teachers engaged in served as a source to democratize teacher education, that is attending to the democratic quality of relationships among those involved and to whose knowledge counts in educating novice teachers. These cooperating teachers offered novice teachers the experiences of engaging in critical dialogue, inquiry, and problem-solving, all of which are necessary to leading a democratic way of life. Exposing novice teachers to these democratic educators opened the possibility to clearly see a role in preparing youth to engage across difference, to identify and solve personal and community problems, and to imagine a better democracy than the one they currently live in.

There is immense potential for "collaborative resonance," which as Cochran-Smith (1991) defines it allows for the "intensification [of school-university relationship] based on the co-labor of learning communities" (p. 282-283). In this case, the co-labor occurred between the

novice teacher as the representative of university knowledge and the cooperating teacher as the representative of school-based and oftentimes community-based knowledge. These relationships exemplified the possibilities for democratizing teacher education and for expanding conceptions of whose knowledge counts.

The knowledge of democratic teaching that these cooperating teachers afforded the novice teachers ought to be more integral to the construction of MU's program. Further, the model of their democratic mentorship offered possibilities to reimagine the ways that all teacher educators – from methods instructors, to supervisors, to cooperating teachers – engage in the learning to teach process. Democratizing teacher education must bring together the knowledge from the university via a university representative separate from the novice teacher, so that the novice teacher has the opportunity to bring in her own new beginnings and knowledge. If collaborative resonance is a means to co-labor and democratizing teacher education is a means to draw on multiple sources of knowledge about students and teaching, then all parties must be a part of constructing the learning community.

Examination of the mentoring practices of the cooperating teachers in this study allowed for a particular consideration of the cooperating teachers' knowledge of both democratic practices in elementary settings and teacher education. The mentoring practices that these cooperating teachers employed highlight possible avenues of collaboration between universities and schools. In particular, special attention to the mentoring practices that create further democratic experiences for novice teachers would create more opportunities for democratic [teacher education] in university programs. Finally, as noted, there was immense opportunity to create greater collaborative resonance between the university program of study and the experiential knowledge afforded by field work.

Chapter 7: Developing a (Democratic) Teaching Identity

Sociocultural theories of learning and development, including identity development, focus on the social practices afforded within and across contexts in which novice teachers participate. There is a dialectical relationship between the individual and society, with each shaping and being shaped by the other (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Importantly, internalization, the moving inward of social functions, is key to a sociocultural understanding of teacher identity development (Vygotsky, 1978; Van Huizen et al., 2005; Wenger, 1998). Novice teachers participate in multiple contexts that afford them possible teaching practices and identities; nevertheless, as seen previously in the cases of Diego and Olivia, the backgrounds and commitments of novice teachers affect what practices they take up. Importantly, novice teachers have to figure out their alignment or disalignment with public ideas of teaching that are reflected in the cultural and political settings of schools. Van Huizen et al. (2005) underscore that this does not mean that novice teachers need to accept current ideologies and practices; however, they need to understand that their allegiance and commitment to teaching as a professional identity must contend with these factors. Further, the novice must find a way to reconcile these public ideas of teaching, or as I will call them social identities since they are afforded by social participation in practice, with their personal background, commitments, and individual sense of self over time. This reconciliation creates a personal coherence in which the social becomes the personal, the professional identity of teacher becomes a more personal identity, and the personal sense of self over time coheres to a sense of self as teacher. This study looks at how teacher learning and identity unfold in the specific context of a democratic classroom, while also paying attention to the larger school, district, and socio-political context that might affect that classroom.

Throughout this chapter I refer to the concepts of personal identity, social identity, personal coherence, and social legitimation. In brief, I define these terms as follows:

- *Personal identity* – An individual’s sense of self, what we commonly call “personality,” that has developed over time. In this case, personal identity primarily refers to the self outside of the classroom / teaching.
- *Social Identity* – A social identity refers to an identity, or role, afforded by a particular context or community. The individual is most influenced by “social roles, with varying degrees of pressure to fit into the available identity ‘molds’ created by these influences” (Côte & Levine, 2002, p. 8). In this study social identity is aligned with professional identity / teacher identity.
- *Personal Coherence* – Similar to Lerman’s (2000) idea of person-in practice-in person, the idea of personal coherence refers to an individual’s recognition, acceptance, and enactment of a social identity. In other words, the social identity coheres to their idea of self.
- *Social Legitimation* – This refers to the recognition and acceptance by others of an individual’s identity.

In the previous chapter, shared authority between the cooperating teacher and the novice teacher created a possible space to experience and enact democratic education. Yet, shared authority only goes so far to establish a novice’s identity as “teacher.” This identity must also become socially legitimated. While the cooperating teacher is an important part of legitimizing the novice teacher’s emerging identity as “teacher,” nevertheless the community, including the students in the classroom and the other teachers and staff in the school building, are also

important in validating the novice as a “teacher.” Finally, the novice teacher herself must recognize this new identity as teacher, what I have thus far termed personal coherence.

In this chapter, I focus on the case of Hannah, a novice teacher working with Eva at South Shore Elementary School. Hannah’s case was particularly interesting as I argue that she had multiple social identities (Côte & Levine, 2002) and communities of practice (Wenger, 1998) afforded to her by her contexts for learning. Hannah was afforded the most coherent vision of democratic teacher education through her work in Eva’s democratic classroom, with Jane and her peers in the PDS program, and at South Shore, which as a PDS school most closely embodied the ideals and structures of democratic education at a school level. In many ways she aligned with those identities and practices; however, Hannah still struggled with finding a way to allow those social identities to cohere to her personal identity and become a teaching identity. This tension between social identities and personal coherence make Hannah’s ability to develop a sense of a teaching identity particularly complicated, yet not uncommon. In many ways, Hannah’s struggles illuminated the struggles of many novice teachers to establish a teaching identity, and in particular, her case highlighted the difficulties associated with establishing a democratic teaching identity as a novice.

I detail Hannah’s trajectory toward a teaching identity through two primary pieces of her narrative. First, I focus on Hannah’s story of her teaching journey as told through her final teaching and learning presentation for the PDS program at MU. In this story, she highlighted whom she saw as most influential and how she conceptualized her learning to teach trajectory and self as teacher. Second, I analyze three separate instances over time when Hannah spoke about her “teaching voice.” In this case, “teaching voice” equated to teaching identity as it encompassed both Hannah’s personal identity struggle toward seeing herself as a teacher and the

tension in social legitimation of being seen as a teacher by others. Finally, I examine Hannah's struggle to develop personal coherence, the difficulties of social legitimation of identity, and the particular challenges to developing a democratic teaching identity as a novice teacher.

Hannah – “A Person is a Person Through Other People”

Hannah did not start MU's Elementary Education program with a clear vision of herself as a teacher; in fact, she continued her separate major in English as a “back-up” in case she decided to leave the program. As previously noted, Hannah made her decision to apply to the School of Education at the last minute. She reflected,

It was kind of a surprise to me [getting into the program] and I decided to try it out and I liked it right away and I mean, it's been really interesting too because going into it, I was not mentally prepared for working in a school with kids, like in a really diverse school, especially because I grew up in a really middle-class, White neighborhood. So I feel like since then, everything in my mind had changed from that view to a view of working with a diverse group of kids

(Interview, February 21, 2012).

Hannah considered that her shift in desire toward wanting working with a diverse student population resulted from “a lot of things,” one of which was being part of a cohort “that's pretty diverse.” (Interview, February 21, 2012). Importantly, Hannah commented that the very notion of changing her ideas and worldview was powerful. She said, “Even getting this idea that what I was thinking could change, it could be different, like other ways to look at the world and see it, has changed that” (Interview, February 21, 2012). Finally she noted that, in particular, working in the public schools in Lake City and participating in the PDS cohort impacted her understanding of and valuation of people who were “completely different” (Interview, February

21, 2012) from her family and those with whom she grew up. Hannah experienced a number of powerful shifts from the beliefs and worldviews she brought with her to MU and the School of Education; her recognition of, attention to, and valuation of diversity in terms of race, class, language, and ability was particularly important to her emerging teacher identity.

The students who participated in the PDS cohort gave a final “Teaching and Learning” presentation to their peers. They invited family, friends, former cooperating teachers, and methods instructors who had been influential to their growth. Hannah’s parents and brother, four former cooperating teachers, two methods instructors, her supervisor Jane, and peers in PDS all attended the presentation. Her journey through five semesters in the teacher education program was one of constant reflection, apprehension, and growth. Hannah provided a glimpse into her growth over the five semesters in her final teaching and learning presentation. In many ways, this presentation was Hannah’s story, from her point of view, and gives a window into her perception of self as teacher.

Hannah began her presentation with an anecdote about a recent outing to hear a speaker who quoted Desmond Tutu; she used the following quote as a frame for her presentation, “A person is a person through other people” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). Hannah noted five significant persons / groups of people who have influenced her growth as a teacher: herself, the PDS program / cohort, her cooperating teachers, the community, and the students at her school placements. Her personal narrative here reveals the multiple social identities for teaching afforded to her in the context of her learning to teach process. Hannah’s five areas of influence frame this section and the majority of data presented comes from her teaching and learning presentation; however, I have also included portions of her interviews that supported her explanation of her growth through these five facets.

Herself. Hannah began with discussing herself in telling the story of the five aspects of “who made me who I am” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012) as a teacher. She told pieces of her personal story, growing up in a mid-sized city in the northern part of the state, attending private school from kindergarten through middle school, and ending with her decision to apply to the School of Education two weeks before the deadline. She mentioned having a coach in high school who was influential in her own growth and commented, “I thought I might be interested in teaching,” and then her work in the Parks and Recreation program in her hometown the summer before she applied to the School of Education. Interestingly, Hannah noted that the work in the parks program struck her because it was “in part unfamiliar” as the students came from a low-income housing section of the city and she found the “kids at camp inspiring.” After speaking with two advisors at MU who told her she should not “get her hopes up,” since she had not been on the pathway for admittance to the Elementary Education program, Hannah commented that she “magically got in” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012).

Hannah concluded her reflection on her place in her journey to teaching with the following: “For not having been in the mindset of a teacher, there was a lot I had to do to get there” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). She did not see herself as a teacher prior to entering the program at MU. Importantly, Hannah did not have a personal resolve, or a touchstone moment, around teaching; Hannah’s reasons for entering the teaching profession were more disparate and thin. Instead of having a powerful moment or experience, as Diego and Dania did when they shifted their focus to teaching because of work in the JumpStart program, or progressing toward a long-held goal, as in the cases of Lisa, Olivia, and Claire, she seemingly made a rash decision and then had to work throughout her program to establish her reasons for teaching. In many ways, Hannah’s case illustrated the possible influence of a coherent teacher education program

that establishes a particular culture, vision, and enactment of teaching. For Hannah, her experiences as part of the PDS program (in the PDS schools, including their communities and students) were the primary spaces for her to develop her teaching identity. She was not a *tabula rasa* ready to absorb everything that PDS and her teachers had to offer; rather, Hannah represented a complicated case where the negotiation between the self and the social was less clear and where the social seemed to dominate possible teaching identities. I explore this tension further in the following section on Hannah's conceptions of "voice" in teaching.

The PDS program. Hannah entered the PDS program because of the "comfort" of knowing she would work in two schools with the same supervisor. She noted that the program promoted social justice teaching and culturally relevant practices. Powerfully, she commented, "What would you want for your child? That's what we do in PDS" (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). Hannah spoke this introduction to the program with pride and exuded the belief that the PDS program was preparing the best possible teachers for the diverse students in Lake City.

For Hannah, her PDS cohort was particularly influential to her narrative of teaching and learning. She noted that her cohort had "strong opinions" and were people who "know what they feel" (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). Her comment, "Hey, I'm a White middle-class teacher working with diverse students," (Field Notes, May 14, 2012) set the context for her main points of growth through her PDS peers and program. As noted in other areas, PDS was the first space where Hannah openly discussed issues of race, class, and inequities present in society.

Hannah reflected on three major lessons learned from PDS. First, "you have to get out of your comfort zone" (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). She gave the anecdote about being afraid to go to the community soccer games at first, but then she started to go with her peers and became more comfortable over time. Engaging with the community outside of the school was a core

practice in the PDS program and a requirement for students; this aspect of the program was both difficult and full of immense growth opportunities for Hannah. Engaging with the diverse community of South Shore Elementary challenged Hannah to move beyond her comfort zone.

