

1995

## Reflection, Rhetoric or Reality : A Case Study in Preservice Teacher Education

Denis McLaughlin  
*Australian Catholic University,*

Pam Hanifin  
*Australian Catholic University,*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte>



Part of the [Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

McLaughlin, D., & Hanifin, P. (1995). Reflection, Rhetoric or Reality : A Case Study in Preservice Teacher Education. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 20(1).  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.1995v20n1.5>

This Journal Article is posted at Research Online.  
<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol20/iss1/5>

## REFLECTION, RHETORIC OR REALITY: A CASE STUDY IN PRESERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

Denis McLaughlin & Pam Hanifin,  
Australian Catholic University,

### THE PROBLEM OF REFLECTION

Over the last decade, the term 'reflection', has re-emerged as a central focus surrounding the issue of providing a practical, technical oriented teacher preparation program, as opposed to a liberal, socially oriented, type education (Richardson, 1990).

Whilst there has been much support for the image of the teacher as a reflective professional (Schon, 1983), there appears to be no definitive description as to what constitutes reflective practice, or scholarly consensus as to the ways and means by which teacher educators might encourage its development. It has been described as "difficult" (Wildman & Niles, 1987), "fuzzy" (Tom, 1987), "problematic" (Ross, 1989), "knotty" (Bullough, 1989) and a "slippery and chaotic" (Smyth, 1989) concept to pin down.

Just as the concept of teaching can and indeed does mean different things to different people in different situations, so too does the concept of reflection and the image of the teacher as a reflective professional (Vaughan, 1990:210).

The definition of reflection proposed by Grimmer (1988) is often cited in the literature. Grimmer, (1988:6) describes reflection "as a specialised form of thinking that is stimulated by surprises or puzzles". From a more philosophical orientation, Butler (1992) defines reflection as "the open active communication channel between the social context and the inner self ... Reflection is an evaluative dialogue that enriches the self and enhances professional practice" (Butler, 1992:223). This definition appears to be broader and more flexible in scope, in as much as it highlights hermeneutic understanding. Houston and Cliff (1990:212) provide a further approach in questioning a conception of teaching that links reflective activity only with problem solving "without an unequal emphasis on understanding the totality and the unity inherent in the teaching context". These distinct definitions of reflection provide examples that as a concept, reflection does indeed have "definitions embedded in particular ideologies" (Smith & Hatton, 1992:4). Consequently, when faced with the problem of defining and conceptualising reflection for one's own understanding and practice, it

becomes necessary to determine the underlying beliefs and assumptions that may distinguish the various approaches. Grimmer et al., (1990:20-36), provide a useful summary drawn from selected studies that used the concept of reflection as the primary theoretical construct. This summary outlines epistemological commitments for three perspectives on reflection (Figure 1). It outlines the 'what', the 'how' and the 'why' of the three distinct perspectives of reflection.

Is (knowledge derived from research or practice) seen as an external source of mediating action in so much that it *directs* teachers in their practice; or is such knowledge regarded as *informing* practice as teachers deliberate among competing alternatives for action; or does such knowledge constitute one source of information that teachers use metaphorically to *apprehend* practice as they reconstruct their classroom experiences? (Grimmett et al., 1990:22)

The debate about reflection is academic if there is not a clear focus for its promotion irrespective of the nuances of its meaning. In the context of this study reflective experiences aim to promote a more critical stance in the beginning student teachers (Smyth, 1989).

The fundamental premise (of the unit)... is the incipient development of a critical perspective over and above competence in teaching strategies..... This practice is achieved through deliberate holistic experiential and extended practice in teaching a series of chosen lessons which have been identified as important to the young student teacher (McLaughlin, 1993).

