

2007

## Repositioning Research As Writing to Improve Student Learning

Sara Booth  
*University of Tasmania*

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### Recommended Citation

Booth, S. (2007). Repositioning Research As Writing to Improve Student Learning. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 32(4).  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2007v32n4.1>

This Journal Article is posted at Research Online.  
<http://ro.ecu.edu.au/ajte/vol32/iss4/1>

## REPOSITIONING RESEARCH AS WRITING TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

Sara Booth  
University of Tasmania

*Abstract: In recent years teacher education has used the process and practices of research to improve pre-service teachers' pedagogical practices. Pre-service teachers, however, generally prefer to understand the practices of teaching rather than research. This paper considers the writing process rather than the research process as central to the construction of pre-service teachers' subjectivities. It explores the responses of twenty-six Tasmanian Secondary English postgraduate pre-service teachers in 2004 and 2005, drawing on data from research writing projects, surveys and interviews. These responses indicated that when writing is positioned central to the research process it can change pre-service teachers' construction of research and in turn improve pedagogical practice and most importantly student learning.*

### Introduction

Teacher education has in recent years focused on the process and practices of research as a way of improving and transforming pedagogical practice. The research methodologies of action research and teacher research have played a critical role in providing teachers and pre-service teachers with ways to examine and critically reflect on practice (Cochran-Smith, 1994; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1992). The process and practices of research have been used very effectively in teacher education for pre-service teachers to develop understanding, self awareness and insight into their developing practice (Gray & Campbell-Evans, 2002). The process is about pre-service teachers making sense of their experience (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). One issue facing teacher educators who use the research process in their programs is that many pre-service teachers question the role of research in informing classroom practice (Gray & Campbell-Evans, 2002). These pre-service teachers prefer to learn how to teach rather than learn how to do research.

When writing is positioned central in the research process it provides a way for pre-service teachers to reconstruct and redesign their pedagogical practice. Research writing has historically been viewed through the social practice of academic writing as powerfully masculine (Saunders et al., 1999). This nineteenth century notion of the author as 'the writer-writes-alone' has now been replaced with co-productive and collaborative partnerships which shifts the focus from sole author to a discursive community (Lee, 1998). Similarly research texts and textual practices surrounding research construct writing as rational and objective (Threadgold, 1993). However, research writing can be considered as a personal production of knowledge (Lee, 1997; Lee & Boud, 2003). When pre-service teachers view their writing as text, it becomes "an object which we could ask questions of and interact with critically" (Kamler, 2001, pp.59-60).

The aim of this paper is to follow the experiences of twenty-six Tasmanian Secondary English postgraduate pre-service teachers to explore their efforts of understanding and transforming their practice through research writing and continuous revision of their practice as part of their university assessment. Data was collected in 2004/2005 and included pre-service teachers' research

writing projects, interviews and surveys which were collected in the final year of their two year postgraduate teaching degree.

Relatively little attention has been given to making writing central to the work of knowledge production in research rather than treating it as marginal and ancillary (Lee, 1998). By reconceptualising research as writing (Lee, 1995/1996, 1998) it becomes a design in subjectivity for pre-service teachers. This work has mainly been theorised in academic literacy and doctoral research education (Lee, 1995/1996, 1998; Lee & Boud, 2003). Furthermore when research literacies are developed in conjunction with research writing it can make pre-service teachers' self-knowledge problematic by assisting them to 'read against the grain' (Cochran-Smith, 1991, 2004; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Davies, 1992; De Lauretis, 1987; Taylor, 1995). Research literacies, such as Rowan's (2001) transformational analysis questions which are underpinned by critical literacy and poststructuralist theory, can be used on pre-service teachers' subjectivities as a site of intervention (Lee & Boud, 2003; Threadgold, 1993).