Second, Hannah learned that talking about doing something can only go so far; at some point, she said, “you have to just do it, you have to try it” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012).

Hannah’s supporting evidence for this point was her talking about applying to the African student teaching program and initially not taking action to do it. She commented on this in our first interview, “I’ve always wanted to travel more places than I have. I’m kind of a chicken, like I would always say I want to do this, but I can be a chicken, but I’m kind of lazy too” (Interview, February 21, 2012). For Hannah, her final decision to go resulted from a close friend questioning her intention to follow through on her talk about applying to the program; she said,

One of my friends was like, you know what, I don’t think you’re actually going to do it and that was the last little thing that pushed me over...I was like you know what, I’m going to do it because I want to show you that I can do it (Interview, February 21, 2012).

This pattern where Hannah talked about an idea or action, then another person challenged her intention, thereby pushing Hannah to finally take action, created multiple moments for growth. In these moments, Hannah moved closer to establishing personal coherence between her social identities and her sense of self as teacher.

Third, Hannah felt that the PDS program pushed her to be more “genuine and open with all students” and to be “willing to share experiences” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). This ability to openly talk about her life and experiences and to engage her personal self with her teaching was an area of tension for Hannah. Ultimately, I argue that this tension inhibited Hannah’s

ability to establish herself as part of the democratic classroom community. While building individual relationships with students was an area of growth for Hannah, nevertheless not establishing herself in relationship to the classroom community interrupted the type of democratic teaching environment Eva had established in the classroom.

Practicum teachers. The practicum teachers with whom Hannah worked each semester were the next area of influence included in her teaching and learning narrative. For Hannah, the order in which she worked with these teachers was particularly powerful and created a progressive narrative leading toward her feeling more and more like a teacher. In her description of each teacher she talked through critical incidents that led to a learning breakthrough.

Hannah's first classroom practicum placement, which occurred during the literacy semester, was in a kindergarten classroom at South Shore's partner school. For Hannah, the amount of singing in a lower grade classroom made her uncomfortable. She said, "I don't like singing... [cooperating teacher] said, 'you're going to pick a song and teach it to us... I was too scared to say no'" (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). Hannah said she learned, "you can't care what anyone thinks, just do it" (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). Here, Hannah echoed her earlier lesson from her PDS cohort of getting out of her comfort zone; these moments for Hannah presented risks wherein she relied on both the push from and support of her community. When Hannah reflected on this experience earlier in the semester, she noted that she was "absolutely terrified" during that semester and that she felt "absolutely clueless the entire time" (Interview, February 21, 2012). When talking about her relationship with her cooperating teacher, Hannah said,

I was kind of quiet and I didn't know to ask questions, I made the effort to get to know the teacher I worked with, but it was more, you're this person I have to look

up to, instead of a personal level, and now it's changed (Interview, February 21, 2012).

At this point in her experience, Hannah saw herself as peripheral to the classroom community and as not having important information to add to the teacher's repertoire.

In her second practicum placement, Hannah worked at South Shore in a third grade classroom that was a special education cluster and also had a number of ELL students. Hannah talked about learning the importance of language in the classroom – from using “people first” language that supports special education students by putting the individual before the disability, i.e. a student with emotional-behavioral disorder, rather than an EBD student, to attending to ways that students used language and drawing from that as a resource. Hannah also noted in our conversations that this teacher was “extremely organized”; organization was a struggle for her both logistically in the actual day-to-day preparation and organization of lessons and materials, and as a characteristic that Hannah saw as important to teaching and one which she lacked.

Again, Hannah looked to this teacher for support in tackling teaching math that semester. Translating her knowledge of math content to pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987) was a difficult move for Hannah, but her practicum teacher that semester supported her growth in this area. Hannah said, “So the teacher I was with then was also very much like, just you can do this, just go ahead and do this, we'll plan for you to do this and this, this week, she's extremely organized” (Interview, February 21, 2012). Interestingly, as Hannah reflected on her experience with this teacher, she also commented,

I still saw her on the level of more of a superior than well that's just how, and like I still see it that way, but I think I'm coming more to terms with that I can be a teacher, like I can be at the level, we can learn from each other type feeling. So I

was also very quiet and I opened up a lot more as it went (Interview, February 21, 2012).

Hannah's reflection on her own position as a teacher in relation to her cooperating teachers illustrated the complicated dance between learning as an apprentice and seeing oneself as part of a community of teachers. In many ways, the cooperating teachers within the PDS schools were a cohesive community of practice afforded to novice teachers in the PDS program. With PDS situated in the two schools, there was a strong commitment to the ideals of PDS, i.e. social justice teaching and working with diverse populations of students, among the entire staff and emanating from South Shore's principal.

During her fourth semester practicum, Hannah worked with Tuan at Central Rivers. While Central Rivers was not a PDS school, Jane asked Tuan to participate given his background as a former PDS student and his commitment to the values of PDS. Hannah noted that Tuan asked her, "Do you know what voice is?" (Field Notes, May 14, 2012) and that this was when she began to focus on developing her voice in the classroom. Engagement with the students in Tuan's first grade classroom, learning about their lives, and feeling comfortable sharing about her life created space for Hannah to begin narrowing the gap between her vision of herself outside of the classroom and inside the classroom. She gave the anecdote of reading Kevin Henkes' picture book, *Chrysanthemum*, in which the students in Chrysanthemum's class make fun of her name. Hannah connected the story to an anecdote about a time when she was made fun of as a child for her middle name.

Hannah noted that allowing her personal life into the classroom not only affected her relationships with students, but also with colleagues. She reflected,

Last semester [fourth semester] it was a big, a big thing that we were working on, me finding my voice in the classroom and then me being more open with people I'm working with and making sure to ask more questions and to even just talk about stuff that isn't just school-related for once. I didn't think that was appropriate, or not appropriate, but I was too afraid to be like, oh I did this this weekend, how was your weekend, it was more structured from the beginning (Interview, February 21, 2012).

This ability to ask questions, whether about teaching and learning or about a colleague's life outside of the classroom, proved an area of tense development for Hannah. She noted that in her semester working with Tuan she started to ask questions earlier, which allowed her to shift more quickly into teaching rather than just observing. Importantly, this shift came as a result of a push from the outside. Similar to her decision to apply to the African student teaching program after a friend challenged her actual intention, Hannah's shift to being more present in the classroom came after a challenge from Jane and Tuan. Hannah said,

The next semester I was at Central Rivers and that's when I start to open up more and Jane and Tuan kind of called me out on it, that I was being really quiet, and I'm not a quiet person (Interview, February 21, 2012).

Beyond this initial challenge, Hannah also noted that Tuan continued to push her toward engagement with teaching. She commented,

This was the first time I really also stayed after school and made sure I was there and figured it out for this group...Tuan made sure we would talk it through and figure it out, which was good, I needed that (Interview, February 21, 2012).

Hannah noted that part of this was “slowing down” to see the more detailed aspects of teaching and to take the time to think through her process. After this semester she felt more at ease around former cooperating teachers, and commented that she was “friendlier,” which more clearly matched her intent; for Hannah being “very, very nervous in the beginning” (Interview, February 21, 2012) made her wary of how to engage in practice alongside her cooperating teachers.

As Hannah transitioned into talking through her student teaching placement with Eva, she brought up the essential question of if she wanted to “keeping doing this” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). Like her other cooperating teachers, Eva acted as both a support and a catalyst for Hannah. Hannah felt that Eva “gets me as a giant mess” and allowed her to go at her own pace and proceed at her own level (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). She noted that Eva allowed for Hannah’s first few lead days to be “all over the place” so that Hannah could learn from the experience and finally come to a place where she felt that she could focus on “voice, language, and knowing [her] kids” (Field Notes, 2012).

In our final interview Hannah reflected on what had influenced her teaching the most. She placed the PDS program as the most influential with practicum experiences following that. She reflected,

In theory, everything sounded great in coursework and I was like, I’m going to do this in my classroom, it sounds so awesome, but until you actually try them in your practicum experiences, you don’t know how it’s going to work...and just seeing my progression from my first semester...it’s just a huge difference. So I could have put all these together and then teach and it would have been a complete disaster and I would have—I can honestly guarantee I wouldn’t be

teaching still if I would have had these times in the classroom and especially with PDS...PDS was the most influential because I mean, practicum experiences are so big and PDS influenced those experiences for me...I was lucky enough to have been with four amazing teachers...but I was lucky enough to have Jane who could see that I needed these teachers at these times and placed me with them

(Interview, May 22, 2012).

Mediation by Jane, the PDS program, and her cooperating teachers supported Hannah's learning to teach process and in the meantime afforded her a coherent vision of teaching diverse students; however, each practicum teacher approached teaching in their own particular ways and Hannah took from each a particular lesson of being a teacher of diverse students.

Communities. While Hannah's reflection on her practicum teachers pinpointed the influence of individuals, her next area of influence, the communities in which she learned and developed, broadened the sphere of who influenced her growth and identity development. Again, Hannah referred to the effects of engaging with the larger school community through the weekend soccer program. She specifically noted that she "transitioned from [just] going there, to talking to parents, talking to kids in school about this" (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). Hannah began to see the connection at this point between the intention of the PDS program's community engagement requirement, i.e. for novice teachers to understand students in multiple spaces and deepen knowledge of the community to inform practice in schools, and its effect on her teaching identity within the school community. She began to bring what she understood about students outside of school, what could be considered "personal," into her relationships inside the school. This was a moment where Hannah began to breach her personal-professional divide and move toward a more coherent identity.

Hannah also discussed developing community within her student teaching classroom. The morning meeting in which students shared how they were feeling, and during which the teachers also shared, was a focal point for developing this sense of community. Hannah commented, “If I’m upset, they have to know it. I’m human. That’s how it is” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). This shift toward sharing her feelings with her students moved her toward becoming a part of the community; however, for Hannah, this shift occurred near the end of her student teaching and limited her opportunities to become a fully democratic teacher in the classroom. I revisit this idea during the latter half of this chapter.

The students. Finally, Hannah noted that the students in her placements will be what “stick in my mind the most” and what would drive her to continue her learning-to-teach process (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). Hannah named two particular students who fueled her growth. First, in her fourth semester, one of her first grade students constantly asked her personal questions, “What is your name? Where are you from?” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). Hannah commented that this student’s inquisitive nature pushed her to be more “open with everything” during that semester; she said, “you can’t hold back when a kid is firing questions at you” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). This student compelled Hannah to be more open with sharing her personal life within the classroom community and created important opportunities to bridge the personal-professional divide.

The second student Hannah spoke about was a young girl in her student teaching placement. As Hannah described her, “she’s from a White middle class family, is proficient in everything, but during my lead week I realized I wasn’t planning for her” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). Hannah realized that her students who needed more help governed her planning, while students who seemed able fell to the wayside. Hannah said, “I need to see the whole picture

instead of just the pieces” (Field Notes, May 14, 2012). This struggle to see the whole picture was a tension that resonated through every novice teacher’s experience in this study; part of becoming a teacher was moving beyond the limited participation of working with a few students or focusing only on those students whose needs seemed most urgent, and instead taking in the whole picture to see how to balance supporting the needs of individuals and the needs of the whole community. This balance was one of the aspects that made taking on a fully democratic teaching identity difficult; the teacher ultimately has to be fair and just in the community and have the community recognize that justness, while also feeling safe as individuals.

Searching for a “Teaching Voice”

In the previous section, I relied on Hannah’s “voice” to describe her teaching and learning process through her presentation. Considering that the presentation was a “public” presentation of “Hannah as teacher,” it illustrated how Hannah envisioned herself in the eyes of others and how she wanted others to see her and her teaching. This public showing of her teaching identity was personal in that it was her story, her narrative account of events, and her attempt at sense-making of her learning-to-teach process. While this iteration of “voice” is important to understanding Hannah’s alignment with public accounts of teaching, it is also important to consider Hannah’s struggle with the concept of a “teaching voice” throughout her learning to teach process. In this section, I analyze a series of interview excerpts from over the course of the study in which she reflected on “finding” her teaching voice.