In order to make practical this expectation, the obvious questions to explore were 'what is meant by a critical perspective; how might one discern its development; what might its impact be on professional learning and teaching practice?' To do so meant that the link between "critical" and "reflective" needed to be established. As learning is an act of knowing promoted by other influences other than problematic situations (Freire, 1973), then the definition of reflection as "an evaluative dialogue that enriches the self and enhances professional practice" (Butler, 1992)

Figure 1  
Summary of Epistemological Commitments For Three Perspectives on Reflection in Teacher Education

	Perspectives on Reflections	Source Knowledge for Reflection	Mode of Reflective Knowledge	Purpose of Reflection
1.	Reflection as instrumental mediation of action	External authority (mediated through action)	Technical	Directs
2.	Reflection as deliberating among competing (mediated) view of teaching	External authority through context)	Deliberative	Informs
3.	Reflection as reconstructing experience	Context (mediated through colleague/self)	Dialectical	Apprehends and transforms

appears to offer a more appropriate understanding of the concept for the context of this study. Consequently, reflection from a critical perspective represents the view that knowledge is tentative and emergent as past understandings are constructed and reconstructed (evaluative dialogue) in order to generate new meaning to the experience and used to transform practice (Freire, 1985). The promotion of a critical perspective endeavours to make explicit learning about teaching, learning about the self as teacher and as learner, learning about the content matter and learning about the social milieu in which such teaching experiences occurred. From this reflective perspective, the student's attention is focused inwardly at his/her own practice and outwardly at the social context in which practice is experienced (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1991:8).

In contemporary Australia, teacher educators have been invited to engage in "new ways of seeing", with a "new spirit", to infuse education - not simply to reinvent "new packages of programs" (Beare, 1989:9). The challenge for students, teachers and teacher educators is to reflectively identify and recognise their own beliefs about learning and effective teaching and to clarify, develop, reframe, refine and ultimately to act on new ways of seeing (Beare, 1989), within the specific context of their own practice.

### The deliberate promotion of reflection

Having acknowledged the current need and importance of reflection in a teacher education program, the more difficult challenge is its deliberate promotion. Consequently, this paper docu-

ments planned attempts to implement and evaluate a reflective approach taken by Second Year Bachelor of Teaching students, at the Australian Catholic University, Queensland Division (ACU).

The development of reflection is "an active, effortful enterprise that arises when certain motivational forces are allowed to operate" (Wildman, Niles, Magliaro & McLaughlin, 1990:139). In recognising the need to incorporate the promotion of reflection into a more general mode of professional learning (Marland, 1992; Wildman et al., 1990), it was acknowledged that reflection does not just occur.

Preservice teacher education programs should address the developmental needs of the students (Kagan, 1990:161). Hence the need existed to explore, rather than to assume the students' development of a critical perspective. In order to be more informed of the professional needs of the students, the following question invited exploration.

*Are these teacher education students able to demonstrate evidence of the development of a reflective approach in early field experiences? (Research Question 1)*

In accepting that systematic reflection plays an integral role in professional growth (Wildman et al., 1990:161), it was important to monitor the students' learning, in order to facilitate further development. Identification of the types of reflection demonstrated by the students held the potential to provide information, which could further guide the practice. It is generally accept-

ed that any educative process needs to start from where the individual is at, teacher educators do not always honour this consideration (Weinstein, 1990:162). This becomes especially apparent, when defining the focus for reflection and in the consideration of what counts as evidence of reflection. Thus, it was essential to recognise that the students were encountering their first experiences as 'teachers'. In accepting that "reflection is not form and its substance changes" (Houston and Clift, 1990:219), it needed to be recognised that the type of reflection would be influenced by the context specificity of the situation, in which it was generated and nurtured.

The identification of types of reflection evident in the students' reflections was not for the purpose of "grading" students, but rather to gain insight to each student's professional growth as well as to their developmental needs.

Thus, it was necessary to move beyond identification of types of reflection. What became helpful to know, was *what was the content of the students' reflections*, since this provided context and identified issues perceived as significant by the student teachers (*Research Question 2*).