## Literature Review

Writing can be defined as "a learned social discursive practice of a gendered subject, not as a natural and personal response to the self" (Gilbert, 1989, p.262). Writing has traditionally been recognised as a way of recording personal, lived experience. Gilbert's (1989) definition, however, demonstrates that writing can be viewed not as a natural and personal response to the self but as a discursive practice which consists of a number of discourses, which can be both constraining and contradictory. Subjectivity is thus seen to be constituted through discourse (Green, 2005). As Finders (1999) asserts, "...we are unable to see an individual's story as constructed and constrained by the dominant discourses. The individual's narrative is not a random individual history, but constituted by social and collective histories". (p. 259)

In the case of pre-service teachers it is recognised that their subjectivities are constrained through their teacher education courses by a number of competing and contradictory discourses such as theory/practice, idealism/realism (McWilliam, 1994). Pre-service teachers in their effort to understand and develop their pedagogical practice face contradictions not only from the discourses in their teacher education courses but also contradictions in their own developing subjectivities. Subjectivity can be defined as

the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world... subjectivity is...precarious, contradictory and in the process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak. (Kamler, 1987, pp. 32-33)

The dominant yet competing discourses in teacher education not only work towards constituting and reconstituting pre-service teachers' subjectivities but also constrain them from "exploration of appropriate and necessary connections across isolated areas of endeavour in the teacher education project" (McWilliam, 1994, p. 151). These discourses need to be disrupted so that pre-service teachers can reconstruct their own understandings of what it is to teach and learn (McWilliam, 1993, 1994, 1995). Writing through genre is considered to be deeply constitutive of subjectivity (Kamler, 2001, p.54). Genre has been traditionally used by teacher education and educational research as the main focus of repositioning the writer (Kamler, 2001). Genre can be defined as "a culturally specific set of social processes that recur in particular social situations; and as a text type characterised by a distinctive set of stages and linguistic features" (Kamler, 2001, p.92).

Historically, genre has been positioned in teacher education as static and unchanging. Narrative, biography, autobiography and life history are valued genres in teacher education which encourage the personal and responsive. Whilst an understanding of genre does provide specific knowledge about the linguistic features and structures of texts, genre as a social practice is open to contestation

and reconstruction. Genre as a social construct predisposes “one ... to partial understanding, not only of genre itself, but of one’s actions in relation to it” (Threadgold, 1993, p.6). Anstey and Bull (2004) contend:

Genres are seldom pure; they change and evolve in response to the purpose, social context, audience, mode and the technology used to produce them. Often parts of several genres might be found in one. (p.192)

The research text as a genre, similar to other genres, is a social construct, mainly situated in the genre of report writing; however, it can carry elements of other genres such as narrative and argument. Cope and Kalantzis (1993, p.15) maintain that reports as a genre, “... appear to be factual and voiceless. Far from it, reports carry powerful agendas. Their neutrality is not just a part of their descriptive function. It is also a convenient pretence”. This quotation points to the social construction of research and its associated writing practices as neutral and impersonal. The research process, however, can be seen as a particular process of writing as well as a social practice (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000; Lee, 1998).

Research writing as a genre, therefore, can become a design for both effective text production and for the production of subjectivity (Kalantzis & Cope, 2000; Kress, 1996a; New London Group, 1996). Genre can be used as both an interpretative and representational resource for pre-service teachers to examine their initial assumptions of teaching and learning. Genre as an interpretative resource is about providing resources for dealing with the everyday world and for taking ourselves up within the cultural storylines available to us (Davies, 1994; Gilbert, 1993). As a representational resource genre can make visible “the transformation by the subject of her or his subjectivity” (Kress, 1996b, p.22).

Genres are used in teacher education to initiate reflection in pre-service teachers. The concept of reflection and reflective practice has been an integral part of teacher education practices for many years. Reflection, as a capacity to be instilled in pre-service teachers, can be seen as a cognitive, reflective activity in which pre-service teachers’ reflect-on-action (Schon, 1983, 1987). Reflection-on-action places emphasis on after-the-event evaluation (Schon, 1983, 1987). Pre-service teachers, after viewing a lesson reflect back on particular events, analysing where difficulties arose, considering how these might be addressed in future situations. Reflection is mainly about observation of others’ actions, whether these are students, colleague teachers or other school practices.

Reflection as a practice, however, is difficult to initiate in pre-service teachers. One way of encouraging pre-service teachers to reflect on their practice is by incorporating ‘research literacies’ rather than reflection into their research writing. These practices are associated with ‘deconstruction’ and ‘post-critical literacy’ (Lee, 2000, p.131). The importance of research literacies for pre-service teachers is that these literacies can support them in the analysis of their pedagogical practices as texts (Lather, 1992). Positioning research literacies as significant in changing pre-service teachers’ pedagogical practices is about repositioning the way reflection is applied in teacher education programs. By using critical literacy strategies, such as Rowan’s (2001) transformational analysis questions on pre-service teachers’ writing, these can assist in deconstructing the inherent ideologies and biases present in pre-service teachers’ writing. These questions are normally applied to texts to understand the author’s intentions:

Select a text

Identify the status of the text/genre

Reflect on how the genre traditionally deals with difference.