As noted earlier, Tuan and Jane introduced the language of “voice” to her in her fourth semester. During my interview with Jane I commented that Hannah “talked a lot about voice,” to which Jane replied,

I don't know if we fed that to her...or if she really believes it. If voice is the issue for her, or it's, what does it mean to teach? I don't know...but we did bring that up, that started with Tuan, using the word voice, presence (Interview, May 31, 2012).

Jane introduced an important possibility to consider throughout Hannah's reflection on "voice" – was it about finding her particular vision of teaching, or was it about finding any vision of teaching? Jane noted that Hannah, who was an incredibly kind, thoughtful and giving student, always would engage in the following pattern of dialogue with Tuan and her:

Hannah: What do you think?

Jane & Tuan: What do you want?

Hannah: I don't know. What do you think?

Jane & Tuan: What do you want to do? (Adapted from Interview, May 31, 2012)

Using the metaphor of the "ball is in your court," Jane emphasized that this needed to happen for Hannah to learn during her student teaching, which is when Jane felt Hannah's learning really started to take off. While Jane gave the caveat that she and Tuan may have "fed" the language of voice to Hannah, nevertheless it resonated enough with her that it surfaced multiple times in our interviews. I present our conversations about voice in chronological order with analysis following each of the iterations.

February 21, 2012 – "Finding my voice." Hannah mentioned voice in our first interview as we discussed her goals for the semester. She named, "finding her voice" as a goal that had emerged the previous semester when she realized that she would get "quiet" while she was teaching, particularly when she searched for her next steps in a lesson. She commented, "I mean I would get antsy having to try to listen to me explain something in a boring voice also"

(Interview, February 21, 2012). When I asked what Hannah meant by getting quiet, and “losing her voice,” she said,

I mean, so in general, I’m usually a pretty silly kind of weird person. Knowing that’s how I am and I like being that way, but when I get, when I’m trying to teach something, it’s not even, I don’t have stage fright or anything, it’s not that, but I think I get so into what I’m doing, or trying to figure out how I’m going to do this and thinking critically about everything while I’m in the lesson that I’m not always paying attention to how I’m reacting and how I’m acting with the kids.

So, and I mean some of it is also nerves (Interview, February 21, 2012).

Hannah’s reflection on her feelings and actions while searching for her voice exemplified her pursuit to find coherence between how she understood herself outside of teaching (personal identity) and how she envisioned the role of a teacher (professional identity). At this point in time, Hannah equated voice with “being very stiff and not very personable” (Interview, February 21, 2012) in her lessons. Hannah felt that her “silly” and “weird” parts of her self outside of teaching were not represented when she would teach. A portion of this discomfort emerged from equivocating between “being a really good friend” and “being like a teacher...being more firm” with students. While Hannah recognized that Eva was able to be “goofy and silly” with the students while maintaining a classroom community focused on learning and caring, nevertheless Hannah needed to find her own balance between her personal “silly” and “weird” identity and her professional identity as a teacher who needed to be “firm” (Interview, February 21, 2012).

Hannah reflected on this equivocation as an area for growth and saw the necessity of finding her balance in voice between her personal identity and professional identity. She said,

Kids can hear you say, “you need to listen to this because it’s really important,” and I feel like they respect that more when you just do that. I’m finding that aspect of not just being silly, but being firm when you need to, not just the friend, but the actual teacher (Interview, February 21, 2012).

Hannah differentiated between roles in the classroom – friend and teacher. At the start of her student teaching, she was moving from being an observer and “a friend”, in many ways more like a volunteer in the classroom, to assuming the role of “the actual teacher.” This shifting role further highlighted the tension she felt between her personal identity as “silly” and the firmness she ascribed to a professional identity.

Hannah’s conception of “voice” in teaching amounted to finding a solid professional identity, rather than feeling in flux in her learning-to-teach process. She said, “If you just heard my voice teaching, you should be able to match that to me. The words I’m saying and how I’m acting in my expressions, as opposed to any teacher, you should be able to know it’s me” (Interview, February 21, 2012). Hannah felt that her “voice” should distinguish her as a teacher, and yet still match her conception of her personal self. She reflected on whether her “teacher voice” would be different than her “every day Hannah voice.” She said, “I feel like they should match up in a lot of areas...it’s like a Venn diagram – there should be plenty of overlap, but there’s some that’s just teacher and some just me outside the classroom” (Interview, February 21, 2012). Importantly, Hannah felt that she had her “outside voice” in other areas of her life, but when it came to teaching she was searching for how she could “pull aspects of me into my teaching” (Interview, February 21, 2012).

At the start of her student teaching placement, Hannah’s awareness of and goal to “find her voice” dominated her conceptualization of voice and her teaching identity. She searched for

personal coherence between how she understood her personality outside of teaching and who she was becoming in her learning-to-teach process. She desired to hold on to her “silly” and “weird” parts of her personality, yet she felt tension doing this while moving toward becoming a more legitimate participant in the teaching aspects of classroom life. Hannah’s hesitancy in the classroom, what she termed her “stiffness,” may have emerged from her feeling nervous. She commented,

For a good portion at the beginning of the program, there were points where I didn’t feel I should be in the School of Ed; it’s not that I didn’t want to be in there, but it’s like I felt that I didn’t deserve to be in there because I didn’t have / hadn’t had a lot of experiences (Interview, February 21, 2012).

Hannah’s search for personal coherence not only concerned finding space for her quirkiest personality traits, but also stemmed from insecurity about her journey into teaching. Since her personal identity did not include an initial resolve to teach, Hannah often doubted and questioned her decision to teach. She searched for reasons and experiences to build her professional identity as a teacher, rather than drawing on past moments and emotions.

April 25, 2012 – “The serious tone.” During Hannah’s student teaching, she participated in the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) that required her to teach a series of literacy lessons, videotape one of those lessons, and write extensive reflections on the lessons. Hannah worked with Eva to determine what topic in writing she would tackle for this mini-unit. Together, they reviewed the writing standards for third grade and settled on “voice” as the topic for Hannah’s mini-unit. The students had partnered as pen pals with a second-grade class at another school and were starting a letter-writing unit that became the focus for teaching “voice.”

Hannah introduced “voice” through a sequence of lessons beginning with examining letters and how “it will sound different and it will be signed differently” (Interview, April 25, 2012) depending on the audience. To formally introduce the vocabulary “voice,” Hannah constructed a lesson around work from local artists. She asked students to describe, discuss, and compare the works of art; she then introduced a new piece of artwork. Not giving the artist’s name, she asked “Who painted this?” and allowed students to discuss ideas in partnership and develop evidence and reasoning for their choice. Hannah then explained, “We’ve been learning about this, this whole time and you guys just didn’t have a word for it, this is voice” (Interview, April 25, 2012). The students completed other activities where they listened to writing or viewed artwork and gave reasoning and evidence for who they thought crafted the work. Hannah remarked that she wanted to introduce the concept of voice in multiple formats and mediums since she felt that voice occurred in multiple facets of life. She said, “In whatever we do we have a voice. I have a voice in teaching; I have a voice as a student. It’s different. So voice as an artist, voice in your writing” (Interview, April 25, 2012). The idea of multiple voices and outlets of voice emerged more clearly in Hannah’s conception of voice at this point in time.

I commented to Hannah that voice was something we had discussed during our first interview and I asked her if she felt like she was finding her voice. She said,

I think so, I think it’s getting, it’s getting closer. Jane observed me on Monday and she’s like, “I’ve never heard you like that before, you were very just calm and just went.” And I was like, oh weird, I guess I didn’t realize it but I just feel a lot calmer this week and more sure of myself. I’m at the point where like if someone is doing something like, fooling around, I’m just like nope, not doing that right now. Which earlier this year, I’d be like can you please, you know, quiet your

voice a little; I was more timid. Now you know, that's not how we're doing. You know little things, Jane was like I don't know, that's not what I'm used to hearing. And I'm like yeah, good, that's what I want (Interview, April 25, 2012).

Hannah referenced her earlier equivocation between timidity and firmness. Asking students to adhere to classroom norms became more automatic and less filled with possibilities of students not responding or respecting Hannah's directive. Importantly, Hannah's legitimation for this shift came from Jane; social legitimation of her emerging teaching identity, particularly from Jane, whom Hannah viewed as integral to her growth and learning, provided recognition that Hannah could assume the identity of teacher.

Hannah continued to reference her earlier conception of voice, particularly the dichotomy of friend and teacher, when I asked her if she could describe her voice as a teacher. She explained,

Oh, I don't think I can describe it yet. It depends, I've gotten a lot more serious which is hard for me because I'm not a serious person at all, but I mean today during writing I was super goofy and I realized while I was in the middle of it, I was dancing around and shouting stuff out...so I think now that I'm more comfortable with the serious tone, I'm figuring out ways to hook my goofiness into that instead of going the opposite way, you know I was goofy and trying to figure out when to be serious and stuff. But I think I've jumped in the other way, so these last few days have been a little more serious than I have been before but then also throw the goofy things in and it's gotten, it feel better, it feels like it's more teacher mode instead of friend mode and I'm still having my voice in it (Interview, April 25, 2012).

In this excerpt, Hannah narrated her integration of personal identity and professional identity and showed a stronger sense of personal coherence to a teaching identity. Hannah marked a teaching identity as being more serious and firm. Prior to this, she felt that she had to figure out ways to map that idea of seriousness onto her “goofy” personal identity, whereas here, Hannah found ways to establish a teaching identity and bring her personal identity to it. Rather than starting with the personal and moving to the professional, Hannah had to establish a sense of professional identity and bring in her personal side. Yet, Hannah still felt that she waivered between days when she felt comfortable and days when she felt “a little off” (Interview, April 25, 2012), and attributed this to her comfort with the subject matter she was teaching.

May 22, 2012 – “I’m confident that it’s going to come.” Answering the question, “Are you sure you want to be a teacher?” came up in multiple instances for Hannah. Her family asked her this question when she abandoned her goal to attend medical school, other friends and family asked her this question during the protests in Lake City, and finally, Tuan and Jane asked her this question. While Hannah could defend the profession to her family and friends, speaking to members of the profession about her reasons to teach proved more difficult because their questioning her intentions hurt Hannah. She said, “I was just heartbroken...I was like, Jane, why would you ask me that? But it’s good because it made me actually stop and think” (Interview, May 22, 2012). Hannah believed then that Jane had asked her the question as a means “to get a rise” out of her so that Hannah could state her reasons and feel more confident in her teaching identity.

When Hannah detailed her reasons for teaching, she focused on a sense of responsibility. She said,

It's something that I feel like I know I want to do and that I'm able to do and I know it's going to take a lot of work and a lot of practice and reflection, but for me, it's just a personal goal to want to do this and to be able to do it in a way that's going to be meaningful for kids as opposed to just finishing school and getting a degree...now I know this is what I want to do and have all these tools to be able to do it, instead of just being thrown out there. So I think some of it is the idea that I'm given all these things to be able to do this, that it's almost like a responsibility now...but also, just it's something I want to do because I know the kids deserve certain things. They deserve to get questioned like I was with Jane...I mean every kid deserves a meaningful education, not just an education, but a meaningful one where they learn what they want to learn and to do all this...I've gotten all this experience that now that I know that, I have so many ways and outlets to try to do this, so if one thing doesn't work, I know another way that could work, or I know someone who could help me to get this to work. There's so many reasons that before I would have just been like, well I like kids, I like hanging out with them, it's more than that, it's not just that any more (Interview, May 22, 2012).

Prior to her experiences in MU's School of Education and the PDS program, Hannah did not have a strong reason for wanting to teach. As she stated at the end of this excerpt, before this experience she would have just said that she wanted to teach because she liked kids. At the end of her experience, Hannah felt that she had learned multiple methods of working with students so that they received a "meaningful education." She related that "meaningful education" to one that allowed for students to explore their interests, engage in inquiry, and face questions so that they

could reason and give evidence for their answers. A prime example of this “meaningful education” appeared in Hannah’s lesson on voice, wherein she scaffolded moments for critical thinking, discussion, and deliberation. Hannah felt that her shifted conception of what teaching entailed came with a responsibility to put those ideas into practice. Thus, while Hannah did not have a strong personal resolve around teaching at the start of the program, by the end of the program her experiences in PDS, and in particular in classrooms, afforded Hannah a rationale for pursuing teaching.