Whilst encouraging critical thought in the students, it was important to evaluate the effectiveness of conditions and strategies, which had been deliberately planned to facilitate its development. If reflection is "a way of thinking how to improve" (Wilson & Honson, 1992:6), then the purpose of evaluation for this study needed to reflect a similar philosophy. "It was not to prove, but to improve" (Stufflebeam, 1983). Hence the following warranted investigation.

*Which strategies do students identify as effective in stimulating reflection? (Question 3)*

Consequently, this study offered the potential to reduce the dichotomy that may often exist between the formal theory of course work and the reality of practice. This was due to the possibility that the study sought to identify perceived contradictions, between the planned professional practices and the students' experiences, beliefs, ideals and practices.... "once contradictions are apparent, teachers (and teacher educators) have two choices; they can become shrewdly clear of their need to be reactionary, or they can accept a critical position to engage in action to transform reality" (Freire 1985:89).

The Professional Studies 1 unit is an integral part of the 2nd year of the Bachelor of Teaching Program. The unit aims to promote the students'

development of reflective teaching and is structured to integrate theory and practice through the merging of teaching and learning experiences with field experiences.

The students (N=16) belonging to one tutorial group spent half a day in the field each week for a period of twelve weeks. Throughout these twelve half day sessions, as well as a four week extended practicum, the students remained at the same school, with the same class and the same supervisory teacher. The students were also assigned the same university tutor for both field visits and course work tutorials. There was verbal and written communication between the university, the tutor, the supervisory teachers, the principals of the schools and the students in terms of expectations, responsibilities, procedures and available support systems. Of these 16 students, four volunteered to assume the role as "co-researchers", all of whom were undertaking their first field experience at the same school.

In order to forge links between teaching, education studies and curriculum studies and to minimise the apparent dichotomy between formal theoretical knowledge and experiential knowledge, the unit was structured to provide a continuity between what had been taught in course work and what was expected in the field. There were no "phantom" lessons as the unit is intentionally derived from curriculum units within the Bachelor of Teaching program. Figure 2 overviews the unit outline.

This was the students' first field experience and as such, the Professional Studies 1 unit was designed and structured to assist each student to more effectively make the transition from self as tertiary student and self as learner to self as teacher and learner (Nias, 1987). Students were encouraged to assume a critical perspective through engagement in self assessment, critical discussions with their supervising teacher, tutor and peers, reflective post lesson journal writing and the writing of a reflective progress report. The intent to construct a working view of the development of reflection appeared plausible, in view of current scholarly emphasis on the need to incorporate such research into a more general mode of professional learning (Marland, 1992; Wildman et al., 1990). Thus, through collaborative inquiry, the purpose was to explore changes in student thinking.