Analyse the text by working through the following questions:

Who/What is included?

Who/What is excluded?

What are various individuals associated with? Who gets to do what?

What is represented as natural and normal?

Who/What is valued? How is this communicated?

How does the text reproduce or challenge mythical norms? (Rowan, 2001, p.47)

Furthermore, theory drawn from academic literacy (Lee, 1997) and doctoral research education (Green, 2005; Lee, 1998; Lee & Boud, 2003; Malfroy, 2005) work towards presenting a model of co-production in research writing. The construction of a discursive community by viewing research as writing (Lee, 1995/1996, 1998) creates a site of negotiation. Research writing, therefore, can be seen as a collaborative and co-productive activity rather than as a solitary, individualised activity. By viewing writing as a collaborative and co-productive activity this can change the way lecturers, colleague teachers and pre-service teachers traditionally interact. Co-production can be defined as “the degree of overlap between two sets of participants-regular producers and consumers” (Lee, 1997, p.72). By adopting the practices of a discursive community this can change the traditional hierarchical relationships in teacher education. As McWilliam (1994, p.151) argues, “In postmodern times teacher educators are challenged to adopt a new dialogue... and a new relationship with students...”

The role of writing groups can play an influential role in reconstructing pre-service teachers' subjectivities. Lee and Boud (2003) discuss the use of a writing group initiative to support academics in their research activities. Writing groups in the academic environment are seen as crucial in the making and remaking of academic subjectivities (Lee & Boud, 2003). In such an atmosphere, the emotional work of writing is made visible. Externalising issues and dilemmas in relation to writing and research is considered critical in changing a negative emotion such as fear into desire (Lee & Boud, 2003).

Another significant benefit of making writing central to the research process is the process of revision or rewriting. Rewriting is seen as a way of reinventing pedagogy (McWilliam & Palmer, 1996). Lee (1998) argues that the practices of revision and re-writing transform subjectivity. Revision is viewed as “not only a change in text but as achieving a shift in the writer's subjectivity” (Kamler, 2001, p.60). Revision changes the process of writing of ‘getting it right’ to one of performance. The process of rewriting as one of performance creates space for new possibilities and change (Saunders et al., 1999). Revision is thus seen as critical in assisting pre-service teachers to redesign their subjectivities and in the process their pedagogical practices. Furthermore, when there is a collaborative revision process occurring in a discursive community, this interrupts the idea of writing as a solitary and individualised activity. Collaborative rewriting practices position the role of peers as critical readers by providing feedback which has the effect of repositioning subjectivity (Saunders et al., 1999). Rewriting is thus viewed as a process of negotiation rather than as a skill or correction (Lee, 1998). The result of this group collaboration is that the writing becomes a form of collective learning. Difference in experience within the group is seen as a productive element of this learning (Saunders et al., 1999, p. 711).

Revision can have the effect of repositioning pre-service teachers in the teacher education context. Similar to doctoral students, pre-service teachers through the process of collaborative rewriting can construct “a positionality and place for themselves in the university” (Lee, 1998, p. 129). This repositioning has the effect of repositioning them as particular knowers and writers (Lee, 1998). Cochran-Smith and Lytle argue that, “When they change their relationships to knowledge, they may also realign their relationships to the brokers of knowledge and power in schools and universities” (1993, p. 52).

The continual redrafting and rewriting practices involves pre-service teachers in reading their pedagogical practices ‘against the grain’ (Cochran-Smith, 1991, 2004; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Davies, 1992; De Lauretis, 1987; Taylor, 1995). As Davies argues,

Any reading against the grain implies a detailed knowledge of the grain itself. And who we have taken ourselves to be in the past and in much of the present are known precisely in terms of that which we are trying to undo. (1992, p.74)

Cochran-Smith (2004) refers to teacher education programs which offer pre-service teachers ways of reading their practices against the grain as collaborative resonance. When pre-service teachers collaboratively construct their knowledge with others such as other pre-service teachers, colleague teachers and lecturers they are “bringing people who have insider perspectives on teaching that have developed outside schools themselves” (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p.28). Many teacher education programs however, Cochran-Smith (2004, p.25) argues, are positioned in a critical resonance discourse which is concerned with “what students learn about teaching and schooling at the university and what they already know and continue to learn about them in schools”. This particular discourse does not provide pre-service teachers with the analytical skills to “critique standard procedures [or] the resources to function as reforming teachers throughout their teaching careers” (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p.27).