Hannah started her student teaching with a goal of “finding” her voice; however, by the end of student teaching, Hannah’s conception of voice became more nuanced and process-oriented. Hannah explained her position on her teaching voice,

My voice is still a thing that’s trying to get figured out and I don’t think it will until years into having my own classroom. It’s not something I can just find while I’m student teaching, it’s not going to just come up, especially because it’s not my own classroom and I have all this support. I’ll still have support wherever I go, I can email Jane whenever I want, but stuff like that, it’s not the same type and it’s going to be my own classroom and if my voice isn’t there it’s not going to work. And I know things aren’t going to fall together in my first few years of teaching so I don’t expect my voice to be there, it’s going to take a lot of experiences and all different things happening that I’m going to realize, ok, this is how I want my classroom to be and this is what I think is going to work best, and it depends too on the students that year that I’m working with. Eva and I talked about this like your voice is going to change depending on what student you’re working with. Some students, you think you’re going to teach in a certain way,

but it's not going to work for every student. So some you're going to have to change how you teach so that they're able to learn in a way that works for them. So my voice definitely isn't there yet, but I'm confident that it's going to come, that it's going to be there (Interview, May 22, 2012).

Importantly, Hannah felt that the level of support she had encountered in her student teaching, while helpful to her overall growth, also created such a tight safety net that she did not have to struggle to teach. In other words, Hannah did not face a crisis moment where she felt she had to assume total responsibility for the students in her class. When Jane reflected on Hannah's placements, she said,

She had a huge safety net in all of her classrooms. She had outstanding cooperating teachers who made sure that that environment was working for themselves and the kids and so when someone else walks in, that environment is working. And she experienced that four semesters in a row. That's probably something I could have and should have done is put her in a place where things were falling apart a little and she had, she was needed in a different way. So when she's needed in a different way, what's going to happen? I don't know, and I'm excited to see for her (Interview, May 31, 2012).

Hannah's case was interesting because of this Catch-22. Hannah needed support to find personal resolve around teaching, and she needed to observe and participate in thoughtful, caring, functioning classrooms to gather experiences on which she could base that resolve. Yet, Hannah also pushed ahead when she met moments of crisis or when someone questioned her, i.e. her decision to go to Africa. What would have happened for Hannah had she experienced a classroom where she felt more "needed"? Jane's recognition of this exemplified her intense

involvement in Hannah's learning trajectory and highlighted the possible role a supervisor, who was embedded in Hannah's multiple learning and development contexts, could take in scaffolding experiences for novice teachers.

While Hannah's safety net of well-established classrooms may have hindered her development through crisis, these classrooms also provided more complex conceptions of teaching voice. Hannah recognized that future experiences, classrooms, and environments would continue to shape and develop her teaching voice. Importantly, she ended with a statement of confidence that time and experience would present her opportunities to continue developing her teaching voice. Whereas finding her teaching voice was a big goal, and a big worry, at the start of her student teaching, by the last week of her student teaching, Hannah's ease with the uncertainty and acknowledgement of the process illustrated a growing sense of comfort in an identity as teacher. A teaching voice, and for all intents and purposes a teaching identity, was no longer something she had to find, rather it was something she knew would develop over time and with experience.

Toward a Democratic Teaching Identity

In the first section of this chapter, Hannah described the multiple social identities afforded to her through her participation in multiple communities of practice. Hannah marked the PDS program and her experiences in PDS classrooms as particularly influential. As communities of practice, the PDS program and the PDS schools and classrooms provided Hannah multiple examples of democratic teaching and democratic teacher education. Hannah worked with both Tuan and Eva, whose classrooms emphasized democratic values, dispositions, and skills. Further, as part of the PDS program, Hannah experienced a more salient vision of democratic teacher education as the mission of the program aligned with the practices in the

seminar and supervision led by Jane. These multiple democratic communities offered Hannah opportunities to align with democratic practices. As noted, Hannah aligned with these social identities; however, her struggle to have these social identities cohere to a personal vision of herself as a teacher complicated her development of a democratic teaching identity. In this final section, I revisit the complications of personal coherence and social legitimation in the development of any teaching identity, and in particular a democratic teaching identity.

In Chapter 5, I argued that novice teachers enact democratic practices that their field placement (classroom) participation afforded them; further, their participation in particular communities of practice afford novice teachers with particular social identities. Like Olivia, Hannah worked in a classroom that focused on student discussion, deliberation, and values of caring and the importance of respecting the common good. Hannah believed in the importance of student talk, shared ownership of the classroom space, student-led decision-making, and ensuring students are aware of their place as young citizens in a democracy. Hannah said, “They know that they have that voice and that they have a piece of the class, they're not just in it, they're an actual piece of it” (Interview, May 22, 2012). These beliefs clearly aligned with the classroom community Eva had established.

Hannah not only believed in these ideals, but she also worked toward enacting them in her practice. She constructed a science inquiry unit around the study of plants, during which students developed and chose their own particular inquiry question to explore. She led and valued morning meetings as a way to begin her day with students and foster a sense of common good. She also used class meetings as a way to address problems in the classroom. Finally, Hannah adopted much of Eva's language of respect, caring, and community.

This language acted as a bridge to Hannah adopting a more democratic teaching identity; however, her reflection of the language also revealed tension in Hannah's ability to develop a teaching identity that was personally coherent. During a writing lesson, Hannah said to a student, "You can wait until everyone is here and share when you feel that everyone is respecting what you are saying" (Field Notes, March 7, 2012). When we talked about this language and its origin, Hannah attributed it to both Eva and Tuan. She said,

They're both very much like, we're a community, we respect each other, we listen to each other's thoughts, that's why you need to make sure you listen because if they're listening to you, you should be listening to them, that's how we work together. So Eva says those words a lot like, make sure you're being respected, or I don't really feel respected right now, I'm going to wait to make sure I know that people are respecting my thoughts and ideas and I just think that's so much more meaningful to them than saying, oh be quiet, you guys are interrupting [student]. The idea that they can keep talking but they're not going to be respecting what she's doing and would they want the same kind of treatment when they would be in that spot. I think it's a lot more meaningful to them and it comes more from them to choose what they want to do.

Hannah noted here the impact that these language choices had on students and the ability of the community to develop values of respect. Sharing the responsibility with students created a way to develop a democratic classroom, but it also created tension for Hannah. When I asked her if she felt comfortable with, and if she would continue to use, this type of language, she reflected,

It was very awkward at first, especially it's not even more comfortable saying it about them, make sure everyone's respecting you, but it's a lot harder for me to say I'm waiting to be respected, it feels very awkward for me, or it did. I think that a lot of it is my tone, but it will come off in this horrible way and I'll be like, I sound like such a mean person, but I've been trying to use it more and trying to get more comfortable with it and it has gotten easier and I like it a lot more now, when I can really be like sincerely like I don't think you guys are listening and I think this is important stuff and I'm not going to talk and now have people listen because that's not a way to respect someone who's talking to anyone, not just a teacher, but anyone who's talking to you. So I think, thinking of it in that way where it's not just me, but right now in this example is me, but it goes this way for everyone has made it more comfortable for me (Interview, March 13, 2012).

Eva's practices and presentation of social identity as democratic teacher allowed for Hannah to attempt using this type of language that focused on student dispositions, values, and community building. Yet in her reflection, the clear tension emerged – while democratic education allowed for multiple voices, the classroom still had to be structured by the teacher. In other words, while Hannah worked to create shared ownership of the classroom community, she, as the teacher, was the main person shaping the space. Regulating student talk felt “mean” at times for Hannah; however, it also became more natural over time as she saw it as part of the community's values.

Including herself as part of the community added to the tension in this type of talk. She commented, “It's a lot harder for me to say I'm waiting to be respected” (Interview, March 13, 2012). Thus, the tension in creating space for student talk not only felt awkward when Hannah had to regulate student voice, but also when she had to establish membership as part of the

community of talk. In other words, Hannah had to include herself in the community that deserved respect. Balancing being a member of the community with the authoritative role of a teacher presented a challenge for novice teachers to develop a democratic teaching identity.

Hannah explained further,

I felt like I was saying, you need to respect me because I'm the teacher and that's kind of how, like I never heard it like that when Eva said. Like when Eva said it, that's not how I took it at all, but when I said it, that's how I felt like it sounded in my voice when I said it. But then I started thinking about it in this other way, no you should respect everyone when they talk, you should be listening to people. And then it wasn't, it took the focus off of me, like I'm not telling them that to just listen to me, it's everyone, they have to respect anyone when they're working with their community members (Interview, March 13, 2012).

Hannah revealed both her initial discomfort to adopt language that she felt was authoritarian and inauthentic, and her growth toward feeling that she was part of the community in the classroom. Interestingly, her statement that "it took the focus off of me," could be interpreted as her seeing herself as part of the community, or it could be her continued hesitancy to take on a teacher role in the classroom. In this case, Hannah most likely felt the tension of sharing the classroom with the students, including responsibility to respect each person; this tension made developing a democratic teaching identity particularly difficult. In the same instant that Hannah worked to develop a professional identity as a teacher, a role that often entails leadership and authority, she also had to negotiate the democratic aspects of the social identity afforded to her in Eva's classroom. Further, including herself as part of the classroom community proved difficult but ultimately was necessary for the social legitimation of her identity as a teacher in that classroom.

Social legitimation from the community held the possibility of reinforcing Hannah's identity as a teacher. In the case of a democratic classroom, social legitimation from the community of students was not only powerful, but also necessary. As a classroom that functioned as a community, the students in Eva's room felt ownership over the space and membership into the community. During the first weeks of Hannah's student teaching, Eva remarked on the tension between the students and Hannah that resulted from Hannah's discomfort in taking on her role as teacher. She said,

There's been some situations where she kind of had to strengthen her voice and the kids are noticing that it, like, I think they're craving a little bit stronger voice from her...Ultimately, my job is to ensure that everyone is safe--that's my first job, and I think there's like an emotional safety there...to ensure that everyone feels like their ideas are valid...we're a collaborative group, that the individual matters. So, I think that's a huge responsibility that we have as teachers is [that] you set a tone in your room to allow that to happen. So people are just constantly talking over each other and talking over Hannah, too, you know, and she's OK with it. Or at least she says she's OK with it indirectly by allowing it to continue (Interview, April 27, 2012).

Eva's comments pointed toward Hannah's work on developing a stronger, more "serious" teaching voice. Importantly, Eva highlighted the role of the students in that work. Students craved a stronger voice to aid them in mediating their community norms and values.

Developing a stronger teaching voice was an area of growth for Hannah throughout the semester, and her ability to strengthen relationships with students bolstered this growth. Eva noticed, "She's built those relationships steadily with the kids, and for a long time I wasn't seeing

that and I was worried about it” (Interview, April 27, 2012). Entering a well-established classroom in January added to the difficulty in developing relationships early on; however, with her increased involvement in the community outside of the classroom, Hannah moved toward developing stronger relationships that helped solidify her place in this classroom community. Yet, her role as a teacher in this community remained tenuous, which added to the tensions Hannah felt between social legitimation from the community and establishing personal coherence with a teaching identity.

Hannah offered a classroom anecdote that illustrated this interplay between recognition of an identity by others, social legitimation, and by oneself, personal coherence; this excerpt illustrated a central tension between the social-personal, personal-professional divides in developing a teacher identity. The incident occurred during her first mini-lead week of taking on three days on her own, when a student inquired about Eva’s whereabouts. Hannah recalled,

I kept making up these excuses and then finally one day I was like, I don’t know, I have no idea where she is. And they were like, what?! And I was like, well I’m learning to become a teacher so I need to learn to be in this room without Ms. Eva. Am I going to take Ms. Eva with me if I go to a different school? And like, well no I guess not. And [they] kind of thought about it a little bit more and then later this girl’s like, ‘so it’s kind of like you’re a teacher then’. And it’s like, yes exactly, that’s why I’ve been doing these lessons the last few days, that’s why Ms. Eva hasn’t been in the room.

Katie (author): How did that make you feel when she said that?