**Figure 2**  
**Order of Elements in the Weekly Practicum Cycle**

WEEK	DATE	TUESDAY UNIVERSITY	THURSDAY TEACHING
1	Feb 8-12	Hr 1 Organisation of Program Hr 2 Organisation of Practicum Hr 3 Classroom Management Prospective Elementary Teacher's Beliefs about Teaching	Tutorial: Beliefs about Teaching Lecture 1: Ch 1 Introduction to Lesson Planning Lecture 2: Introduction to the new Handwriting . A lesson
2	Feb 15-19	Tutorial: Discuss the components of the Handwriting Lesson Lecture: Handwriting - Print Script Tutorial: Video - Handwriting Practice	Tutorial 1: Barry and King Ch 1 Lecture: Management/Observation Techniques Tutorial: Barry and King Ch 2 Acts 2.1 - 2.4
3	Feb 22-26	Tutorial: Story Sharing Lecture: Story Sharing Tutorial: Lesson Assistance	. Visit School . Observe Class . Meet Teacher . Give Program, Communicate, Observe, Reflect
4	Mar 1-5	Tutorial: Barry and King Ch 6 Lecture: Handwriting (Cursive) Tutorial: Lesson Assistance	. Handwriting Test. Visit School . Observe Class . Observe Story Sharing Lesson . Share Lesson Idea
5	Mar 8-12	Tutorial: Social Studies Lecture: Social Studies Tutorial: Lesson Assistance	. Teach Lesson on Story Sharing . Observe Handwriting Lesson . Share Lesson Idea
6	Mar 15-19	Tutorial: Mathematics Lecture: Mathematics Number Facts  Tutorial: Lesson Assistance	. Teach Handwriting Lesson . Observe Social Studies Lesson . Peer Observation . Share Lesson Idea
7	Mar 22-26	Tutorial: Religious Education Lecture: Religious Education Tutorial: Lesson Assistance . Discuss Quality of Lesson Reflections	. Teach Social Studies Lesson . Observe Mathematics Lesson . Share Lesson Idea
8	Mar 29-Apr 2	Tutorial: Science Lecture: Science Tutorial: Lesson Assistance	. Teach Mathematics Lesson . Observe Religious Education Lesson . Peer Observation . Share Lesson Idea
9	Apr 19-23	Tutorial: Physical Education Lecture: Physical Education Tutorial: Lesson Assistance	. Teach Religious Education Lesson . Observe Science Lesson . Share Lesson Idea
10	Apr 19-23	Tutorial: Drama Lecture: Drama Tutorial: Lesson Assistance	. Teach Science Lesson . Observe Physical Education Lesson . Peer Observation . Share Lesson Idea
11	Apr 26-30	Tutorial: Barry and King P 294-317 Lecture: Management Tutorial: Lesson Assistance	. Teach Lesson in Physical Education . Observe Drama Lesson . Share Lesson Idea
12	May 3-7	Tutorial: Blackboard Writing Exam Lecture: Preparation for Practicum Tutorial: Individual Consultation with Tutor	. Teach Drama . Peer Observation

**Research Methodology**

A case study approach (Wilson,1979) was considered to be the most appropriate form of methodology to adopt, as it uses direct investigative methods to explore the students' reality. This methodology also provided the scope and flexibility needed to respect the contextual specificity of constructed meanings evident in the students' reflective activity (Cohen and Manion, 1980). Throughout the duration of the case study, all questions were researched concurrently. This became necessary in order to gain a holistic view (Stake 1983) to the students' professional development of a reflective approach toward practice.

One of the objectives of the study was to determine if indeed the students were able to demonstrate evidence of reflective activity. This information, derived from the students' written reflections was to provide a reference point in the analysis and discussion of Questions 2 & 3.

All sixteen students, including the four co-researchers provided written data in the form of eight post lesson reflections and a progress report. The written data were coded under five categories using criteria for the *Recognition of Evidence for Different Types of Reflective Writing* (Smith and Hatton, 1992).

Significant episodes/phenomena identified by the students as problematic were then coded using the *Development Framework For Professional Preservice Programs: Levels of Reflection Related to Concerns* (Hatton, 1992, in Smith and Hatton, 1993). This was done to assist in the categorisation of themes which manifested themselves.

**Findings**

The results of the analysis of the written data indicated that all sixteen students were able to demonstrate some evidence of the development

of a reflective approach toward practice in the field. Whilst the findings indicated that most of the instances of coded units could be identified as the non-reflective descriptive writing, the most common type of reflection revealed in the coded units could be deemed as descriptive.

The findings presented in **Figure 3** indicate that the students were able to demonstrate evidence of reflective writing, albeit at the lowest descriptive level, with a few isolated instances of dialogic reflection based on one perspective.

Moreover, analysis of the data of progress reports using Smith and Hatton's (1992) criteria revealed several instances of embedded coded units. This indicated movement in the type of writing that was categorised as non-descriptive reflective writing to personalistic/descriptive reflective writing and even to a few instances of dialogic/deliberative and then back to descriptive writing.

Further analysis of data resulted in the construction of five case studies (figure 4). The cases are presented with the premise that teaching, learning and reflection need to be understood in relation to the intentions of the student teacher and the situational complexity of the specific context (Bartlett, 1989). These are documented elsewhere (Hanifin, 1993).