## Methodology

The first stage of the research involved giving two qualitative surveys to pre-service teachers in the three English/literacy curriculum courses in the Bachelor of Teaching program at the University of Tasmania before and after their second practicum in their first year of their two year degree. The Secondary English/literacy class comprised of six male and twenty female pre-service teachers. These pre-service teachers came to the Bachelor of Teaching program with a previous degree, many of whom hold an Arts degree. Thirteen of the twenty-six pre-service teachers were in their late twenties or older and had worked in other professions, such as journalism, English as a Second Language teachers, social work and hospital administration. These pre-service teachers, however, demonstrated the most resistance to the university and school discourses in the initial analysis of data using constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000; Charmaz & Mitchell, 2002) and discourse analysis (Kress, 1985). Resistance, however, was considered a revealing function (Giroux, 1983). Rather than treating resistance as a negative outcome it was seen as positive and productive. As Davies argues, “The question becomes one of how resistance can be best organised and staged through collective shifts in discourses, and through positioning oneself differently in relation to those discourses” (1994, p.34).

To assist these pre-service teachers in understanding and shaping their practice the final year Secondary English course outline was developed around the construction of writing groups and research writing projects. These research writing projects were based on the notion of research as writing (Lee, 1995/1996, 1998). As Secondary English teachers it was considered important that they learnt about the writing process as well as the research process. The main themes which were explored in the writing projects was inclusive teaching strategies, critical writing strategies, explicit teaching of genre, assessment and the teaching of cultural heritage texts.

The research writing projects were deliberately structured over five stages which corresponded with the pre-service teachers’ time at university and on two practicum experiences. Each stage correlated to the processes of the standard research process:

1. Define the writing issue or concern in your English/literacy practice
2. Investigate the issue or challenge in school and literature
3. Redefine and refine the research problem using the transformational analysis questions (Rowan, 2001)
4. Demonstrate how this issue will be addressed in your planning and assessment tools
5. Implement the planning and assessment tools that will address your issue. Analyse and discuss the implementation of these tools using the transformational analysis questions (Rowan, 2001).

These focus questions required both individual and collaborative writing from the pre-service teachers. The third and fourth stages were collaboratively produced by each of the writing groups.

These writing groups would collaboratively write and report their findings to the university class as well as involve their colleague teachers in their year long investigation.

The research writing projects also incorporated research literacies (Rowan, 2001) to displace and problematise the pre-service teachers' initial assumptions of teaching and learning. These questions were used so that pre-service teachers could understand how and why their pedagogies as texts were constructed in particular ways (Lather, 1992). The four and fifth stages of the research writing projects also sought to position pre-service teachers' work as useable for future practice (Kamler & Comber, 2003/2004).

The second stage of the research involved the implementation of these research writing projects over two semesters of the final year of the Bachelor of Teaching program. The Secondary English/literacy pre-service teachers had to complete, as a requirement of their English/literacy unit, a research writing project on a particular issue that they wanted to know more about in their pedagogical practice. A critical feature of the research writing projects was the feedback given by the lecturer of the course and the researcher after each stage of writing. Feedback was treated as response data, that is, "We need other people to make us think" (Lather, 1996, p. 534). Feedback related to the specifics of the writing process and to the methods of how the pre-service teachers could address these issues in their own classrooms. The construction of the research writing projects also involved the continual rewriting of each of the stages. This rewriting involved the process of rewriting the self (Kress, 1996b). Also significant in the research was the value of developing professional, collaborative relationships in education (Darling-Hammond, 1997). The writing groups involved the researcher, the lecturer and the pre-service teachers. These writing groups made visible the 'emotional dimensions of development and change' in the pre-service teachers' subjectivities (Lee & Boud, 2003, p.189).