Hannah: I laughed, I thought it was really funny, like it made me happy, but I just thought it was really funny because I was like, in my mind I’ve always been like

oh I'm a teacher in this room, that's where I put myself. And then to hear it from someone else where it's just clicking for them, like [laughs], I get it, makes sense because I never explained to a lot about, explained that I'm learning to be a teacher, and explained that I'm going to be the one who's trying to lead everything on a few of these, but it made me happy, because I was like, oh you're getting it, this is what I'm trying to do (Interview, March 13, 2012).

Hannah transitioned from an attempt to make excuses for Eva's absence to a more transparent statement about her position learning to be a teacher. This transparency may have been a key factor for the students in the classroom, as Eva always clearly explained why she was asking the students to complete a particular task or adopt a particular behavior. In this moment, the student, who was part of a primary community that needed to validate Hannah's teaching identity, asked for clarity in a situation that did not make sense to her. Hannah recognized her mistake in not fully explaining the situation to the students, and more importantly felt "happy" that the students recognized that she also had the role of teacher in the classroom.

Instances like this when the student asked for transparency, or as Eva described earlier, when student "craved" a stronger voice from Hannah, acted as tests of Hannah's resolve to adhere to the practices that had been set by the community. These practices created a safe environment for students to take risks, feel heard, and know that their ideas were important. For the students in Eva's class, to legitimate Hannah's identity as a teacher, they needed her to attend to the practices and norms they had established that protected "the common good."

Discussion

“My parents asked, why were so many people close to crying, even you. I was like, you just don’t understand...it’s the experience...you would have to teach for a little while before you got it” (Interview, 5/22/12)

In this excerpt, Hannah reflected on her teaching and learning presentation that marked the end of her student teaching at South Shore. Hannah aligned herself with other members of her PDS cohort and with the “insider knowledge” of being a teacher. In this instance she separated herself from her family, noting, “you just don’t understand,” but also could not fully articulate what about the experience moved her to tears. Hannah saw herself as part of the PDS community, as a legitimate participant in that community, who adhered to their values of social justice teaching and working with diverse populations of students. Two primary issues brought tension in Hannah’s full adoption of these democratic teaching identities: 1) personal coherence between how she conceptualized her identity inside and outside of teaching, and 2) social legitimation from the communities in which Hannah participated.

While Hannah’s search to find a teaching voice was important to her story and revealed many of her tensions in establishing a teacher identity, this uncertainty was not unusual for novice teachers. Novice teachers’ identities are often in a state of flux as they are projecting what they think they will do when they are on their own, away from the communities that afforded them these initial possible identities. Yet, Hannah’s case was anomalous among the novice teachers in this study. All of the other novice teachers in this study had a particular initial narrative that served as a touchstone of resolve around their intention to be a teacher. Like Hannah, neither Diego nor Dania arrived at MU with the intention of becoming a teacher; however, both Diego and Dania’s experience working with JumpStart served as both a catalyst to enter the teaching profession as well as a moment on which they could mark their decision. Lisa,

Olivia, and Claire had constellations of moments that involved volunteer work with students that propelled them to pursue teaching. Still, each of these novice teachers had particular touchstone moments that they cited, i.e. Lisa's experience with the student who was having difficulty in her volunteer placement, and these moments became a site of personal identification with the profession of teaching.

When Eva and I discussed Hannah's teaching voice in our final interview, I asked her if she thought Hannah saw herself as a teacher. She commented,

OK, does she see herself as a teacher? I don't...I mean, it shouldn't be this hard, but I don't know. She doesn't have, like, the drive. She doesn't, she's not like hungry for teaching, that I've seen so many teachers around here have. And I kind of expected at that, you know, when you're a student teacher, like, this is your chance to jump in and you know, and that never happened for her. And so I was always worried, what's wrong, what do I need to do to better support that growth? Is it OK if she doesn't have that drive? Is that just part of her personality? Like, you know, but then how that translates to the voice piece. There's a correlation there that I don't know how to explain it, but I feel like if you, you know, you have the passion and the drive, and you know, like you really jump in, you, your voice has, I don't know, a certain quality to it that she never developed. And, but that doesn't mean that it's not going to grow, that it won't come some day

(Interview, June 7, 2012).

Eva confirmed my hunch that Hannah's hesitancy around voice affected her ability to fully enact an identity as a teacher in the classroom; however, she also hinted at the important point that Hannah's development was still in process. That lack of "drive" as Eva put it related directly to

my analysis that Hannah was still searching for and solidifying her reasons to teach through her experience of teaching.

Hannah mentioned working a summer camp prior to the school year in which she applied to the School of Education, yet when presenting her “deciding to teach story,” she led with making a “last minute” decision. Hannah’s teaching identity formation centered around finding her touchstone moments to answer the question, “Why do you want to be a teacher?” For Hannah, at the end of her student teaching experience, a feeling of responsibility drove her current desire to be a teacher. She felt that her work with Jane, in schools, and at the university had afforded her a set of tools that would provide a particular vision of schooling for students. For her, this vision of schooling was one based in inquiry – as she stated in her reasoning for being a teacher:

They [students] deserve to be able to get questioned and to ask questions about every single thing and being in their position once and seeing how different I look at things now, I want to be that person that asks them those questions and gets them to do it and I know that (Interview, May 22, 2012).

Hannah saw her own education as transformative in how she looked at her world and wanted to provide the same experience for students. Thus, again Hannah drew on the social identities afforded to her through her experiences in PDS, yet the lack of attaching that identity to a personal reason, a touchstone moment, made her emphatic statement less personal. The disconnect between the social identities and Hannah’s sense of self led to a lack of personal coherence in her identity as a teacher. Yet, the social identities afforded to Hannah through her experiences in the PDS program and schools highlighted the role that a coherent vision of teacher education could have on an individual’s sense of teaching identity. I do not want to

diminish the hard work that Hannah, Jane, Eva, and Hannah's other cooperating teachers did to forward Hannah's sense of a teaching identity; rather, I emphasize here the difficulty in establishing a salient teaching identity when the individual is still searching for a touchstone moment of resolve.

Hannah's case represented one of possibility for how a teacher education program could influence novice teacher growth and identity development. Her case also highlighted the difficulty in establishing a democratic teaching identity as a novice teacher. Making the move from "friend" to "teacher" required Hannah to become more "serious" and act in a more decisive manner with her students. She needed to establish her place in the community by respecting the norms and values of the classroom, yet also take a leadership role in setting the expectations for the community. Establishing a democratic teaching identity required social legitimation from both Eva and the community of students; however, in the end what it lacked was a personal coherence from Hannah to see herself as a teacher in the classroom.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This study provides insight into two broad areas of study—democratic education, in particular democratic teacher education, and the role of clinical placements in novice teacher learning and identity development. While the novice teachers in this study experienced missed learning opportunities and at times only partially realized teaching identities, nevertheless they also experienced successes in their learning-to-teach process and beginning formation of a viable teaching identity. In this concluding chapter, I review the major findings that have emerged from this study, in particular how this research highlights successes and struggles in novice teacher learning and identity development. I consider the implications of this study on the fields of democratic education and teacher education. Next, I discuss the limitations of this study, noting issues and avenues of inquiry that remained unexplored. Finally, I close with a consideration of possible avenues for further inquiry based on this study.

Novice Teacher Learning

This study examined how novice teachers learned about teaching and being a teacher while working in an elementary level (grades 1-3) democratic classroom. I focused on how a particular type of field experience afforded and/or constrained learning opportunities; however, I was also particularly interested in how immersion in a democratic classroom affected novice teacher's conceptions of democratic education. This study illuminated a number of contributions that immersion in a democratic field experience affords. I specifically considered how novice teachers experience, conceptualize, and enact democratic education, contributing to our understanding of [democratic teacher] education, or how to prepare teachers as democratic educators.

In the literature, [democratic teacher] education primarily looks at how university programs can better prepare democratic teachers through coursework that focuses on novice teacher's dispositions, stance toward teaching as inquiry, and knowledge of critical pedagogy. This study contributes to this literature by highlighting ways in which a field experience in a democratic classroom supported novice teachers' conceptions and enactment of democratic education; in many ways, learning through participation in a democratic field experience bridges the iterations of [democratic teacher] education as the novice teachers explored democratic knowledge, skills, and dispositions. In the following section, I consider the resources afforded to the novice teachers through their participation in these democratic classrooms. I consider what, when, and from whom/where these novice teachers learned. The next section on how novice teachers learned looks more specifically at the role of the field placement in novice teacher learning.

What did the novice teachers learn? The novice teacher's enactment of democratic education aligned with the particular instantiation of democratic education most pronounced in that elementary classroom. For example, Maya emphasized the curriculum as a means to promote critical thinking about society, in particular about the role of race and equity. Diego and Dania were both afforded the practices of Maya's teaching and the space in her classroom to enact critical curriculum. These practices shaped the learning space in the classroom, for both the elementary students and the novice teachers. Diego and Dania had the opportunity to align with these practices, which they did, and the environment was ripe for enactment. This is not to say though that Diego and Dania did not have other conceptions of democratic education that were not part of the vision in this classroom. Diego discussed his desire to incorporate ciphers, i.e., a free form open discussion, so that he could gather more

feedback from his students (Interview, March 15, 2012). In this way, Diego showed promise to incorporate some of the discussion and deliberation practices that were less evident in his current enactment of democratic education. This reflection also points to a possible constraint on Diego's learning in Maya's classroom; why did he not attempt enacting ciphers in Maya's classroom? One reason would point to the general feeling of student teachers, who want to respect the community in which they are teaching. Diego clearly respected Maya, her practice, and the community. While Maya allowed Diego space to try out different curricula, he was still limited by the norms of the community. If Diego wanted to attempt to do a cipher, he needed to be thoughtful in planning the interaction and setting the expectations. As these were not the strongest instructional tools for Maya, he did not have the community resources to support attempting this practice. Thus, while Maya enacted a parallel practice in mentoring, her level of freedom afforded to Diego may have given him less support than he needed at times.

While there were some divergent strains of thinking about democratic practices, nevertheless the primary conception of democratic education aligned closely with the cooperating teacher's conception and enactment. Diego, Dania, and Lisa all created critical curricula and drew upon the *Nguzo Saba* as a means to support democratic values and dispositions. Olivia focused on the skills of participation and problem solving, and the disposition of valuing the common good. Hannah also focused on participation, problem solving, and perhaps most strongly on the idea of the common good in the classroom. Finally, Claire focused on student participation and decision-making. Thus, what the novice teachers learned about democratic education largely depended on the context for learning afforded to them. While this is not surprising given theories of sociocultural learning and development, it is important that teacher education programs understand the contexts in which their novice teachers

are learning. As argued earlier, had Diego and Olivia had further support to mediate their learning in the context of their classroom, they could have developed more robust understandings of democratic education.

Knowing what a context affords a novice teacher in terms of learning experiences creates the possibility to bolster that learning experience with pieces that may not be present. Jane's lament at having not placed Hannah in a classroom "where things were falling apart a little and she was needed in a different way" (Interview, May 31, 2012), illustrates the possibilities for novice teacher learning when working with a supervisor who is embedded in the school context, who is knowledgeable about what opportunities the university is offering novice teachers, and who has knowledge of the novice teacher across a span of learning. In all other cases, the novice teachers mediated their experiences to meet what each saw as his or her needs; however, those needs may not have been the most salient needs. Diego is the prime example here as he clearly advocated for the placements he thought he needed – a male teacher, a middle school experience, and a teacher of color – yet, had someone else seen his growth through semesters, I wonder if they would have also considered putting him with a highly organized and planning-oriented teacher.

Looking at the field experience as a space of knowledge about democratic education requires careful examination of the practices each cooperating teacher pulled under the umbrella of democratic education. While I appreciate the fluidity of the term democratic education, i.e., it allows for multiple instantiations of democratic practices that best support particular contexts; nevertheless, that very fluidity makes democratic education a harder concept to grasp. The classrooms in this study showed a range of instantiations of democratic education – from one that focused on discussion, deliberation, and inquiry, to others that centered critical pedagogy as

the means to prepare young citizens. The challenge here is both to name the practices explicitly and to unveil the great and powerful Oz from behind the curtain. In other words, too often novice teachers attribute the work of their cooperating teachers to innate, unseen qualities that allow for them to create this type of environment. Further, for many of these novice teachers they were entering an established community partway through the year. Making practice explicit and tying that practice to one's philosophy, in this case a philosophy rooted in democratic education, created more robust learning opportunities for students. For example, Tuan purposefully immersed Olivia in planning and establishing the purpose of her lesson before she took on a larger role in teaching in the classroom. His focus on "purpose" was tied to his belief that everything he did in the classroom – from language choices to instructional material choices – had to have a purpose that supported students' academic and social growth. While this could just be considered "good teaching," nevertheless for Tuan it was central to how he understood his role as a teacher in a democracy. He prepared students to be active and participatory critical thinkers and caring community members; as part of this he ensured the structure, processes, and values embedded in his teaching all supported this purpose.