**Research Question 1.**

The students' reflective writing appeared to be descriptive and at the level of technical rationality. What emerged from the data was the embedded nature of the reflective writing. Further analysis of the data indicated movement from one level of reflection to another (van Manen, 1977). Isolated instances of dialogic reflection were not sustained. This type of reflective writing appeared to emerge when students reflected on events which presented major difficulties in a

specific instance and which demanded a decision to be made in the immediate situation (Schon,1983).

When comparing written and spoken reflections of the co-researchers which dealt with similar same problematic issues, it became apparent that the written forms did not always represent the depth and complexity of thinking that underscored the reflections. Conformity to the academic written genre appeared to inhibit the students' reflections. The co-researchers demonstrated an increased complexity of thought, as they explored issues in discussions. The specific issues raised were often of a technical nature.

The co-researchers demonstrated growth in confidence and the ability to address these 'technical' problems through a more reflective decision making process. Moreover they endeavoured to not only focus on the 'how', but became more inclined to merge these with questions surrounding the 'why' and the 'who.'

**Research Question 2.**

Issues of a technical nature dominated the content of students' reflections. Concerns for classroom control and management were the most salient. Early reflections could be described as a retelling of the lesson, with focus to survival concerns. Reflective content appeared to depend on the situational elements and interactions to which the student attended. These early reflections tended to be inwardly focused as the students struggled with their initial teacher role identity.

Pre-existing images of teaching were rarely made explicit in the students' reflections. However, these appeared to underscore the problems that were identified. The students feelings and emotions were often detailed descriptively. This became particularly apparent when the reality of the field situation conflicted with personally held

views. Problems of practice appeared to be framed around the feelings and emotions that this conflict evoked.

As students became familiar with their classroom context, the content of later reflections had increased focus on more specific issues and phenomena. This facilitated the making of more meaningful links between the students' current situations and their previous classroom experiences. The students' reflections moved from survival to task and at times impact concerns. There was a consistent focus toward self (Nias, 1987). In isolated instances, this inward turn to self, facilitated an outward turn which indicated concern for children's learning.

Whilst similar issues of a technical nature comprised the content of the reflections, it became apparent that each was context specific. The students varied in the way problems manifested themselves, how these were described in the reflection and how action was implemented. There was much below the surface of the reflective content that the students themselves needed to explore. When discussing professional issues and phenomena with the supervising teachers, peers and tutor, the students demonstrated a willingness and the ability to assume increased responsibility for their professional growth. This finding confirms that reflection is "inherently a social affair" (Bullough, 1993:393).

**Research Question 3.**

The students tended to evaluate the strategies which had been deliberately planned to stimulate reflection as effective.

A major finding to this question was that most students either expressed the desire for, or recognised the need to have more time made available for discussions of a professional nature, with their supervising teacher, tutor and peers. The

**Figure 3**  
Types of Reflection (Smith and Hatton, 1992)  
Coded Units of Sixteen Students

WRITTEN CRITERIA	LESSON 1 - 4	REFLECTIONS 4 - 8	PROGRESS REPORT
Descriptive Writing	24 20	20 16	23
Descriptive Reflection	9 8	15 17	21
Dialogic Reflection	0 0	2 1	4
Critical Reflection	0 0	0 0	0

**Figure 4** Sequence of the Presentation of Cases

Case One	Joel	Assigned Field Placement	Yr 6
Case Two	Heather	Assigned Field Placement	Yr 3
Case Three	Skye	Assigned Field Placement	Yr 7
Case Four	Caitlin	Assigned Field Placement	Yr 1
Case Five	Tutorial Group:	Sixteen Students	



lack of time that was available in the pre-practicum for such discussion was identified by students as a major constraint to the reflective process.

The students deemed peer observations to be useful, but indicated that these were often rushed and tended to be only superficially discussed. Many students indicated that they experienced difficulty in knowing how to critically observe the teaching of their peers. This conclusion is not surprising as the transcripts of early interview sessions revealed that the co-researchers needed much guidance and support to critically discuss the peer observations.