## Findings

The first stage of the research identified ten categories in the data from a close analysis of the research journal, six interviews and two qualitative surveys using constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000; Charmaz & Mitchell, 2002). The categories which were identified were constructing a theoretical position; drawing theory and practice together; instilling a reflective capacity; developing a learning environment; promoting participation; positioning of pre-service teachers; understanding knowledge; valuing texts and textual practices; adhering to assessment practices and recognising inclusive practice. These categories were further collapsed through discourse analysis into four discourses: resistance, accommodation, pragmatism and limitations.

The discourse of resistance is concerned with pre-service teachers' resistance towards the Secondary English course, in addition to their realisation that students can be resistant towards their own teaching. Being positioned as a teacher with student resistance is a new experience for them. Resistance is also towards developing a theoretical position towards their pedagogical practice. The second discourse is the discourse of accommodation. This discourse is about resistance, however, it is revealed in its opposite category: accommodation and conformism (Giroux, 1983). Many of the pre-service teachers conform to the practices of the Secondary English course, in particular when developing a theoretical position. One pre-service teacher comments, "I think that I have a bit of each perspective but like to assimilate them together, taking the good bits from each and I like to implement them in the classroom with a critical literacy style". This discourse is the most dominant discourse in pre-service teachers' responses. It constrains pre-service teachers from addressing their personal inadequacies and limitations in their pedagogical practice.

The third discourse to be identified is the discourse of pragmatism which is about making the pragmatics of teaching central to pre-service teachers' subjectivities. Grounded in their student perspective these beginning teachers view teachers' work as performance (Britzman, 1986). This

discourse is about pre-service teachers' desire for practical methods of teaching. The last discourse found in the data is the discourse of limitations. This discourse is about the realisation for pre-service teachers that there is more to being a teacher than just performance. They realise their limitations in the pragmatics of teaching. As one pre-service teacher writes, "I realised that I need to know more about teaching spelling, grammar and punctuation. I also need to know more about teaching texts such as Shakespeare as well as knowing how to deal with students with reading difficulties".

The overarching discourse which these four discourses of resistance, accommodation, limitations and pragmatism all occupy is a needs discourse (McWilliam, 1993). Pre-service teachers within these discourses are constrained and struggle to gain ownership of their pedagogical practices. When the powerful discourses of teacher education are not displaced, these pre-service teachers stay positioned and fixed within these powerful, restrictive discourses which position them mainly as students rather than as teachers. The pre-service teachers are also positioned within a critical dissonance discourse (Cochran-Smith, 2004). This discourse does not provide pre-service teachers with teaching 'against the grain' (Cochran-Smith, 2004). When pre-service teachers are not provided with the analytical skills to critique their practice, they do not function as reforming teachers (Cochran-Smith, 2004).

The second stage of the research involved the implementation and analysis of the research writing projects. The coding of the data over the five stages of the project highlighted a number of significant features. Stage one demonstrated how many of the pre-service teachers were enthusiastic about owning their research inquiries and they sought to develop practical strategies for their teaching. The second stage, which coincides with their third practicum, demonstrates how they are pedagogically captured (Van Manen, 1990, 1997) and some abandon their projects. By stage three most have redefined their issues and reconstruct their projects to fit their shift in focus. This stage is deemed difficult as they need to make refinements to their pedagogical practices. Stage four demonstrates their collaborative efforts to construct assessment tools for their last practicum experience. The last stage is about assembling, reassembling and reconstructing their pedagogical practices.

The research writing projects have the effect of producing three dominant discourses-the discourse of ownership, the discourse of disenfranchisement and the discourse of situated methodology. The discourse of ownership replaces the first year discourses of accommodation and limitations. The research writing projects encourage pre-service teachers to take ownership of their pedagogical practices. The decentering of the transformative intellectual (Lather, 1992) occurs at this stage when pre-service teachers shift the focus of power away from the colleague teachers and lecturer and position themselves as experts. A number of pre-service teachers implemented new strategies and school practices such as the creation and sale of a CD-ROM with students to improve student facilities; the creation of a whole-school spelling program for at-risk students; the implementation of creative writing workshops in a school and the implementation of an inclusive classroom plan.