These novice teachers learned a range of practices within varied pedagogies of democratic education. Looking at the ideals that Robertson (2008) sets forth for what democratic teachers should be able to do – they should be able to lead students in deliberation/discussion, in engaging other's perspectives, in being open to changing their minds; they should be able to teach the skills of negotiation, i.e., a disposition toward accommodating other's interests, and to generate solutions to conflict; and they should be able to recognize and act upon injustices in the world – then each classroom in this study hit upon a few of these key elements, but never all of them at once. For example, Tuan and Eva's classroom may have held

all of these possibilities; however, they were not explicitly named and defined for Olivia and Hannah. Given that the cooperating teacher's primary responsibility is to their elementary students and secondarily to the novice teacher, I argue that the teacher education program's role is to highlight and name these practices. I also argue that if we want to create a cadre of democratic teachers, then teacher education must be more coherent and explicit in its preparation of these teachers. I expand this argument further in the section on implications for this research.

When did they learn? Each cooperating teacher in this study had developed a personal framework for how to support novice teacher learning. All of the teachers had some version of gradual release to the practicum students, wherein they provided scaffolded learning opportunities for the novice teacher before asking them to take over complete instruction. For the novice teachers this created space for them to become increasingly legitimized participants in the classroom (Wenger, 1998), which not only allowed for them to slowly build skills, but also to create greater confidence.

Some cooperating teachers, like Julia and Tuan, had explored these frameworks during action research projects or coursework that focused on being a cooperating teacher. Others like Maya and Grace based their teacher education pedagogy on years of experience, including many years working with Jane at South Shore. Eva presents an interesting case for developing a framework for novice teacher learning since this was her first semester working with a student teacher and she was concurrently taking a course on supervision with Jane during this study. She reflected on her work with Hannah, what it taught her about working with novice teachers, and how she envisioned changing her future practice. She commented,

I'm a learner, too...I have so many things to learn and I'm really new at this job myself, so, like, that's the first thing I tell someone when they walk in this room

and they think about working here with me is we are gonna ride these waves together (Interview, June 7, 2012).

Eva went on to talk about the importance of building a trusting relationship and said that was a practice that she would continue to hone. She also talked about her need to build in more systematic reflection with a student teacher, and her need to connect more intentionally with Jane when she had questions or concerns. Eva's reflection on her work as a teacher educator reiterates the role that these cooperating teachers played in novice teacher's learning-to-teach process. These cooperating teachers not only created communities of practice for the novice teacher to participate in and learn from, but also did so in intentional, systematic, and reflective ways.

This particular finding supports *democratizing* teacher education. Whose knowledge counts in the education of novice teachers is at the core of debates about how to best prepare novice teachers. These cooperating teachers not only had knowledge about teaching elementary students through democratic practices, but also had deep knowledge about scaffolding learning opportunities for novice teachers. Yet, as Eva's case shows, these ideas develop over time and with reflection. In her case, she had the asset of Jane as a site-based supervisor with years of expertise in the field of teacher education. Supporting the cooperating teachers who provide the main framework for novice teachers is crucial as teacher education moves to center learning in practice.

From whom/where did they learn? As already noted, the cooperating teacher's practice, pedagogy, and teacher education pedagogy provided the most robust framework for these novice teachers to learn. In most cases, the university's supervisor's role was diminished, except in the case of Hannah who learned in the PDS cohort and who had the same supervisor

for four semesters. Yet, the supervisor did provide a different point of view for the novice teacher, even when that point of view did not align with the novice teacher's perspective (as in the case of Madeline and Dania).

Democratizing teacher education asks, in what ways are teacher education programs creating experiences through which novice teachers can access school, community and cultural knowledge in service of their students? (Norton-Meier & Drake, 2010) Who are they turning to as experts in this knowledge? In these cases, the teacher education program writ large primarily focused on accessing knowledge at the university and applying that knowledge in classrooms; however, since the focus of this study was not on the program, I cannot wholly speak to its role outside of how the novice teachers experienced the program. What is clear is that these novice teachers had opportunities to engage with knowledge sources in the classrooms, schools, and communities in which they completed their field placement.

Each of the cooperating teachers in this study saw the community outside of the school as not only a valuable source of knowledge, but as essential to their work as teachers. Many of these teachers attended community events, volunteered in the community, and immersed themselves in the world in which their students lived. This powerful modeling impacted the novice teachers in this study. Diego and Lisa frequently talked about walking the students home as an ideal way to meet families and develop relationships that supported their teaching in the school. Hannah's participation in PDS added an additional layer of emphasis on engaging with the community. Olivia did not involve herself as intensely in the community; however, she did work to develop relationships with families through her time before and after school in the classroom. Claire and Dania, as practicum students potentially had the least opportunity to engage in this type of learning. While I did not note Claire's engagement with the community, I

did note that Dania continued to attend her practicum placement well beyond her required nine-weeks. Her relationship with Diego strengthened her knowledge of the community, students, and families; she came into the school knowing many of the students already.

The cooperating teachers in this study not only emphasized the distributed expertise in the community outside the school, but also within and across schools. In other words, these cooperating teachers saw their role as a teacher as part of a community of experts that was dispersed across a school building and district. At the weekly ACI team meetings at West Woods, Maya and Grace collaborated with the first grade teachers, the Instructional Resource Teachers, and Instructional Aides. Maya and Grace also drew upon community resources (a local African American pastor and local African American district representative) for their boys' lunch group. Tuan worked closely with the ELL support teacher for his classroom and a district math professional developer. He also reached out to me in the course of this study to help Olivia and him develop a persuasive writing unit. Eva worked with Jane and other teachers in her supervision course. Finally, Julia's third grade team modeled shared instruction as students moved across different homerooms for their math instructional groups. All of these cooperating teachers brought a stance that knowledge about teaching and learning is dispersed across multiple sites and spaces and sought to instill this understanding in their novice teachers. Understanding that novice teacher learning takes place in and through a constellation of resources needs to be at the center of work in teacher education.

Further, the idea of *community teachers* (Murrell, 2001) should guide the preparation of teachers who are working in and for an increasingly diverse democratic society. Murrell (2001) defines a *community teacher* as "one who possesses contextualized knowledge of the culture, community, and identity of the children and families he or she serves and draws on this

knowledge to create the core teaching practices necessary for effectiveness in diverse setting” (p. 52). Key to Murrell’s definition, and the role that experience in democratic classrooms played in this study, is that knowledge is *contextualized*. That knowledge cannot be completely learned in a university classroom away from the schools and communities in which teachers will work. In this study, the role of experience in democratic classrooms and in the communities surrounding schools created robust opportunities for novice teachers to learn about teaching, students, families, and the multiple sources of knowledge that could influence their practice and pedagogy.

The Role of the Field Experience

Novice teachers place great value on experience in their learning-to-teach process; this study was no different in that respect, as all of the novice teachers ranked practicum and student teaching experiences in schools as most influential to their learning and development. What this study adds is an in-depth look into how teachers learned in a democratic field experience. In this section I focus on how the particular context of a democratic field placement afforded/constrained novice teacher learning opportunities.

The novice teachers in this study were afforded opportunities to participate in meaningful ways in these democratic classrooms. Aside from the requirements set forth by MU (for practicum students, teach two observed lessons for practicum students; for student teachers, teach four observed lessons and lead-teach, i.e. complete the planning and instruction, for two weeks), these novice teachers found themselves in classrooms where the cooperating teachers created multiple spaces for inquiry, risk-taking, and reflection. The explicit attention to what I have called the cooperating teacher’s parallel democratic practices created an environment that was ripe for the novice teachers to participate in the community.

Sharing the space. Learning to share the space of a classroom—the physical, academic, and social—with your students is a challenge for any teacher, particularly a novice teacher. Throughout this study I saw both successes in learning to share the space, i.e., Olivia’s attempts at discussion and deliberation, as well as struggles, such as when Diego had to cut out the portion of his lesson that used the computer cart as a consequence when he could not gain full control of the class’s attention (Field Notes, December 9, 2011). Most often the success for novice teachers came when they had clearly planned the instructional aspects of the lesson and yet maintained a flexibility to allow students’ comments, questions, and curiosities shape the lesson. For example, Hannah’s science unit explicitly drew on the district standards about plants; however, she also created space for students to develop their own inquiry to meet those standards.

These novice teachers also had great success in sharing the social classroom space with their students. They worked to develop meaningful relationships with students and allow for those to help them build trust, caring, and respect into their classroom community. Lisa was particularly adept at this and built it into her everyday language with students. During one of her lessons she noticed a young female student who was disengaged and said to her, “Can you work with me because Ms. Lisa has a lot of things and that’s not how you talk to adults. When you are smart and present and working with the rest of the class you have a lot of good ideas” (Field Notes, December 9, 2011). In this moment of redirecting the student’s behavior, Lisa also took the opportunity to build up the student, draw upon her relationship with the student, and continue to shape a caring community.

While the novice teachers did not have control over the physical set up of these classrooms, this still proved an asset to their learning experience. Working in classroom

environments where students felt ownership over the space and understood that they shared it with their teachers provided an ideal space to experience democratic education. Eva's classroom embodied choice, participation, and ownership in every corner. The charts in her room supported the kind of community students sought to embody and were referenced often. For example, one chart read,

Our community is stronger when we...talk about our feelings honestly; are kind to each other; solve problems together (sometimes with an adult's help); make friends with lots of people; help each other; think before we do (take deep breaths...); and, make our classroom a safe place" (Field Notes, February 23, 2012).

This was typical of all the classroom environments in this study. Each was set up with the students in mind. While I was not there at the start of the year to observe their construction of these charts, I was there when changes to the classroom environment were made and students had a clear part in this. During one community council meeting in Eva's classroom, the students deliberated about where to hang the new lunch choice chart (Field Notes, February 23, 2012). While these charts and discussions seem minute, they were essential to creating a shared space with elementary students. For the novice teachers in this study, experiencing this was a first step in considering how they might co-construct a classroom with their future students.

Grappling with the political. Decisions about curriculum in schools are political. What teachers choose to teach and how they teach it value-driven and supports a particular vision of who the student is in the school community, as well as how the student will be part of the larger societal community. The novice teachers in this study worked alongside experienced cooperating teachers who made these curricular debates and decisions transparent. The novice

teachers in this study had some experience with these issues through their coursework at MU; however, working alongside experienced teachers as they made key curricular decisions provided a clear window into the more political aspects of curriculum development. For example, Hannah's work in science with Eva provided a clear space where she saw that her cooperating teacher made a conscious choice to put aside the district curriculum and instead develop her own. Hannah spoke about how they had decided that the district curriculum on plants would not fully engage their students and instead they decided to use the standards to develop their own. This kind of curricular work most often happened in science or social studies. Yet, Tuan also did this work in adapting and developing his work in literacy and math for his students.

Learning to be clear about your reasoning and to defend your decisions in the classroom is essential in today's political climate. More and more the work of teaching is deskilled by top down decisions, which claim that the latest "scientifically proven" curriculum will solve the problems facing school districts. By working alongside expert teachers who stayed abreast of district policies and politics, who made clear and informed decisions about their teaching, and who at times subverted the system, these novice teachers experienced possibilities for teaching against the grain (Cochran-Smith, 1991) in an era of control.

Structuring for freedom and community. Experience in classrooms allowed for novice teachers to see the flow of entire blocks of time for students. Importantly, many of the democratic classrooms in this study had a clear structure to the procedures and transitions relevant to creating a classroom flow. This kind of structure then allowed for the elementary students in these classrooms to experience freedom of choice and participation. Eva, Tuan, Julia, and Grace's classrooms all had clear structures that allowed students to work independently and

develop a sense of autonomy. Eva's classroom during math buzzed with students moving from one possible activity to the next. There was a clear structure—certain choices had to be met by the end of the week and on varying days students met with the teachers in problem-solving groups—yet within that structure children could decide what they “felt” like doing on that particular day.