The co-researchers found the collaborative interview sessions to be useful and remained committed to attendance through-out the twelve weeks of the pre-practicum. The four co-researchers were most supportive of the sessions and noted that they experienced feelings of support and a bonding with each other and the researcher. They were able to recognise that it took time to feel comfortable enough to critically discuss their own teaching and that of their peers. The co-researchers were emphatic in their contention that whilst attendance at the sessions took 'time', they benefited from the discussions and interactions.

The students indicated that they preferred to write their lesson reflections in their own non-academic personal style. They identified the writing of these reflections as useful. Many indicated that they enjoyed reading their past reflections. Some students found the writing of the progress report to be a useful synthesis of their learning experiences. Others found that conforming to the academic genre stifled reflective thinking.

The students were able to clearly identify strategies which were effective in meeting their professional needs. Whilst they identified similar strategies as effective, each individual appeared to utilise and respond to these in their own way.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study was based on the premise that reflection on practice plays an integral role in a teacher's professional life. Hence its development warrants promotion in preservice teacher education programs.

The study concluded that preservice teacher education students are able to reflect on many dimensions of practice in early field experiences. The

'issues' which formed the content of the students' reflections could be described as technical in nature. It became evident that the students demonstrated a willingness to reflect on their practice and to strive toward self improvement.

It appears that reflection on issues of a technical nature which have focus inward to the students' own self, hold the potential to drive and direct focus outward to the children's learning. The research revealed that the students' reflections indicated a definite focus inward to self, as they responded to the contextual demands of the field (Nias, 1987).

A significant finding of the research was the powerful role that feelings and emotions played in the initial framing of problematic situations encountered. The attendance to feelings which were generated through confrontation with problematic issues that were "technical" in nature, suggest that young students' concerns/issues do need to be addressed and resolved in early field experiences. Teacher educators perhaps need to recognise the very real concern that these present for the students, at this point in their professional lives.

Feelings were also expressed about positive issues. Some students were able to use the reflective process to identify 'strengths' in their own teaching and in that of their peers. This appeared to build confidence, provide increased self awareness. The focus to the positive also provided motivation to further develop inherent capabilities. This suggests that reflection needs to be more broadly defined than as a means of solving problems. The research revealed that it has a worthwhile function as a means of building on strengths and thus facilitating a positive self image. The reflective activity of the students appeared to take the form of self dialogue (Butler, 1992), mediating the expression of feelings with that of the context. This strong focus to feelings in student reflection is worthy of further study.

The research found that reflective discussion on these problems assisted the students to adapt and reconstruct their own self image. In doing so, they began to consider the 'why's and 'how's and 'what if's of issues found to be problematic. The written forms did not always represent the depth and complexity of thought, which underscored the reflections. This suggests that perhaps educators need to consider that the written mode may not always provide an accurate picture of the students' ability to 'reflect'. The use of spoken and written language appeared to encourage the students' disposition to engage in reflective activity.

Rather than the issue of what it is that the students are reflecting on, it is the way that the problem is addressed through reflective decision making that appears to be important to the students' professional development. Limited time for professional discussion and dialogue appeared to be a major constraint to the students' engagement in reflective activity. The research concluded that the students are wanting 'time' for collaboration and discussion. The engagement with others who may challenge the student teacher to consider alternatives appeared to play an important role in the promotion of the development of student reflection. This suggests that perhaps more time for collaborative discussion needs to be built into field based programs.

It needs to be noted that the value of this research, lay not only in its findings and generalisations, but in the actual research process. Hence, there is a strong recommendation for the engagement in collaborative research, within the context of one's own situation of practice.