The discourse of ownership also disrupts generational hierarchies (Kamler & Comber, 2003/2004) where the younger inexperienced teacher is in a position of powerlessness and the colleague teacher assumes the position of expert. Decentering these generational hierarchies (Kamler & Comber, 2003/2004) allows for a collaborative mentoring relationship to develop between some of the pre-service teachers and their colleague teachers rather than a purely supervisory relationship. This is evidenced by one of the colleague teacher's comments, "She is amazing, coming up with new ideas and implementing creative writing strategies. I have never seen the students write so well and [name of pre-service teacher] has fostered this in the students".

The next discourse to emerge from the analysis of the research writing projects is the discourse of disenfranchisement. One of the central features of this discourse is that pre-service teachers become disenfranchised or dislocated from their practice in the final stages of the research

writing projects when the research literacies (Rowan, 2001) require pre-service teachers to deconstruct their pedagogical practices. The practice of being a 'good student' is an 'effect of institutional authority' (Amirault, 1995) and consequently blinds some of the pre-service teachers from double visioning their practice and taking ownership of their practice. Their reading of their research writing projects is dependent on the way that they are positioned in relation to it (Kress, 1985). The pre-service teachers in this discourse tend to attribute blame towards other groups rather than examining their own practice. One pre-service teacher wrote, "Secondary school students find it difficult to understand the importance or relevance of cultural heritage texts".

The last discourse to emerge from the research writing projects is the discourse of situated methodology. Lather (1997, p.235) defines situated methodology as "It has something to do with a deconstruction of the theory/practice binary that gestures toward a third space of both/and and neither/nor of theory and practice, a space I presently call a theory of situated methodology". The research writing projects act as an interpretative and representational resource for pre-service teachers to understand their developing pedagogies. One pre-service teacher writes, "This assignment has shown me that teaching is constantly about redefinition". A critical feature of the discourse of situated methodology is that some pre-service teachers read their own practices against the grain (De Lauretis, 1987; Davies, 1992; Cochran-Smith, 1991, 2004; Cochran & Lytle, 1993; Taylor, 1995). Reading against the grain is about making self knowledge problematic. One pre-service teacher writes:

Completing this stage of the assignment made me think very deeply about what my job as an English teacher will be and how I might do that job successfully. I had to revisit my English/literacy work from 2003 and re-evaluate my pedagogical position.

The data also confirms that collaborative resonance occurs with many of the Secondary English/literacy pre-service teachers (Cochran-Smith, 2004). School students, colleague teachers, the researcher and the lecturer and in turn pre-service teachers collaboratively learn from each other and in the process gain a sense of ownership over their teaching and learning. The relationships and partnerships which develop through the research writing projects result in a shift in subjectivity and agency as well as desire. As Lee argues, "Collegiate relations are associated with subjectivity and desire" (1997, p.78). The study found that collaborative and co-productive partnerships rather than supervision worked towards shifting the position of power in this particular teacher education site. The research writing projects had the effect of repositioning supervision. The collaborative practices represented a reposturing of authority rather than a refusal of authority (McWilliam 1997). Green maintains that both parties, the supervisor and the supervisee, should be in a reciprocal relationship where, "Each looks at the other, and sees themselves, differently" (2005, p. 154).

The examination of these discourse places pre-service teachers' responses in either 'doing' discourses or 'being done to' discourses. 'Doing' discourses relate to themes such as production, action and reconstruction of the pre-service teachers' pedagogical practices. When pre-service teachers are situated in 'doing discourses' it is about empowerment, which is "a process one undertakes for oneself, it is not something done "to" or "for someone"" (Lather, 1991, p. 4). On the other hand 'being done to' discourses relate to the themes of reproduction, accommodation and resistance. When pre-service teachers are positioned in 'being done to' discourses it is very difficult for them to obtain ownership of their pedagogical practices. Those pre-service teachers who do not take ownership of their teaching practice remain constrained by the discourses of both the university and the schools. Furthermore, they stay positioned as students rather than as teachers. Relationships for these pre-service teachers are constrained due to the 'being done to' discourses which positions them as passive and resistant.