During her work with Grace, Lisa and Grace developed a different type of math instruction for their students. After discussing the issues the class faced, Grace thought that introducing centers for math might improve student engagement and achievement. With Lisa's help, they began developing this new math routine that allowed students to choose from four different centers that addressed topics in the current math unit. Over time, Lisa, who had “hated” (Interview, December 8, 2011) her math methods coursework, took over teaching math every day and loved how this structure gave students freedom to move at their own pace and develop different skills throughout the week.

Notably, structure was less pronounced in Maya's classroom and it was this lack of structure that often created difficult teaching and learning scenarios for Diego. Diego revealed in the lack of structure, even saying at one point, “See this is how my class would be – a little chaotic” (Field Notes, December 9, 2011). As noted in Chapter 5, while the unstructured environment allowed for Maya to enact her “intuitional teaching,” it did not provide a framework for Diego to allow greater freedom for his students. In this classroom, freedom was enacted more through individual choices in the content of an assignment, i.e., choosing how to write up a response to a simulation experience, than through student choice in an everyday manner. Diego supported this lack of choice through his decision to teach social studies and math as a whole class activity. He backed up his choice to do this with social studies, citing a desire for students

to hear the multiple perspectives represented in a whole class scenario. While his reasoning was sound, there were still multiple instances when a lack of structure inhibited the freedom of his students in the classroom.

Novice Teacher Identity Development

Recounting a story of a teacher I observed, I told a colleague, “She put names on the board? Can you believe it? Publically shaming kids.” My colleague sheepishly replied, “I totally did that my first two years of teaching.” I reflected and added, “Yeah, I had this whole green-good, yellow-warning, red-danger, system of cards to try to control kids’ behavior. I guess during your first year, you are just trying to find control and authority any way you can.” We both laughed about our reminiscing, but as I thought about this interaction, I also thought more intensely about the feat I had set for these novice teachers in my study – not only were they seeking to develop a teaching identity, but I also expected them to incorporate aspects of a democratic teaching identity.

Developing an identity as a teacher is a complicated dance between the personal and the professional. Adding the layer of developing a democratic teaching identity troubles the sense of establishing oneself as an authority in a classroom. A democratic teaching identity necessarily rests on sharing the classroom space – physical, academic, and social – with your students; however, when you are a novice teacher, you are often still figuring out how you want to establish that space and position yourself within it. It also requires a clear personal reason that connects you to the identity of teacher. Lisa, who was preparing to take a long-term subbing position in the spring semester after she completed student teaching reflected on her growth and said,

You really need to know what you want, and you need to know, to teach you need to know who you are as a person and be confident in yourself as a person, that has been huge for me. I just know who I am, what I want, what I'm doing (Interview, December 8, 2011).

Lisa's confidence and clear purpose in teaching differentiates her from the struggles that Hannah faced in Chapter 7. Lisa's sense of personal coherence to a teaching identity was clear and made her assumption of democratic practices as part of that identity more purposeful. Hannah still searched for her teaching identity and aligned with the practices in Eva's democratic classroom; however, her enactment of those practices was less coherent and consistent. Yet, as Eva noted, it may still come for her.

Is it possible to develop a democratic teaching identity as a novice teacher? In so much as it is possible to develop any type of coherent and tangible teaching identity, it is possible for novice teachers to develop toward a democratic teaching identity. The democratic practices that these novice teachers enacted in their practicum and student teaching experiences impressed on them a particular idea of the role of students in an elementary classroom. The key question is whether the community of elementary students recognized the novice teacher as a member of their classroom community who adhered to their norms. Thus, developing mutually respectful relationships with students was key to developing a democratic teaching identity. Yet, these were elementary students, and in these cases these were young elementary students; therefore, it was important to develop not only mutually respectful relationships with individuals, but also a relationship to the entire community, where the teacher acted as a guardian of the community.

The other aspect of a democratic teaching identity that many of these novice teachers developed through both their experience in these classrooms and through their work at MU was

an ideological leaning toward the virtues and principles of a democracy, and in particular a critical stance toward democracy. In other words, they saw their roles as teachers in preparing young citizens, who critiqued and sought to alleviate injustices in their democracy. Each of these novice teachers had pedagogical and ideological inclinations that made participating in and aligning with their cooperating teacher a more seamless transition. In particular, these novice teachers clearly attended to issues of equity and justice. These novice teachers carried ideas about the role of education in creating greater and more equitable opportunities for their elementary students. Importantly, they also recognized that our democracy is flawed and often times unjust. They grappled with how to prepare young students not only for an ideal democracy, but also for the real democracy that they faced.

[Democratic Teacher] Education and Democratizing Teacher Education

Teacher education programs are at a critical and decisive moment. Universities have a significant and important contribution to make to the preparation of teachers; however, they must reimagine how they collaborate with schools and communities in service of teacher learning and democratic education. In line with my own view of public schooling, I have argued that a primary purpose of public schools and consequently of teacher education programs is in service of a more robust democracy. That democracy is dependent on our abilities to interact and work with a wide variety of persons in a variety of contexts. Teacher education programs must take this seriously and recognize the distributed expertise necessary to prepare teachers.

Consequently, universities must examine how best to collaborate with schools and communities to draw-upon that expertise so that their teachers are ready to work in and for a diverse democracy. They must *democratize* teacher education. In this study, the expertise of the cooperating teachers was not only in democratic practices, but also in teacher education. I argue

that universities must pay real attention to the teacher education work done by cooperating teachers and consider the lessons learned from their democratic parallel practices with novice teachers.

How can teacher education programs put practice at the center of preparation? This requires a move away from traditional university structures that have emphasized learning theory and methods at the university, and then putting those ideas into practice during field placements in schools and communities. Schools and communities become primary sites for practice and learning, and not just for application of university knowledge. Zeichner (2010) critiques situating theoretical or academic knowledge at the university, and then leaving schools as mere sites for the practice of that knowledge; instead, he argues school and communities are sites of knowledge in and of themselves. Yet, completely removing the university and reifying practice in schools and communities is not the solution either; rather, collaboration among universities, schools, and communities is required to fully prepare teachers.

In this study, each classroom provided multiple spaces where the teacher education program could have connected with and bolstered novice teacher's learning – both their learning-to-teach process and their understanding of democratic education. Outside of Hannah's experience as part of the PDS program at South Shore elementary, most of the novice teachers in this study centralized their experience in the classroom as the primary place for their learning. They made some connections to their coursework; however, after spending months in these classrooms I saw many more opportunities. While the critique goes that too often knowledge is learned at the university and then put into practice in the schools, in this study, I found that novice teachers recognized the knowledge and theories of practice embedded in schools and classrooms and then made varied attempts at mediating that knowledge of practice with

theoretical knowledge at the university. These novice teachers developed their conceptualization of democratic education by immersion in that education. The cooperating teachers mediated the novice teachers learning about the practices in their classroom, and to the extent possible also helped the novice teachers find coherence between the practices they already learned and the practices in their classrooms. In the cases of Dania and Claire, who were still taking methods courses during their practicum experience, they served as the primary mediator between theories/knowledge presented in methods courses and theories/knowledge presented in the school. While some might point to the university supervisors as the best possible link, as noted in Chapter 4, the issues of time, access, and pay constrict opportunities for university supervisors, most of whom in these cases were also graduate students, to develop the kind of contextualized knowledge necessary to support novice teachers.

Limitations

As with any study, research, and a single researcher can only tell us so much. There are clear limitations to the findings unveiled by this study. In the following section, I detail the limitations of this study.

One researcher, many cases. First, while the purpose of this multicase study was instrumental, that is its purpose was to “go beyond the case” (Stake, 2006, p. 8), I also wanted to do justice to the individual cases. In my analysis and final reporting, I chose to focus on the phenomena of teacher learning and development, which shaped the quintain. Doing so required that I first look at each particular case, but also constantly compare across the cases. The final writing of this multicase study was a challenge and presented a dilemma. I chose to not write up full descriptions of each individual case and then prepare a cross-case analysis for two reasons. First, logistically, as a single researcher, factors of time and resources were limiting. Second, I

made an analytic choice to focus on the phenomena, which as I looked within and across cases, presented the three major areas of data analysis presented in Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of this dissertation.

Second, Stake notes that both case studies and multicase studies “are usually studies of particularization more than generalization” (p. 8). He argues that the power of case study lies in its attention to the particularities of a situation or specific context rather than attending to more general, global findings. The findings of this research are limited to this particular context. It is not clear what democratic classrooms and teacher preparation may look like in a very different context, say a large urban city or a small rural town. Each would carry particularities that would bring another set of interesting, but perhaps very different understandings to the phenomena of teacher learning in a democratic classroom. What this study illustrates is the particular ways that the phenomena of teacher learning played out in this context, what factors influenced that phenomena and how these novice teachers experienced that phenomena.

Focusing on one learning context. While looking only at learning in the field placement highlighted the role of clinical practice, nevertheless it left my knowledge and understanding of learning in other contexts, i.e. the university methods courses and field placement seminars, as only what participants reported. Their reporting was key to how they understood their learning and development; however, it also left an incomplete picture. Methods courses and field placement seminars may have held a wealth of information and possibilities for connecting to the field placement that the novice teachers either did not ascertain or saw as impractical. By focusing my observations solely on the field placement, I may have missed important learning opportunities at the university.

Further, focusing solely on the school field placement may have necessarily privileged it in my analysis. With a wealth of data from the field placement, and only minimal reporting on the university program, I learned far more about the role of the field experience in novice teacher learning than I did about the role of the university classroom. Yet, as I have argued, teacher education programs, particularly those situated at universities, must rethink how they collaborate with and co-create knowledge with teachers in field experiences. What this study offers is a close look at a particular type of field experience and considers its effects on novice teacher learning and development.

Multiple contexts - past, present, and future. While I focused on the field experience as a primary learning context, I also recognized and attempted to explore the multiple contexts that influenced these novice teacher's learning-to-teach process and identity development. These included the personal contexts for each novice teacher, including their past and future projected contexts, the personal (and relational) context of the cooperating teachers, the school contexts, the school of education context, and finally the larger socio-political contexts. This final context, while always of interest, came up organically in a number of my interviews. While I talked to most of the novice teachers about the particular socio-political context of protests in the state that heavily involved teachers and the teachers' union, nevertheless I did not overtly address this issue with many of the cooperating teachers. For some, it came up in our conversations, for others we never specifically touched upon it. Looking back, this would have been an incredibly interesting avenue to pursue, although perhaps a different study altogether.

Grappling with all of these contexts made attributing influence to one specific context difficult. I sought to overcome this with tools like the interview card sort, and specific follow-up

questions about to where/whom they attributed a practice; however, even for the teachers it was often difficult to pinpoint a single influence or critical incident. The historical contexts that influenced these teachers seem innumerable. Further, the future contexts into which these novice teachers were projecting their ideas – will this work in a larger urban area? Will this work with a more diverse / less diverse group of students? Will I be able to do this on my own? – all affected their confidence in their practice and development of a coherent teaching identity. More research in teacher education that specifically addresses issues of context and its influence on learning and identity development are necessary to continue developing this knowledge base.

Logistics of research in schools. There are very real limitations to conducting research in school settings, many of which you can never plan for. Just like there is never a “normal” day in an elementary classroom, so too there was never a normal day of researching in elementary classrooms. For example, Diego prepared a social studies lesson on stereotypes for one Tuesday afternoon; however, an aide’s tangent turned into an entire lecture on the importance of Martin Luther King. Having been in the classroom, I knew this aide struggled to gain the respect of students and Diego reflected afterwards that he felt he had to just let her go with it. On the morning that I scheduled videotaping Hannah’s lesson, she needed to call a class meeting to deal with issues of respect. As an intimate meeting where students needed to feel that they could express themselves, I knew I had to reschedule the videotaping. Issues and events arise at any moment when you are working in a classroom and my role as the researcher was to be flexible. This also became an issue in scheduling debrief interviews with the novice teachers. While ideally these debrief interviews would have happened that day or the next, nevertheless there were times when we had to wait a week due to the novice teachers’ busy schedules. How time lags and interruptions affected the study remain unclear, yet are still important to note.