## REFERENCES

- BEARE, H. (1989). *The Curriculum for the 1990s: A New Package or a New Spirit?* The Australian College of Education. Occasional Paper 12.
- BULLOUGH, R. Jr. (1989). Teacher Education and Teacher Reflectivity, *Journal of Teacher Education*. 40 (2).
- BULLOUGH, R. Jr. (1993). Case Records as Personal Teaching Texts For Study in Preservice Teacher Education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 9. (4).
- BUTLER, J. (1992). Teacher Professional Development: An Australian Case Study. *Journal of Education for Teaching*. 18 (3).
- COHEN, L. & MANION, L. (1980). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Croom Helm.
- FREIRE, P. (1973). *Education for Critical Consciousness*. New York: Seabury Press.
- FREIRE, P. (1985). Reading the World and Reading the Word. *Language Arts*. 62 (1).
- GRIMMETT, P. (1988). The Nature of Reflection and Schon's Conception in Perspective. In P. Grimmett, G. Erickson. (Eds.). *Reflection in Teacher Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- GRIMMETT, P., MacKINNON, A., ERICKSON, G. & RIECKEN, T. (1990). Reflective Practice in

Teacher Education: In R. Clift, W. Houston & M. Pugach (Eds.). *Encouraging Reflective Practice in Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

HANIFIN, P. (1993). *The Promotion of Reflection in Preservice Teacher Education*, unpublished MED thesis, Brisbane: Australian Catholic University.

HATTON, N. (1992). In D. Smith & N. Hatton: *A Developmental Framework for Professional Preservice Programs*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education. Deakin University: Australia.

HOUSTON, R. & CLIFT R. (1990). The Potential for Research Contributions to Reflective Practice: In R. Clift, W. Houston & M. Pugach (Eds.). *Encouraging Reflective Practice in Education*. New York: Teacher's College Press.

KAGAN, D. (1990). Ways of Evaluating Teacher Cognition: Inferences Concerning the Goldilocks Principle. *Review of Educational Research*. 60 (3).

McLAUGHLIN, D. (1993). *Professional Studies 1: Introduction To Teaching*. Brisbane: Australian Catholic University, Queensland Division.

NIAS, N. (1987). *Teaching and the Self*. In M. Holly & C. McLaughlin (Eds.). London: The Falmer Press.

PUGACH, M. (1990). *Self-Study: The Genesis of Reflection in Novice Teachers*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the AERA, Boston, April.

PUGACH, M. & JOHNSON, L. (1990). Developing Reflective Practice Through Structured Dialogue: In R. Clift, W. Houston & M. Pugach (Ed.). *Encouraging Reflective Practice In Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

ROSS, D. (1989). Five Steps In Developing A Reflective Approach. *Journal Of Teacher Education*. 40 (2).

SCHON, D. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. New York: Basic Books.

SMITH, D. & HATTON, N. (1992). *Towards Reflection in Teacher Education*. What Counts as Evidence? Paper Presented at the Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education. Deakin University: Australia.

SMITH, D. & HATTON, N. (1993). *Critical Reflection on Reflection in Action*. Paper Presented at the 5th Practicum Conference, Macquarie University, Sydney.

SMYTH, J. (1989). Developing and Sustaining Critical Reflection in Teacher Education. *Journal Of Teacher Education*. 40 (2).

STAKE, R. (1983). Case Study Method in Social Inquiry. *Educational Researcher*. 7.

STUFFLEBEAM, D. (1983). Evaluating The Curriculum. *Primary Viewpoint*. Brisbane: Queensland Department of Education. 2 (6).

TOM, A. (1987). Replacing Pedagogical Knowledge with Pedagogical Questions. In J. Smyth (Ed.). *Educating Teachers: Changing the Nature of Pedagogical Knowledge*. London: The Falmer Press.

VAN MANEN, M. (1977). Linking ways of Knowing with Ways of Being Practical. *Curriculum Inquiry*. 6.

VAUGHAN, J. (1990). Foreword: In R. Clift, W. Houston & M. Pugach (Eds.). *Encouraging Reflective Practice in Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

WILDMAN, T. & NILES, J. (1987). Reflective Teachers: Tensions Between Abstractions and Realities. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 3 (1).