When pre-service teachers are resistant to changing their practices they cannot double vision their pedagogies (Davies, 1994). When these pre-service teachers apply the research literacies to their writing they stay positioned as students because they cannot recognise their experience of being within and constituted by the master discourses (Davies, 1994; Luke & Gore, 1992). When

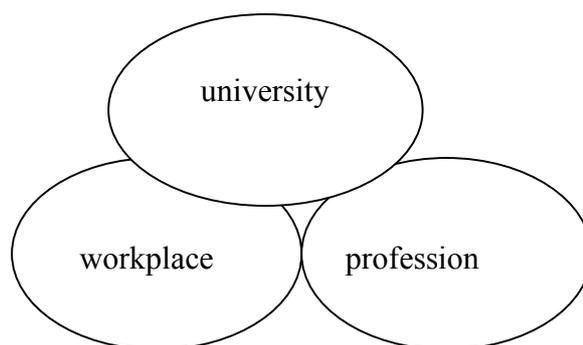
pre-service teachers, on the other hand, are positioned in 'doing' discourses this emphasises their actions of reconstructing and improving their pedagogical practices. The initial discourse of needs which is highlighted in the first year of the research has been replaced by a discourse of desire. The replacement of resistance with desire fundamentally relates to questions of power, that is, "of who it is that produces which account of the social world" (Lee, 2000, p.189).

Those pre-service teachers, who actively design, produce and reconstruct their pedagogical practices through the research writing projects are positioned more in a discourse of desire rather than needs. The transference of desire and in the process, ownership is replicated in the pre-service teachers' relationships with students. Desire is seen as both positive and productive (Lee & Boud, 2003). When pre-service teachers, through the use of their research writing projects, take ownership of their practice they are recognised and rewarded for their productive capacities (Lee & Boud, 2003). When pre-service teachers productively assemble and reassemble their practices they become bricoleurs (Honan, 2004). Bricoleurs can "invent ways of repairing" (Lincoln & Denzin, 2000, p. 1061). Illustrations of the pre-service teachers' assembling practices in this study are the creation and sale of a CD-ROM with students to improve student facilities; the creation of a whole school spelling program for at-risk students; the implementation of critical writing workshops and the introduction of an inclusive classroom plan.

This research has found that when pre-service teachers are situated in stronger, negotiable and equitable positions in relation to assessment they are able to reconstruct their pedagogical practices. The structure of the research writing projects allowed for pre-service teachers to negotiate and revise their work over a considerable period of time. Collaborative writing/rewriting practices with the lecturer and researcher provided constructive feedback over a series of stages. Formative rather than summative assessment was used to improve learning. Another finding is that teacher education institutions need to reconsider their social practices of problematising pre-service teachers' subjectivities through genres such as narrative, biography and autobiography. These genres need to be taught in conjunction with research literacies so that pre-service teachers problematise their practice rather than naturalise particular ways of thinking (Davies, 1994).

## Conclusion

This research has demonstrated that pre-service teachers' personal production of knowledge can be attained through a focus on collaborative writing and rewriting practices. By reconceptualising research as writing (Lee, 1995/1996, 1998) it has repositioned pre-service teachers from undertaking solitary writing practices to improving their pedagogical practices through co-productive and collaborative partnerships. Lee, Green and Brennan (2000) argue that the university is being displaced as the primary site for the production of knowledge. This displacement of knowledge involves the exploration of other practices of knowledge generation and supervision (Malfroy & Yates, 2003; Malfroy, 2005). Lee et al. (2000, p.127) in their research in the experience of doctoral students, raise the issue of new types of knowledge and new types of relationships which work towards developing partnerships in which both higher education and the workplace have some expertise and authority. These authors use Fig.1 to represent the intersections between the university, the candidate's profession and the particular work site of the research. These sites offer opportunities for challenging the binary of 'research' and 'practice' to accommodate new ways of researching (Lee et al., 2000).



**Figure 1: The hybrid curriculum of the professional doctorate (Lee et al., p.127)**

In comparison to teacher education, pre-service teachers situate their knowledge in two particular discursive sites, the university and their practicum experiences. In relation to Fig.1, pre-service teachers are positioned in both the university and workplace sites when they are on their practicum experiences. What is needed further is a repositioning of these sites to include elements of their profession, which positions them within the teaching profession by attending meetings and other associated professional practices of being a professional teacher. This research recommends the formal construction of research learning communities which would be composed of school-based cooperating teachers, university-based program directors and course instructors, and student teachers and supervisors (Cochran-Smith, 2004). These collaborative and interactive partnerships work towards not only providing semiotic space for pre-service teachers to reconstruct pedagogy but also contribute to the construction of co-productive spaces for all stakeholders involved in teacher education.

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