Importantly, data collection for two cases – Diego and Lisa – took place in a consolidated period of six weeks. I was unable to gain access to their classrooms until late November, so I did not see the same learning trajectory for these two novice teachers. Through interviews that asked for them and their cooperating teachers to reflect on past months, I attempted to gain some perspective on the process that each went through. What I did gain from that consolidated period was a deep understanding of the flow and workings of those two classrooms. I shuffled between the two classrooms nearly every day for two-and-a-half weeks in December of 2011 and a few more times during January of 2012.

Dania's case also had logistical constraints since I faced a conflict of interest as her methods instructor at MU. A fellow graduate student, Torrey Kulow, collected the initial interview and videotaped a lesson. I was able to see another lesson that Dania had videotaped for her practicum seminar. My knowledge of Dania's participation in the study and subsequent interviews with Dania took place after the semester ended and I had submitted her grades. Still, as I analyzed her case it was difficult to filter out my personal knowledge. Dania knew that I knew the students in her practicum site because of her relationship with Diego. She would relate anecdotes and ask for specific advice about lessons she was planning for the class, knowing that I was familiar her context. While this presented a dilemma as I tried to focus only on what the data presented, it also afforded me a level of understanding about Dania's perspective.

My perspective and my dual role. As noted in Chapter 3, I had worked with many of these teachers and novice teachers in other contexts. Julia's classroom was the inspiration for the study; I was extremely familiar with her practice and the school. I had been in both Maya and Grace's classrooms at different points in my work at MU to see their model of instruction. I

had served on a panel with Tuan at one point in the past. Additionally, I had taught five of the six novice teachers in my methods course.

My role as a teacher educator and a researcher complicated my analysis. I have often argued that the joyous and difficult part of being a teacher educator is that you are a teacher at heart – you believe that everyone has the potential to succeed. The challenge for me as a researcher was seeing my students struggle and being thoughtful about what that struggle meant for this study. While I could never present a wholly unbiased view, I worked diligently to let the data speak and themes emerge. Still, my perspective necessarily noticed some themes while failing to see other themes.

The limits of democracy. Finally I want to consider a rather large limitation when talking about issues of democracy, and in particular democratizing relationships among institutions. There are limits to how democratic these relationships can be and both the university and the school must recognize those. The university remains the final certifying institution as well as a school that evaluates students via grades. These two factors affect the power differential in any relationship with collaborators. Writing about the role of deliberation in democracy, Sanders (1997) notes that a deliberation can never be truly equal due to these institutionalized power differentials. While a deliberation is a particular decision-making exercise, it closely parallels how I have established the case for democratizing teacher education. So in this case, the university would always have the upper hand in decision-making instances due to its ultimate degree granting and certifying capabilities. And yet, to allow this as a roadblock to innovation is to cower from the difficult work of collaboration. It is more fruitful to address these timely and important problems in teacher education by reimagining these relationships and restructuring whose knowledge counts and to what ends. In the end, teacher

education programs must focus firstly on expanding learning opportunities for novice teachers so they are not lost in the pitfall.

Implications

Despite these limitations, there are real implications for the findings of this study. First, there are implications for democratic teacher education and its possibilities in teacher education programs. Second, there are more general implications for teacher education in terms of clinical placements and learning in and from practice. Both of these areas are influential on novice teacher's learning and development and deserve consideration.

Implications for democratic teacher education. There is great potential for teacher education programs to reflect on instantiations of democratic education and how classroom practices in field experiences align with program missions and core values. As a program, MU promoted the ideals of democratic education, yet the program did not always reflect on those ideals or enact them in its own classrooms. Not providing the experiences of democratic education in the teacher education classroom, or democratic [teacher education], limited the experiences novice teachers had from which they could better understand democratic education. As noted, the democratic education that these novice teachers experienced was what they then enacted in their practice. Teacher education has an immense opportunity to consider how to create more robust experiences for novice teachers to live democracy in their own learning settings.

Teacher education also has the potential to more effectively mediate learning opportunities for novice teachers by more effectively collaborating with schools and communities. Democratizing teacher education requires recognition of expertise in these areas, democratic education and teacher education, outside of the university. This recognition is the

first step in rethinking how best to collaborate with schools and communities so that novice teachers benefit from the distributed expertise of university faculty, P-12 schools, and communities. I emphasize the idea of collaboration here more than partnership – while they both bring together groups for a common purpose, the inclusion of *labor* in collaboration emphasizes the shared work that is necessary in preparation of teachers. Yet, that collaboration must be fully democratic so that the work is mutually agreed upon and mutually beneficial. Collaboration among academic knowledge, usually situated at the university in the form of theory, and practitioner and contextual knowledge, usually situated in schools and communities, creates the possibility for dynamic learning spaces for novice teachers. These dynamic spaces afford novice teachers more contextualized tools and experiences to take into their profession (Zeichner, 2010; Anagnostopoulos, Smith & Basmadjian, 2007).

There are also implications to further consider what kind of citizens (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004) we are preparing our teachers to be, and what kind of citizen we are encouraging our novice teachers to prepare in elementary classrooms. The particular instantiations of democratic education in elementary classrooms matter for what kind of citizen we aim to prepare, which ultimately is shaped by our view of democracy. In this study, I have advocated a view of deliberative and participatory democracy that is dependent on citizens who are informed, critical, and both willing and able to participate. I have also advocated for a democracy that foregrounds consideration for the common good. This is a very different vision of democracy than the one currently being proffered by many of the new “educational reformers,” e.g., Michelle Rhee and Wendy Kopp, who focus on individual attainment and ideas of a mythical meritocracy that schools and teachers can achieve despite deeply rooted social/structural issues of inequality and poverty. Thus, when teacher education programs consider their role in

democracy and their role in preparing novice teachers as democratic educators, they must also consider what kind of citizen and what kind of democracy they are supporting.

Implications for clinical placements and novice teacher learning. Again, there is great potential for the role of a teacher education program in structuring and mediating learning in and from practice in schools. In this study, there were missed mediational opportunities for the teacher education program that could have supported novice teacher learning and development. Having clarity and coherence through a teacher education program, including in the selection of and supervision of placements in field experiences, would create more robust learning opportunities for novice teachers. While a program can author a mission statement that supports the ideals of democratic education, unless there is explicit attention to how each programmatic component supports these ideals there will remain multiple spaces for missed mediation opportunities. Similar to the ways that the elementary teachers in this study had to structure their classrooms in order to promote students' autonomy and freedom, teacher education must be more thoughtful and deliberate in the learning opportunities structured for novices. I want to be clear that I am not advocating for a prescriptive model of "teacher training," which would diminish the craft and artistry involved in teaching at any level. Yet, I am advocating that programs have the potential to greatly influence novice teacher learning, as evidenced in Hannah's case, if they provide a more coherent vision that lives out in its practices and structures.

Additionally, teacher education must reflect on its own instantiations of responsive teaching at the university level. Lowenstein (2009) argues that teacher educators need to better know the assets of their students, particularly when it comes to multicultural issues and knowledge, rather than assume a deficit model of them because they are mostly White, female,

and middle-class. I would add that we need to know the civic and political assets of our novice teachers (see also, Gatti & Payne, 2011).

Critics argue that teacher education programs at universities are failing our nation's schools, and those programs face assaults from both the left and the right of the political spectrum. Calls for greater accountability measures through qualifications and testing, tracing student test scores back to teacher education programs, and a focus on alternative teacher education programs such as Teacher for America are pressuring university-based teacher education programs to redefine their roles. I believe that to face those critics, teacher education programs must first turn a critical eye inward. The move to center teacher education around practice so that novice teachers learn from doing and examining pedagogy first-hand is one possible step toward innovation. Yet, that innovation depends on what and how practices are accessed and utilized; more time spent in practice does not necessarily improve teacher education. Teacher education programs must also commit to creating mutually respectful and beneficial relationships with schools and teachers in the vein of democratizing teacher education that I have described here.

Further Lines of Inquiry

As a multicasestudy, I focused on a particular context that illuminated possibilities for learning in democratic classrooms. More studies that look across different types of contexts, including different types of teacher education program contexts, as well as different elementary school contexts, will contribute to a greater understanding of how experiencing a vision of democracy as a novice teacher impacts enactment of democratic education. In this study I looked at two strands within the MU elementary education program – the traditional model and the PDS model. A more in depth look at how PDS models, which vary substantially, may

support democratizing teacher education by illuminating how relationships among institutions can be more democratic, how those relationships are negotiated and upheld as democratic, and then how then those relationships support novice teacher learning.

There also needs to be more in depth study of different instantiations of democratic education and what each affords to novice teachers' learning-to-teach process and identity development. This study afforded a look across five different classrooms in four different schools; however, larger samples may afford a greater breadth of understanding how teachers and schools are working to overcome the democratic divide. A focus on what tools different contexts offer the novice teachers' to support their conceptions of democratic education would also highlight areas that university teacher education programs could focus on to mediate novice teacher learning about democratic education.

In this study, I focused on democratic education as a constellation of practices that can occur across the time and content of the elementary classroom's day. My conception was not limited to the realm of social studies, but rather took an integrated approach to understanding how elementary classrooms create communities for young student-citizens. The classroom as a community created a space for democratic practices, rather than rooting democratic practices in a particular subject area, such as social studies. Social studies education faces the challenge of being squeezed out of a curriculum, where if the subject is not tested, it is not taught. For this reason, many social studies educators argue that taking an integrated approach will only further dilute social studies in the elementary curriculum; however, I argue that when thinking about democratic education, we have to think across the multiple opportunities in elementary classrooms to promote student discussion, deliberation, problem-solving, and social action. More in depth studies of democratic classrooms and schools that detail how democratic practices

are embedded throughout curricula are needed as models of the possibilities of democratic education in elementary classrooms. Further, naming practices as contributing to democratic education holds different weight in the conception of the purpose of public schooling. In other words, students can gather together to solve a class problem because it is the easiest way, or they can do this because the teacher believes that students need to develop these skills and dispositions to be participatory and active citizens.

This study focused on the novice teachers' learning and the contributing role of the cooperating teachers and the community to that learning and development; however, the voices of the elementary students were not included in this study. I have argued that the community of elementary students socially legitimate or marginalize novice teachers as actual teachers in the classroom; including their thoughts on the novice teacher would add to our understanding of the difficulties in establishing a teaching identity, and particularly a democratic teaching identity, as a novice teacher.

Compelled by the move to situate novice teacher learning in and from practice, I sought to understand how a particular context afforded or constrained learning and development opportunities. Further studies need to broaden the scope to ask how universities can situate learning in and from practice through democratizing teacher education, as well as through developing a coherent vision of [democratic teacher] education. The challenge for teacher education is to find a way to sustain these programs rather than develop an innovation via a single grant that ends once the money has run out.

This study focused on novice teacher learning at one particular moment in time in their learning-to-teach process. Studies that follow novice teachers into their first years of teaching after they have experienced immersion in a democratic field experience are needed.

Additionally, longitudinal studies that consider the elementary age students and the effects of democratic education on their conceptions of citizenship and their role in the community are necessary so that we can better understand these foundational aspects of democratic education.

Finally, in this study I touched upon the influence of the socio-political context. In an era when public school closings, union protests, and testing are consistently on the front page of the news, teacher education must pay particular attention to this larger influential context. Teacher education must ask how this affects novice teachers' conceptions of teaching and public schools. Further, teacher education must ask itself what kind of citizen-teachers its programs seek to prepare. Teachers who understand the political nature of education and their potential role in shaping education reform are more critical than ever in an era of neoliberal assaults on public education.

At the top of my social studies methods syllabus I place the following two quotes side by side:

“The issue is not
how to stand above the choice.
Rather, it is in what values
I must ultimately choose.”
--Michael Apple (2004), *Ideology and
Curriculum*

“...and I am waiting
for the American Eagle
to really spread its wings
and straighten up and fly right”
--Lawrence Ferlinghetti, *I Am Waiting* (1958)

These two quotes represent the challenges we face in teacher education, democratic teacher education, and democratic education writ large. Novice teachers must ultimately decide what practices, and consequently what values, they choose in creating elementary classroom learning

communities. Further, the ideal of democracy in the United States has yet to live up to its ideal version, a version that takes the common good seriously.

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