WILDMAN, T., NILES, J., MAGLIARO, S. & McLAUGHLIN, R. (1990) Promoting Reflective Practice Among Beginning and Experienced Teachers: In R. Clift, W. Houston & M. Pugach (Eds.). *Encouraging Reflective Practice in Education*. New York: Teachers' College Press.

WILSON, S. (1979). Explorations of the Usefulness of Case Study Evaluations. *Evaluation Quarterly*. 3 (3).

ZEICHNER, K. & TABACHNICK, B. (1991). Reflections on Reflective Teaching. In B. Tabachnick & K. Zeichner. *Issues and Practices in Inquiry Oriented Teacher Education*. London: The Falmer Press.

## RESTRUCTURING TEACHER EDUCATION

Shirley Grundy  
Murdoch University

Gordon Stanley  
Education Policy and Coordination Bureau

As part of the process of developing a four year Bachelor of Education in September 1994, Edith Cowan University conducted a public seminar entitled "Restructuring Teacher Education". The invited speakers were Dr Shirley Grundy (Murdoch University), Professor Bob Meyenn (Charles Sturt University), Sandra Milligan (Ashenden Milligan Pty Ltd), Professor Paige Porter (University of Western Australia), Greg Robson (Education Department of Western Australia) and Professor Gordon Stanley (Education Policy and coordination Bureau).

Two of the presentations are published here to inform others engaged in the tasks of restructuring teacher education.

### SHIRLEY GRUNDY

Before addressing the issue of the restructuring of teacher education and providing some thoughts about what might be appropriate restructuring practices to consider, I want to go back a step and engage in some reconceptualization. Actually what I am wanting to investigate here is not entirely a reconceptualization, but rather a reiteration, a reclaiming and a reassertion of some ways of thinking and talking about teaching, teacher professionalism and teacher education, that have been around for a long time, but somehow have always remained marginalised.

In essence, then, what I want to do is to reclaim and reassert what I see to be a muted discourse within the field of teacher education, and to explore what the implications might be for teacher education programs and practices if such a discourse was to be privileged.

The initial premise of my argument, then, is that **teaching is a learning profession**. That is, teaching is not a technical act that is learnt at one time in one site and then applied in a variety of sites for ever more (maybe with increased efficiency and effectiveness, and with the need for periodic re-honing and/or updating of skills).

To assert that teaching is a learning profession is, however, to assert more than that concepts of 'life-long' or 'career-long' learning should be

applied to teachers along with everyone else in our society. Teachers need to be career-long learners because of the special nature of the profession of teaching, but it is beyond the scope of this discussion to explore this notion in any depth. In making my assertion, I am standing upon much work in the areas of 'teacher as researcher', 'action research', 'action learning', 'diagnostic teaching' etc.

It is important, however, that we also extend this notion of the teacher as learner, beyond the individualised conception from which it is frequently understood. That is, even where a 'learning' model of teaching is accepted, the teacher is usually interpreted as an individual learner, engaged in self-reflection upon (largely) solitary practice.

We need to go further than this. **Being a teacher is not only being a learner, but being a member of a 'learning community'**.

Again we need to ask 'what does it mean to be a member of a learning community?' and 'where is this learning community situated?'

The recent emphasis upon 'retraining', 'upskilling', 'competency standards' etc. has signalled an enormous boost in the professional development and training industry. Teachers, along with members of practically every other industry in Australia, have been sent off on a massive paper chase; going off to this course and that in the quest for the 'good oil' that will ensure improved practice.

The idea that teachers are members of a 'learning community', however, must mean more than that they are members of a profession which is engaged in structuring 'learning' (or training) activities for its members.

The principal learning community to which teachers must be seen and must see themselves as belonging is **the school**.

For a long time now, dating back to the development of insights arising out of the 'new sociology of knowledge', we have understood that the school is not simply the site of education, it is a